

# **Online tutorial CURRICULUM**

## **Introduction**

Welcome to the online tutorial about deafness. This tutorial will provide you with information about deafness and deafness-related issues to assist you in being fully informed when conducting a JCA on a Deaf or hard of hearing person.

Please remember that although you will be learning useful general information about your Deaf and hard of hearing clients, every deaf person is different, encounters different barriers, communicates in different ways and has different support requirements. Do not make any generalisations or assumptions about deaf people.

# Table of contents

- 1) **Deafness and communication methods**
  - 1.1 Terminology
  - 1.2 How does deafness occur?
  - 1.3 Communication methods
  
- 2) **Working with interpreters**
  - 2.1 Why do you need an Auslan interpreter?
  - 2.2 Booking interpreters
  - 2.3 How to work with an interpreter at the JCA
  - 2.4 Interpreter Code of Ethics
  - 2.5 Checklist
  
- 3) **How to conduct a JCA on deaf and hard of hearing clients**
  - 3.1 Introduction
  - 3.2 Checklist
  
- 4) **Hard of hearing clients**
  - 4.1 Background information
  - 4.2 Tips for communication
  
- 5) **Referring a deaf person to a specialised deaf employment service**
  - 5.1 Introduction
  - 5.2 Benefits
  
- 6) **New Auslan for Employment programme**
  - 6.1 What is the Auslan for Employment programme?
  - 6.2 Applying for Auslan for Employment funding
  - 6.3 Eligibility and funding limits
  
- 7) **Resources**
  - 7.1 Technology
  - 7.2 Links

# 1) Deafness and communication methods

## 1.1 Terminology

Below you will find a list of useful terms associated with deafness:

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Auslan</b>	Or Australian Sign Language – the sign language used in Australia. Auslan is quite different in its grammar and vocabulary from English.
<b>deaf</b>	The collective term to describe all people with a degree of deafness.
<b>Deaf</b>	Term preferred by the Deaf community denoting those people who use Auslan as their primary method of communication, and are part of the Deaf community. ‘Deaf’ people usually do not see themselves as disabled, and describe themselves as a cultural and linguistic minority group in the same way as, say, the Aboriginal, Vietnamese and Jewish communities.
<b>hard of hearing</b>	<p>The terms ‘hard of hearing’ and ‘hearing-impaired’ can be used interchangeably, with usage differing from state to state.</p> <p>These terms refer to those people who become deaf later in life, do not identify themselves as ‘Deaf’, are not members of the Deaf community and/or do not use Auslan to communicate.</p>
<b>hearing-impaired</b>	<p>Some deaf people may find the term ‘hearing-impaired’ offensive as they believe it implies that deafness is something that needs to be fixed, and thus prefer the term ‘hard of hearing’.</p> <p>For the online tutorial the term ‘hard of hearing’ will be used – describing both hard of hearing and hearing-impaired people.</p>
<b>oral</b>	<p>Term describing those Deaf and hard of hearing people who are able to and choose to talk.</p> <p>Some oral people are bilingual and bicultural (using both spoken English and Auslan) however the majority of oral people have little or no Auslan skills and are not involved in the Deaf community.</p> <p>Sometimes the terms ‘oral’ and ‘hard of hearing’/‘hearing-impaired’ are used interchangeably.</p>
<b>Deafblind</b>	Term describing people with a combination of both a hearing loss and visual impairment. Some people may have been deafblind from birth; others may have been born deaf but become blind later in life or vice versa. The best way to identify to what extent your client is deafblind is to ask them directly.

**Please note:** some terms used in the deafness sector can be very specific, and incorrect terminology may cause offence. The best way to determine your client’s preferred identification and

requirements is to ask them directly. Clients will not be offended at this question – they prefer that you express an interest in ensuring that the most correct information is used on the JCA.

## 1.2 How does deafness occur?

Deafness occurs in three main ways:

### **Hereditary:**

This is deafness that is genetic – passed down through the generations. Many people with hereditary deafness are born into signing Deaf families, belong to the Deaf community, understand Deaf culture and use Auslan to communicate. However, there are a number of hereditary deaf oral families too.

### **Acquired:**

This is deafness that occurs later in life arising from old age, injury, illness, industrial exposure or a sudden hearing loss that cannot be explained. These people usually identify themselves as hard of hearing/hearing-impaired, and use lipreading and spoken English as their communication methods, assisted by hearing aids and/or cochlear implants.

### **Other:**

Often a deaf child will be born into a hearing family with no family history of deafness. The deafness may be caused by a mother's exposure to rubella or other conditions during pregnancy, but occasionally there is no known reason for the deafness. As the hearing parents are unlikely to know how to sign, these children are usually educated in oral programs, with an emphasis on lipreading and spoken English as their communication methods, assisted by hearing aids and/or cochlear implants. It is common for a number of these oral deaf children to join the Deaf community and learn Auslan at a later date.

## 1.3 Communication methods

There is no one 'universal' communication method that suits all Deaf and hard of hearing people in Australia. Each person has their own communication method that suits them.

