



Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Key Support Actions

- Make use of any technology suitable for the student, e.g., induction loop or human support e.g., captioning or a sign language interpreter
- Provide handouts, PowerPoint slides and any other materials in advance
- Ensure that all information is provided in written format e.g., feedback, schedules, essay titles or contact details
- Keep timetables and venues consistent. This allows for any support workers to attend or the correct equipment to be made available
- Establish strong ground rules to ensure that everyone can take part in discussions, even if they are unable to hear cues to join. Deaf students may become more tired. Build in regular breaks to allow for concentration fatigue

What does Deaf or Hard of Hearing mean?

- The term 'deaf and hard of hearing' covers a wide range of hearing loss, along with differing communication needs. Students may wear hearing aids or have a cochlear implant. Some prefer to lipread, others may use British Sign Language (BSL)
- 30% of words can be lipread, the rest is guesswork and its success is dependent on several additional factors. Therefore, this should not be relied upon
- Deaf people often struggle with non-verbal cues such as tone and cadence. An unobstructed view of faces and body language makes it easier for those who rely on lipreading and allows for more effective communication

Impact on study

Deaf and Hard of Hearing students may need support in the following areas:

- Accessing and being able to participate in teaching, such as lectures
- Being able to access film and TV resources
- Participating in group discussions

Inclusive teaching

These are strategies of benefit to all students but will also help to remove barriers from students who are deaf or hard of hearing:

- Written feedback is helpful, as it allows the student not to miss out on any important information or inaccuracies
- Lecture notes and supervision handouts in written format
- Context is important, provide an overview of what the lecture or supervision will cover
- Permission to record lectures, in case no notetaker is available and allows the student to catch up
- Reserved seating to allow for student to be seated in the best position, close to the speaker and the use of any equipment that requires amplified and clear listening
- The student will need to see clear faces to lip-read. It is not possible to read slides and to lipread at the same time

Reasonable Adjustments

- If video clips are used, then they will need to be subtitled
- 24 hours' notice of change of venue, so that the student can rearrange human support if needed
- Indicate change of topic, so that the student knows about the change of subject
- Provide a glossary or vocabulary list. It is difficult to understand a new word if it is not known

Technology Support/Human Support

- Deaf and hard of hearing students may use a range of human support. This is known as Non-Medical Help and usually funded through the DSA. International students are funded by LSE
- Support can be in the form of live captioning, notetaking or recording/transcription
- Assistive Technology can be helpful, such as an induction loop

The legal position

If a student is deaf or hard of hearing, they are likely to meet the definition of a disabled person under the Equality Act (2010). This requires the University to make reasonable adjustments and not to treat the student less favourably for reasons relating to their disability.

This guide has been produced for LSE by the Disability and Mental Health Service, with credit to the Accessibility and Disability Resource Centre at University of Cambridge who kindly permitted use of their staff guides in production of our own.