

# **Proposal for Access to Initial Teacher Education for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Individuals**

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**DeafHear.ie**  
Services for Deaf & Hard of Hearing People



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## Summary

At present in the Irish education system, Deaf and Hard of Hearing (D/HH) people are inadvertently excluded from initial teacher education (ITE) and entry into the primary teaching profession. This is largely because of the requirement that entrants to ITE hold an honour in Leaving Certificate Irish, a subject from which D/HH people are exempt as students. There is also the issue of fitness to practise required on entry to employment which has traditionally been viewed as a barrier to students with disabilities from entering this field. As a result, there is an absence of D/HH individuals and subsequently an absence of native Irish Sign Language (ISL) users teaching in the deaf education sector. This situation is particularly unsatisfactory given the need for linguistic modelling for D/HH children acquiring Sign Language when their parents do not use that language. Furthermore, the social benefits of having D/HH adult role models for D/HH children are not gleaned in a system where there is no avenue for D/HH adults to work in the field.

This proposal outlines how this anomaly might be addressed. In summary, the proposal suggests the replacement of the Irish language requirement with an ISL prerequisite and the establishment of a Bachelor of Education ISL Entry Route Pilot Programme in one of the teacher training colleges. It is proposed that this programme be run on a pilot basis initially with the intention of a permanent establishment in due course. The main aim of such a programme is to provide teachers to work in the deaf education sector. The issue of fitness to practise is not addressed in detail in this proposal since it is perceived more as a concern for teachers working in mainstream schools. Instead, this issue is seen as part of a wider movement currently taking place to provide access to ITE for people with disabilities more generally.

## **1 Intro`duction**

### 1.1 The current situation

At present in Ireland, there are a number of barriers preventing Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing (D/HH) people from entering the primary teaching profession. Firstly, they are excluded *de facto* from initial teacher education<sup>1</sup> (ITE) programmes because of the Irish language requirement, since they are exempt from learning Irish at their first and second level schooling. Secondly, students must pass the fitness to practise medical examination on completion of teacher training before entry to the profession. Combined, these barriers have excluded D/HH people from becoming qualified primary school teachers in the Republic of Ireland resulting in an almost complete absence of D/HH teachers working in that sector. As a result, D/HH children are routinely taught by hearing teachers, many of whom begin their post with no competency in Irish Sign Language (ISL).

Following recent meetings between the Education Partnership Group<sup>2</sup> and the Conference of Heads of Irish Colleges of Education (CHoICE), a consensus has been reached that the exclusion of D/HH people from the primary deaf education profession is an anomaly that should be addressed. The main purpose of this proposal is to outline how access could be provided to teacher training. This proposal is positioned in the context of both current barriers and benefits of providing access to ITE for D/HH individuals. For a number of reasons, which will be outlined below, the proposal concentrates on providing access to ITE for those D/HH individuals who will go on to work in the deaf education sector, as opposed to the mainstream school system.

### 1.2 Structure of this Report

As a response to a discussion on the implementation of curriculum change in the Irish education system in 2008, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment

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<sup>1</sup> Also known as primary teacher training.

<sup>2</sup> The Education Partnership Group is made up of the Catholic Institute for Deaf People, the Centre for Deaf Studies at Trinity College Dublin, the Irish Deaf Society, and DeafHear.

published a discussion paper entitled *Leading and Supporting Change in Schools*. In this discussion paper they outline the principles for leading and supporting change. One category of principles they outline relates to the process of realising change. They stipulate that it is important to "achieve clarity on the intention and outcome of change" (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, No Year: 14). This proposal is guided by this principle and strives to clearly outline both the intention behind, as well as the possible outcomes of the changes suggested within this document.

The intention behind this proposal is to address the current exclusion of D/HH people from ITE and as such, it begins by examining the current barriers facing D/HH individuals. It continues by looking at the important role D/HH individuals play in the deaf education sector, examining international literature on this issue – in other words outlining *why* having D/HH teachers is of value to the system. The third section contains an outline of the consultation process undertaken in the production of this report and highlights the main issues of concern raised by stakeholders. Moving on in the fourth section, a proposal on how access to ITE might be organised is set out, as well as the implications of this move. In general, the proposal for access involves the replacement of the Irish language requirement with an ISL pre-requisite and the establishment of a Bachelor of Education ISL Entry Route Programme in one teacher training college. The final section provides basic costing and infrastructural requirements for the provision of the teacher training programme for D/HH individuals.

## **2 Barriers to Teacher Training**

### 2.1 The Irish Language Requirement

The main barrier preventing D/HH individuals from accessing ITE is the Irish language requirement. In order to gain entry to teacher training programmes, students must obtain an honour in the higher level Leaving Certificate Irish examination. As a group, D/HH students are exempt from learning Irish while at first and second level, which means that they do not have the requirements necessary to later apply for ITE. Of course, the major oversight of this issue is that teachers are not required to have Irish to teach in the deaf education sector. At second level, where the Irish language rule has been waived except for those teachers teaching the Irish curriculum, there has been an increase in the number of D/HH teachers.

### 2.2 Fitness to Practise

The issue of fitness to practise may also present a barrier to D/HH people wishing to teach at primary level. Students entering teacher training programmes must sign a declaration of health and qualified teachers must undergo a fitness to practise assessment before entry to employment. Fitness to practise is determined by an occupational health company called Medmark. Individuals must first complete a pre-employment questionnaire. Part of this questionnaire asks whether or not the applicant has “ears, nose, throat or any voice disorders? e.g. deafness, tinnitus, voice weakness/voice projection difficulties, recurring laryngitis” (Medmark, No Year). On receipt of this pre-employment questionnaire a further medical examination may then be required.

Since there have been few D/HH applicants, we have little knowledge of what protocol would be put in place for students from this cohort presenting for this fitness to practise assessment. We can surmise however, given that the Irish language requirement is not as significant a barrier for other individuals with disabilities, yet they too are underrepresented in the primary education sector, that fitness to practise may well be an issue. Speaking with representatives from the colleges of education, it appears that many students with more significant disabilities simply do not present for teacher training. There was, nonetheless, a tangible concern from stakeholders over

issues of health and safety and classroom management that will need to be addressed should people with disabilities (including D/HH adults) become qualified primary teachers. Most of these concerns are expressed with regards to D/HH individuals working in a mainstream environment where the children hear and speak. The same issue was not seen as a concern for those who would go on to work in the deaf education sector. Since this proposal concentrates on the latter group, the question of fitness to practise is not dealt with in detail here. However, I would highlight that since the overall issue of access to ITE for people with disabilities is being dealt with by the Conference of Heads of Irish Colleges of Education (CHoICE), the question of fitness to practise in mainstream schools should be included on their agenda rather than within the remit of this piece.

### 2.3 Registration

For those D/HH people who have travelled abroad over the years to become qualified primary teachers, restricted recognition can be granted as teachers in the primary sector. This has not been a frequent occurrence, with more students opting for second level teaching in Ireland since the removal of the Irish language requirement during the 1990s. This restricted recognition limits D/HH individuals to teaching within the deaf education sector and as such, they are still prevented from teaching in mainstream schools.

### 2.4 Conclusion

A number of barriers exist in the Irish context preventing D/HH individuals from entering ITE. As a result, there is a remarkable lack of D/HH teachers working in the primary education sector<sup>3</sup>. This is in contrast to the situation in the UK. According to the British Association for Teachers of the Deaf, 100 of the 1700 teachers surveyed declared to have some degree of hearing loss, in other words almost 6% of their membership (Personal Communication, BATOD, April 2011). Since there is no

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<sup>3</sup> Only one Deaf primary school teacher is known to the author to work in this profession in Ireland. He obtained his qualification in the US and has been granted restricted recognition to teach in only schools for the deaf.

comparable association for teachers of the deaf in Ireland, a similar question regarding Irish teachers was put to the Irish National Teachers Organisation who unfortunately responded stating that they do not have any details on D/HH members in their organisation. It would be safe to conclude, however, given the current barriers, that there are few D/HH teachers working in primary education sector across the Republic of Ireland.

### **3 The Importance of Providing for D/HH Primary Teachers**

#### 3.1 Providing Role Models

In their review of the deaf role model project run by the National Deaf Children's Society (UK), Rogers and Young (2011) create a compelling argument for the need for deaf role models for D/HH children, their parents, and other professionals. They point to the research on reducing isolation in young D/HH people and maximising exposure to native signers. They also stress the important part deaf role models play in challenging negative stereotypes of D/HH people, promoting positive attitudes among hearing parents towards D/HH people, and modelling appropriate communication strategies for hearing parents to use with their D/HH children. While their review is of a project set up specifically with the goal of providing role models, they highlight that "role model status may be something perceived and attributed, rather than deliberately sought out or created through a job description" (2011: 4). So it is for D/HH people working as teachers where their job description is educational but in practice, students may see them as role models as well as teachers.