Below is a list of the common communication methods used by deaf people.

<b>TERM</b>	<b>DEFINITION</b>
<b>Auslan</b>	Or Australian Sign Language – the primary language of the Deaf community of Australia – as recognised by the Australian Government in 1987. Auslan is not 'broken English', but rather it has its own structure and grammar. Auslan incorporates the use of signs, including fingerspelling, as well as body language, facial expression and lip patterns.
<b>Signed English</b>	Unlike Auslan, Signed English is not a natural language but is instead a method of representing English using signs. Signed English consists of a sign for every English word, and follows English grammar and structure.  Signed English is primarily used by young people in a number of schools. These young people tend to incorporate more Auslan into their signing as they join the adult Deaf community.

<p><b>Lipreading</b></p>	<p>Lipreading (or speech-reading) is the process of reading lip patterns to determine what is being said. Not all Deaf or hard of hearing people can lipread, and ability varies greatly between individuals.</p> <p>Lipreading is only a limited means of communication, as not all English sounds can be distinguished from the lip patterns.</p> <p>The effectiveness of lipreading can be diminished for a number of reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number of people talking</li> <li>• The level of background noise in the room</li> <li>• Insufficient lighting</li> <li>• Obstructions such as beards, food, hands, papers in front of mouth</li> <li>• Fatigue – lipreading for long periods of time can be very tiring for a Deaf or hard of hearing person as it requires great concentration</li> </ul> <p>Lipreading can be an effective tool for limited one-on-one communication with clients who have good lipreading abilities, and are in ideal conditions. Lipreading is not an inherent ability in all deaf people – it is a learned and practised skill.</p>
<p><b>Spoken English</b></p>	<p>Spoken English is used by a number of deaf people (usually hard of hearing/hearing-impaired people) in conjunction with lipreading as a communication method.</p> <p>Most deaf people have the ability to talk – but to widely varying degrees of clarity. Some deaf people can make noises, but not be understood at all, whereas other deaf people have a clear, understandable voice. Most deaf people will have a deaf ‘accent’ to some degree.</p> <p>Most deaf people who use spoken English are oral, but there are a number of bilingual/bicultural Deaf who use both Auslan and spoken English to communicate.</p> <p>A key thing to remember is that an excellent speaking voice does not equate to excellent hearing. Some Deaf people will intentionally not use their voice for this reason. Other Deaf people may not use spoken English because they are embarrassed of their ‘deaf voice’ or because they realise that people have difficulty understanding them.</p>
<p><b>Written English</b></p>	<p>Many deaf people communicate in limited situations via written English. This usually happens via turn-taking using pen and paper.</p> <p>Written English is not the preferred communication method as for many deaf people, English is their second language with Auslan as their first. Use English for basic communication only. Written English, could be used, for example, to ask basic questions about name and address etc, but should not be used to conduct a JCA. If</p>

	<p>you need to use written English, use plain English and do not use idioms.</p> <p>Remember that although many deaf people do have difficulties with English, this is not always the case.</p>
<b>Minimal language</b>	<p>A small number of deaf people lack fluency in any language – whether is be written English, spoken English, Auslan or any other language. It is common for these clients to know a few basic signs and have very minimal written English skills.</p> <p>In these cases it will be necessary to book a Relay interpreter. This is a Deaf person who relays information between the booked interpreter and the minimal language needs deaf client.</p>
<b>Other sign languages</b>	<p>There are a number of sign languages in the world (for example: Auslan, British Sign Language, and American Sign Language): there is no one universal language that all deaf people use around the world.</p> <p>Some deaf people may be fluent in an overseas sign language – but are yet to attain fluency in Auslan. These deaf people may also require a Relay interpreter in order to access the JCA.</p>
<b>Deafblind</b>	<p>Deafblind people communicate in many different ways, including (but not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where clients have some sight, interpreters may restrict their signing to a confined space, at a determined distance from the client, or the client may place their hand/s on the interpreter’s wrists, and follow the interpreter’s signing in their line of vision</li> <li>• Where the client has low vision, they will often use tactile signing, where the client places their hands on the interpreter’s hands to ‘read’ the signs</li> <li>• Another method is tactile fingerspelling – the Deafblind two handed alphabet uses letters fingerspelled directly into the palm of the deafblind client’s hand. This is usually supplemented by ‘short-cut signs’ – signs signed directly onto the client’s hand.</li> </ul> <p>To communicate with your deafblind client, you will require an interpreter who knows how to work with deafblind clients. Currently there is no ‘Deafblind Interpreter’ accreditation, so when booking an interpreter, request an interpreter with deafblind experience. Most Deaf relay interpreters do have skills in this area, so if no Auslan interpreter with these skills is available, request a relay interpreter to work alongside the regular interpreter.</p> <p>When conducting a JCA on a deafblind person, consider similar questions for a Deaf or hard of hearing person (as outlined in topics 3 and 4), in addition to a questions about barriers presented by their restricted sight.</p>

	For more information about deafblindness see: <a href="http://able.fabricgroup.com.au/">http://able.fabricgroup.com.au/</a> <a href="http://www.deafblindinfo.org/FAQ.asp">http://www.deafblindinfo.org/FAQ.asp</a> <a href="http://www.deafblindinternational.org/standard/about.html">http://www.deafblindinternational.org/standard/about.html</a>
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Deaf people may use one, several or all of these communication methods – and to widely varying degrees. Not all deaf people are fluent Auslan users, not all deaf people can lipread, not all deaf people can talk and not all deaf people have good English literacy. Do not make any assumptions about how a deaf person may communicate.

