

School *is* over What now?

A resource guide for Deaf students leaving school in the Hunter Area

Many young people leave school unsure of their vocational and training options. This situation is often more extreme for Deaf and hearing impaired teenagers who do not have access to the range of information and/or may not be aware of services catering specifically to their needs.

In early 2001, a committee was formed with representatives from both the Parramatta and Newcastle offices of the Deaf Society of New South Wales and Teachers of the Deaf from Kotara South Public School and St Dominic's School for Hearing Impaired children with the aim of producing an information resource to assist young Deaf adults who were wanting further education or were looking for work.

The booklet has been compiled as a result of contributions by organisations providing services to Deaf school leavers in the Hunter region. It provides information about the range of services available, particularly those that are Deaf specific, in an easy to read format.

The information is directed at school leavers but may also be of assistance to current school students, parents and teachers as well as members of the adult Deaf community.

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Introduction

In 1978, the United Nations introduced "Rights of Disabled Persons". This declaration gives everyone with a disability including Deaf and hearing impaired people the right to education, training and work, including the assistance necessary to achieve these things.

Laws in Australia are based on this declaration. As a result, there are many resources now available to assist people with a disability achieve education, training and work goals (adapted from Australian Hearing 1999 Resources guide for hearing impaired students, Issue 1 - 1000 p23).

There are so many resources available for students leaving school that all could not be included in this booklet.

Included in this book are:

- Resources available in the Hunter area.
- Resources from outside of the Hunter area that are not available in this area but are important to know about.

It is hoped that this booklet will help you find the resources you need to meet your goals. For further information, please contact:

The Deaf Society of NSW
Newcastle Branch
CML Building
Suites 1- 6 Level 6
108 - 110 Hunter Street
Newcastle NSW 2300

Voice / TTY: (02) 4929 7494
Fax: (02) 4929 1404
Email: deafncle@idl.com.au

PART 1

Further Education

So, you are considering further study

What do I want to study? Where should I study? Where can I find more information? These are questions faced when planning your future.

This section contains information on further education available in the Hunter region. This includes details on how Centrelink can assist you with further education.

TAFE NSW

TAFE NSW offers courses for both deaf and hearing people. TAFE NSW aims to ensure that all members of the community have equal access, support and opportunities for study.

TAFE NSW provides services to people with disabilities.

TAFE NSW has a special service called the “Teacher/Consultants” of the Deaf and Hearing-Impaired who assist students who are Deaf or hearing-impaired.

Teacher/Consultants can assist Deaf and hearing-impaired students in many ways including assistance with:

- Information
- Enrolment
- Advice on financial support
- Extra study time
- One to one training if necessary
- Note takers
- Sign Language Interpreters
- Examination Support

If you wish to do further study at TAFE NSW, you can contact the Teacher/Consultants at any TAFE in NSW.

Contact Details

For more information on TAFE NSW, you can call the TAFE NSW Information Centre

Voice: 131 601

Fax: (02) 49237840 (for Hunter area)

Website: www.tafensw.edu.au

Apprenticeships and Traineeships

NSW Department of Employment & Training

Apprenticeships and Traineeships are jobs that you can work and receive training while being paid.

The apprenticeship and traineeship system is run by the NSW Department of Education and Training. Over 80 apprenticeship categories and 180 traineeships are available in NSW. All apprenticeships and traineeships include:

- paid employment under an industrial arrangement (for example: an award or enterprise agreement)
- a training agreement or “indenture” that is signed by the employer and apprentice or trainee and registered with the NSW Department of Education and Training.
- a training program, delivered by a registered training organisation that meets the requirements of an apprenticeship and or traineeship and leads to a nationally recognised qualification.

As an apprentice or trainee, you will get a job, free training (both on-the-job and formal training), ongoing advice and support, financial assistance and nationally recognised qualifications.

How long is an Apprenticeship / Traineeship?

An apprenticeship is usually three or four years in a trade area e.g. building, hairdressing, cooking. A traineeship is usually one to two years depending on your experience and skills although many traineeships now link directly to apprenticeships.

Who is eligible?

Apprenticeships and traineeships are for people of all ages. Part-time traineeships are available to high school students who are at least 14 years and 9 months, school leavers, people entering or re-entering the workforce and existing workers.