Most D/HH children (approximately 90%) grow up in hearing families and the majority of these attend mainstream schools. As a result, they often have limited access to D/HH adult role models. These role models have an important part to play in the development of D/HH children linguistically, socially, and psychologically. In spite of this important role, owing to the current barriers facing D/HH people on entry to ITE, there is a remarkable lack of D/HH teachers working in the deaf education sector in the Republic of Ireland. The urgency of this situation has been identified in the Irish context (Leeson, 2007; Mathews, 2011).

##### *3.1.1 Language Modelling*

The current absence of D/HH teachers does not equate with lack of need. While there has been an increasing trend towards mainstreaming of D/HH pupils in the Republic of Ireland in recent years, these pupils still receive considerable input from a number of professionals including the visiting teacher service, resource teachers, ISL home tutors and special needs assistants. As well as this, a significant number of children still attend units for D/HH children in mainstream schools as well as schools for the

deaf. At present, there are 10 such units attached to mainstream primary schools and a further 2 at second level (Department of Education and Skills, 2011).

While the student numbers have been declining in specialised settings, attendance at both units and schools for the deaf still makes up a considerable number of D/HH children. For example, in the academic year 2006/2007<sup>4</sup>, there were 41 students attending units for D/HH children in primary schools across the country (Mathews, 2011). In the same year, there were 63 students attending primary schools for the deaf, and a further 118 at post primary schools for the deaf. Irish Sign Language (ISL) plays an important part in the education of these D/HH children in particular.

While not all D/HH children use ISL as their dominant method of communication, educational settings where D/HH children are congregated have typically been characterised by the provision of an education through ISL. In 2007, a survey was conducted among all of the units for the deaf attached to mainstream primary schools across Ireland (Mathews, 2010). Six out of seven mentioned that they used ISL as a language in the classroom. Furthermore, enrolment in a mainstream school does not indicate that D/HH children do not at present or will not in future use ISL for communication. D/HH children who attended mainstream primary school may then go on to a second level facility for D/HH children, or may wish to use ISL interpreting services in their adult lives. They may choose to use ISL as well as speech as a language of social communication with friends and family. As such, ISL has an important role, not only in the linguistic and educational development of those children in distinct facilities for D/HH children, but also those who are in mainstream.

Because of this, there is a particular need for teachers who are fluent users of ISL to be employed in the education system, not only as a means of providing access to communication in the classroom but to act as language role models for young D/HH children acquiring that language. D/HH adults, for whom Irish Sign Language is their dominant and/or native language, are ideally positioned to take up this role. At present, access to ISL is frequently provided through the employment of D/HH individuals as special needs assistants. However, owing to the barriers described above, there is no avenue to ITE in the Irish context.

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<sup>4</sup> This is the most recent data available across all educational placements.

At present, to become a recognised teacher in primary school in the Republic of Ireland's individuals must meet the following criteria:

"The Minister for Education and Skills, in accordance with the authority conferred by section 24 of the Education Act 1998, directs that school authorities, as employers, ensure that teachers proposed for appointment to teaching posts for which salary grant is being sought must be

1. Registered with the Teaching Council in accordance with Section 31 of the Teaching Council Act, 2001

and

2. Have qualifications appropriate to the sector and suitable to the post for which s/he is proposed." (Teaching Council website)

I wish, in particular, to draw attention to the second component - to have qualifications appropriate to the sector and suitable to the post. At present, those working directly with D/HH students are not required to have ISL, though frequently in practice they are provided with some basic training. This oversight is likely to be part of the legacy of oral education implemented in this country during the 1950s whereby speech was established as the preferred method of communication in deaf education settings. It also reflects the growing number of D/HH children for whom acquiring speech has been made more feasible through cochlear implantation. While this trend has been challenged to some degree in practice with a return to using Sign Language since the 1980s in some educational settings, policy measures have not been instigated to indicate a clear path for providing teachers fluent in ISL to the deaf education sector. Internationally, the presence of D/HH teachers in primary education has provided a population of fluent sign language users to work in that sector and has, to a degree, offered a balance and alternative to oral programmes. Significantly, the absence of D/HH candidates to ITE programmes in Ireland has had the opposite effect, seeing an absence of language models for those children using ISL as their dominant language as well as slow progress in the implementation of bilingual programmes.

### *3.1.2 Deaf Role Modelling*

A number of benefits in addition to language modelling arise from the presence of D/HH teachers in a classroom with D/HH students. Perhaps the most important is that they can act as adult role models for D/HH children (many of whom will have hearing parents) and that this can help children to create "a realistic and positive projection of their own future" (Jiménez-Sánchez and Antia, 1999: 219/220). Such benefits are clearly illustrated by the fact that many D/HH children without access to adult role models experience difficulty in understanding their own deafness, with some believing that they will become hearing in their adulthood. Gregory et al (1995) found that one third of their sample thought, as children, that they would grow up to be hearing. The authors directly relate this to the absence of deaf adult role models in their lives. D/HH teachers could fulfil such a role, as well as a broader function of providing knowledge about Deaf Culture and the history of the Deaf Community and links to that community for children, their parents, and the larger school community.

This cultural role is a complex and multi-faceted one and research into the unrecognised curriculum (cultural knowledge) taught by D/HH teachers has indicated the extent to which D/HH teachers bring something unique to deaf classrooms. Ladd (2011) discusses six stages of Deaf pedagogical praxis: starting the cognitive engine; holistic use of modalities; creating a safe Deaf space; language acceleration; establishing Deaf children's place in the worlds<sup>5</sup>; and how to live in the worlds. While research on the particular benefits brought by D/HH educators is still underdeveloped (Ladd, 2011), the indications are that a deaf education system which fosters D/HH teachers is an enriched system.

### *3.1.3 Won't D/HH Special Needs Assistants Suffice?*

Many of the benefits outlined above are currently provided to a number of D/HH children in classroom settings by D/HH special needs assistants. However, it is critical to recognise the benefits of D/HH adults working as teachers in the school environment rather than as assistants. For D/HH individuals working as special needs assistants, there are strict restrictions against engaging in any form of teaching activity which prevents full engagement between students and D/HH adults in the primary classroom. Jiménez-Sánchez and Antia (1999) highlight that classrooms where D/HH

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<sup>5</sup> The plural 'worlds' here signifies the author's distinction between Deaf and hearing worlds.

adults are teaching assistants or volunteers working under the direction of a hearing teacher (the system currently practised in Ireland) do not obtain the same benefits that result from having D/HH teachers working in the classroom itself. They highlight that for children to view D/HH and hearing adults with equal roles is empowering for these students. Furthermore, having D/HH adults working in the school environment can bring about changes in hearing teachers' understandings of deafness, and reduce the potential isolation experienced by both D/HH adults and students in public school settings (Jiménez-Sánchez and Antia, 1999).

### 3.2 Equity and Social Justice

Access to ITE is not simply an issue of provision of role models within the classroom. According to the National Office for the Equity of Access to Higher Education:

“The pursuit of equality in higher education is central to our aspirations to create an inclusive and democratic society. Education has a key role in promoting equality of opportunity and participation in the civic, cultural and social life of a nation. Its role relates to the promotion of collective as well as personal advancement” ((Higher Education Authority, 2008: 14).

As such, access to ITE is as much a matter of equality and social justice as it is of education. At present, D/HH individuals are systematically excluded from the primary teaching profession. While a small number of D/HH individuals have gone on to become second level teachers in this context, the absence of D/HH individuals at the primary level sector indicates that there is still much work to be done in this area. This must be placed in the context of larger debates on the role of people with disabilities in the education sector, in particular the primary education sector. In the current educational philosophy of social inclusion, it is somewhat ironic that while the vast majority of D/HH students come through the mainstream education sector as students, they are currently unable to return to that sector (at primary level) to work as teachers.

As a commitment to providing equity of access to higher education, the National Access Office has published the National Access Plan, setting targets for participation in third level among students with disabilities to be met by 2013. In spite of growth in the numbers of students with disabilities at third level overall, D/HH students in particular have been noted as a population where progress has been

slow (Higher Education Authority, 2008). As such, a target to double the number of D/HH students in the higher education sector (as enrolled in 2006/07) by 2013 has been established. This would mean an increase from 126 in 2006/07 to 252 in 2012/13. Enrollment fell just short of an interim goal of 189 for 2010/11, with 92% of that target being met (data from the HEA provided through personal communication with the office). Providing access to ITE would not only help in continuing to uphold higher participation rates in third level, but would signal a clear commitment to equity of access across courses.

