

# REGISTRATION AND QUALIFICATIONS NEWSLETTER

**FEBRUARY 2005**

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**This newsletter is distributed to:**

- Registered BSL/English Interpreters, Deafblind Interpreters (Manual), Lipspeakers and Speech to Text Reporters;
- Approved NVQ Assessment Centres;
- The Independent Registration Panel;
- The Consortium of Interpreter Assessment and Training Providers.

**Editor**

Roz Chalmers, CACDP Qualifications Officer - Lipspeaking, Note-taking and Speech to Text Reporting

## 1. General Information

The final figures for 2004 – 2005 show a welcome increase in numbers of all types of registered Language Service Professionals (LSPs) between April 2004 and January 2005.

Category	April 2004	January 2005
Member of the Register of BSL/English Interpreters	166	201
Trainee Interpreter (BSL/English)	41	46
Junior Trainee Interpreter (BSL/English)	71	87
Member of the Register of Deafblind Interpreters (Manual)	17	31
Member of the Register of Speech to Text Reporters	10	11
Member of the Register of Level 3 Lipspeakers	24	27
Registered Level 2 Lipspeaker	14	20

Registration is now under way for the April 2005 - March 2006 registration year. Please note that from April this year Members of the Register of BSL/English Interpreters, Members of the Register of Deafblind Interpreters (Manual), Members of the Register of Speech to Text Reporters and Members of the Register of Level 3 Lipspeakers will all be issued with annual registration certificates.

## 2. ACE Report

The Access to Communication in English (ACE) Report has just been produced by a coalition of organisations, including CACDP, NADP, BIVR, Hearing Concern, RNID, LINK, Sense, Deafblind UK, deafPLUS, AVSTTR, Aberdeen and North East Deaf Society and the Cued Speech Association UK, under the auspices of UKCOD. The report aims to raise awareness of the communication requirements of deaf and deafblind people who prefer to communicate in English, and who therefore use Deafblind Interpreters (Manual), Deafblind Communicator Guides, Speech to Text Reporters, Lipspeakers, or Electronic or Manual Note-takers.

The report highlights the experiences of deaf people trying to access public services such as health and welfare, the courts and tribunals, and local government. It found that 46% of deaf people were unable to interact with their public services 'all the time' or 'often' due to the lack of communication support available.

Public misunderstanding of the communication requirements of deaf people is common. One respondent to the report wanted a meeting with the local health authority to discuss her children's schooling. She needed either a Lipspeaker or a Speech to Text Reporter in order to follow the meeting. The local education authority said that if the respondent used BSL it would provide a BSL/English Interpreter, but as she did not, the authority was not obliged to provide communication support. A similar confusion arose when a respondent requested, in writing, a Speech to Text Reporter to aid his communication during a court hearing for a disability discrimination claim. Despite the clarity of his request, he was provided with BSL/English Interpreters.

The ACE report aims to make recommendations to government for urgent action to tackle the acute shortage of LSPs. A look at the numbers of registered LSPs working with deaf people who use English is ample proof that more training is desperately needed. A bedrock of the ACE campaign is the lack of central funding available to address the shortage of fully qualified LSPs.

UKCOD will now be advising its member organisations as they develop individual projects. AVSTTR is currently involved in talks to seek funding for the training of trainers. They hope to be able to set up training for Speech to Text Reporters in the not too distant future, but the first step on the road is to build a solid foundation of qualified trainers. Other organisations are also identifying projects that they would like to take forward.

The standard of provision is a very important issue for the ACE group. While there is guidance on the appropriate use of BSL/English Interpreters under the Disability Discrimination Act, none exists for the use of other LSPs, and this must be addressed as a matter of urgency. Employers, commissioners and service users must be educated on the necessity of registration, i.e. on the advantages of booking a LSP who is qualified to nationally agreed standards, who works to professional codes of conduct, and who is subject to a complaints and disciplinary procedure in the event of the codes being broken.

Copies of the ACE report can be obtained from the RNID who were responsible for co-ordinating and producing the report on behalf of the ACE coalition.

The e-mail address is: [informationline@rnid.org.uk](mailto:informationline@rnid.org.uk).

