



Qualification Specification

Level 3 Certificate in Communication
Support for Deaf Learners

600/6458/4

Sept 2017 – Aug 2018

QUALIFICATION SPECIFICATION

Signature Level 3 Certificate in Communication Support for Deaf Learners (RQF)

(RQF Accreditation Number: 600/6458/4)

Signature Qualification Reference: CSW3

Qualification aim

Signature Level 3 Certificate in Communication Support for Deaf Learners is appropriate for specialist learning support practitioners who work with Deaf learners in for example an FE College, adult and community learning centre or learning provider and for those supporting work based training such as within voluntary, community, private and public organisations.

The aim of the certificate is to provide those who are learning support practitioners - Communication Support Workers (CSWs) - with the underpinning knowledge, understanding and skills in order to effectively fulfil the specialist learning support practitioner role.

Essential requirements

A minimum of Level 2 BSL is essential for candidates studying this certificate. Level 3 BSL is desirable. Candidates should also have English at a minimum of level 2. Candidates without Level 3 BSL at entry are strongly recommended to achieve BSL level 3 either whilst training or shortly after achieving the certificate. Those who work/intend to work in establishments where learners using BSL are the norm should gain BSL at level 3 alongside this qualification.

This qualification is listed as appropriate for learners 19+.

It is recommended that all candidates undertake an initial assessment prior to commencement of the course. This should include an assessment of their BSL skills, and their individual needs with respect to the minimum core of language, literacy, numeracy and ICT. The minimum core is not required as part of the qualification, but to work as a Learning Support Practitioner (CSW), learners will need proof that they have met the standards.

Themes for success

Knowledge and understanding of literacy, language, numeracy and ICT expected of all learning support practitioners is detailed in the document [Themes for Success](#) (LLUK 2007).

Programmes should support the development of personal skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT at level 2 and develop an appropriate assessment strategy. The document is divided into six themes with each theme containing a number of elements. There are twenty three elements in all. All elements should be delivered and assessed across the following mandatory units:

- Learning Support and Lifelong Learning Contexts: Communication Support for Deaf learners
- Principles of Learning Support: Communication Support for Deaf Learners
- Supporting Learning: Communication Support for Deaf Learners

Qualification structure

To achieve the full Level 3 Certificate in Communication Support for Deaf Learners, learners are required to achieve all eight units.

The Level 3 Certificate in Communication Support for Deaf Learners consists of mandatory credit only. The introductory unit, *Preparing to Support Learning*, should be delivered first. This could be combined with additional units to provide a particular focus for the introductory part of a programme. A holistic approach may be taken by centres with the remaining mandatory units

Learning support practice and assessed observations

Learning support practice should provide experience of working with both individual deaf learners and with groups of deaf learners, with a wide range of hearing loss. Candidates should undertake at least 40 hours of learning support practice. This may be achieved through a range of means which may include the following:

- Employed practice
- Voluntary practice
- Placements into a learning support (CSW) role.

In order to successfully achieve the full certificate, candidates must complete at least 40 hours of learning support practice with deaf learners, of which there must be a minimum of 4 observations. Any single observation session must be of a minimum of 45 minutes. Observed learning support practice should take place at regular intervals throughout the course to allow time for candidate reflection and development.

The following guidelines offer direction for the context of learning support practice:

- Learning support is directed by a person who is leading the learning.
- The learning support practitioner (CSW) has access to specialist expertise where relevant, which would include other learning support practitioners, teachers and those in a range of learner support roles.
- The learning support practitioner (CSW) is practising in a context that allows him/her to meet the standards that must be achieved within the qualification.

