

Accessing Education: Exploring D/deaf students' experience of applying to higher education

Information Sheet

In a report from the National Deaf Children's Society 46% of students stated that the support they required was not in place when they started university.¹ This has led to a decrease in retention of D/deaf students at Higher Education, and so this project aims to identify how to best support those students who are currently applying to university to improve their student experience and foster inclusivity within universities and colleges.

This project will examine what the barriers are for D/deaf students applying to HE and why they exist. It will also seek to understand what facilitates students' in applying to HE courses, and how these practices can be used across the sector. The project will include interviews with specialist staff at local institutions, questionnaires with D/deaf students applying to university, and D/deaf students currently at university. It will also examine the support available in different HE institutions. A barriers and facilitators model has been identified to accurately understand the access requirements for D/deaf students in HE and to formulate recommendations and interventions for best practice.

The aims of the project are as follows:

- Ascertain D/deaf students' experiences in, and barriers to, applying for HE
- Work with students and practitioners in the Deaf community to identify what support would be most helpful in accessing HE and formulate a 'best practice' approach
- Identify HEI's current practice and use this to inform recommendations to support the transition of D/deaf students into higher education

By identifying potential barriers in applying to HE, and examining best practice across the sector, it is hoped that this research will enable Greater Brighton Metropolitan College [GB MET] to better support D/deaf students studying at FE level when applying to Higher Education both internally and externally. It will also provide a framework on how best to support D/deaf learners in Higher Education courses within the college.

The project will be disseminated throughout GB MET and at any relevant conferences.

¹ <https://www.ndcs.org.uk/about-us/news-and-media/latest-news/almost-half-of-deaf-students-start-university-without-support/>