### 3.3 Conclusion

Significant benefits could be brought to the deaf education system by the inclusion of D/HH individuals at primary level as teachers. Benefits could be in terms of linguistic role modelling to D/HH children, deaf role modelling from D/HH adults to children, providing community ties to parents, schools and children, and the provision of unique pedagogical practices that D/HH adults have been seen to bring to the classroom. What's more, the education system would be demonstrating greater equity of access for D/HH individuals and showing a commitment to the full inclusion of D/HH people in the education system.

#### 4. Consultation Process

##### 4.1 Meeting Stakeholders

In preparation for writing this document, a consultation process was undertaken with key stakeholders identified by the Education Partnership Group. Meetings were held with the individuals listed below in April, May and early June with the intention of identifying current barriers in place, and establishing any potential difficulties with the proposed solution of replacing the Irish language requirement with an ISL prerequisite. Details on the more practical aspects of costing and infrastructural requirements were also elicited during the consultation process.

Table 4.1 below outlines the individuals involved in the consultation process and their position held.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>
Áine Lawlor	CEO of the Teaching Council
Dr. Anne Lodge	Principal of the Church of Ireland Centre for Education
Dr. Lorraine Leeson	Director of the Centre for Deaf Studies
Leah O'Toole, Educational Psychologist (representing Dr. Anne O'Gara)	President of Marino Institute of Education (Coláiste Mhuire)
Olivia Breen, Registrar (representing Dr. Pauric Travers)	President of St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra
Susan Donovan	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
Patrick Matthews	Deputy Chief Examiner, Irish Sign Language Leaving Cert Applied
Rosario Ryan	Disability Officer, NUI Maynooth
David Loughrey	Chairperson, DS3, Support Service for Deaf Students in Third Level, Trinity College Dublin
Don Mahon	Assistant Chief Inspector, Department of Education and Skills
Carol Ann Woulfe	Equality Authority

**Table 4.1 Stakeholders**

Meetings ranged from twenty minutes to an hour in length. Brief notes were taken during the meeting and expanded immediately afterwards. A summary of the discussion was emailed to stakeholders to allow member checks to take place. At the request of those involved, they were assured that their comments would not be identified by name in the finished document, but rather that general themes emerging across the meetings would be discussed.

#### 4.2 Issues Identified

A number of common themes emerged across meetings with stakeholders. The first was that there was a general welcoming of the proposed changes and an acknowledgement that the exclusion of D/HH people from teaching D/HH children was an anomaly which needed to be addressed. Nonetheless, the main issue of concern regarding entry to teacher training was whether or not a restricted qualification should be awarded to D/HH teachers. Some stakeholders felt that two issues needed to be examined before D/HH teachers could teach in the mainstream environment: health and safety (including classroom management), and access to the Irish language in the classroom.

The issues of health and safety and classroom management in schools where teachers with disabilities teach students without disabilities is something that should be dealt with in the wider scheme of providing access to teacher training for people with disabilities in general. Suffice to say here that it would be worth examining the situation internationally where D/HH individuals are facilitated in their teaching at mainstream schools. In the US in 1996, for example, the case of *Grantham vs. Moffett* showed that the College of Education at Southeastern Louisiana University was unlawful in dismissing a profoundly deaf student-teacher from their elementary (primary) teacher-training programme. The provision of reasonable accommodation may make teaching in mainstream classrooms a more feasible option for many D/HH than it is at present.

Issues of health and safety aside, a distinguishing feature of the Irish education system which differentiates the situation facing D/HH people in teaching here from the international context is the role of the Irish language. As well as being a subject on the curriculum, the Irish language is intended as a conversational language in the classroom. As a result, competency in Irish is needed beyond the period of time

allotted to the teaching of Irish. Giving due regard to the important role of spoken Irish in the instruction of primary school children, the assimilation of D/HH teachers in the mainstream sector is something that needs to be given close examination. In order to facilitate D/HH teachers to work in this environment, in particular those who use Irish Sign Language (rather than speech) as their first language, the potential use of trilingual (ISL-English-Gaeilge) interpreters may need to be examined. Another option would be to examine the provisional recognition of qualification afforded to teachers qualified outside of the Republic of Ireland. Schools employing teachers with provisional recognition are instructed to make arrangements to deliver the Irish language curriculum to the class. However, lack of access to conversational Irish for students taught by those with a restricted qualification throughout the day does not appear to present as an issue in these situations. This may be used as an example for how D/HH teachers might be accommodated in the future in mainstream settings. These issues aside, it should be remembered that individual boards of management within schools may decide on the eligibility of D/HH teachers for employment in their schools given the occupational requirements of the job and the needs of their school.

The main issues identified by stakeholders are all relating to the role of D/HH teachers working within mainstream schooling. In contrast, there was a general agreement that D/HH teachers should be facilitated without issue to take up positions in schools catering for D/HH students. As a result, the proposal below concentrates on this cohort. Nonetheless, the issue of accommodating D/HH teachers for work within mainstream schools should be examined as part of the work currently being undertaken by the Conference of Heads of Irish Colleges of Education (CHoICE). A number of more specific issues emerged with individual stakeholders which have been used to shape the proposal outlined below. Examples of such issues include the replacement of the Irish language requirement with an Irish Sign Language prerequisite, the introduction of Irish Sign Language to the second level curriculum, the qualifications required for individuals to teach such a curriculum, and the long-term feasibility of providing access to ITE.

## 5 Proposal for Access

### 5.1 Removing Barriers

As mentioned already, there are two significant barriers facing D/HH people in accessing ITE: the Irish language requirement and fitness to practise. I have already stated that fitness to practise is an issue being dealt with at a wider level regarding students with disabilities more generally and that this should not present as an issue for D/HH students wishing to teach in D/HH facilities.

#### *5.1.1 Removing the Irish Language Barrier*

Since the most significant barrier facing D/HH people in gaining admission to ITE is the Irish language requirement, it is proposed that this will be altered for D/HH people. There are 3 possible ways of achieving this: to remove the Irish language requirement entirely for D/HH applicants; to replace the Irish language requirement with an ISL requirement for general entry to teacher training; to remove the Irish language requirement and replace it with an ISL requirement for entry to a specific Bachelor of Education ISL Entry Route Programme. The implications involved with each option are summarised in the table below.

Option:	Implications:
Waive the Irish language requirement for D/HH people entirely.	<p>Suitably qualified D/HH individuals could apply to any teacher training college across the nation.</p> <p>Delivery of supports would be spread across all teacher training programmes - less cost effective.</p> <p>D/HH individuals applying may not be competent in ISL, and may therefore be unsuitable for work in the deaf education sector.</p>
Replace the Irish language requirement with an ISL pre-requisite	<p>ISL curriculum for the Leaving Certificate will need to be developed.</p> <p>Students (both D/HH and hearing) receiving an honour in the ISL Leaving Certificate examination could apply for teacher training in any of the colleges. Resources spread across all programmes - less cost-effective.</p> <p>Hearing students may opt for ISL in an effort to avoid the Irish language requirement. They may not intend to use Irish Sign Language at a later date and little long-term benefit to the deaf education system would arise.</p>

<p>Remove the Irish language requirement, and provide a Bachelor of Education ISL Entry Route programme.</p>	<p>Students (both D/HH and hearing) who achieve an honour in the ISL Leaving Certificate could apply for entry to a specific Bachelor of Education ISL Entry Route programme.</p> <p>Concentration of resources to support D/HH students in <u>one</u> teacher training programme - most cost-effective programme.</p> <p>Fosters the further development of Irish Sign Language competency among those students coming in for whom ISL is not their dominant language and also opens the possibility of developing modules specific to deaf education within the Bachelor of Education programme.</p>
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**Table 5.1 Summary of the possible routes to removing the Irish language barrier.**

Since the intended move is to allow D/HH people to become trained as teachers so that they might seek employment in educational facilities for D/HH children, the third option is preferred for a number of reasons. First, it ensures ISL competency on entry to teacher training, thereby guaranteeing a population of teachers with ISL to work in deaf education settings. Second, it allows the congregation of ISL-users into a particular programme which would facilitate peer-learning, further development of ISL competency, as well as improved social interaction between D/HH students. Third, the development of a particular programme would allow for modules relevant to deaf education to be taught. Finally, it means the concentration of support resources necessary to provide access to D/HH students to ITE into a single programme, thus providing the most cost-efficient delivery of access through the effective use of existing resources. Since this is the most feasible option, the implications of such a move will be dealt with in detail below. The exchange of an Irish language requirement for an ISL pre-requisite will be dealt with first, followed by some detail on what a B.Ed. ISL Entry Route course may look like. Possible student numbers will then be dealt with followed by the entry route.