How to get an apprenticeship or traineeship?

Apprenticeships and traineeships are advertised in the employment section of the newspaper and trade journals. You can also approach employers of organisations directly to see if they are offering apprenticeships or traineeships.

What is my role and responsibilities as an apprentice or trainee?

- you must learn and work to develop the knowledge and skills required by your employer
- go to off the job training / formal training if your employer asks
- study and do assessments
- follow work instructions by your employer, and
- follow the training agreement.

What sort of assistance do I get?

If you choose TAFE NSW as your registered training organisation, you have access to Teacher/Consultants for the Deaf who can assist students who are Deaf or hearing impaired. For more information, please contact the Consultant for the Deaf at Gosford TAFE.

Training assistance available for apprenticeships and traineeships can include:

- Sign Language Interpreters
- Notetaking
- On the job training
- Help with travelling to and from work

When you have finished your training

After you have finished your apprenticeship or traineeship, you can continue to work for your employer or change jobs and or start your own business if you like.

Contact Details

NSW Department of Education and Training (DET)
New Apprenticeship Centres
State Office Block
Level 1/117 Bull Street
Newcastle West NSW 3202

Voice: (02) 4974 8500
Fax: (02) 4925 2846
Email: craig.hagan@det.nsw.edu.au
Web site: www.apprenticeship.det.nsw.edu.au

Newcastle University

After you receive your Higher School Certificate (HSC), you may wish to do further study at University. Universities aim to give students who have a disability the chance to be involved in university life.

Study at university can be on campus, by distance or on-line.

- **On campus study** is available at all universities. It involves attending the university for lectures and tutorials.
- **Distance study** is only available at some universities (e.g.. Charles Sturt University and University of New England). It usually involves attending the university for short periods of time with most of the study occurring at home using prepared notes from the university. Newcastle University does not offer distance learning. For more information about distance learning, contact the university offering the course you are interested in.
- **On-line study** is only available at some universities. It involves study at home using information obtained via your computer. Contact the university offering the course in which you are interested directly for more information.

Newcastle University has a department called the “Student Support Service” (Disability) designed to assist students with disabilities including deafness and hearing impairment.

If you are interested in going to Newcastle University you can contact the Student Support Service (Disability) to arrange an interview. The university encourages students to contact the Student Support Service (Disability) as soon as possible to ensure students have access to the support and services they need.

The Student Support Service (Disability) assists Deaf and hearing-impaired students in many ways including assistance with:

- Information
- Enrolment
- Sign language interpreters
- Taking notes in class
- Adaptive technology
- Other specific services as needed

Remember if you need an interpreter, tell the Student Support Service (Disability) at the time you make your appointment.

Contact Details

Student Support Service (Disability)

Voice: (02) 4921 7304

TTY: 1800 114 994

Fax: (02) 4921 7065

Email: student-support@newcastle.edu.au

Deaf Education Network (DEN)

Deaf Education Network (DEN) offers courses for both Deaf and hearing people. DEN courses include sign language, general education and professional development skills. DEN also offers a variety of workplace training programs.

DEN has many courses, which are accredited by the NSW Vocational Education and Training Board (VETAB).

Courses offered by DEN change each term.

For all courses for Deaf students, DEN provides Deaf teachers, Deaf support teachers and/or interpreters.

How do you find out about the courses at DEN?

- Fax, e-mail or TTY DEN and ask for a program or look at their website for course details.
- DEN will post you a program.

How do I enrol in DEN courses?

- The enrolment form is in the middle of the program book.
- Complete the form and return it to DEN by post or fax.
- You may also enrol by telephone or TTY.
- DEN will then be in contact with you about the course you have chosen.
- You may send payment by cheque with your enrolment form or pay over the telephone using Visa card, Mastercard or Bankcard. If you are on a pension, you will get a discount. On the enrolment form you will need to put your pension number.

Do you want to become a Member?

If you wish to become a member of DEN, they will send you copies of their programs twice a year. The cost of the membership is \$11.00 a year.