## **Examples:**

Below are a few examples of different deaf people, and how they may communicate:

- Siobhan is third-generation Deaf and her primary language of communication is Auslan. She has minimal spoken English skills, and average written English skills. She attended a mainstream school accessing the curriculum and social activities via an interpreter.
- Candice was born into a hearing family with a mild hearing loss. Her hearing slowly deteriorated, and by the age of 18 she was profoundly deaf. She was raised orally and has a clear speaking voice. She attended a mainstream school using hearing aids and lipreading to communicate. Candice has excellent English skills. She ventured into the Deaf community at 15 years of age, beginning to learn Auslan.
- Brady was involved in a workplace accident when he was 26 years old that resulted in him losing all his hearing in his left ear, and half of his hearing in his right ear. Brady identifies himself as hearing-impaired and uses a hearing aid in his right ear. Brady's spoken English skills have not changed, however they may do so if his hearing decreases.
- Tyler was born profoundly deaf, however his deafness was not discovered until he was four years old. He received a cochlear implant at five years of age: however he missed out on his first four years of crucial language development stages. Tyler has poor written and spoken English skills.
- Rebeckah was born to a Deaf father and a hearing mother. Rebeckah has a moderate/severe hearing loss, uses one hearing aid, and learnt both spoken English and Auslan growing up. Rebeckah considers herself to be a bilingual bicultural Deaf person, using Auslan with her Deaf friends and family, and spoken English with her hearing family.

## 2) Working with interpreters

### 2.1 Why do you need an Auslan interpreter?

Why do you need to book interpreters for all your JCA with a Deaf client? Why not just ask the Deaf person to lipread, or use pen and paper to communicate?

The number one reason why an interpreter should be booked is to allow complete communication access between the JCA assessor and a Deaf client who uses Auslan. The Deaf client is able to communicate best in their primary language, and thus is able to answer your questions to the best of their ability. This enables them to demonstrate their full potential and to respond to questions accurately.

**Note:** Remember that in some situations a relay interpreter or an interpreter with deafblind experience may need to be booked.

### 2.2 Booking interpreters

You will need to book an Auslan interpreter for the JCA if you have a Deaf client. When booking interpreters, consider the following:

#### **Interpreter qualifications, accreditation and skill level:**

It is recommended that you only book interpreters who are accredited by NAATI (the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters) at paraprofessional or professional level. Unaccredited interpreters should never be used, as they lack the appropriate level of skill and are not bound by professional ethics.

You may also wish to request an interpreter with skills appropriate to the JCA – for example TAFE or university qualifications in an employment-related area, or previous experiences with JCAs – but do bear in mind that Auslan interpreters are in high demand so this request may not be able to be met.

#### **Deaf client preference:**

Deaf clients may have a preferred interpreter whom they want booked for their interview. Deaf clients may have a preference of interpreters for a number of reasons:

- Past experience with the interpreter (or previous poor experiences with other interpreters)
- Interpreter's skill level and background knowledge
- Interpreting style (such as a preference for fingerspelling, or a literal approach to interpreting, or use of facial expression etc)
- Professionalism

When booking an interpreter for a JCA, consult with your Deaf client to determine if they have a preferred interpreter. Also bear in mind that interpreters should not interpret a JCA if there is a conflict of interest – for example, family members must not be used.

### 2.3 How to work with an interpreter at the JCA

Below are a few reminders about working with interpreters:

- **Introductions:** Some Deaf clients will introduce themselves and the interpreter to you. However if they don't, introduce yourself to both parties.
- **Seating arrangements:** Seating arrangements are important – poor visual lines can interfere with smooth communication. If the Deaf client or interpreter does not request a particular seating arrangement, ask them what arrangement they prefer.  
The typical arrangement is for the interpreter to sit next to the JCA assessor, with the Deaf client directly opposite. This enables the Deaf client to simultaneously view both the assessor and the interpreter – allowing them to see the assessor's facial expression and body language, and the interpreter's signs.
- **The role of the interpreter:** The role of the interpreter is to facilitate communication – they cannot assess the Deaf client for you. Remember that the interpreter is ethically obliged to interpret all communication, so do not make asides you do wish to be interpreted.
- **Talk directly** to the Deaf client. For example say “So John, how are you?” rather than “Could you please ask John to tell me how he is?” or “How is John?” Ensure you maintain eye contact with the Deaf client. Sometimes this may feel a little unnatural, as the Deaf client may be looking at the interpreter; however it assists in developing a rapport with your client.
- **Speaking speed:** Speak at a normal pace in your normal voice – there is no need to talk slower or louder. Interpreters will usually let you know if they are having difficulties keeping up or do not understand what you are saying.
- **Lag time:** Allow for lag time in the Deaf client's response as the interpreter interprets from your spoken English into Auslan, and then the client's Auslan into spoken English. Sometimes the interpreter will wait until you or the client finishes ‘a turn’ before commencing interpreting.
- **Referring to materials:** If you refer to a document, or the computer screen, bear in mind that it is impossible for the Deaf client to watch the interpreter and refer to the materials at the same time. Allow time for the Deaf client to watch the interpreter, and then refer to the document/screen etc.