Signature unit code	RQF unit number	Unit title	Assessment	Unit details
K311	L/504/0066	Preparing to Support Learning	Portfolio of evidence	For full details of this unit see unit specification
K312	H/504/2986	Learning Support in Lifelong Learning Contexts: Communication Support for Deaf Learners	Portfolio of evidence	For full details of this unit see unit specification
K313	K/504/2987	Principles of Learning Support: Communication Support for Deaf People	Portfolio of evidence	For full details of this unit see unit specification
K314	M/504/2988	Supporting Learning: Communication	Portfolio of evidence	For full details of this unit see unit

Signature unit code	RQF unit number	Unit title	Assessment	Unit details
		Support for Deaf Learners		specification
K315	K/601/9364	Reflective Journal	Production of Journal	For full details of this unit see unit specification
K316	Y/601/9361	Supporting Bi-lingual Access	Portfolio of evidence	For full details of this unit see unit specification
K317	D/601/9362	Clear Speech and Notetaking	Portfolio of evidence	For full details of this unit see unit specification
K318	H/601/9363	Accessible English for Deaf and Deafblind People	One hour written assessment paper (external assess)	For full details of this unit see unit specification

Delivery and contact hours

Guided learning hours

The certificate has a credit value of 36, and 330 hours of learning in total. The recommended guided learning hours are 190 as shown in the table below: this must be the time the candidate is timetabled for face-to-face contact to include:

- classroom-based learning
- individual or group tutorials with tutor – at least one tutorial per unit is required
- tutor/assessor feedback on observed and assessed learning support practice.

Unit	Guided learning hours	Additional study hours	Total learning time	Credit value at level 3
K311 – Preparing to Support Learning	30	30	60	6
K312 – Learning support in Lifelong	30	20	50	6

Unit	Guided learning hours	Additional study hours	Total learning time	Credit value at level 3
Learning Contexts: Communication Support for Deaf Learners				
K313 –Principles of Learning Support: Communication Support for Deaf Learners	30	20	50	6
K314 –Supporting Learning: Communication Support for Deaf Learners	30	20	50	6
K315 - Reflective Journal	10	20	30	3
K316 - Supporting Bi-lingual Access	20	10	30	3
K317 – Clear Speech and Notetaking	20	10	30	3
K318 – Accessible English for Deaf and Deafblind People	20	10	30	3

Total Qualification Time

Guided learning hours (GLH)	Additional study hours	Total Qualification Time	Credit value at Level 3
190	140	330	36 credits at Level 3

In addition to the hours of contact time, centres need to ensure that there is evidence for another 140 hours of directed or self-directed learning. This time could include using text books, websites, use of library facilities and preparation of assessment.

Centres may deliver the certificate as either a part-time or a short 'fast track' programme. It is envisaged that the majority of centres will opt for a part-time mode of delivery. Where centres opt for short, full-time mode of delivery, it is recommended that the programme is delivered over sufficient time to enable evaluation and reflection on personal and professional practice. If the candidates are in-service, an account of the number of hours per week they are supporting learning is needed when deciding on the most appropriate delivery mode.

Qualification objectives

At the end of the qualification, learners will be able:

- to provide a sound educational basis for supporting deaf learners in a wide range of learning institutions within the Lifelong Learning Sector
- to develop the necessary knowledge, skills and attributes for supporting deaf learners in a wide range of learning institutions within the Lifelong Learning Sector
- to promote personal and professional development
- to promote evaluation and reflection on personal and communication support practice.

Target group

Level 3 Certificate in Communication Support for Deaf Learners is suitable for those who work, or wish to work, in education; in schools, colleges and universities, supporting deaf learners to communicate with their teachers and other learners. CSWs work as part of the education team alongside other professionals, such as Teachers of the Deaf (TODs), Speech and Language Therapists (SALTs), and Audiologists. Duties typically include:

- Supporting deaf learners by enabling communication between spoken English and BSL, notetaking and lipspeaking.
- Supporting deaf learners with understanding and producing written material in class.
- Adapting learning materials so that deaf learners understand them more easily.
- Suggesting ways that the school or college environment can be improved to make it easier for deaf learners to use hearing aids or lipread.

