

**THE GLASGOW  
SCHOOL: ARE**

**British Sign Language (BSL) Plan  
2024 – 2030**

## Executive Summary

The Glasgow School of Art is a small, specialist institution for the visual creative disciplines. Through our people, our education and our research, we empower change and create impact that is both transformative and collaborative.

Across all that we do, equality, diversity and participation are embedded in line with our approach to mainstreaming equality. Our BSL Plan 2018 – 2023 supported this approach and our refreshed BSL Plan 2024 – 2030 builds on and embeds this further, with actions integrated in, and delivered through, our Strategic Plan 2022 – 2027 and its core and enabling strategies.

A published BSL plan is a requirement on higher education institutions in Scotland under the [British Sign Language \(Scotland\) Act 2015](#).

**Our current Lead Officer for our BSL Plan is the Director of Strategy and Marketing ([s.parsons@gsa.ac.uk](mailto:s.parsons@gsa.ac.uk)).** We will report on progress in implementing our plan through our Equalities Committee and our annual reporting on progressing with our strategic, core and enabling plans.

## Short Summary of our Refreshed Plan

Our refreshed BSL Plan provides our details of our areas of focus aligned to the Scottish Government British Sign Language National Plan 2023 – 2029. Some actions are explicit but many are already and will continue to be, embedded in our existing activities and delivery or are being addressed within the core and enabling strategies of our Strategic Plan 2022 – 2027 our through our existing work around equality and the associated reporting mechanisms. Together this creates a culture where difference and individual needs are valued and supported. For The Glasgow School of Art as a small, specialist institution, this approach is appropriate and aligns with our embedded approach to equality and how we currently meet the individual needs of students across degree and non-degree programmes and the many visitors we welcome on to our campuses for exhibitions, conferences, seminars and events.

Not all the priority areas within the Scottish Government BSL National Plan 2023 – 2029 relate to the work of the GSA, its students, staff and visitors. Our summary plan focused on the following priority areas:

- Delivering the BSL National Plan
- BSL Accessibility
- Children, young people and their families
- Access to employment
- Celebrating BSL Culture
- BSL Data
- Democratic participation

Together our focus will ensure that our deaf/deaf-blind students, staff and visitors are supported and able to take advantage of, and contribute to, studying, working or engaging with The Glasgow School of Art.

## Our Refreshed Plan

We have identified the areas we will focus on in our refreshed BSL Plan aligned to appropriate priority areas identified within the British Sign Language (BSL) National Plan 2023 – 2029. These actions will be addressed over the period of this refreshed BSL Plan through our specific core and enabling strategies, our annual implementation plan or mainstreamed in to our core activities and approaches.

British Sign Language (BSL) National Plan 2023 - 2029 Priority Areas	GSA Responses and Actions	Delivered through:
<p>Delivering the BSL National Plan - creating the right conditions required to improve outcomes for BSL users in Scotland.</p>	<p>Our response to the ambitions of the British Sign Language National Plan 2023 -2029 forms part of our wider approach to ensuring that the GSA is an open and accessible institution in which to study, work, visit and partner with.</p> <p>Our small size, diversity of student and staff and extensive cultural, creative and public engagement requires us to approach our BSL plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In a proportionate way taking into consideration what we can do, the time frame in which we can achieve it and how we can resource it;</li> <li>• Taking a cross-GSA approach ensuring that we are all actively engaged in delivering our plans and actions considering where our actions and ambitions are already being delivered, should be being actioned and delivered through existing activity or addressed through our strategic and annual implementation plans;</li> <li>• Utilising the expertise and experience of our students and staff;</li> <li>• Building on our existing approaches to mainstreaming</li> </ul>	<p>GSA Strategic Plan 2022 – 2027 including core and enabling strategies</p> <p>Equality Action Plan</p> <p>Equality Impact Assessments</p>