## 2.4 Interpreter Code of Ethics

All NAATI accredited interpreters are obliged to follow a Code of Ethics. Both AUSIT (Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators) and ASLIA (Australian Sign Language Interpreters Association of Australia) have a similar Code of Ethics.

In summary form they are:

1. Professional conduct
2. Confidentiality
3. Competence
4. Impartiality

5. Accuracy
6. Employment
7. Professional development
8. Professional solidarity
9. Professional independence

For a full version of the Code of Ethics with further description, see <http://server.dream-fusion.net/ausit2/pics/ethics.pdf> (AUSIT version) or <http://aslia.com.au/mambo/content/view/23/54/> (ASLIA version).

## 2.5 Checklist

For an easy checklist to remind you about how to work with interpreters, click on this link.

### Examples:

Lindsay is a profoundly deaf Auslan user who has been booked for a JCA in two weeks' time. An interpreter needs to be booked for the appointment, and she has requested that her mother interpret. What should you do?

*Answer:* Regardless if Lindsay's mother is a NAATI accredited interpreter or not, it is a breach of the Interpreter Code of Ethics for a family member to interpret. The correct procedure is to allow Lindsay's mother to attend as a nominee (if Lindsay wishes), and to also book a NAATI-accredited interpreter.

Georgette (a JCA assessor), Miriam (a Deaf Auslan user) and Phoebe (an interpreter) have just sat down to begin the JCA. Georgette explains the purpose of the JCA, and once completed, asks Phoebe "Did Miriam understand everything that I just said?" Is this the correct procedure?

*Answer:* No. The correct procedure is for Georgette to talk directly to Miriam (ie. not to Phoebe) and to ask her "Did you understand everything I just told you?"

Yuri has recently moved from Russia to Australia. He is fluent in written Russian and Russian Sign Language, however he has only average English skills and no Auslan skills. What special arrangements will Yuri require for his JCA?

*Answer:* For his JCA, Yuri will require an Auslan interpreter and a relay interpreter, or in the case that a relay interpreter is not available, an Auslan interpreter and a spoken Russian interpreter working as a team would be best.

During the course of a JCA, an interpreter reveals to the JCA assessor that they know the Deaf client well and have worked with them often in the past. The interpreter reveals that the Deaf client was fired from their last job for having too many sick days, and for lying to their manager about their qualifications. Is it appropriate for the interpreter to tell the JCA assessor this?

*Answer:* No, this is not appropriate. An interpreter is bound by the Interpreter Code of Ethics. They are not at liberty to discuss past bookings or their knowledge of the Deaf client. (Similarly, the assessor should not ask the interpreter to reveal any confidential information.) In this case, the JCA assessor should consider filing a complaint with the agency through which the interpreter was booked.

### 3) How to conduct a JCA on deaf and hard of hearing clients

#### 3.1 Introduction

The aim of this section is to offer you suggestions on factors to consider when assessing a deaf or hard of hearing person, creating your Assessment Summary, and selecting the most appropriate employment service to support the deaf worker in obtaining and maintaining employment.

When conducting a JCA the most commonly asked question of a Deaf client is “What barriers do you face in the workplace?” Commonly, deaf clients respond: “I don’t have any barriers”.

There are different reasons for this. The deaf client may:

1. view themselves as equal to a ‘normal hearing’ job-seeker (ie. as someone without barriers);
2. be unaware of the barriers they face and the implications of these; and/or
3. not understand the term ‘barrier’ (even when it has been interpreted into Auslan).

There could be a number of barriers that deaf clients face including physical, mental, emotional etc – but the key barrier is usually communication.

Even if a deaf person denies having barriers, try to determine what barrier/s they actually face. The checklist below will assist you in determining this.

#### 3.2 Checklist

Below are a list of topics and questions to consider asking the deaf client when determining what barriers they face:

- **Interpreters:** *Will you require an interpreter in the workplace for your staff meetings, trainings etc?* This will impact on the employment service referral and their capacity to provide for this.
- **Lipreading:** *Can you lipread?* A simple yes is insufficient and you need to determine to what extent they can lipread. For example, can they lipread a staff meeting or training session, or only a one-on-one conversation? Remember that the ability to lipread does not eliminate communication as a barrier.
- **Hearing:** *How much can you hear (ie. can you hear a fire alarm, the door shutting, or the phone ringing etc)? Will you be wearing hearing aids and/or cochlear implants in the workplace?* Do not assume that just because a deaf person has some hearing, that they can hear everything, all the time. Assistive listening devices can assist hearing to a certain level – but not to the level of normal hearing.  
If a deaf person does not already use hearing aids and/or cochlear implant, it is inappropriate to ask them if they will consider using them.
- **Spoken English:** *Can you talk? If yes, are you comfortable doing so and communicating via this method?* If yes, bear in mind that being able to speak does not provide the deaf person with two-way communication.