Contact Details

Deaf Education Network
Building N, 361 - 365 North Rocks Road
North Rocks

Postal Address:
PO Box 5004
North Rocks NSW 2151

Voice: (02) 9764 4600
TTY: (02) 9764 4972
Fax: (02) 9746 8426
E-mail: den@deaf.nsw.edu.au
Website: www.deaf.nsw.edu.au

WEA Hunter

Adult Education and Training

WEA Hunter offers many different courses for Deaf adults, including students leaving school who want to improve their skills.

Deaf Adult Literacy Course

WEA Hunter has a special course for Deaf people who need help with reading and writing. This is called a “Literacy” course.

This course was set up with the help of the Deaf Society of NSW, Newcastle branch who continue to support the course.

The Literacy course runs on Thursdays from 9.30am to 2.30pm for 16 weeks. During the 16-week course you do some assessment tasks. These are not exams. If you successfully complete these tasks, you will receive a VETAB certificate. This is a special certificate that shows your results for the course.

The teachers of this class use Auslan and/or oral communication. Work on computers is also included in the class.

This course is free. Also if you receive money from Centrelink and you attend this course, you may be eligible for extra money called the “Pensioner Education Supplement”. For further advice about this, contact the Disability Officer at your nearest Centrelink office.

If you are interested in the Literacy Course, contact WEA Hunter and make an appointment with the coordinator for the Deaf Adult Literacy Program.

Helping Early Leavers

WEA Hunter has a special course for people who have left school early (before receiving a school certificate and/or higher school certificate).

This course is called the “Helping Early Leavers Program” (HELP). This is a 10-week course for 15 to 24 year old people.

The course can help you with further education and/or employment.

If you are interested in this course, you need to contact WEA Hunter to make an appointment with the HELP coordinator.

Other Courses

WEA Hunter also runs classes for adults, which may be suitable for students leaving school. WEA Hunter advertises these courses in a special booklet available from WEA Hunter. Some are hobby type courses but others are training courses for things like computer and business studies.

For these courses, WEA Hunter is unable to provide an interpreter but if you have a friend or someone who can help you, they are welcome to come to the course with you. The person interpreting for you does not have to pay to attend the course.

How do you enrol in these courses?

You will need to pick up an enrolment form from WEA Hunter. After you fill in the form, they will contact you to let you know if you are able to attend the course, tell you when you can start, the time of the course and the name of your tutor.

Contact Details

WEA Hunter
63 Union Street
NEWCASTLE NSW 2300
Voice: (02) 4926 4066
Fax: (02) 4929 6845

Co-ordinator of the Deaf Adult Literacy Program:

Voice: (02) 4926 1113
Fax: (02) 4926 2941
Email: [literacy @ weahunter.com.au](mailto:literacy@weahunter.com.au)

Open Learning Australia

On ABC television you can watch special programs which are subtitled. These programs are called "Open Learning". Open Learning programs are courses which cover many different topics.

Open Learning can help you with further education in different ways. For example:

- Open Learning programs may be useful for you to watch to give you an idea of the type of things you can study at University.
- If you are interested in a particular topic, you can ask for free study information. Using this information, you can study the course in more depth and decide if the topic suits you.
- You can enrol in an Open Learning course. This means that you pay to study the course. You will be sent text books and study materials. You can then follow the program and at the end be assessed. If you pass an Open Learning course, this may be counted toward a University degree.

Contact Details

For more information contact Open Learning Australia:

Voice: (03) 9903 8900

Fax: (03) 9903 8966

Centrelink

What can Centrelink Offer?

Centrelink offers many different services free to the school leaver.

- Career Counselling
- Planning for further study after leaving school, including information about courses, traineeships and apprenticeships
- Information about job vacancies
- Access to the Job Network
- Access to specialist employment services

Employment Assistance

Want help to find a job? Centrelink can assist you to access the Job Network or refer you for special employment assistance.

Special Employment Services available in the Hunter Region includes CRS Australia & Castle Personnel booklet (there is further information about these services in this booklet).

You may be able to access employment assistance while still at school.

You may be asked to provide medical information so Centrelink can decide what employment assistance you need.

For further information contact the Centrelink Disability Officer

Disability, Sickness & Carers: 132717
TTY: 1800810586

Need an Interpreter? TTY or fax Centrelink what language you use (e.g. AUSLAN, Signed English).

Applying for Assistance

Turning 16 years of age soon? You can get financial support (payment) from Centrelink e.g.: Youth Allowance (YAL) or Disability Support Pension (DSP).

