

British Sign Language Call for Evidence

Responses from South Lanarkshire College

Question	Comment/response
1. Do you think we need to change the law to promote the use of BSL and, if so, why?	We don't think so. The Equality Act should cover adequately all individuals with any protected characteristics and the adjustments required to support them in the achievement of their goals. However, there is a need for organisations to work together to supply additional learning support materials of a generic nature, for those learning sign languages.
2. How realistic do you think this aim is and to what extent do you believe the Bill can achieve this objective?	If a named individual is tasked, by the Government with being responsible for the implementation of a BSL Bill with action plans, timelines, review and evaluation, it could happen. What additional financial support will be made available to support this individual and public authorities, to make it happen and where will this financial resource come from?
3. Could there be unintended consequences for other languages or forms of communication used by the deaf community?	Yes. If these forms are used extensively, they could be disadvantaged by the promotion of BSL alone. Is there a measure of what these languages are and the prevalence of them?
4. What should the Minister with lead responsibility do?	Identify relevant organisations and individuals to consult; review the current position and evaluate the effectiveness currently of BSL; devise an action plan with a timeline, named persons, allocated responsibilities; review; evaluate effectiveness and impact.
5. If listed authorities say they will do something relating to the promotion of BSL, will the Performance Review process ensure they are held to account?	Yes, if it is a robust, transparent process with consequences for lack of compliance or failure to meet targets agreed by negotiation/consultation.
6. Do you have any comment on the proposed content of the Plans?	Plain English is the preferred vehicle for something like this. For example "in connection with the exercise of the authority's functions" is a convoluted expression. It is necessary to evaluate the impact of any plan and not just to note the meeting of targets/milestones/actions.
7. Do you have any comments on the proposed timescales?	None
8. What effect do you think these will have on you or your organisation?	None
9. Would you suggest any changes to the list of public authorities?	Education Scotland and any other external validating body.