### 3. BSL/English Interpreting

#### Accreditation of Prior Learning for Interpreters

Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) is widely used as a way of valuing earlier study, and using it to count towards another qualification. CACDP has been asked about APL in relation to the Interpreting NVQ. In particular, some interpreters who have achieved a BSL standard recognised by the Independent Registration Panel as part of their university interpreting qualification, have asked for this to be used as APL towards the language units of the Level 4 NVQ in Interpreting (BSL/English).

Within the NVQ system, the candidate has to evidence their competence at a particular level against the requirements of the particular NVQ. The assessor's job is to support the candidate's claim to competence when they are sure that he or she can fulfil all the criteria for the qualification. Evidence from other assessments, e.g. IRP-benchmarked BSL assessments taken as part of a recognised Interpreter Training Programme, may be used provided that the NVQ assessor is confident that it meets the requirements of the NVQ. However, if a candidate brings in evidence filmed over 18 months ago, which demonstrates their competence in a particular area, this can be used provided that the assessor can be certain that the candidate is still able to work at this level. It is then the assessor's responsibility to be able to justify their decision to the Internal Verifier (IV), and on to the External Verifier (EV). Any such evidence cannot be used as a *substitute* for meeting the criteria of the NVQ, but it can *contribute* to the evidence requirements.

## Review of National Occupational Standards

The National Occupational Standards for Interpreting can be used for a number of purposes. For example, employers can use them to benchmark their employees' skills. CACDP, as an Awarding Body, has used the standards as the basis of the Interpreting NVQ. The standards are not CACDP's. Instead, they are 'owned' by CILT (the National Centre for Languages). CILT is the languages-sector equivalent of a Sector Skills Council.

The National Occupational Standards for Interpreting have now come up for review, and CACDP will be involved in this from the start as we are the only Awarding Body offering an NVQ in Interpreting. Our views and comments will be important to CILT, and it is vital that we are able to represent the views and comments of those in the area of BSL/English Interpreting who are involved in the NVQ process. However, we also need to realise that these Occupational Standards cover the whole field of interpreting, and so we cannot guarantee that all of our suggestions for change will be agreed to.

Rosie Addis will be on the Steering Group, and the first meeting will be at the beginning of February. Any comments on the Level 4 NVQ in Interpreting (BSL/English) will be welcomed. Please e-mail them to Rosie at [rosiea@cacdp.org.uk](mailto:rosiea@cacdp.org.uk). She will then collate them and pass them on to CILT. The more comments and examples CACDP receives, the more persuasive the argument we can make to CILT to change the standards. The process will take around six months, so please do take the opportunity to comment.

## Feasibility study – Deaf People Working as Interpreters

There are increasing numbers of Deaf people working in the areas of interpreting and translation. CACDP has made a commitment to investigate these areas, to see if the various roles can be defined, standards agreed, and the implications of this for training and qualifications identified.

We are keen to ensure that Deaf people and others with an interest in this area are provided with an opportunity to contribute without undue delay. We are setting up a feasibility study to look at the roles of interpreters that are not currently covered by the NVQ (including those of Deaf interpreters) and to inform CACDP as to whether it is possible to agree a defined role (that is, a real job, required by employers) and set standards for this role from which a qualification and training programme could be developed. However, such a qualification would require agreement and support from the field, it would have to be financially worthwhile, and training providers would also have to be available. The deaf field would have to contribute to this work, which would have to involve other providers of qualifications in interpreting and not just CACDP.

This article is to alert you to the feasibility study, which will be taking place in February and March 2005. I will be contacting registered LSPs and others to invite you to respond to a questionnaire on these issues.

## 4. Continual Professional Development for LSPs who work with deaf people whose preferred language is English

The Registration Panels for Lipspeaking, Speech to Text Reporting and Deafblind Interpreting (Manual) will be looking this year at how these registered LSPs can be asked to provide evidence of continual professional development (CPD) in order to maintain their registration status. It is fully recognised by the professional bodies ASLI, ALS, BIVR and

AVSTTR that a programme of CDP is necessary for each individual LSP to enable them to improve the service they offer to deaf people and keep abreast of progress within their particular field. Each professional association is working on ways to help their members to do this.

