

## D/deaf

D/deaf is a term used to cover all people with some type of deafness and includes those who are:

- **Hard of hearing** people have a slight to moderate hearing loss and will probably wear one or two hearing aids. They have difficulty hearing speech clearly, but are generally able to join in everyday activities.
- **Partially deaf** people have a more severe hearing loss which significantly affects everyday activities and communication. They may use both speech/lip-reading and sign language and probably wear hearing aids.
- **Profoundly deaf** people have little or no useful hearing and while some may wear hearing aids these do little more than assist with environmental awareness and do not help much with the understanding of speech

This last group of profoundly deaf people can be further subdivided into people who are:

- **'deafened'** people have lost most or all of their hearing after childhood. Speaking was their first communication method so they use speech and lip-reading, but some may use Sign-Supported English; others choose to use BSL (British Sign Language)
- **'deaf'** people, with a lower-case 'd', are those born profoundly deaf, but choose to use speech and lip-reading and regard English as their first language.
- **Deaf** people are those who use British Sign Language as their first or preferred language and are known as 'Deaf' with a capital 'D'. They regard themselves as a linguistic and cultural minority and have a separate 'Deaf Culture' and a thriving deaf Community. There are more than 66,000 Deaf BSL users in Britain today.

## Communication

Communicating with D/deaf people can be a challenge if you are

not used to it. Remember that D/deaf people rely heavily on visual information, so you may find the following points useful:

- Make and keep good eye contact with the D/deaf person
- Keep your face clear of obstructions
- Make sure there is good light
- Keep your lip patterns clear but do not exaggerate your lip/mouth movements
- Keep to the subject
- Keep the pace even
- Be patient- give the D/deaf person time to reply
- Relax!

One final point: don't assume that a D/deaf person will understand you from lip-reading alone. Even a trained lip reader will receive *less than half* of what you are saying.

## Medical vs. Social

There are two ways of looking at deafness: sociologists call them the "Medical Model" and the "Social Model".

- **Medical Model:** Deafness is an illness and disability. It can be treated by medication or surgery, or managed by training from the medical professional. D/deaf people are cases for treatment.
- **Social Model:** Deafness is not an illness or impairment but a difference. D/deaf people are only disabled by barriers created by other people. Deaf people have their own language and are a linguistic and cultural minority. D/deaf people can live normal lives with access through visual information, technology and interpreters.



## Useful Websites

### British Deaf Association

[www.bda.org.uk](http://www.bda.org.uk)

### British Sign Language

[www.britishsignlanguage.com](http://www.britishsignlanguage.com)

### Forest Bookshop

[www.forestbooks.com](http://www.forestbooks.com)

### Action on Hearing Loss (RNID)

Action on Hearing Loss is the new name of RNID.

[www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk](http://www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk)

### See Hear

[www.bbc.co.uk/seehear](http://www.bbc.co.uk/seehear)

### Further help in the Library

If you need help in the Library contact:

Lisa Croft	01204903092	<a href="mailto:L.Croft@bolton.ac.uk">L.Croft@bolton.ac.uk</a>
Denise Mercer	01204903264	<a href="mailto:D.Mercer@bolton.ac.uk">D.Mercer@bolton.ac.uk</a>

### Support in the University of Bolton

If you require any advice regarding d/DEAF or other disability issues please contact the Disability Service:

Phone: 01204 903478

E-mail: [disabilityinfo@bolton.ac.uk](mailto:disabilityinfo@bolton.ac.uk)

Website: <http://www.bolton.ac.uk/disability>



# The Library

## *D/Deaf* *awareness*