5.2 Irish Sign Language on the Second Level Curriculum

The first issue to face when replacing the current Irish language requirement with an ISL pre-requisite is the level of competency that would be required. In keeping with the current requirement for Irish, it is proposed that an honour at higher level Leaving

Certificate ISL would be an appropriate pre-requisite. At present, ISL is available for the Leaving Certificate Applied but not for the standard Junior or Leaving Certificate. As such, the curriculum development process has been successful for the Leaving Certificate Applied and the experience of this programme may be used as a model for introducing ISL to other aspects of the second level curriculum. Therefore, one of the first steps to be taken should be the design and implementation of secondary school syllabi for the instruction of ISL. An issue emerging from meetings with stakeholders was that in order to allow students to develop competency of ISL through the full secondary school curriculum and in line with the teaching of other modern languages, it is proposed that ISL be made available for the junior certificate and Leaving Certificate at both higher and ordinary level.

It is beyond the scope of this document to detail what each of the syllabi should contain. Suffice to say, they should follow the general design for the teaching of modern languages. For example, in the Leaving Certificate syllabus for modern languages, four basic learning outcomes are identified:

- (a) a communicative competence in the target language
- (b) awareness about language and communication
- (c) an understanding of how to go about learning a foreign language
- (d) a level of cultural awareness

To assist in developing syllabi for secondary school, it is recommended to consult curricular material already available to the teaching of ISL across the Republic of Ireland. ISL is taught in a range of formal settings through secondary, third and further education programmes: on the Leaving Certificate Applied, as a third level subject (through the Centre for Deaf Studies), and as certified under the National Framework for Qualifications. On the ISL Leaving Certificate Applied syllabus, the subject is taught in four modules: Making Contact, Social Interaction, Deaf People in the World of Work, and Deaf People in the Wider World (Department of Education and Science and National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, 2000). As such, students are introduced not only to the vocabulary and structure of Irish Sign Language but also to the Irish Deaf community and culture. This course is currently assessed in a continuous manner with students delivering a number of key assignments at the end of each module. The Irish Sign Language Academy (under the

Irish Deaf Society) has also developed a curriculum at FETAC level 4 which is equivalent to the Leaving Certificate. This material is designed with adults in mind and would need to be adapted for a second level audience.

At third level, in the Centre for Deaf Studies, ISL makes up a significant component of the Bachelor in Deaf Studies. These programmes are accredited by the Higher Education and Training Awards Council. ISL material has been developed for levels A1, A2, B1 and B2 on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). As such, material exists for four out of the six levels. As was the case with the work of the ISL Academy, this material has been developed for adults and would need to be modified before delivery to students at second level.

The purpose of pointing to this curricular material is to show that ISL is currently taught in a variety of settings and to a high degree of certification. The design and implementation of material for an ISL second level curriculum should therefore present no significant barrier. A body of work exists and while adjustments must be made for delivery of this material to a younger audience, much of the groundwork has already been done. Furthermore, much of this curricular material is currently mapped onto the CEFR which is already in use by the Department of Education and Skills. Given this, the creation of a new syllabus in line with the teaching of modern languages in second level should not be an onerous task. A body of online material could be devised to help standardise approaches to learning ISL across schools.

Another source of information might be to look at what is happening internationally. At present, Signature (formerly the Council for Advancement of Communication with Deaf People) is designing a British Sign Language curriculum for introduction at GSCE level in the UK. Notably, Signature already offer accredited courses in ISL up to level 6 on the National Vocational Qualifications framework for the UK. In Australia, Auslan (Australian Sign language) is widely taught and recognised as the Language Other Than English (LOTE) requirement (SignPlanet.net, 2008). Furthermore, in the US a substantial number of states recognise American Sign Language (ASL) taught at second level as meeting the foreign language requirement for entry to third level. Where this state-wide acceptance does not exist, a significant number of universities still accept ASL as fulfilling the foreign language requirement – Wilcox has listed 160 such universities (Wilcox, No year). The Department of Education at Gallaudet University in Washington, DC is currently working on

standardised curricula for delivery of ASL from kindergarden through high school (Gallaudet University, 2004).

### *5.1.3 Resources Needed to Introduce ISL at Second Level*

Two requirements come with the introduction of ISL to the second level curriculum: the development four syllabi (Junior Cert Ordinary, Higher and Leaving Cert Ordinary, Higher) and appropriately skilled and qualified teachers to deliver an ISL curriculum.

With regard to the development of syllabi, further consultation between the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), representatives from the schools for the deaf, the Centre for Deaf Studies, the Education Partnership Group, and the Teaching Council should take place to establish in detail how to progress on this matter. Having spoken informally with a number of these individuals as part of the consultation process for *this* document, there is a general consensus that the addition of Irish Sign Language to the second level curriculum should certainly be project planned.

The second infrastructural requirement is the training of appropriately qualified teachers to deliver an ISL curriculum at second level. The most appropriate avenue currently available to fill these positions would be for those students with a Bachelor in Deaf Studies (Centre for Deaf Studies, Trinity College Dublin) to progress on to the postgraduate diploma in education for secondary school teaching. According to the Teaching Council, once a syllabus has been approved by the NCCA, teachers holding a degree in that subject along with a teaching qualification can be registered as second-level teachers for that subject. As such, these students would be qualified and recognised as teachers to work in the second level system delivering classes in Irish Sign Language. The four-year full-time Bachelor in Deaf Studies is currently delivered in such a way that students can concentrate on ISL teaching as one of three possible specialisation routes (Interpreting and Deaf Studies are the other two). The students on the ISL teaching route study aspects of the psychology of education as well as curriculum planning and assessment (Trinity College Dublin prospectus) and are thus ideally suited to progress to teacher training. Nonetheless, *all* students graduating with a Bachelor in Deaf Studies (of which ISL makes up a

significant component) should be deemed as suitable candidates to apply for secondary teacher training.

### 5.2 B.Ed. ISL Entry Route Pilot Programme Course Outline

The B.Ed. ISL Entry Route pilot programme would be a full-time four-year honours degree programme qualifying<sup>6</sup> applicants to teach in the primary school system. The focus of the programme would be to qualify students for entry into schools for the deaf or other facilities catering for D/HH children or other children being instructed through the medium of ISL. Employment as a resource teacher in a mainstream school working with students who are exempt from the Irish language curriculum is another possibility to be considered. Students might also use the B.Ed. programme as an entry route to postgraduate training in the field of special education generally or deaf education specifically. Any restrictions to apply to the qualified teachers should be explicitly outlined on entry to the course and these restrictions should in no way inhibit students from progressing to postgraduate learning.

It is proposed that a pilot programme would run for six years with two intake groups at a two-year interval e.g. Year 1 intake September 2012 to graduate in 2016, Year 2 intake September 2014 to graduate in 2018. The minimum intake requirement will depend a great deal on where the programme is being delivered. If, for example, the programme is delivered in conjunction with Trinity College Dublin, existing resources in the Centre for Deaf Studies could be used. This would allow for students on the B.Ed. ISL Entry Route pilot programme to be assimilated in existing B.Ed. classes with ISL interpretation. Courses specific to deaf education (see below) are already provided through the Centre for Deaf Studies and a number of additional students from a B.Ed. programme could be accommodated there. As a result, no

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<sup>6</sup> The issue of a restricted qualification needs to be examined, whereby students will be restricted to working in environments where the Irish language (Gaeilge) is not required, in line with the occupational requirements of various educational environments. In particular, reference should be made to Article 4 of Council Directive 2000/78/EC with regard to the occupational requirements and vocational training of individuals with disabilities. As such, students (either D/HH or hearing) entering with both an honour in higher-level Irish *and* Irish Sign Language will not be subject to such restrictions. Any restrictions that apply should be solely with regard to the occupational requirements of the school and should in no way affect the potential of the teacher to obtain permanent employment, nor should it mean a lower pay scale. Teachers should be paid on the same scale as hearing teachers working in similar situations without restricted status.

additional classes would need to be established. However, in the case that the programme is delivered outside of Trinity College Dublin, the minimum class size feasible would be a class of 6, with a maximum intake guideline of 10 (personal communication, teacher training colleges). The preference would be for the former since it provides the most sensible use of existing resources, both financially and in terms of the expertise already established in the Centre for Deaf Studies.