- **Literacy Skills:** *Can you read English well? Can you write English well?* In order to fully determine what literacy skills a Deaf person has, pose questions like *How often do you read the newspaper – and which newspaper/s do you read? Do you need help to read your mail?* This will give you an idea of their literacy level.
- **Technology:** *Do you require special technology or equipment such as a TTY, pager, fax etc in the workplace?* To ascertain what technology they may require, pose questions like *How would you know if there is a fire at work? How will you contact people at work?*
- **Other communication support:** Generally hard of hearing people will not require an interpreter, but there are a small number who may. These hard of hearing people will use the interpreter to sign what you are saying, but will then voice their response themselves. Other hard of hearing people may require notetakers or live captioning.

Responses to the topics above that are not noted elsewhere on the JCA should be included in the Assessment Summary to ensure that the service provider (and subsequent potential employer) is equipped with as much information as possible about the deaf client. Remember that the JCA has a huge impact on the deaf client's chances of obtaining and maintaining work.

When making recommendations about the best suitable work for deaf clients, bear in mind the obvious – that deaf people cannot hear, and that many cannot talk clearly either. When considering what jobs are appropriate for the deaf client, consider the inherent requirements of the job – do not assume that because the client is deaf that they are unable to do the job. See this link for a list of jobs that deaf people are currently employed in nationally.

### **Print off Checklist:**

Click here for an easy print off version to remind you of these suggestions on how to conduct a JCA on a deaf client.

### **Examples:**

Audrey is a Deaf rights activist who comes from a Deaf family. Audrey sees that she can do anything that anyone else can, except hear. When attending her JCA, Audrey is asked what barriers she faces in the workplace. She responds “I don’t face any – I can do the same work as any hearing person.” How might the JCA assessor determine if Audrey does in fact have barriers?

*Answer:* Ask questions about if she will require an interpreter for staff meetings and trainings, or any special equipment that she may require for complete access in the workplace.

Shad is 23 years old and was raised orally, learnt Auslan when he was eight years old and was profoundly Deaf by the time he was 14 years old. He considers himself a bicultural bilingual Deaf person. During the JCA the assessor is determining what barriers Shad may face in the workplace. One question the assessor asks is “Can you speak?” Shad replies via his interpreter that he can speak English very well, however he prefers not to communicate via this method because in his experience people assume that his good speech equates to good hearing. He prefers to use Auslan and an interpreter to communicate. What should you do with this information?

*Answer:* Shad has revealed that spoken English is not a preferred form of communication for him. However this information should still be noted in the Assessment Summary (if not elsewhere) to ensure that the employment service is aware of this information.

## 4) Hard of hearing clients

### 4.1 Background information

The terms 'hard of hearing' and 'hearing-impaired' describe people who became deaf later in life, or those who were deaf from birth and raised orally, using lipreading and spoken English to communicate, and have little or no Auslan skills. Some people prefer the term 'hard of hearing', whereas others prefer 'hearing-impaired'.

### 4.2 Tips for communication

Below are a few tips for communicating with hard of hearing people:

- Be aware that the hard of hearing client may have difficulty in understanding you – even with a hearing aid and/or cochlear implant
- Don't shout – speak in your normal voice at a normal pace
- Avoid using idioms
- Face the hard of hearing person directly, and try to be at the same eye level where possible
- Keep your hands away from your face to allow the hard of hearing person to view your lip patterns and facial expression
- Remember that beards and moustaches can interfere with lipreading
- Keep background noise to a minimum – this may involve holding the interview in an enclosed room
- Ensure that lighting is appropriate – ie. not shining directly in their eyes
- If the hard of hearing client is having trouble understanding what you are saying, try to find a different way of saying the same thing
- Use visual aids, such as diagrams and pictures, if necessary

### Examples:

Kody is a hard of hearing person with good lipreading skills and clear spoken English. Rylen the JCA assessor, labelled Kody 'Deaf', and enquired as to where his Auslan interpreter was. This offended Kody who responded that he wasn't Deaf and that he doesn't need Auslan or an interpreter because he can talk and hear just fine. What could Rylen have done to avoid this awkward situation?

*Answer:* Rylen should ask Kody directly how he prefers to be identified, and what his preferred communication method is to ensure that this situation does not arise.

Katya, who is hearing impaired, arrives at Centrelink for her JCA, meets her assessor Jackson and is led to his desk. Jackson's desk is next a window where the sun is currently setting (casting Jackson's face in shadow), and in addition to this a mother and her two young, noisy children are sitting at the next desk over. Katya is finding it extremely difficult to lipread Jackson due to the poor light and poor environment. What could Jackson do to alleviate the problem?

