



What is BSL ?

Sign Language is a visual means of communicating using gestures, facial expression, and body language. Mainly people who are Deaf or have hearing impairments use Sign Language.

Within Britain the most common form of Sign Language is called British Sign Language (BSL). BSL has it's own grammatical structure and syntax, as a language it is not dependent nor is it strongly related to spoken English. BSL is the preferred language of between 50,000 – 70,000 people within the UK.

After a big campaign BSL was finally recognised by the UK government as an official minority language in 2003. This has led to increased funding for the needs of the communication of people who are Deaf, and an increased awareness of the language which now has a similar status to that of other minority national languages such as Gaelic and Welsh.

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British Sign Language

*Open Evening
Wednesday 13th November 2013*



Level 1 Award in BSL (Beginner)

Qualification aim

This qualification is designed to teach learners to communicate using British Sign Language (BSL) on a range of topics that involve simple, everyday language use.

Unit structure

This qualification is divided into three units, each of which can be achieved separately. Learners who are new to BSL should cover 101 first, as units 102 and 103 build on this knowledge. Units 102 and 103 can be taken in any order.

To achieve the full Level 1 Award in British Sign Language, candidates must pass all units.

Essential requirements

BSL competence standards include requirements for candidates to have sufficient sight, manual dexterity, facial and body movement to produce and receive BSL. It is the responsibility of the centre to explain these requirements before accepting a candidate for this qualification

Career Pathway

Retail outlets, Restaurants, Food stores,
Service Industry,



Level 2 Certificate in BSL (Intermediate)

Qualification aim

This qualification is designed to enable learners to develop an ability to communicate with Deaf people using BSL in a range of familiar contexts, participating in lengthy and open-ended exchanges. The course will develop functional communication in BSL about a range of real life, routine and daily experiences. The learner will be able to deal with most routine language tasks and have sufficient grasp of grammar to cope with some non-routine tasks. Learners will be taught a number of regional variations in sign language.

Unit structure

The qualification is divided into three units, each of which can be achieved separately. The units can be done in any order at any time but it is recommended that the content of Unit BSL201 is covered before Unit BSL202 or BSL203.

To achieve the full Level 2 Certificate in British Sign Language, candidates are required to achieve all units.

Career Pathway

Receptionist, Carers, Nursing, Midwifery,
Charity Sector, Office administration,
Teaching Assistant, Leisure and Tourism,
Utility Groups.



Level 3 Certificate in BSL (Advanced)

Qualification aim

Level 3 Certificate in British Sign Language (BSL) caters for the learning needs of those who already have competence in BSL at Level 2. Successful learners must be able to demonstrate competence at Level 3 of the UK Occupational Language Standards (CILT, 2010). **This means that the learner will be able to understand and use varied BSL in a range of work and social situations.** The learner will develop an advanced knowledge of the structure and function of British Sign Language and an understanding of the Deaf Community and Deaf Culture.

Qualification structure

Successful completion of this qualification can be used as evidence of the language skills needed in order to be able to operate independently and at an advanced level in the target language. It is useful for those who work on a regular basis with Deaf people (for example social workers, teachers of the Deaf, communicators, voluntary workers, workers within Deaf organisations, schools, etc), those who aspire to work in these contexts, and those who wish to expand their knowledge and skills in British Sign Language.

Career Pathway

Communication Support Worker, Learning
Support Assistant, Teacher of the Deaf,
Police, Prison Services, Social Worker,
Legal/Court Support, Counsellor, Business
within Deaf Organisation