

# Deaf Education at Manchester University 2022

**Dr Helen Chilton, Dr Lindsey Jones and Helen Martin** provide a current overview of the mandatory qualification provided by the University of Manchester

Our aim at Manchester is always to involve our learners in a wide and varied curriculum, encouraging them to apply the latest research to practice. Time is well spent getting the basics right, but we also ensure that our students have the chance to apply their knowledge to real life contexts through simulated tasks such as troubleshooting in audiology or report writing from case-studies. It is important for learners to enter the profession with high levels of resilience and the ability to problem solve.

We are exceptionally proud of our facilities, which will help us to continue with strong practical teaching. Our teaching room has soundfield technology and we have a fully equipped audiology laboratory. Our students become competent at speech discrimination testing, which we practice in our specialist room in the lab. We have access to a range of hearing aids that our students work with using both the FP35 and the Auricle HiT. We hope that our newly qualified Teachers of the Deaf (ToDs) will use the skills they learn with us to support service development and their colleagues in the field. Being connected to both speech and language therapy and audiology in the university gives learners unrivalled access to expertise through guest lectures and tailored resources.

## Modes of study, flexibility by design, and exit routes

Manchester provides the option of full-time or part-time (weekly) on-campus study or a fully e-blended (distance) route. This provides flexible and accessible learning pathways that allow students to learn in a way that fits with their work and life commitments. We have two different postgraduate exit routes, both of which qualify students as ToDs. Students can exit with a Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip) in Deaf Education or can continue to complete the Master of Science (MSc) module by completing a dissertation.

We support learners to switch between modes of study if needed. Students have switched from on-campus to e-blended in response to work opportunities, and e-blended learners have been given the opportunity to attend the on-campus sessions if their personal circumstances have accommodated this. Our top-spec hybrid teaching facilities allow all learners to join our sessions remotely, so we are offering even more flexibility than ever before! Zoom, despite its challenges, now gives almost limitless opportunities for the future,

and we will continue to draw upon it even when Covid is a distant memory.

Whatever route of study our students choose, we work hard to provide opportunities for our learners from all routes of study to come together to network and build relationships and feel part of Team Manchester. Our e-blended learners join us on campus each year twice a year and make the most of our facilities during their three-day workshops. In year 1 we invite our e-blended and on-campus first years to get together at our e-conference where we host national and international speakers to share their research and practice with us. Our excellent relationships with schools and services for deaf children continues to grow and our partners welcome students to complete their teaching placements with them. At Manchester our students do two x 20-day placements over the duration of their study with us.

## Placements

We arrange our placements for learners based on their learning needs and local availability. We try to ensure that placements give contrasting experiences wherever possible. Regular readers of the BATOD Magazine or those connected to our programmes via their supervisory roles will know that the first placement is assessed by physical visits to schools from supervisors. For their qualifying placement, learners are assessed by their supervisors using Swivl technology. This small, remote camera enables supervisors to access the lesson remotely and develops reflective practice, a vital skill for our learners to take





forward into their role as a Newly Qualified ToD. Whilst remote supervision clearly helped us to overcome the challenges of Covid, it is important to remember that this was added to our programme eight years ago, long before the impact of Covid bubbles and visitor restrictions. We are thrilled to announce that the use of this technology along with our adaptive approach to teaching and learning has won the Deaf Education team at Manchester a teaching excellence award from the Institute for Teaching and Learning this year!

### Our students' achievements

This is by far the most important part of this article as our learners continue to make us proud. We have had phenomenal achievements over the last few years, including:

- high percentages of self-funded students securing employment as ToDs during their training. Feedback from employers has been that training ToDs who attend interviews are knowledgeable, well equipped, and have all the makings of fantastic ToDs of the future
- outstanding MSc dissertations including empirical studies and grant proposals
- Emily Knell-Davies (who graduated Winter 2020) was awarded the Eichholtz Prize by BATOD – an amazing achievement in such difficult circumstances
- a number of our recently graduated alumni taking on roles within regional BATOD committees and presenting at BATOD conferences. We were delighted to see Emma Danton and Catherine Sharp presenting their work, submitted to us as part of our Policy and Practice module, at the recent BATOD North conference. This great work shows the quality of our graduates who continue to add expertise and value to the profession year upon year. It is also a proud moment for us when we turn the pages of the BATOD Magazine and see great articles from our alumni and current students adding insights into their practice, the most recent being from Sabine Crumbie who shed light on the challenges of working with D/deaf students in further

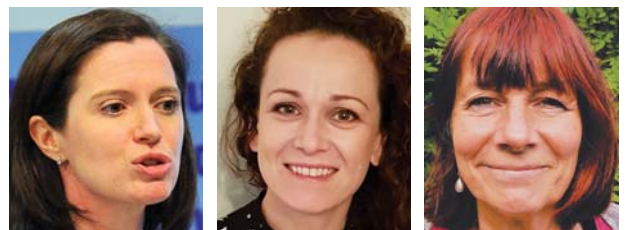
education, and Catherine Scully sharing her work as a Headteacher (and ToD in training) of Jordanstown school in Belfast.

### Bursaries to study at Manchester

We welcome applications to our programme and can offer bursaries for those who are self-funding and who are not currently employed as a Teacher of the Deaf.

Our **Birkdale Bursary** is new for September 2022. This bursary can be awarded to up to four candidates per year who can show a commitment to raising standards in deaf education and with the drive to achieve this. In addition, we are still offering the **Lawrence Werth** bursary which is for students who can demonstrate exceptional classroom practice. We are looking for two candidates per year.

We have never been prouder of our Team Manchester students and alumni who work tirelessly for deaf children and their families. If you would like to study with us and become part of our team please email the programme team and we will set aside time to chat to you about our course in more detail: [Helen.Chilton@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:Helen.Chilton@manchester.ac.uk) or [Lindsey.Jones@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:Lindsey.Jones@manchester.ac.uk)



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