*Answer:* Jackson could pull the blinds over the window or ask the mother and children to be quiet – but the easiest solution may be in moving the JCA to another room, preferably an enclosed space with no glaring lights.

Iona has a very mild hearing loss and a clear voice. She rarely has any problems with her hearing, and can understand almost everything. However, her hearing loss and a lack of access to education

have led her to having poor general communication skills, particularly in the areas of interviewing and networking. Where should Iona be referred to?

*Answer:* Iona's issues are not directly related to her hearing loss, but rather to poor job-seeking skills – Iona will probably be best suited to a generic employment service.

Nathaniel is 22 years old. He is an only child, and was implanted with a cochlear implant at two years of age. Nathaniel's preferred communication method is spoken English and lipreading, and he is confident in his ability to speak. Nathaniel meets his JCA Assessor, Wendi, and proceeds to introduce himself. Wendi cannot understand Nathaniel's speech as he has a very strong 'deaf accent'. Wendi repeatedly asks Nathaniel to repeat what he is saying, yet she is still unable to understand him. Nathaniel begins to get frustrated. What can Wendi do?

*Answer:* Wendi could politely explain to Nathaniel that she is having great difficulty in understanding what he is saying, and if it was possible for him to write his answers on paper. This is something that needs to be dealt with great delicacy, as Nathaniel is under the assumption that people are able to understand his voice and may be offended if Wendi says otherwise.

## 5) Why refer a deaf person to a specialised deaf employment service?

### 5.1 Introduction

There are a wide variety of employment services that a deaf client could be referred to, and this referral is solely dependent on the outcome of their JCA.

There are a number of specialised deaf employment services around Australia. Not all deaf specialist employment services fall under the Disability Services – there are also specialist deaf Job Network services and Disability Employment Network Services around Australia. It is strongly recommended that you are familiar with the specialist services in your area.

Below is a brief description of the eligibility for the Disability Employment Network (DEN) and Job Network to assist you in referring deaf clients to the correct employment service:

- **DEN Capped** services are for job-seekers who require intensive and ongoing support to find and maintain a job (these job-seekers require more than six months of support and maintenance of these clients is indefinite if the need exists).
- **DEN Uncapped** services are for job-seekers who require considerable ongoing support to find and maintain a job, but who do not require the same amount of support as those job-seekers referred to the Capped programme (it is expected that these job-seekers should achieve employment independence within two years).
- **Job Network** services are essentially for job-seekers who do not require ongoing support to find and maintain a job (workers under Job Network are provided with six months of on-the-job support).

### 5.2 Benefits

There are a number of benefits for referring a deaf client to a specialised deaf employment service, as opposed to a generic employment service. Specialist deaf employment services are best equipped to support deaf clients looking for work for a number of reasons:

- **Knowledge:** Specialist deaf employment services have a wealth of knowledge about deafness – about Auslan, Deaf culture and the Deaf community.
- **Communication:** Specialist deaf employment services have staff who are fluent in Auslan and who understand the barriers which deaf clients may face. Interpreters are available are available when required (for example, for job interviews etc).
- **Understanding:** Specialist deaf employment services are aware of employer fears about employing a deaf client (such as health and safety, communication etc) and how best to allay these fears and resolve these issues.
- **Education:** Most specialised deaf employment services offer training for employers and co-workers to facilitate the deaf client's transition into employment.

The above assets may not be found in a generic employment service. Some hard of hearing people may be best suited for a deaf specialist service or may find the necessary support at a generic employment service.

When referring the deaf client to an employment service, consider whether the employment service can provide the ongoing job support required by deaf clients:

- Are staff able to communicate directly with the client?
- Are staff knowledgeable in occupational health and safety issues affecting deaf employees?
- Do staff understand the cultural, social, educational and psychological ramifications of deafness?
- Is the service willing and able to book interpreters were required?

### **Examples:**

These are examples of people who would benefit from a referral to a deaf specialist service:

- Dorothea has had great difficulty in finding employment, mainly because many potential employers have fears about employing a Deaf worker.
- Kade has poor English skills, poor Auslan skills, is unable to lipread and finds it extremely difficult to communicate with hearing people.
- Harrison was bullied as a child due to his deafness, and as a result has developed an intense dislike for hearing people. Harrison has a minimal understanding of hearing culture, and of appropriate ways to conduct himself in the workplace.
- Lia has excellent Auslan and written English skills, and requires interpreters for job interviews, staff meetings, training sessions etc.
- Shay has excellent Auslan skills, but very poor written English skills. He requires all paperwork to be translated into Auslan for him to understand them.
- Tanya communicates via spoken English with a mild 'deaf accent'. Tanya has difficulty communicating with hearing people, and fears that people believe she can do nothing because she is deaf.

The above examples are only a few of the instances where it is recommended deaf clients be referred to a specialist deaf employment service.

