

# The PGDip/MA in Deaf Education (QToD) – a fresh look

Dr Jackie Salter and Professor Ruth Swanwick provide an oversight of what is happening at the University of Leeds

The introduction of the updated Mandatory Qualification (MQ) for Teachers of the Deaf (ToDs) has provided us with a fantastic opportunity to refresh our programme. Working in conjunction with our past and current students, and a range of stakeholders including regional tutors and school-based colleagues, we aim to:

- respond to the increasing workplace demands on students
- build a sustainable and active learning community
- ensure assessment
  - is minimised and varied
  - is directly relevant to the role of the ToD (authentic)
  - allows students choice in content and presentation (autonomy).

To achieve this, we will:

- reduce the number of credits for the PGDip (Postgraduate Diploma) (MQ ToD) and MA (Master of Arts) (MQ ToD)
- introduce new assessment types (presentations, workbooks, video analysis, reports)
- embed academic study skill/assessment support throughout the programme
- reorganise the curriculum to include smaller modules
- introduce more recorded lecture material and group activities to complement the face-to-face sessions
- require only one assessed placement for students (depending on experience and meeting the MQ competencies) including a peripatetic option
- support the development of the online community

This will be delivered from September 2023. Please see the [UoL website](#) for further information.

## Research at Leeds University Ghana Early Childhood Education (ECE)

Since 2020, Professor Ruth Swanwick and post-doctoral researcher Dr Daniel Fobi have been working together to develop educational resources

and research capacity in Ghana for deaf children and their caregivers. This two-year project is a collaboration between the UK and Ghana, funded by the British Academy under the Global Challenges Research Fund for Early Childhood Education (BA ECE 190031).

The project aimed to develop an equitable partnership between the University of Leeds and the University of Education in Winneba (UEW) to build strategies and resources to support education and health professionals, and caregivers with the potential to transform the lives of families of deaf children in the region. Through Daniel's professional links the project established connections with the Department of Special Education, UEW, building a team including early career research assistants, deaf leaders, and deaf academics as well as working with the Ghana National Association for the Deaf (GNAD).

One key outcome of this project is a series of short videos in Ghanaian Sign Language (GhSL) captioned in English, with English and Twi voice over, designed for caregivers. These include introductions from deaf people about their lives, education, and employment, as well as short sign language tuition excerpts and examples of interactions between deaf adults and young children. The videos are accompanied by a handbook for teachers and caregivers



Teacher of the deaf interpreting for deaf students in a workshop



*Nathalie and Elettra having a break*

that provides introductory information about deafness, early support, assessment, and educational provision. Requests have been made for the materials to be further developed and the team plans to refine and extend these materials.

A further outcome of this project has been to support the development of scholarship that connects the deaf education knowledge base with the wealth of established literature on child development in Africa and Africentric theories of being. Five papers in peer-reviewed journals have been developed from the original project work and the team have secured a book contract with Oxford University Press: *The Early Care and Education of Deaf Children in Ghana* to be published in the OUP 'Perspectives on Deafness' series.

The project team are planning to extend their work across other sub-Saharan contexts. Specifically, this includes the

development of deaf leadership in ECE as well as improved ECE provision and infrastructure for young deaf children and their families, enhanced research capacity, and the further development of African scholarship in deaf ECE. The British Association of Teachers of Deaf Children and Young People (BATOD), and specifically Teresa Quail, have been hugely supportive in the development of these funding applications and in supporting the team to build links across the sub-Saharan context.

### **An update from our Early Career Researchers Nathalie and Elettra**

Nathalie and Elettra are early-stage researchers in the Comm4CHILD Innovative Training Network, under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie European grant scheme. They are both about to start their respective data collection at the Yorkshire Auditory Implant Service (YAIS) at Bradford Hospital.

Nathalie is investigating how multimodal communicative resources are used to support interactions between hearing parents and their deaf/hard-of-hearing children, especially in the time between diagnosis of hearing loss and the onset of intervention. Nathalie will be working with parents and their children (9–24 months of age) recording a play session. This will be analysed from a multimodal perspective to identify and understand multimodal communication strategies involved in facilitating access to and opportunities for communication.

Elettra's project is investigating the context for spoken language acquisition in deaf children who wear cochlear implants and grow up in plurilingual and multicultural families. Elettra's project will recruit children between four and ten years of age, who have been implanted at least three years. Participant families will be interviewed and asked to complete a questionnaire about their linguistic background and language use during their daily life. They will subsequently be given a recording device called LENA, which will record the linguistic interaction the child has during two consecutive days that will then be analysed. ■



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Project Case Study:

[essl.leeds.ac.uk/education/news/article/1513/the-uk-ghana-deaf-education-project-team-identify-the-value-of-visual-communication](https://essl.leeds.ac.uk/education/news/article/1513/the-uk-ghana-deaf-education-project-team-identify-the-value-of-visual-communication)

Project 'further together' profile: [spotlight.leeds.ac.uk/further-together/](https://spotlight.leeds.ac.uk/further-together/)

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