### *5.2.1 Course Delivery*

The most likely course of action will be that students on the B.Ed. ISL Entry Route pilot programme will attend core modules along with students on the regular B.Ed. programme, with the provision of an ISL interpreter. Specialised courses for the B.Ed. ISL Entry Route students should also be provided. A list of proposed modules is in Table 5.1 below. Where appropriate, these modules might be made available to students on the regular B.Ed. programme as part of their special education training thus populating the mainstream schools with a cohort of hearing teachers who have a greater awareness of deaf education and the needs of D/HH children.

Perspectives on Deafness
Fundamentals of Audiology
Language Acquisition, Cognitive Development and Deafness
Curriculum Planning and Methods of Assessment in D/HH children
Teaching Mathematics to Deaf Children
Teaching English to Deaf Children
Teaching ISL to Deaf Children
ISL Linguistics
ISL (progressing from Leaving Certificate levels)

**Table 5.2 Possible Specialised Modules for B.Ed. ISL Entry Route Students**

### *5.2.2 Entry Routes*

A number of possible routes of entry could be available to process applications from D/HH individuals including a Disability Access Routes to Education (DARE) or a modified CAO process. The DARE programme allows entry to third level programmes based on lower CAO points for applicants who have a disability. However, since this proposal points to the establishment of a particular B.Ed. ISL Entry Route, a modified CAO process might be more suitable. This could be modelled on the current modified CAO (with derogation) process through which students from the Church of Ireland community gain entry to the Church of Ireland College of Education (CICE) in Rathmines.

### *5.2.3 Potential student numbers*

It is difficult to predict the number of potential students who might apply for the proposed B.Ed. ISL Entry Route programme. Potential students should meet 4 criteria: ISL competency, 2 honours (in addition to ISL) in the Leaving Certificate, pass their mathematics and English exams at leaving certificate, and have a desire to enter teacher training. A variety of data sources exist which may be able to help in establishing the number of potential applicants.

The first of these sources is the number of students currently taking ISL as the Leaving Certificate Applied subject. Unfortunately, while this indicates ISL competency it means students are not taking the standard Leaving Certificate and thus do not qualify for entry to teacher training through the traditional route.

The second source is statistics from the Department of Education and Skills on Leaving Certificate completion from D/HH students. A significant obstacle in terms of calculating the potential number of applicants is that data on the number of D/HH students sitting the Leaving Certificate annually is not gathered by the statistics division of the Department of Education and Skills (Personal Communication, 8/4/11). However, there are a number of other sources from which information can be combined to help provide some indication of the number of potential applicants for teacher training. According to the State Examinations Commission, there are approximately 100 Leaving Certificate students annually requesting additional supports on the grounds of hearing impairment (personal communication, State Examinations Commission). This is likely to be an underestimate on the total number

of D/HH students sitting the Leaving Certificate in any given year considering that not all students will seek accommodations.

The third source of information is the number of D/HH students funded per annum to attend third level programmes which would indicate general progression and/or suitability for third level study. We can see from Table 5.1 below that since 2006 there has been a steady increase in the numbers of D/HH students receiving financial support in third level institutes across the Republic of Ireland. This indicates an increase of approximately 43% from 2006 to 2009.

Academic year	Total number of 3 <sup>rd</sup> level institutes funded	Total number of students supported	Total funding allocated
2006/07	35	141	€1,531,389.71
2007/08	37	146	€1,862,263.11
2008/09	37	178	€1,981,348.73
2009/10	39	201	€2,792,887.93

**Table 5.3: Funding provided to D/HH students 2006-2010**

**Data provided by the Higher Education Authority.**

As well as an overall increase in the numbers of students attending 3<sup>rd</sup> level, we can see from Table 5.2 below that these students have attended a range of institutes including Universities, Institutes of Technology, and other Centres of Further Education.

Academic year	University	Institutes of Technology	All other	Total (across years)
2006/07	62	58	21	141
2007/08	74	50	22	146
2008/09	92	49	37	178
2009/10	92	60	49	201
Total (across sectors)	320	217	129	

**Table 5.4: Breakdown of D/HH students funded 2006-2010 by institutional status.** These figures are accumulative (i.e. the figure for 2007/08 includes students progressing from 2006/07 and so forth).

Data provided by the Higher Education Authority.

The majority of students receiving funding attended programmes in universities. As such, it can be assumed that students are entering competitive academic environments.

While this data presents a rather optimistic picture of progression to third level, it must be remembered that entry to teacher training will require 2 honours in addition to ISL requirements. Also, current discussions on literacy and numeracy point to the possible establishment of a pre-entry literacy and numeracy requirement which may be imposed in the not distant future (personal communication, teacher training college representative).

The lack of comprehensive data on Leaving Certificate completion among D/HH students and their academic performance at that level leaves it impossible to provide accurate estimates on the number of potential applicants. From what data there is available, we know that there has been an overall increase in students attending third level from this cohort and that at least 100 students per year sit their Leaving Certificate examination with accommodations on the grounds of hearing loss. Nonetheless, this does not indicate that students will meet the entry requirements needed for teacher training. Data from the 2011 census, when released, may help to fill in some of the gaps on this estimate, but we are unlikely to have a clear picture of the situation until a course is available and applications are made. From discussions with stakeholders, the estimates are that there will be relatively low numbers of applicants. However, if a B.Ed ISL Entry Route pilot is to be designed in conjunction with an existing B.Ed. programme, there should be no minimum number of students required since the existing programme could accommodate any applicants with funding on a per capita basis from the Higher Education Authority.

#### *5.2.4 Hearing Students*

It must be acknowledged that there is a significant population of hearing individuals who might also be suitable applicants for a B.Ed. ISL Entry Route pilot programme. In particular, those who are the children of deaf adults (CODAs) who have been raised with ISL as their first language and have an inherent understanding of the Deaf Community might be valuable members of this student body. Other hearing people who, out of their own professional interest, wish to enter this field and intend to meet

the requirements (such as studying ISL to Leaving Certificate level) should also be considered. However it is strongly recommended that, at the minimum there should be two thirds of the places in any given year reserved for D/HH applicants. The remaining places can be filled between D/HH and hearing applicants on a competition basis.

### 5.3 Possible Outcomes of this Proposal

Should this proposal be accepted, there are a number of possible outcomes for the education system, D/HH children, and the Deaf Community at large. The most significant change to the education system as a result of a B.Ed. ISL Entry Route pilot programme is that it would ensure a continued population of teachers for the schools and units for the deaf with teachers who are not only competent ISL users but who have also studied modules relevant to deaf education. As well as this, it would increase the exposure of hearing students studying in colleges of education to issues relating to deaf education. Through increased interaction with other students who are themselves D/HH, as well as the possibility of studying modules in relation to deaf education as optional special education courses, these hearing students will bring a new awareness to mainstream schools of the issues facing D/HH children. The knock-on effect on D/HH children is that there would be a greater understanding of the needs facing those children within both mainstream and deaf education environments. As already mentioned, provision of access to role models will also be beneficial.

A further benefit to D/HH children is the possible introduction of ISL to the second level curriculum. Should this be introduced, a considerable number of D/HH teenagers will have the opportunity to sit an exam that reflects their linguistic background for the first time. At present, many D/HH students (often with accommodations) sit the Leaving Certificate curriculum in a language that is not their first language. For many other young people in a similar position (native Irish speakers, immigrant children for whom English is a second language) they often have the opportunity to complete a Leaving Certificate examination in their native language. In 2010, 15 non-curricular European languages were available to students including Polish, Czech, Hungarian, Modern Greek, and so forth. The provision of a similar possibility to D/HH young people would be a welcome addition to the

secondary school curriculum. Such a move would also heighten the profile of ISL in the Republic of Ireland.

For the Deaf Community overall, the creation of access to ITE would mark a significant milestone in their equity of access to third level education as well as their involvement in the deaf education system. Barriers preventing D/HH people from accessing ITE have been a source of frustration for many decades. In the history of Irish deaf education, there are notable D/HH people who have taught in schools for the deaf (Pollard, 2006). Unfortunately, since the establishment of the Irish Republic and the subsequent changes in requirements for teacher training, in particular the introduction of the Irish language requirement, D/HH people have been inadvertently excluded from this sector. In contrast to other countries, D/HH adults can make little impact on the education of D/HH children. Progress in this area would bring Ireland in line internationally in terms of the practice of deaf education. Furthermore, it would allow for the introduction of educational initiatives such as team-teaching and co-enrolment models practised at present in the US and the UK (Kreimeyer et al., 2000) but unfeasible in the Irish context due to the lack of D/HH teachers or teachers fluent in ISL.