Progression routes

On completion of Level 3 Certificate in Communication Support for Deaf Learners, a range of further qualifications are available, including:

- Signature Level 3 Award in Insights into Communication with Congenitally Deafblind People.
- Signature Level 3 NVQ Certificate in British/Irish Sign Language
- Signature Level 6 NVQ Certificate in British/Irish Sign Language
- Signature Level 6 NVQ Diploma in Sign Language Interpreting

- Signature Level 6 Diploma in Sign Language Translation

Mapping to national standards

The core units of assessment for the award were written by LSIS (formerly LLUK), based on the National Occupational Standards for Learning Support Staff.

The four additional mandatory units of assessment were written and developed by Signature, mapped against National Occupational Standards for Learning Support Staff (CSWs), developed by Signature, NATED and ACSW.

Planning for programme delivery

Centres wishing to offer the Level 3 Certificate in Communication Support for Deaf Learners will need to consider:

- the anticipated market
- support and guidance to meet individual learning needs
- the mode of delivery of the programme: structure, content and assessment methods
- overall resource requirements for planning and delivery
- procedures for ensuring review and revision in accordance with contemporary issues
- progression opportunities.

Centre resources

Centres wishing to offer this certificate should ensure that there are sufficient resources to support delivery of the qualification. It is expected that taught sessions will be delivered in an identified base room in which a range of audio visual aids likely to be required for the sessions is or can be made available. It is also expected that candidates have access to resources which are commensurate with the level 3 nature of the certificate. Candidates should have access to a learning resource centre where they can obtain up to date reading materials, for example textbooks and journals, and information technology. Centre resources will be checked as part of the centre recognition process.

Centre staffing

Centres will need to identify a suitably qualified Programme Manager, delivery team and candidate mentors. The members of the delivery team, who teach and assess on behalf of Signature, will need to have the following qualifications and experience:

- A recognised teaching qualification, e.g. Certificate/ Postgraduate certificate in Education or Certificate in FE teaching-stage 1, 2 and 3, NVQ Level 4 in Learning and Development, CTLL, DTLL, Teacher of the Deaf.
- Recognised qualifications in British Sign Language, e.g. Level 3 BSL or above, MRSLI, for those teaching a specialist unit (e.g. K316 Supporting Bi-lingual Access).
- Substantial, successful teaching experience, supported by evidence from internal observation of teaching and learning reports.
- Fully conversant with contemporary issues in the education of deaf learners.
- Fully conversant with contemporary issues in the post 16 sector.

Staff who meet these requirements will be accepted as approved teacher/assessors on behalf of Signature and will be expected to provide evidence of engaging in appropriate continuing professional development to ensure that knowledge and skills are kept up to date. Members of the delivery team may be accepted with alternative teacher training and related qualifications. For further guidance please contact Signature.

Centre staffing will be checked as part of the centre recognition process, which will ask for copies of CVs and certificates for any member of the team involved in the teaching and assessment process. For further information, please refer to unit regulations and Signature general regulations, available on the Signature website.

Support provided to candidates for their learning

- **Pre-course information**

As part of the interview of general pre-course information, all potential entrants must be given guidance and advice on suitable progression routes.

- **Individual Learning Plan (ILP)**

All candidates should have an individual learning plan (ILP). This aspect of personal development is addressed in unit K315 as part of the Reflective Journal.

ASSESSMENT AND MODERATION ARRANGEMENTS

Candidates will produce a portfolio of evidence to cover all assessment criteria.

Evidence can be used for more than one unit.

Evidence can be spoken, signed or written.

Some evidence may be generated by assignments set by the centre.

There is a requirement for observation of performance, but practice as a Learning Support Practitioner (CSW) is not assessed; objectives are covered by feedback from the assessor and by self reflection from the individual learner.

Portfolios will be internally assessed.

External quality assurance will be carried out by a Signature appointed moderator.

See individual unit specifications and regulations for further details.



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