## 6) New Auslan for Employment programme

### 6.1 What is the Auslan for Employment programme?

The Australian Government announced a new initiative commencing 1 January 2007 called 'Auslan for Employment'. The scheme will provide \$5 million over four years to provide three levels of assistance:

- Level 1:** Auslan Interpreter Assistance
- Level 2:** Deaf Awareness Training for Co workers
- Level 3:** Co worker Auslan Course Assistance

The aim of the Auslan for Employment (AFE) programme is to maximise the ability and independence of New Deaf Workers to find work, or Deaf Existing Workers whose continued employment is at risk.

Employers and service providers are able to apply for funds on one, two or all three levels of funding, provided that they have a Deaf Auslan (Australian Sign Language) user employee in their workplace (subject to conditions specified below).

More information can be found on the JobAccess webpage at [http://www.jobaccess.gov.au/JOAC/Employers/Employer+incentives/Auslan\\_For\\_Employment\\_Pro.htm](http://www.jobaccess.gov.au/JOAC/Employers/Employer+incentives/Auslan_For_Employment_Pro.htm) or by calling the JobAccess Advisory Hotline on 1800 464 800.

The Auslan for Employment Guidelines detailing all relevant information, and criteria, can be found at <http://www.jobaccess.gov.au/NR/rdonlyres/436080E0-C8F5-4B87-8FCA-82A136F0877A/0/AFEAuslanForEmploymentGuidelinesPDFDec2006.pdf>

**Note:** JCAs are not able to apply for this funding. The information in this section is merely for your information and if necessary so that you are able to advise your clients and employment services of this scheme. The AFE is not the Workplace Modifications Scheme. For more information on the Workplace Modifications Scheme see:

[http://www.jobaccess.gov.au/JOAC/Employers/Employer+incentives/Workplace\\_Modifications\\_S.htm](http://www.jobaccess.gov.au/JOAC/Employers/Employer+incentives/Workplace_Modifications_S.htm).

### 6.2 Applying for Auslan for Employment funding

Only employers and service providers are able to apply for the funding. They can apply for one, two or all three levels of funding.

Applications for funding are made online through a secure site found on the JobAccess website at: [http://www.jobaccess.gov.au/JOAC/Employers/Employer+incentives/Applying\\_for\\_Auslan\\_For\\_E.htm](http://www.jobaccess.gov.au/JOAC/Employers/Employer+incentives/Applying_for_Auslan_For_E.htm)

Once the application has been submitted, the JobAccess professional advisory panel will either approve or decline the application within a working day.

Once approved, the employer is able to make arrangements as approved. The employer pays for the expenses, and then submits receipts/invoices to JobAccess by a set deadline to be reimbursed.

## 6.3 Eligibility and funding limits

The AFE programme is subject to conditions summarised below – see also the AFE Guidelines at: <http://www.jobaccess.gov.au/NR/rdonlyres/436080E0-C8F5-4B87-8FCA-82A136F0877A/0/AFEAuslanForEmploymentGuidelinesPDFDec2006.pdf>

### Who is an eligible ‘Deaf worker’?

**Deaf Worker:** Australian resident who is Deaf and uses Auslan as primary communication method and has been employed for a stated amount of time.

*Deaf New Worker:* A Deaf Auslan user who has been employed for less than six months at their current position.

*Deaf Existing Worker:* A Deaf Auslan user who has been employed for more than six months, *and* whose job is ‘At Risk’.

**Ineligible workers** are those who do not satisfy the conditions above.

A Deaf Existing worker whose job is ‘At Risk’ essentially means a Deaf employee at risk of losing their job, undergoing a change in duties or career progression.

### Levels of Assistance:

#### *Level 1:*

The number of interpreter hours available for Level 1 Assistance is dependent on the number of hours the Deaf employee works.

Employers can also apply for Auslan Interpreter Travel Assistance (if more than a 200km return trip is required for the interpreter).

#### *Level 2:*

There is an allowance of one Deafness Awareness Training per Deaf worker, unless it is proven that the Deaf worker has undertaken a significant change of duties within the same workplace (to be determined on a case-by-case basis).

#### *Level 3:*

Employers are limited to one approved application for one Co worker Auslan Course assistance per Deaf worker in the workplace, for study towards an accredited Certificate II Auslan Course. It is expected that this co worker will complete up to Certificate II within 15 months.

#### *Time limits?*

From the first online application approved it is expected that an employer will only require assistance for nine months. (Note: this means that if an employer initially applies for only one level of assistance, they are limited by this nine-month time frame if they wish to apply for other levels of funding).

Generally, once the nine months are completed, an employer is unable to apply for any more AFE funding, unless there are extenuating circumstances (to be determined on a case-by-case basis).

## 7) Resources

### 7.1 Technology

Below is a description of the various pieces of technology and equipment that can assist Deaf and hard of hearing people.

