

# The challenges for D/deaf people wishing to undertake teacher training

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## Background

- The issues facing D/deaf people wishing to become teacher trainees in Scotland led to the establishment of a Scottish based support forum following a similar support group U.K.wide. The group is used to support D/deaf people wishing to train as a teacher or as a teacher of the deaf. A D/deaf-led forum can relay advice and guidance to D/deaf peers who hit barriers during teacher training.

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- The group is a support group that communicates via email or Facebook messenger forum to raise awareness or discuss issues affecting D/deaf peers and promotes awareness of jobs available within Scotland.

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## Challenges

- **Issues in achieving qualified status as a teacher**
- Lack of awareness in universities
- No reasonable adjustment for D/deaf teachers in terms of placement – currently most or all must be in hearing environments
- Mainstream professionals and Teacher Training Institutions have little awareness of barriers faced. It could be possible for Deaf teachers to be assessed by a deaf peer if possible in deaf schools or mainstream
- Lack of support for placements

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## Challenges

- **Issues for qualified teachers of the deaf**
- Indirect institutional discrimination i.e. local authority services apparently not wanting deaf candidates in post
- Not invited to interview despite experience or qualifications
- Most ToD posts are not advertised - workforce stays the same
- Lack of understanding in the field about the positive role a deaf person can have within the profession amongst colleagues, families and pupils.

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## Positive Professional Impact of Deaf Teachers

- D/deaf ToD group invited to speak to BATOD NEC Conference 10<sup>th</sup> June Belfast 2017:
- Rep presented an overview of our DToD group.
- Positive ToD feedback
- Queries were raised over the core values of the group:
- Rep responded our reflections that as a group we were over the d/D, signing/oral debate, and that in reality many of us were bi-modal/bi-cultural, "have your cake and eat it!".

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## Conclusion

- **Conclusion:**
- The Deaf Teachers Group is working closely with one university at present to improve attitudes and access to initial teacher education. Some signs of progress: e.g. GTCS has agreed that Higher English can be achieved by the end of the Initial Teacher Education course, fluency in BSL is seen as an asset.

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