Continual professional development requires that the individual examines the way they work and:

- identifies areas where development is needed;
- selects a way of meeting the need;
- implements this through training, peer evaluation, personal research, guided observation, etc;
- evaluates what s/he has learned;
- puts what they have learned into practice in their work.

Most LSPs are already implementing this process informally, but a formal procedure is needed in order to provide evidence that development is taking place. CPD will not be an onerous procedure, and the professional associations will be consulting with their members in order to devise a system that is reasonable, as well as purposeful. This will be submitted to the Registration Panels for their consideration. There will be ample notification and explanation before any system of CPD is introduced as a requirement for registration.

## 5. Speech to Text Reporting

Earlier this year the Speech to Text Reporting (STTR) profession was informed by Possum Controls, the manufacturer of the keyboards used by most STTRs for deaf people, that they would no longer manufacture or maintain their machines after October 2004.

A campaign was begun by the professional associations (the BIVR and the AVSTTR) to persuade Possum to change their minds. The associations received strong support from Lord Ashley, a regular user of STTRs in the House of Lords, and from other deaf people who use the service. The machines made by Possum are compatible not only with the Palantype software but also Eclipse and Legende, all used by STTRs, so their loss is of great concern.

After a meeting with representatives of AVSTTR and BIVR, brokered by the RNID, Possum's directors decided to donate the technical drawings for the keyboards to the RNID for their use in the continued support of Palantypists working with deaf and hard of hearing people. This will also allow for the manufacture of replacement keyboards should the need arise.

Materials for training have been donated by Possum to the professional associations the AVSTTR and BIVR. These include Palantype manuals and training tapes as well as the existing training machines. They are being stored by UKCoD on behalf of AVSTTR and BIVR.

## 6. Deafblind Interpreting (Manual)

The Level 4 Certificate in Deafblind Interpreting (Manual) was revised and updated during 2004. A further eight candidates sat the examination during January 2005. New videos have recently been produced for the Level 4 examination.

Gerard Swan and Paula Bowers continue to hold the fort in the absence of Jane Andrews, who is expected back from maternity leave in February.

## 7. Lipspeaking

Eleven Level 3 Lipspeakers attended a day in December 2004 to update their information about the Level 3 curriculum. Those who hold a teaching qualification will now offer their services to teach a Level 3 course in London, beginning in February 2005.

Level 3 Lipspeakers who qualified before 1998 will be required to show evidence before registering in 2006 of having updated their qualification by attending Level 3 modules in Listening Skills and Legal and Social Services. These will take place in London. The Listening Skills module will be held on 23/24 April at the offices of the RNID in Featherstone Street, London. The Legal and Social Services Module will take place at the RNID, with additional guided observation in Horseferry Road Magistrates' Court and Bow Street Police Station. This module will take place on 12, 13, 14 and 15 May.

Registered Level 3 Lipspeakers who do not have evidence that they have attended these modules during previous Level 3 courses are asked to contact the Chair of ALS, Sara Scanlon (email: scanlons@tgis.co.uk), in order to secure a place on the course. Places are being held for you!

## 8. Proposed Minimum Standards for Agencies – Second Consultation

The Agency Steering Group (ASG) conducted the first of three rounds of consultation concerning the proposed minimum standards for agencies in the Autumn of 2004. The ASG started the second of these consultations with all stakeholders involved in the industry regarding the potential adoption of these minimum standards, in January 2005. They prepared three separate documents which they asked people to consider:

Document 1: Revisions from the first consultation  
Document 2: Revised Proposed Minimum Standards  
Document 3: Revised Standards of Service

These documents were sent out to all registered LSPs at the beginning of January. The consultation period ran until 31 January 2005 and therefore will have finished prior to this newsletter going out. However, if readers have any comments to make about agency standards, these should be sent to [agencysteeringgroup@hotmail.com](mailto:agencysteeringgroup@hotmail.com) or alternatively to Donna Rubin c/o Deaf Direct, 13 Castle Street, Worcester, WR1 3AD.

Agency Steering Group - Donna Rubin, Jason Barnett, Sally Chalk, Joan Quarrington and Lynden Mack.