



University for the Common Good

British Sign Language (BSL) Plan 2024 – 2030

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1. Introduction

1.1 About this plan

This is the British Sign Language (BSL) Plan for Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU), as required by the BSL (Scotland) Act. It refreshes our original 2018-2024 plan and sets out actions we will take over the period 2024-2030.

It follows the [BSL National Plan](#), published in November 2023, which aims to make Scotland the best place in the world for BSL users to live, work, visit and learn, and commits the Scottish Government to a number of actions under ten priority areas.

Our plan is framed around the same long-term goals as the national plan, where these are relevant to the work of the University.

This plan supports our mission, vision and values. Glasgow Caledonian is the University for the Common Good and the plan supports our mission to make a positive difference to the communities we serve and this is at the heart of all we do, especially in our teaching and research on social innovation. Our innovative and award-winning work with communities around the world is underpinned by a shared commitment to the Common Good by students and staff at all levels.

Through this plan, GCU is committed to protecting and supporting BSL, including in its tactile form.

Central to this is our commitment to involving and engaging BSL users in developing our BSL plan, as well as continued engagement around implementing actions and providing feedback on progress. We will also contribute to the national progress report in October 2027.

1.2 GCU BSL contact

The GCU contact for any questions or feedback in relation to the BSL plan is Adrian Lui, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Advisor, A.Lui@gcu.ac.uk

Additionally, BSL users can contact us via [contactSCOTLAND-BSL](#)

1.3 Where to find the BSL version of this plan

The BSL version of GCU's BSL plan is under development and details will be added to the plan when it is complete.

2. Summary

2.1 Development of GCU's BSL Plan 2024-2030

The BSL (Scotland) Act says that BSL Local Plans should 'try to achieve consistency' with the BSL National Plan, and take into account guidance from Scottish Ministers. The GCU BSL Plan is aligned with this as it is based on a Further and Higher Education specific guidance document and template plan devised by the Scottish Government.

The BSL National Plan 2023 – 2029 has been intentionally designed in a way that allows the Scottish Government to have flexibility in the way we implement the Plan so that we are able to adapt to changes in priorities and address any new issues that may arise in the 6-year period. In line with this approach, the GCU BSL Plan will evolve and be revised in the context of changes and developments, such as the implementation of the University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Implementation Plan (EDI Plan) during the same period (2024-2030). A core aspect of the achievement of the EDI Plan is to listen to the lived experiences of people with protected characteristics and take action to respond to issues and needs, and this principle will apply in the context of the BSL Plan.

2.2 Summary of GCU's BSL Plan 2024-2030

GCU's BSL Plan 2024-2030 refreshes the original plan from 2018-2024 to take into account the new BSL National Plan. We will continue to strive to support the relevant aspects of the ten long-term goals of the BSL National Plan but our main focus throughout the majority of the plan is on supporting the **BSL Accessibility** goal in the National Plan - like the Scottish Government, we recognise that BSL communities are underrepresented across organisations and services in Scotland, so we want to promote and develop sustainable approaches to ensure that BSL users have access to opportunities and services offered by Glasgow Caledonian University by ensuring they have information in the right format and at the right time.

Our commitments can be broadly summarised as taking steps to make our information and services accessible to BSL users and to provide our staff with relevant information and development:

- Have accurate information on BSL users
- Improve information and services for students and prospective students who use BSL
- Promote the use of contactSCOTLAND-BSL
- Signpost staff who work with BSL users to appropriate training
- Take steps to ensure that our campuses and facilities are accessible to BSL users

3. Glasgow Caledonian University BSL Plan 2024-2030

1.1 BSL Accessibility

GCU shares the long-term goal for all Scottish public services set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

“To remove accessibility as a barrier for BSL users in all aspects of life, recognising the importance of having accessible information in the right format at the right time, utilising technology and increasing people’s awareness of communication tools.”

By 2030 we will:

1.1.1 Analyse existing evidence we have about students, staff, prospective students and prospective staff who use BSL; identify and fill key information gaps so that we can establish baselines and measure our progress.