	<p>equality and commitments to being a diverse institution in all that we do;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring that all parts of our community who use BSL benefit from the actions we take.</li> </ul>	
BSL Accessibility – remove accessibility as a barrier for BSL users in all aspects of life, the importance of having accessible information, utilizing technology and increasing awareness of communication tools	Continue to improve the quality of information we hold across all protected characteristics to ensure we make appropriate evidence-based plans and identify actions to be mainstreamed or individually addressed.	Data Strategy People Strategy
	Continue to make external information held in print, digital and video/audio format accessible for BSL users adhering to best practice and technology enabled approaches.	Education Strategy Digital Strategy
	Ensure information is available to students on the range of internal and external services available to students including Scottish Government’s nationally funded BSL services.	Student Services
	Ensure the communication needs of deaf/deaf-blind students are considered and addressed.	Student Communications Framework
	Ensure the communications needs of BSL users are considered and appropriately considered and addressed within GSA’s digital estate.	Development of GSA’s digital communications estates and infrastructure
	Continue to ensure access to opportunity to all and needs to deaf/deaf-blind applicants are considered throughout the applicant journey.	Fair Admissions
	Ensure BSL interpretation is available at core GSA on-campus and digital events.	Individual events plans
	Ensure developments and enhancements to our Estate takes cognisance of the needs to Deaf/Deaf-blind students.	Estates Strategy
Children, young people and their families – overcome barriers for BSL users and deafblind children to ensure they have the support they need at all stages of their	Improve our information for applicants and students on what BSL users (and students with other disabilities and individual learning requirements) can access to support their application to and learning at GSA.	Student Recruitment Student Services
	Through our reasonable adjustment process we ensure the needs to	Student Services

learning, so they can reach their full potential.	deaf/deaf-blind students are met.	Academic programmes
	Identify and address the needs of students with BSL and other learning needs within Open Studio and make necessary adjustments based on a robust evidence base to ensure our Open Studio provision is accessible.	Open Studio Student Services
	Ensure learning resources and on-line learning meet the needs to BSL.	Library and Learning Resources Digital Strategy
	Consider the opportunities for staff to undertake BSL training and development including for specific staff, the opportunity to qualify as a BSL Interpreter.	People Strategy
	Review whether specific posts require to have embed BSL skills as essential or desirable criteria.	People Strategy
Access to employment - BSL users will receive person-centered support to enable them to progress in their chosen career.	Awareness of UK Government 'Access to Work' scheme (and other Governmental and third-sector opportunities) students can benefit from and the support it provides for BSL students as they transition from art school to their creative careers.	Careers Officer
	Ensure we are an accessible employer, removing structural barriers to entering and sustaining employment. We will make appropriate adjustments that promote the GSA as an employer for BSL users and to ensure the accessibility of our staff recruitment information, person specifications and application and interview process.	People Strategy
	Ensure students engaged in Professional practice working in schools and communities as part of their programme of study have the opportunity to undertake BSL awareness training if appropriate.	Enterprise Studio Academic programmes
Celebrating BSL Culture – culture can improve the life chances of all people at every stage of their lives. In Scotland, culture can be an important element to help	Ensure our exhibitions, cultural engagement, archives and collections and access to our heritage is accessible to BSL users.	Exhibitions Strategy Cultural Engagement Archives and Collections Strategy

reduce poverty and mitigate its impacts. BSL users will have full access to the cultural life of Scotland, and equal access to enjoy and contribute to the culture and the arts.	Review how we can support visitors who use BSL to improve engagement, use and understanding of the GSA's rich cultural offer.	Audience development
	Engage with Culture Strategy for Scotland and Glasgow's Cultural Strategy supporting and implementing best practice approaches to ensuring access and participation in culture and the arts.	Exhibitions Strategy Cultural Engagement Archives and Collections Strategy
BSL Data – strengthen the evidence and data on the BSL community to better inform decision making	Continue to improve the quality of information we hold across all protected characteristics to ensure we make appropriate evidence-based plans and identify actions to be mainstreamed or individually addressed	Data Strategy
Democratic participation – BSL users will be fully involved in democratic and public life in Scotland as board members on our public bodies	Ensure our Board is open and accessible to all.	Board recruitment process
	Ensure the needs to BSL users are considered in our committees and structures to ensure they can take an active and full part.	Board and Committee management
	Ensure that when we implement our statutory duties, for example complaints and good governance, we recognise the specific needs of BSL users.	Approaches to implementation of statutory duties

## On-going Feedback and Contribution

Our Plan covers the period to 2030. It is not considered to be a static approach and our implementation, progress and outcomes will be reviewed and our approach developed, embedded actions in our strategies, plans and equality outcomes.

It is available in both print format (PDF) and BSL version at [www.gsa.ac.uk/BSLPlan](http://www.gsa.ac.uk/BSLPlan) and you can comment on our Plan via [Contact Scotland BSL](#), by email at [GSABSLPlan@gsa.ac.uk](mailto:GSABSLPlan@gsa.ac.uk) or in writing to:

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