

British Sign Language Qualifications

Overview

British Sign Language (BSL) was recognised by the government as a language in its own right in March 2003. The BDA (British Deaf Association) suggests that BSL is the first or preferred language of over 87,000 Deaf people in the UK. BSL is a visual-gestural language, with its own grammar and principles, which are completely different from the grammatical structure of English.

British Sign Language (BSL)

British Sign Language is a visual means of communicating using gestures, facial expression and body language with its own vocabulary, grammar and syntax. It is not dependent upon or related to English and is used mainly by people who are Deaf or to support those who have a hearing loss.

Similarly, to spoken language, there are regional variations. For example, the sign for 'holiday' which has around 10 -12 sign variations is dependent upon the area of the UK that you are in.

British Sign Language is a real, full and living language that is part of a rich cultural heritage and one of the UK's indigenous languages.

It is also a gateway to learning, a path towards a sense of Deaf identity, and the means whereby Deaf people survive and flourish in a hearing world (Source: BDA, 2014).

ALS is providing training at levels 1, 2 & 3

Who are these qualifications for?

These qualifications are for those who wish to communicate effectively with Deaf people.

Benefits for individuals

- Develop confidence in communicating with the Deaf community
- Nationally recognised BSL award using Signature accredited qualifications

Benefits for employers

- Gives employees the skills and confidence to communicate with Deaf people
- Supports an inclusive culture within the organisation

Course Eligibility:

- Living or working in Cardiff Capital region
- Aged 18+
- Not in full time education
- Available to employed, unemployed and volunteers

How does the learning take place?

The course is a blended model based on face-to-face teaching, self-study and practice using the homework online resources.

British Sign Language Level 1 Award

Level 1 Award in British Sign Language Qualifications is designed to teach learners to communicate with Deaf people in British Sign Language (BSL) on a range of topics that involve simple, everyday language use. They will gain basic skills and confidence in production and reception of BSL.

Level 1 Award in British Sign Language is suitable for those who:

- want to learn basic language skills to communicate simple conversations with Deaf people
- want to learn new language skills as part of a programme of study
- want to progress to more advanced study and/or employment using BSL in the future
- are studying for personal development
- are parents, family, friends or colleagues of Deaf people.

Content

Each module below requires attendance at the 21 face-to-face teaching sessions and a total of 10 hours self-study and practice.

Induction: 1-hour virtual meet and greet with your tutor

Module 1: Introduction to BSL

Module 2: Conversational BSL

Module 3: Communicate in BSL about everyday life

Assessment occurs after completion of the training and learners are assessed on the following objectives:

- Understand and use a limited range of simple words and sentences in BSL
- Take part in simple, everyday conversations in BSL
- Give and follow simple directions or instructions in BSL
- Give and follow simple familiar statements or descriptions in BSL

By:

- A Practical Demonstration of skills – undertaken by the tutor
- And holding a Conversation in BSL – undertaken by an external assessor for a maximum of 5 minutes

Delivery

A total of 21 weekly face-to-face sessions of 3 hours each.

British Sign Language Level 2 Certificate

This Level 2 Certificate qualification in British Sign Language is designed to enable learners to develop their skills to communicate with Deaf people using British Sign Language (BSL) in a range of everyday situations. The qualification will allow learners to participate in longer and more varied conversations than at Level 1. The course will develop communication in BSL about real life, routine, and daily experiences. Learners will be able to deal with most routine communication and have enough understanding of grammar to cope with some non-routine communication. Learners will be taught a number of regional variations in sign language.

Level 2 Certificate in British Sign Language is suitable for those who:

- wish to achieve language skills at an intermediate level to improve communication with Deaf people
- are Deaf and wish to gain a qualification in their native language
- are family, friends and colleagues of Deaf people
- want to progress from Level 1 study in BSL, and who may want to progress to more advanced levels of study in BSL at a later date
- are studying for personal development.

Content

There are 3 modules, delivered over 33 sessions of 3 hours face-to-face with an additional 15 hours of self-study and practice for each module.

The qualification is based on 3 themes: Everyday Conversation, Eating and Drinking, and Spending and Shopping

Module 1: BSL Receptive Skills

Module 2: BSL Productive Skills

Module 3: BS: Conversational Skills

Assessment

Occurs after completion of the teaching and is made up of:

- A multi-choice exam
- A presentation of 3-5 minutes and conversation held with an independent assessor

Delivery

Attendance at 33 weekly face-to-face sessions of 3 hours.

British Sign Language Level 3 Certificate

The Level 3 Certificate in British Sign Language qualifications meets the learning needs of those who already have competence in BSL at Level 2 and are interested in developing their skills and knowledge. Successful learners must be able to demonstrate competence at Level 3 of the UK Occupational Language Standards (Instructus 2012). This means that the learner will be able to understand and use varied BSL in a range of work and social situations.

The learner will develop an advanced knowledge of the structure and function of British Sign Language and an understanding of the Deaf Community and Deaf Culture.

Essential Requirements

In order to be entered for a course and assessment leading to this qualification, learners must be able to demonstrate competence in BSL at level 2.

This level is suitable for those:

Working on a regular basis with Deaf people (for example social workers, teachers of the Deaf, communicators, voluntary workers, workers within Deaf organisations, schools, etc), those who aspire to work in these contexts, and those who wish to expand their knowledge and skills in British Sign Language.

Content

One Module made up of the skills required to:

The natural context of using BSL is in two-way interactions (discussions, conversations, debates, etc.), as well as one-way interactions (monologues, presentations etc.). The candidate is therefore expected to demonstrate receptive and productive skills in both two-way and one-way interactions. Signature recommends the best approach to teaching and assessing this qualification is by covering both receptive and productive skills together.

The module is based on 43 weekly sessions of face-to-face teaching with a tutor and an additional 120 hours of self-study and practice.

Assessment

Assessment	Assessment Method	Duration
Formal Presentation	External	8-10 minutes
Informal Conversation	External	10-12 minutes
Receptive Skills	External	1 hour approximately

Delivery

A total of 43 weekly sessions of 3 hours.