Steps	Timescale	Responsibility	Success measures
Scope existing mechanisms for collecting BSL user data (quantitative and qualitative) and implement required changes to systems and processes.	By 2025	Director of Strategy and Planning/Director of People	Clear overview established of BSL users in the GCU community.
Include data on BSL users routinely in relevant internal and external reports and use the data to inform equality impact assessments of decisions, services and activities.	By 2025	Director of Strategy and Planning/Director of People	Data on BSL users is used to inform planning and development of GCU services and activities.

By 2030 we will:			
1.1.2 Improve information and services for students and prospective students who use BSL, including making our website more accessible to BSL users.			
Steps	Timescale	Responsibility	Success measures
Identify the key information and services to be improved over the cycle of the first BSL plan.	By 2025	Director of Student Life/Head of Brand Management and Multimedia/Director of Marketing, Recruitment and Conversion	Evidence of BSL in our provision of information and services, and on our website and other media channels.
Secure resources and expertise to develop and deliver improvements to information and services, including our website	By 2027		
By 2030 we will:			
1.1.3 Promote the use of the Scottish Government’s nationally funded BSL online interpreting video relay services called ‘contactSCOTLAND-BSL’, which allows BSL users to contact public and third sector services and for these services to contact them.			
Steps	Timescale	Responsibility	Success measures
Use all internal channels such as Caledonian Connected, staff email, manager briefings and team meetings to cascade information on ‘contactSCOTLAND-BSL’ to all staff.	By 2025	Director of Student Life/Director of Communications	Evidence of staff aware of, and trained in use of ‘contactSCOTLAND-BSL’, supported by relevant technology.
Identify relevant frontline staff and provide tailored training sessions on using ‘contactSCOTLAND-BSL’.	By 2025	Director of People	

By 2030 we will:			
1.1.4 Signpost staff who work with BSL users to appropriate BSL awareness training, and enable them to take up such training.			
Steps	Timescale	Responsibility	Success measures
Source providers and materials in relation to BSL awareness.	By 2024	Director of People	Sessions procured and designed.
Develop calendar of training for relevant staff over the cycle of the BSL plan.	By 2024	Director of People	Sessions communicated to staff via managers.
Deliver training over the cycle of the BSL plan.	By 2030	Director of People	Proportionate numbers of staff trained in key teams.
By 2030 we will:			
1.1.5 Take steps to ensure that our campuses and facilities are accessible to BSL users.			
Steps	Timescale	Responsibility	Success measures
Embed BSL considerations in next review/update of Estates Strategy/Campus Masterplan.	By 2030	Director of Estates	Evidence/feedback shows that BSL users can fully access our campuses/facilities.

By 2030 we will:

1.1.6 Take action to ensure that students and prospective students who use BSL are properly supported.

Steps	Timescale	Responsibility	Success measures
Provide accessible information about what BSL users can expect from GCU.	By 2025	Head of Brand Management and Multimedia	Our web pages are accessible to BSL users and there is visibility for users of BSL.
Provide access to key information within GCU campuses.	By 2025	Head of Brand Management and Multimedia	Our key information is accessible to BSL users.
Provide full access to open days for prospective students who use BSL.	By 2025	Director of Marketing, Recruitment and Conversion	Our open days consider and support the needs of BSL users.
Provide support throughout the student journey for students who use BSL (including completing application forms, interviews, applying for Disabled Students Allowance, SAAS etc., learning and teaching, placements, exams and graduation).	By 2025	All Directors and Deans, Academic Registrar	BSL users are supported throughout the student journey through accessible information, the use of Contact Scotland and having access to BSL interpreters where appropriate.