## **6 Costing and Infrastructure for D/HH students**

### 6.1 Resources needed for D/HH students

According to the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment discussion paper *Leading and Supporting Change in Schools*, "it takes investment to achieve deep change" (No Year: 14). They stress that these investments include resources and funding as well as investments in people, the learning environment and schools. While there are a number of infrastructural, administrative, and resource requirements for establishing a B.Ed. ISL Entry Route pilot programme, the expected investment must be situated within Ireland's current economic climate. As a result, the figures outlined below have attempted to provide the most cost-effective manner of delivering access to ITE. Fortunately, many of the resources needed already exist. In particular, the congregation of students into one programme will allow for a cost-effective manner of delivering access.

Common services provided to D/HH students in the third level sector include: note-takers, Irish Sign Language interpreters, speed text operators, one-to-one tuition and additional exam time (personal communication, DS3 spokesperson, Trinity College Dublin). These services are usually provided to students who are being mainstreamed as a single deaf student in a class of hearing students. Considering that the proposed B.Ed ISL Entry Route pilot programme will be populated by students competent in Irish Sign Language, it may be more suitable to use the current Bachelor in Deaf Studies provided through Trinity College Dublin as a model. As such, the provision of an ISL interpreter rather than a speed text operator is most likely. As is the norm for students registered with the Disability Support Services, note-takers, one-to-one tuition and additional exam time can also be provided. Costing for the provision of such services is outlined below.

### 6.2 Costing

Below is a table outlining some of the basic costs associated with establishing a B.Ed. ISL Entry Route pilot programme. The costing is based on a four-year programme, with 35 hours of teaching per week over an 18 week academic year for the first three years, and 110 teaching hours in the fourth year (accommodating teaching

placement). Teaching in the fourth year is delivered on one evening a week for a 22 week academic year. These contact hours are based on information provided by the Church of Ireland College of Education and their current B.Ed. programme. Further detail on how this costing was reached is available in the spreadsheet in Appendix 1. Much of the information used for costing has been provided by the Disability Support Services office at Trinity College Dublin.

It should be noted that the B.Ed. will change nationally with the intake cohort of 2012, and will see the commencement of a four-year programme across all colleges with an increase in the number of hours spent on placement. As such, the costing below will have to be adjusted to reflect any changes, although given that it is already based on a four-year programme, these changes should not be significant. This costing is based on providing two R2 ISL-English interpreters on a full-time basis (five-day week). An additional 10 half days of interpreting is included for university functions, although HEA funding is restricted for interpreting academic contact hours only. The cost of providing a full-time note-taker is also included. The hourly rate for the costing is €15/hour (based on personal communication, disability offices) and holiday pay at 8% and employer PRSI at 4.25% is also included. A further aspect of costing that may need to be examined is placement supervision. It is assumed that students on the B.Ed. ISL Entry Route pilot programme would undertake their placement in a deaf education setting where they will use ISL in instruction. However, their supervisors may not be ISL users and would therefore require the services of an interpreter to adequately assess the student.

The note-taker costing is based on a laptop note-taker (someone hired specifically to go into the class to take notes on a laptop for D/HH students). An alternative to this provision would be to have a class note-taker. This is where a student already enrolled in the class, usually identified as being a suitable note-taker because of good academic performance provides a copy of their notes to D/HH students in the class. This may be a cheaper alternative to a laptop note-taker and details on this costing can be found in appendix 1.

Administrative costs will also be incurred given that D/HH students, as students registered with disabilities, are entitled to the supports of the disability office, receiving a detailed assessment of need and a learning programme which is reviewed annually. These duties should be subsumed by existing administrative staff, namely the staff of the disability office. Given that small numbers are anticipated, this should

be feasible. Administration within the college of education responsible for undertaking the pilot programme is estimated to be in the region of half a full working day per week (personal communication, college of education representative). This would come to a total of €5,616/annum. While it is anticipated that this would only be for the first year or two of the pilot programme, the costing is for administration across the four years. Another basic once-off cost to be considered is the installation of a loop system so students with residual hearing can access spoken language in the classroom. A basic guide for the installation of an advanced interactive system is €6,000 (personal communication, Deafhear.ie).

Service	Cost per annum	Total Cost for 4 year programme
Irish Sign Language Interpreter	Years 1-3 = €53,650/annum Year 4 = €14,210	€175,160.00
Note taker	Years 1-3 = €10,639.76 /annum Year 4 = €1,857.34	€33,776.62
Course Administration	Years 1-4 = €5,616/annum	€22,464.00

**Table 6.1 Basic Costing for a B.Ed. ISL Entry Route Programme**

### 6.3 Funding

As already mentioned, the congregation of students into a concentrated programme is the most cost-effective means of utilising resources. One reason for this is that the Higher Education Authority (HEA) provides individual funding for each student with a disability, but this fund is allocated on a per capita basis to the college, and the colleges then distribute those funds on a needs basis. As a result, the congregation of a number of D/HH students into a single class allows for the combining of disability-related funding from the HEA to be used for the provision of services.

By far the most expensive aspect of providing access for D/HH students is English-ISL interpretation. The annual rate allocated per D/HH student for interpreting costs is €28,275 (Personal communication, disability officer), which may fall short of the actual costs to interpret a programme with as many contact hours as

teacher training<sup>7</sup>. Since the interpreting costs are the same for one student as they would be for a class of ten, this provides a significant cost-effectiveness measure. Furthermore, the per capita rate of €950 awarded for students with disabilities might be pooled to provide for additional resources such as note-taking, extra academic tuition, interpretation for extra-curricular activities<sup>8</sup>, learning support, or initiatives like the DS3 project in Trinity College Dublin. Based on this, a total of 3 students would make the course cost effective since the annual cost of providing ISL interpretation and a note-taker comes to €64,289.76 and the total funding available for 3 D/HH students using ISL interpretation is €87,675. Further detail on the figures for costing is available in the appendix.

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<sup>7</sup> The annual cost of providing an ISL interpreter for a BA in English, for example, is €51,322 with 20 contact hours per week.

<sup>8</sup> Funding allocated for interpreting is, at present, to be used for academic contact hours only. This puts students who are D/HH at a disadvantage when it comes to taking part in the social side of college life and becoming a full member of the college community.

## 7 Conclusion

“The Council believes that the time is now right for a thorough and fresh look at teacher education so as to ensure that tomorrow’s teachers are competent to meet the challenges that they face and are life-long learners, continually adapting over the course of their careers to enable them to support their students’ learning” (The Teaching Council, 2010: 3)

Significant change is underway in the deaf education system the Republic of Ireland. The commencement of universal newborn hearing screening will, for the first time, allow for nationwide early intervention programmes to be rolled out. The work of the Education Partnership Group continues to strengthen the roles of its constituent organisations in the support and delivery of the deaf education system. The newly established Deaf Education Centre and the forthcoming Deaf Village, both in Cabra, point to the historic significance of the residential schools in shaping deaf education as well as their future role in a more dynamic and inclusive education system.

The education system has also changed more generally. A flurry of policy documents in the 1990s saw a dramatic re-examination of the Irish education system. The 1998 Education Act and the 2004 Education for Persons of Special Educational Needs Act both paved the way for a system of education across the country more inclusive to children with special educational needs. The establishment of the National Council for Special Education consolidated this move. More recently, work by the Teaching Council and the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment has indicated that the mood is right for change.

Given these committed ideals of inclusiveness and the current appetite for change in the system, the Education Partnership Group eagerly present this proposal for how D/HH individuals may be included in Initial Teacher Education. This report has dealt in detail with why this move is needed, how it might be approached, and the implications of such a move. In conclusion, I detail below a step-by-step process for how the various stakeholders might move forward in achieving access to ITE for this group. Table 7.1 below outlines each step, specifying the parties involved, the body responsible, the purpose, and the outcome. A summary of table 7.1 is presented in graphic format in figure 7.1. Table 7.2 provides additional detail on the inclusion of ISL on the second level curriculum.