Some employers will be eligible to apply for the Workplace Modifications Scheme to cover the costs of modifying the workplace or purchasing special or adaptive technology for eligible employees with a disability (including deaf employees). For more information about this scheme visit [http://www.jobaccess.gov.au/JOAC/Employers/Employer+incentives/Workplace\\_Modifications\\_S.htm](http://www.jobaccess.gov.au/JOAC/Employers/Employer+incentives/Workplace_Modifications_S.htm)

<b>ASSISTIVE HEARING TECHNOLOGY</b>	
<b>Hearing aids</b>	<p>Hearing aids are a piece of technology that amplifies a person’s hearing. They do not recreate hearing and although they make sounds louder, the sounds are not necessarily clearer.</p> <p>Hearing aids work best in a quiet environment with a small number of people. In a loud environment the noises are louder and tend to merge and blend so that no sound is clearly discernible.</p> <p>Not all Deaf and hard of hearing people use hearing aids, either because they receive little or no benefit from them, or for political reasons (such as the perception that hearing aids are trying to ‘fix’ deafness).</p>
<b>Cochlear implants</b>	<p>A cochlear implant (sometimes called a ‘bionic ear’) is a surgically implanted device that allows a deaf person to experience sounds by sending electrical signals to the nerve endings in the cochlea.</p> <p>Cochlear implants are not a ‘miracle cure’ – even with a cochlear implant, a deaf person is not able to hear the same as a person with normal hearing.</p>
<b>COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY</b>	
<b>Phone</b>	<p><b>Telephone Typewriter (TTY)</b> A TTY is a telephone typewriter consisting of a small computer-like keyboard and screen. Two people with a TTY can communicate via typing on the keyboard, and reading each others message on the screen.</p> <p>A person without a TTY and a person with a TTY can communicate via the National Relay Service (see below).</p>
	<p><b>National Relay Service (NRS)</b> The National Relay Service is a telephone relay service that allows people with a TTY to communicate with people who do not have a</p>

TTY. Most calls cost the same as a local call. Ensure you ask your client for their TTY number if they have one. To call them, just dial 133 677 and follow the prompts.

	For more information see <a href="http://www.relayservice.com.au">www.relayservice.com.au</a>
	<b>Telephone amplifier</b> There are a variety of telephone amplifiers available. The purpose of these telephone amplifiers is to amplify the talking on a telephone. This assists some deaf people to hear on the phone.
<b>Mobile phone</b>	Mobile phones are a great piece of communication technology for deaf people. Most deaf people cannot use the voice function, but will use SMS and/or video call regularly.
<b>Internet</b>	Email and online chat services such as MSN are used frequently by many Deaf and hard of hearing people.
<b>OTHER TECHNOLOGY</b>	
<b>Alarms</b>	When general alarms are set off, a noise sounds. However, these alarms are not audible to most deaf people. Instead, a flashing light or vibrating alarm can be installed. This means that (dependent on what the alarm is for – fire, telephone, front door etc) a light will flash or vibrate, instead of emitting a noise.
<b>Pagers</b>	Pagers are a useful piece of technology to obtain the attention of a deaf person, especially when they are in a hard-to-reach place (such as high up on scaffolding, or in the toilet) and cannot hear auditory cues.
<b>iMate</b>	The iMate is a mirror that is mounted on top of the computer screen, and enables the computer user to have complete sight of all things happening behind them. This allows the deaf person to see what they cannot hear around them.

## 7.2 Links

### **Australian Federation of Deaf Societies**

[www.afds.org.au](http://www.afds.org.au)

### **Deafblind information links:**

<http://able.fabricgroup.com.au/>

<http://www.deafblindinfo.org/FAQ.asp>

<http://www.deafblindinternational.org/standard/about.html>

### **Interpreter Code of Ethics**

ASLIA: <http://aslia.com.au/mambo/content/view/23/54/>

AUSIT: <http://server.dream-fusion.net/ausit2/pics/ethics.pdf>

### **National Relay Service**

[www.relayservice.com.au](http://www.relayservice.com.au)

### **Auslan for Employment (JobAccess)**

*General Information:*

[http://www.jobaccess.gov.au/JOAC/Employers/Employer+incentives/Auslan\\_For\\_Employment\\_Pro.htm](http://www.jobaccess.gov.au/JOAC/Employers/Employer+incentives/Auslan_For_Employment_Pro.htm) or call JobAccess Advisory Hotline on 1800 464 800.

*Guidelines:*

<http://www.jobaccess.gov.au/NR/rdonlyres/436080E0-C8F5-4B87-8FCA-82A136F0877A/0/AFEAuslanForEmploymentGuidelinesPDFDec2006.pdf>

*Making an application:*

[http://www.jobaccess.gov.au/JOAC/Employers/Employer+incentives/Applying\\_for\\_Auslan\\_For\\_E.htm](http://www.jobaccess.gov.au/JOAC/Employers/Employer+incentives/Applying_for_Auslan_For_E.htm)

**Workplace Modifications Scheme**

[http://www.jobaccess.gov.au/JOAC/Employers/Employer+incentives/Workplace\\_Modifications\\_S.htm](http://www.jobaccess.gov.au/JOAC/Employers/Employer+incentives/Workplace_Modifications_S.htm)