By 2030 we will:			
1.1.7 Take on board guidance produced by the SFC and others to ensure that across GCU, staff are aware of their responsibilities towards BSL users, and that students who use BSL know what to expect.			
Steps	Timescale	Responsibility	Success measures
Use all internal channels such as Caledonian Connected, staff email, manager briefings and team meetings to cascade information on guidance and good practice.	By 2025	Director of People/Director of Communications	Evidence of information circulated and briefings developed and sessions delivered to staff.
By 2030 we will:			
1.1.8 Invite continuous feedback from students/prospective students and staff who use BSL over the coming year/18 months after adopting this plan.			
Steps	Timescale	Responsibility	Success measures
Collect feedback through a survey, focus groups and 1 to 1 meetings to inform future activities.	By 2030	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Advisor	Evidence of channels being used to collect feedback.
By 2030 we will:			
1.1.9 Commit to reviewing/refreshing this plan which includes more 'local' actions (based on that feedback) after the national progress report (due October 2027).			
Steps	Timescale	Responsibility	Success measures
Use feedback collected from BSL users and also consult with Directors/Deans/Heads to develop more 'local' actions.	By 2030	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Advisor	Evidence of feedback being used to inform future versions of this plan.

Our contribution to other relevant long-term goals will include:

1.2 Children, Young People and their Families

GCU shares the BSL National Plan long-term goal, which is:

“The Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) approach will be fully embedded, with a deaf or deafblind child and their family offered the right information and support at the right time to engage with BSL. We will strengthen partnerships between relevant organisations to overcome barriers for BSL users and deaf/ deafblind children to ensure they have the support they need at all stages of their learning, so that they can reach their full potential.”

By 2030 we will:

1.2.1 Ensure that our support for children and young people, including through our childcare facilities on our Glasgow campus, and external; engagement work through GCU Outreach, are accessible and welcoming to families and children who use BSL.

Steps	Timescale	Responsibility	Success measures
Review process of nursery provision and scope the key stages of the process that require a BSL presence.	By 2027	Manager of GCU Nursery	Key information is provided to parents and children who are BSL users.
Review process of identifying and engaging with BSL users and their families across all outreach activities.	By 2027	Head of GCU Outreach/Head of Admissions	Feedback demonstrates that our community and engagement and outreach activities are inclusive of BSL users.
Develop action plan based on findings with actions embedded into the mainstream plans of each outreach project.	By 2027	Head of GCU Outreach/Head of Admissions	

1.3 Access to Employment

GCU shares the BSL National Plan long-term goal, which is:

“BSL users will receive person-centred support to develop their skills, consider what route to employment is right for them and enter into the workforce so that they can fulfil their potential, and improve Scotland’s economic performance. They will be provided with support to enable them to progress in their chosen career.”

By 2030 we will:

1.3.1 Raise awareness of the UK Government’s ‘Access to Work’ scheme for students who use BSL towards the end of their course, so that they can benefit from the support it provides when they enter the world of work.

Steps	Timescale	Responsibility	Success measures
Review current provision and support in relation to Access to Work for students.	By 2027	Head of Careers	Feedback demonstrates that events and opportunities are accessible to BSL users.
Develop action plan based on findings with actions that are embedded into Careers Service plans and processes.	By 2027	Head of Careers	

By 2030 we will:

1.3.2 Take steps to ensure that People Services policies and processes in relation to the staff experience, including recruitment, development, progression and working arrangements are fully accessible to people who use BSL.

Steps	Timescale	Responsibility	Success measures
Review policies and processes in relation to key stages of the staff experience.	By 2027	Director of People	Feedback demonstrates that applicants and staff who are BSL users can access

Develop action plan based on findings with actions that are embedded into People Services plans and processes.			information and support.
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1.4 Health and Wellbeing

GCU shares BSL National Plan long-term goal, which is:

“BSL users will have access to the information and services they need to live active, healthy lives, and to make informed choices at every stage of their lives”

By 2030 we will:

1.4.1 Take steps to ensure that GCU’s mental health and wellbeing services (including advice and counselling services) are fully accessible to students who use BSL.

