



HM Government



Disability Unit

The BSL Advisory Board

What each member of the board will do



easy
read

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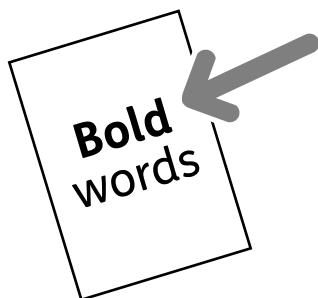
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In this Easy Read document, difficult words are in **bold**. We explain what these words mean in the sentence after they have been used.



Some words are [blue and underlined](#). These are links which will go to another website which has more information.

Introduction



In 2022, the government made a new law, called 'the British Sign Language (BSL) Act'.



This law says that:

- British Sign Language (BSL) is a language that people in the UK use.
- The government needs to make sure information it gives to the public is available in British Sign Language.



To help us follow the new law, we are making a new group of people who use British Sign Language called the BSL Advisory Board.



There will be 2 **co-chairs**.

Co-chairs are the people who will run the group.

The co-chairs will be:



- A Civil Servant - this is someone who works for the government.



- An independent co-chairperson - this will be someone who uses BSL. You can apply to be the independent co-chairperson.



This information explains what you will need to do if you want to be:

- An independent co-chairperson.
- A member of the BSL Advisory Board.

Who we are looking for

Some of the people we would like to join the BSL Advisory Board might:



- Use BSL as their first language, as a **Deaf** person.

Deaf people have been unable to hear all their lives and use sign language.



- Use BSL as their second language, as a parent of Deaf children or as a child of a Deaf adult.



- Have worked as an **interpreter**.

Interpreters are hearing people who sign things that people say.



- Have worked for an organisation that supports people who use BSL.



- Have worked with **D/deaf** children and young people as a teacher using BSL.



D/deaf means the person is either Deaf with a capital d, or **deaf** with a small d. The two are different.



Deaf people have been unable to hear all their lives and use sign language.



deaf means someone who finds it hard to hear.



- Use **tactile or hands-on BSL** as a first language.

Tactile or hands-on BSL is a type of BSL used to talk to people who are D/deaf and blind. You can use it by touching and feeling parts of people's hands.

Members



What members of the group will do

If you become a member of the BSL Advisory Board, you will be expected to:



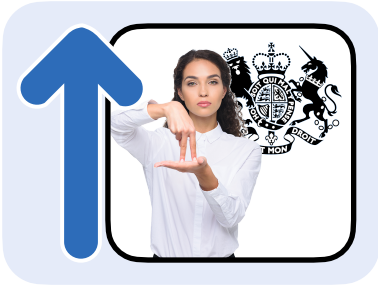
- Share information about your life as someone who uses BSL and the issues you might have faced.



- Speak up about the work of the BSL Advisory Board.



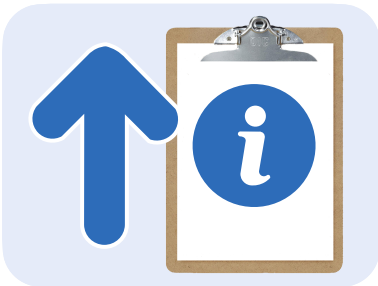
- Find out about what people in your area or organisation think about the issues facing people who use BSL.



- Share ideas about how the government can give information to the public in a better way.



- Work with other members of the group to help write rules for parts of the government to follow the new law.



- Look at information made by the BSL Advisory Board and help make it better.



- Look at how to support the government to make sure the new law is followed, like by training more interpreters.



- Think of things to talk about in meetings that are based on what you know about D/deaf people who use BSL.

What we are looking for in a member



Please think about these when you apply.

If you want to be a member of the BSL Advisory Board, you must:

- Know about:
 - BSL as a language.
 - How BSL means that D/deaf people can be included.
 - Why BSL is important to people.
- D/deaf people and the issues they face.
- Be able to work with other members to support the government.



It would be good if you also:



- Had worked with other people on a **committee**.

A **committee** is a group of people chosen by an organisation to work on a project.



- Are a member of an organisation or group that could help you talk about the issues Deaf BSL users face.



- Know a lot of people who use BSL that you could share information with.

The independent co-chairperson

What the independent co-chairperson will do

If you become the independent co-chairperson, you will be expected to:



- Decide what people will talk about at meetings. You will do this in a document called an agenda.



- Help meetings to go well, but not take too long.



- Talk to people and organisations about the work of the BSL Advisory Board.



- Make sure all members can take part in meetings.



- Help members to understand issues.



- Try to find things that everyone agrees on.



- Go to other government meetings to talk about the work of the BSL Advisory Board.

What we are looking for in an independent co-chairperson



Please think about these things when you apply.

If you want to be the independent co-chairperson for the BSL Advisory board, you must:



- Show that you have been very involved with D/deaf people in a local or national organisation.



- Know about:
 - BSL as a language.
 - How BSL means that D/deaf people can be included.
 - Why BSL is important to people.



- Be very good at leading a group of people.



- Have run meetings, listened to what everyone said and made good decisions.



- Be able to stay calm and make sure people with different ideas can take part in a meeting.



- Be able to think about both sides of an argument.

It would be good if you also:



- Have BSL or tactile BSL as your first language.



- Have advised the government in the past.

How much work you will need to do



There will be 4 meetings a year.



Some will be in a room and some will be online.



You will need to work with the government to decide what people will talk about in meetings.



Before each meeting of the BSL Advisory Board, you will meet with the government to make sure that you have done what you needed to do.



You will not be paid to be the independent co-chairperson.



You may be given some money if you need to pay for travel or support.



All meetings will have BSL and tactile/
hands-on BSL interpreters.