



# **British Sign Language**

## **Draft Action Plan**

**2024-2030**

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## Section 1

### Introduction

British Sign Language (BSL) is a recognised language of Scotland which means that people whose first or preferred language is BSL may access information and services based on their language.

Throughout the plan reference is made to “BSL users”. This covers all people whose first or preferred language is BSL, including those who receive the language in a tactile form due to sight loss.

A BSL version of this plan will be added to the college website following the relevant Board/Committee approval processes.

Borders College BSL Action Plan supports the BSL National Plan for Scotland 2023-2029<sup>1</sup>. The National Plan has ten priority areas which represent the collective ambition for BSL in Scotland and underpins the Scottish Government’s overall ambition; to make Scotland the best place in the world for BSL users to live, work and visit.

The British Sign Language (Scotland) Act 2015<sup>2</sup>, requires listed authorities in Scotland to publish BSL plans every six years demonstrating how they will promote and support BSL. The BSL (Scotland) Act 2015 aims to:

1. Promote awareness and use of BSL; and
2. Improve access to services for Deaf and Deaf- blind people.

As a listed authority, Borders College will write and publish actions outlining the measures it will take to promote awareness of BSL, and access to education and services for Deaf and Deaf-blind people. In developing this plan, Borders College aims to achieve consistency with the National Plan and will take account of how best to respond to BSL users’ needs within local contexts and services.

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<sup>1</sup> British Sign Language National Plan 2023-29 [url] <https://www.gov.scot/publications/bsl-national-plan-2023-2029/documents/>

<sup>2</sup> British Sign Language (Scotland) Act 2015 [url] <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2015/11/introduction/enacted>

### **Context for Borders College BSL Action Plan 2024-2030**

Borders College has reviewed the progress it has made with its BSL Action Plan 2018-24. In partnership with Scottish Borders Council and NHS Borders, Borders College has actively engaged BSL users and their representatives in a consultation process to comment on, and develop themes which will inform the priorities of this plan. We are committed to continued engagement with this group around shaping provision, implementing actions, providing feedback on progress and developing further actions and future evaluation.

Borders College is committed to;

- Ensuring the voices of BSL users are heard in the matters that are important to them.
- Improving access to, and the use of BSL across the College.
- Supporting BSL users through their transition into college, participation within, and beyond.
- Raising awareness and celebrating BSL Culture.

## Section 2

### Borders College BSL Plan 2024-2030: Long Term Goals

Borders College BSL Plan 2024-2030 has identified five long term goals. These goals are consistent and aligned within the ten long term priorities of the National BSL plan.

National BSL Priorities	Borders College BSL Long Term Goals	
<b>BSL Accessibility</b>	1	Promote and develop sustainable approaches to ensure that BSL users have access to opportunities, support and services.
<b>Children, Young People and their Families</b>	2	Support BSL users through their transition into college, participation within college and beyond.
<b>Health and Wellbeing</b>	3	Provide information and support to enable BSL users to live active and healthy lives.
<b>Celebrating BSL Culture</b>	4	Consider how we promote and raise awareness of the cultural life of Scotland with BSL users, and enable them to celebrate their own culture and heritage.
<b>Democratic Participation</b>	5	Ensure the voices of BSL users are heard in the matters that are important to them.

### Section 3

#### Borders College BSL Action Plan

##### **BSL Accessibility**

##### **Long Term Goal 1**

Promote and develop sustainable approaches to ensure that BSL users have access to opportunities, support and services.

Borders College BSL Actions:

- Work in partnership with Scottish Borders Council, NHS Borders and wider partners to consider options for further qualifications in BSL for staff and students.
- Review, improve and develop accessible materials and information for BSL users across college systems e.g. website, learning platforms and approaches.
- Consider the sustainability of the support offered to BSL users across our services.
- Provide opportunities for staff attend BSL training.
- Explore assistive technology and AI to support BSL users.

##### **Children, Young People and their Families**

##### **Long Term Goal 2**

Support BSL users through their transition into college, participation within college and beyond.

Borders College BSL Actions:

- Continue to review and develop approaches to transition and support for BSL users into college.
- Improve outreach meetings with schools to gather greater understanding of the support that is required and available for BSL users.
- Work with partners and services to provide details of schemes to support transition beyond college and into work.
- Ensure curriculum staff working with BSL users are aware of and can support the needs of BSL users.
- Ensure support and information is available to all staff to build confident and positive interactions and communication with BSL users.

**Health and Well Being**

**Long Term Goal 3**

Provide information and support to enable BSL users to live active and healthy lives.

Borders College BSL Actions:

- Ensure BSL users are aware of the wellbeing support they can access at College.
- Deliver health and wellbeing activities that are inclusive of the BSL community at College.

**Celebrating BSL Culture**

**Long Term Goal 4**

Consider how we promote and raise awareness of the cultural life of Scotland with BSL users, and enable them to celebrate their own culture and heritage.

Borders College BSL Actions:

- Explore opportunities to celebrate BSL culture through our awareness raising.
- Promote events and opportunities which highlight and celebrate BSL culture.

**Democratic Participation**

**Long Term Goal 5**

Ensure the voices of BSL users are heard in the matters that are important to them.

Borders College BSL Actions:

- Ensure feedback and engagement process are accessible for BSL users.
- Support BSL users to actively participate in college experiences.

### **Monitoring and Review**

Borders College will monitor progress of the BSL Plan on an ongoing basis through the BSL Steering Group. Annual updates will be provided to the Equalities and Inclusion Committee, and to the Regional Board where appropriate.

### **Contact**

The lead officer for Borders College's BSL Action Plan is Amy Brydon and can be contacted if there are questions or comments in relation to the College's BSL Action Plan.

**Amy Brydon**  
**Director Student Services Borders College**  
**Scottish Borders Campus Galashiels**  
**TD1 3HE**  
[abrydon@borderscollege.ac.uk](mailto:abrydon@borderscollege.ac.uk)