Steps	Timescale	Responsibility	Success measures
Review current provision and support of mental health services and identify gaps in relation to BSL support.	By 2026	Director of Student Life	Feedback and evidence demonstrates that BSL users can fully benefit from services to support their health and wellbeing.
Include BSL provision in the development and implementation of the Student Mental Health Framework.	By 2026	Director of Student Life	

By 2030 we will:			
1.4.2 Take steps to ensure that GCU's staff support services, including Occupational Health, and our Employee Assistance Programme, are fully accessible to staff who use BSL.			
Steps	Timescale	Responsibility	Success measures
Review current provision and support of staff support services and identify gaps in relation to BSL support.	By 2027	Director of People	Feedback demonstrates that applicants and staff who are BSL users can access information and support.
Include BSL provision in the development and implementation of future staff wellbeing policies and provision.	By 2027	Director of People	
By 2030 we will:			
1.4.3 Take steps to ensure that classes and other facilities at the ARC are fully accessible to people who use BSL.			
Steps	Timescale	Responsibility	Success measures
Review current provision and support for BSL users in ARC classes and activities.	By 2026	Head of Campus Services	Feedback demonstrates that applicants and staff who are BSL users can access ARC classes and activities.
Include BSL provision in the planning of ARC classes and activities.	By 2026	Head of Campus Services	

1.5 Celebrating BSL Culture

GCU shares the BSL National Plan long-term goal, which is:

“BSL users will have full access to the cultural life of Scotland, equal opportunities to enjoy and contribute to culture and the arts, and are encouraged to share BSL and deaf culture with the people of Scotland”

By 2030 we will:

1.5.1 Take action to ensure that extracurricular/recreational activities offered within GCU are fully accessible to students who use BSL.

Steps	Timescale	Responsibility	Success measures
Review current provision and support for BSL users in relation to student events and activities, including Fresher’s Week, clubs and societies.	By 2025	Director of Student Life	Feedback to demonstrate that intersectionality is recognised and groups/societies are accessible to all. E.g. LGBTQ+ BSL users are able to access the LGBTQ+ society.
Include BSL provision in the planning and delivery of student events and activities.	By 2025	Director of Student Life	
Include celebration of BSL culture in the work of the EDI Campaigns Group.	By 2024	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Advisor	

1.6 Access to Justice

GCU shares the BSL National Plan long-term goal, which is:

“BSL users will have fair and equal access to the civil, criminal and juvenile justice systems in Scotland”

By 2030 we will:

1.6.1 Take steps to ensure that our GCU Law Clinic, which provides free and confidential legal advice and assistance to individuals within the Greater Glasgow community who do not qualify for legal aid and cannot afford professional legal advice, is fully accessible to people to use BSL.

Steps	Timescale	Responsibility	Success measures
Review current provision and support for BSL users in relation to accessing information, advice and support at the GCU Law Clinic.	By 2027	Dean, Glasgow School for Business and Society	Evidence demonstrates that information and advice is accessible to members of the public who are BSL users.
Include BSL provision in the delivery of future GCU Law Clinic activities.	By 2027	Dean, Glasgow School for Business and Society	

1.7 Democratic Participation

GCU shares the BSL National Plan long-term goal, which is:

“BSL users will be fully involved in democratic and public life in Scotland, as active and informed citizens, as voters, as elected politicians and as board members of our public bodies”

By 2030 we will:

1.7.1 Take steps to ensure that the policies and processes in relation to recruiting and supporting members of our University Court, which is our governing body, are fully accessible to people who use BSL.

Steps	Timescale	Responsibility	Success measures
Review current provision and support for BSL users in relation to recruitment of governors to University Court.	By 2027	University Secretary	Evidence of access to opportunities and services to BSL users.
Include BSL provision in the delivery of future recruitment of governors to University Court.	By 2025	University Secretary	

By 2030 we will:

1.7.2 Take steps to ensure that trade union members who are BSL users are provided with information and support

Steps	Timescale	Responsibility	Success measures
Review current provision and support for BSL users in relation to support and advice to Trade Union members and include BSL provision in the delivery of future support for Trade Union members.	By 2026	Chair of Combined Union Committee	Evidence of access to opportunities and services to BSL users.

4. What happens next?

- We very much welcome feedback on our BSL Plan from students, staff and other stakeholders, including organisations, community and voluntary groups, and members of the public.
- We want to ensure that over the timespan of this plan, the actions are relevant and responsive to BSL users.
- Whether you are part of a group, or are an individual, we are happy to for you to get in touch with us at and we will arrange a suitable time and place to collect your feedback. Please contact Adrian Lui, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Advisor at A.Lui@gcu.ac.uk