	Step	Parties Involved	Body Responsible	Purpose	Outcome
1. Groundwork	<b>Circulate</b> EPG proposal to stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CHOICE</li> <li>• Teacher Education Section of the DES</li> <li>• Teaching Council</li> <li>• NCCA</li> <li>• NCSE</li> <li>• HEA (Equality Unit)</li> </ul>	EPG	To disseminate the EPG (Mathews) proposal for access to ITE by D/HH individuals.	Proposal will be read by the various stakeholders.
	Hold a <b>stakeholder meeting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CHOICE</li> <li>• Teacher Education Section of the DES</li> <li>• Teaching Council</li> <li>• NCCA</li> <li>• NCSE</li> <li>• AHEAD</li> <li>• HEA (Equality Unit)</li> </ul>	Education Partnership Group (EPG)	To discuss EPG proposal for access to ITE by D/HH individuals.	Agreement will be reached from the various stakeholders that the proposal is feasible and commitment of support will be achieved for the various stages involved.
	Place <b>ISL on the second level</b> curriculum (see separate process sheet). <u>Note that this is a long term goal.</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NCCA</li> <li>• CDS</li> <li>• Teaching Council</li> <li>• EPG</li> </ul>	NCCA	To establish a working group, design syllabus, train and register teachers, and deliver ISL in second level. (see separate process sheet for detail)	ISL will be delivered to second level students at Junior and Leaving Cert, both higher and ordinary level.
2. Follow up from meeting	<b>Identify a suitable college</b> of education for the delivery of the B.Ed ISL Entry Route Pilot Programme in conjunction with CDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EPG</li> <li>• CHOICE</li> <li>• CDS</li> </ul>	EPG	To consider the merits and resources of the various colleges of education and identify the most suitable one.	A college of education will be identified and subsequently approached for the delivery of the B.Ed ISL Entry Route Pilot Programme
	<b>Secure participation</b> from the college of education identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HEA</li> <li>• Provost</li> <li>• Heads of School</li> </ul>	EPG	To meet with various departments and individuals within the designated college	Formally collaboration between CDS and a college of education will be secured to

	above.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director of Undergraduate teaching</li> <li>• CDS</li> <li>• President/Principal</li> <li>• Disability Support Services</li> </ul>		of education and awarding university to discuss any reservations or queries.	deliver the B.Ed ISL Entry Route Pilot Programme.
	<b>Secure replacement of Irish</b> language requirement for ISL prerequisite entry to the proposed B.Ed ISL entry route (in principle)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EPG</li> <li>• DES</li> <li>• College of Education</li> <li>• Teaching Council</li> </ul>	Teacher Education Section of DES <sup>9</sup> . (Teaching Council has an advisory capacity to the DES in this regard).	To ensure the replacement of the Irish language requirement for those entering the B.Ed ISL Entry Route pilot programme with an ISL prerequisite	Formal agreement from the DES that with the establishment of the B.Ed ISL Entry Route pilot programme, the Irish language requirement will be waived for those students applying for that ITE programme and that instead an ISL prerequisite will be introduced. The DES should notify CHOICE of this arrangement.
	<b>Define restricted status</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EPG</li> <li>• DES</li> <li>• Teaching Council</li> </ul>	Teacher Education Section of DES (The Teaching Council has an advisory capacity to the DES in this regard)	To discuss the necessity and composition of a restriction to be applied to graduates of the B.Ed ISL entry route programme. Such a restriction should apply to place of employment only and should have no impact on salary, employment status, promotion, or entry to	An agreement will be reached among the organisations involved as to what the restricted status placed on teachers qualifying from the B.Ed ISL Entry Route Programme will entail. The wording of this restriction will be finalised for submission to the designated college of education. It will be their

<sup>9</sup> Principal officer of this section is Mr. Eddie Ward. The Higher Executive Officer is Maura Boggs - 0906484283

				postgraduate training.	responsibility to inform incoming students of the restriction.
	Secure <b>funding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EPG</li> <li>• College of Education</li> <li>• CDS</li> <li>• HEA</li> </ul>	College of Education and CDS	To identify the funding needs and sources for the establishment and running of the pilot programme.	Funding for the establishment of the programme will be awarded.
3 Prepare and Establish programme	<b>Syllabus</b> design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• College of Education</li> <li>• CDS</li> <li>• Teaching Council</li> </ul>	College of Education and CDS	To design the syllabus and material necessary for the delivery of the B.Ed ISL Entry Route Pilot Programme and produce accompanying promotional material.	Course outline and teaching materials will be finalised and accompanying promotional material will be completed.
	<b>Derogation</b> process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• College of Education</li> <li>• DES</li> <li>• Central Admissions Office (CAO)</li> </ul>	College of Education	To establish a derogation process for applicants to the B.Ed ISL Entry Route pilot programme	A derogation process will be established for applicants for the B.Ed ISL Entry Route pilot programme
	<b>Recruitment</b> of suitable applicants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• College of Education</li> <li>• CDS</li> </ul>	College of Education	To identify potential students and advertise the programme as well as the entry procedure and restrictions to qualification.	Eligible students will apply for the course.
	Consider <b>literacy and numeracy</b> test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• College of Education</li> <li>• CDS</li> </ul>	College of Education	In anticipation of the introduction of a nationwide literacy and numeracy for students in ITE, assessment strategies for literacy and numeracy of D/HH applicants	The college of education running the B.Ed ISL Entry Route pilot programme will be familiar with the issues surrounding the assessment of D/HH students in literacy and numeracy and will take these

				should be considered.	issues up in discussions with relevant bodies when nationwide literacy and numeracy assessment of ITE applicants is being considered.
4. Student intake	<b>Assess ISL</b> competency of applicants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CAO</li> <li>• College of Education</li> <li>• CDS</li> </ul>	CDS	To assess the ISL proficiency for applicants to B.Ed ISL Entry Route pilot programme	Students with a proficient level of ISL will be identified and approved for entry to the programme on condition of fulfilment of other requirements.
	<b>Process applicants</b> through the derogation process	CAO	CAO	To identify eligible students based on the ISL competency assessment as well as the CAO special derogation process.	Eligible students will be offered a place on the course.
5. Programme accreditation	Programme <b>accreditation</b> (awarding university)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• College of Education</li> <li>• CDS</li> <li>• Awarding university</li> </ul>	College of Education	To initiate and complete the accreditation process for the B.Ed ISL Entry Route pilot programme through the awarding university.	B.Ed ISL Entry Route pilot programme will be accredited by the awarding university, allowing graduates to be conferred with a degree from that university.
	Programme accreditation (Teaching Council)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• College of Education</li> <li>• Teaching Council</li> </ul>	College of Education	To initiate and complete the accreditation process for the B.Ed ISL Entry Route pilot programme through the Teaching Council.	B.Ed ISL Entry Route pilot programme will be accredited by the Teaching Council, allowing graduates to be registered with the Teaching Council.
6. Programme	Interim <b>evaluation</b> the pilot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• College of Education</li> <li>• EPG</li> </ul>	College of	To evaluate the progress of the B.Ed ISL Entry Route pilot	A brief evaluation report will be produced with

evaluation	programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HEA</li> <li>• Students</li> </ul>	Education	programme after 4 years.	recommendations for changes which should be implemented without delay in the teaching of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> intake cohort.
	Final evaluation the pilot programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• College of Education</li> <li>• EPG</li> <li>• HEA</li> <li>• Students</li> </ul>	College of Education	To evaluate the progress of the B.Ed ISL Entry Route pilot programme after 6 years.	An overall evaluation report will be produced and will indicate the future sustainability and value of the B.Ed ISL Entry Route programme. Circulation of the report should be wide and include all stakeholders identified in this report.

**Table 7.1 Progress Model – D/HH entry to ITE**

	Step	Parties involved	Body Responsible	Purpose	Outcome
1	Establish <b>working group</b> within NCCA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NCCA</li> <li>• Centre for Deaf Studies (CDS)<sup>10</sup></li> <li>• Pat Matthews<sup>11</sup></li> <li>• Unions</li> <li>• Deaf Teachers’ Group</li> <li>• EPG</li> </ul>	NCCA	To begin discussing the possibility of introducing ISL onto the second level curriculum.	Consensus on how this can be achieved will be reached.

<sup>10</sup> The CDS runs the Bachelor in Deaf Studies and will subsequently be involved in training those teachers who will deliver the curriculum in second level.

<sup>11</sup> Pat Matthews is the current Deputy Chief Examiner of the Leaving Certificate Applied course in ISL.

2	<b>Design syllabus</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pat Matthews</li> <li>CDS</li> <li>Deaf Schools</li> </ul>	NCCA	To design the syllabus to be delivered in second level at Junior and Leaving Cert, both higher and ordinary level. To establish a suitable method of assessment.	Syllabus will be designed and method of assessment organised.
3	<b>Train teachers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CDS (Bachelor in Deaf Studies)</li> <li>Colleges of Education (Postgraduate teacher training qualification)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CDS</li> <li>Colleges of Education</li> <li>Teaching Council</li> </ul>	To train a cohort of students who will become teachers at second level for the ISL leaving cert curriculum.	A cohort of individuals qualified to teach ISL at second level will be secured.
4	<b>Advertise programme within relevant schools.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NCCA</li> <li>EPG</li> <li>CDS</li> </ul>	NCCA	To begin to advertise the introduction of ISL to the curriculum, targeting schools and units for the deaf at first, but also advertising the move through national media and via the DES. This should begin at least a year before ISL is to be introduced.	Awareness of the introduction of ISL to the curriculum at second level will be raised.
5	<b>Register teachers</b>	Teaching Council	Teaching Council	To recognise those teachers who have received the required qualifications through the registration process under section 31 of the Teaching Council Act. 2001.	Formal recognition of those qualified to teach ISL at second level.
6	<b>Employ teachers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Boards of Management of Schools</li> <li>DES</li> </ul>	Boards of Management of Schools	To recruit, select and employ suitably qualified teachers for the deliver of the ISL second level syllabus.	Suitably qualified teachers for the deliver of the ISL second level syllabus will be employed.
7	<b>Deliver programme</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School principals</li> <li>ISL teachers</li> <li>Second level pupils</li> </ul>	ISL teachers	To deliver the second level ISL syllabus to students.	A cohort of students will complete exams at junior and leaving certificate (both higher and ordinary level) in ISL.

**Table 7.2 Progress Model – ISL onto second level curriculum.**

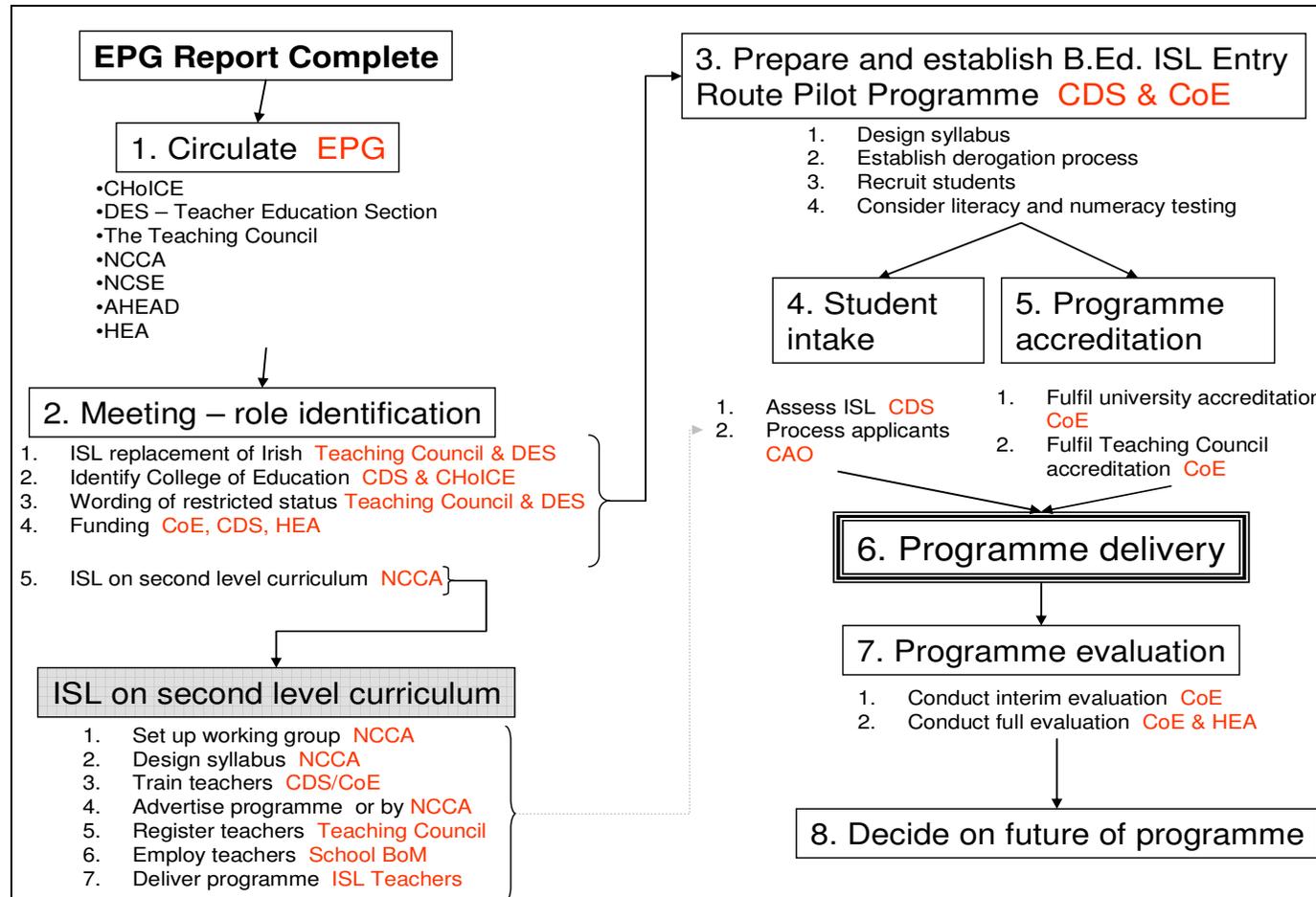


Figure 7.1 Progress Model

Appendix 1

Service	Cost	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Total
<b>Interpreting</b>						
daily (full day rate)	€ 290.00	€ 290.00	€ 290.00	€ 290.00	daily (full day rate)	€ 290.00
weekly (5 full days)	€ 1,450.00	€ 1,450.00	€ 1,450.00	€ 1,450.00	1 full day/week	€ 290.00
18 week academic year	€ 26,100.00	€ 26,100.00	€ 26,100.00	€ 26,100.00	22 week academic year	€ 6,380.00
2nd FT Interp/year	€ 26,100.00	€ 26,100.00	€ 26,100.00	€ 26,100.00	2nd FT Interp/year	€ 6,380.00
Occasional interpreting					Occasional interpreting	
10xhalf days	€ 1,450.00	€ 1,450.00	€ 1,450.00	€ 1,450.00		€ 1,450.00
<b>Interpreting Total</b>	<b>€ 53,650.00</b>	<b>€ 53,650.00</b>	<b>€ 53,650.00</b>	<b>€ 53,650.00</b>		<b>€ 175,160.00</b>
<b>Note taker*</b>	laptop notetaker					
Hourly rate	€ 15.00	€ 15.00	€ 15.00	€ 15.00	Hourly rate	€ 15.00
35hr week	€ 525.00	€ 525.00	€ 525.00	€ 525.00		
18 week academic year	€ 9,450.00	€ 9,450.00	€ 9,450.00	€ 9,450.00	110hr year	€ 1,650.00
Holiday pay at 8%	€ 756.00	€ 756.00	€ 756.00	€ 756.00	Holiday pay at 8%	€ 132.00
Employer PRSI at 4.25%	€ 433.76	€ 433.76	€ 433.76	€ 433.76	Employer PRSI at 4.25%	€ 75.34
<b>Note-taking total</b>	<b>€ 10,639.76</b>	<b>€ 10,639.76</b>	<b>€ 10,639.76</b>	<b>€ 10,639.76</b>		<b>€ 1,857.34</b>
<b>Course Administration</b>						
Hourly rate (inclusive of PRSI)	€ 27.00	€ 27.00	€ 27.00	€ 27.00		€ 27.00
Half day (4 hours)	€ 108.00	€ 108.00	€ 108.00	€ 108.00		€ 108.00
Annual	€ 5,616.00	€ 5,616.00	€ 5,616.00	€ 5,616.00		€ 5,616.00
<b>Course Admin Total</b>	<b>€ 5,616.00</b>	<b>€ 5,616.00</b>	<b>€ 5,616.00</b>	<b>€ 5,616.00</b>		<b>€ 22,464.00</b>
<b>Assistive Technology</b>						
Loop system installation	€ 6,000.00	€ 6,000.00				€ 6,000.00
<b>Yearly Total</b>		€ 75,905.76	€ 69,905.76	€ 69,905.76		€ 21,683.34
<b>Four year total</b>						<b>€ 237,400.62</b>
<b>Note-taking alternative</b>						
*class notetaker						
Hourly rate	€ 10.00	€ 10.00	€ 10.00	€ 10.00		€ 10.00
35hr week	€ 350.00	€ 350.00	€ 350.00	€ 350.00		
18 week academic year	€ 6,300.00	€ 6,300.00	€ 6,300.00	€ 6,300.00		€ 1,100.00
Holiday pay at 8%	€ 504.00	€ 504.00	€ 504.00	€ 504.00		€ 88.00
Employer PRSI at 4.25%	€ 289.17	€ 289.17	€ 289.17	€ 289.17		€ 50.49
<b>Total</b>	<b>€ 7,093.17</b>	<b>€ 7,093.17</b>	<b>€ 7,093.17</b>	<b>€ 7,093.17</b>		<b>€ 1,238.49</b>
						€ 22,518.00

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