- 1 Call TTY or Fax Centre link BEFORE 16 years of age

Youth & Student Assistance: 132 490
Disability, Sickness & Carers: 132 717
TTY: 1800 810 586

Need a Sign Language interpreter? Tell Centrelink what language you use (e.g. AUSLAN or Signed English)

- 2 Centrelink will ask your name, address and other details then post you a claim form.
- 3 Return your claim form to Centrelink within 14 days.
- 4 Centrelink will let you know if you are successful and tell you what happens next in a letter.

Types of Payments

1. Youth Allowance

This payment gives money to people who are over 16 years of age who are in TAPE, training, or looking for a job. This payment is given to you if your family does not earn much money. Other things will be looked at as well. If you apply you will have an interview with Centrelink.

2. Disability Support Pension

This payment provides money to people who have a disability. Medical things will be looked at for this pension. If you apply you will have an interview with Centrelink.

3. Other Payments

- Pensioner Education Supplement
- Education Entry Payment, Mobility Allowance
- Low Income Earners Health Care Card.

Contact Details

Centrelink (Hunter Region)
331 Charlestown Road
CHARLESTOWN NSW 2290

Voice: (02) 4974 3400
TTY: 1800810586

You can also contact Centrelink using the National Relay Service (133 677).

Fax: The fax number for each Centrelink office is different. Contact your local Centrelink office for the fax number.

Website: www.centrelink.gov.au or www.youthallowance.centrelink.gov.au

PART 2

Specialist Employment Services

Specialist employment services help people who may need extra assistance to find and keep a job.

Specialist employment services available to you in the Hunter Region include Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service (CRS) and Castle Personnel.

Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service Australia

What is CRS?

CRS Australia is a specialist employment service, which helps people who have a disability, illness, or injury that may find it hard to look for and keep a job.

How do I join CRS?

If you are 16 years of age or over and have left school to look for work, you may join CRS.

Visit your nearest Centrelink office and tell the staff that you want to join CRS.

You will be asked to fill out some forms that will ask what sort of disability, illness or injury you have. The information you write on these forms will help Centrelink work out how much support you need to get work.

What can CRS do to help you?

CRS will link you with a Rehabilitation Consultant who will help you work out what you need to do to get a job. You will be able to choose different ways to do this.

CRS Services

To identify the job you would like, your Rehabilitation Consultant will arrange special assessments. It is hoped that these will help to find out what type of work interests you as well as what type of work you are able to do.

Based on the results of these assessments, the Rehabilitation Consultant will help you **choose your work goal**.

The Rehabilitation Consultant will help you to develop a plan that describes the services available to help you reach your work goal. This is known as a Vocational Plan. You will be asked to do things you have agreed to as part of this plan.

Services are then arranged to help you reach your work goal.

CRS provides:

- Information about jobs
- Work experience
- Help to write a job application
- Help with finding a job
- Training so that you learn to do a job
- Short courses at a training college or school

- On the job training with an employer
- Aids to help you communicate with people at your job, e.g. TTY
- Equipment to help you do your job
- Counselling
- Auslan interpreters for Deaf people to help them communicate with the Rehabilitation Consultant, Trainers and Employers.

Contact Details

Level 3
97 Scott Street
NEWCASTLE NSW 2300
Voice: (02) 4960 4300
Fax: (02) 4960 4333

CRS is located opposite the Newcastle railway station.

For further information please contact your nearest CRS office. CRS is listed in the yellow pages under 'Rehabilitation'.

The Department of Family and Community Services fund CRS Australia.

Castle Personnel

Who we can help?

Castle Personnel helps people who have a disability who want to find a job in open employment. Open employment means employment at award wages.

We can assist people who have an intellectual, physical, neurological or psychiatric disability, acquired brain impairment, or sight and/or hearing loss.

Where we can help?

Castle Personnel has offices in Newcastle, Maitland, Singleton and Toronto. We help people to find work in Newcastle and most of the Hunter, from Wyee in the South to Bulahdelah in the North and to Singleton in the West.

Newcastle Office
235 Darby Street
COOKS HILL
Voice: (02) 4929 7711
TTY: (02) 4929 7711
Fax: (02) 4929 7713

What we do for you

Our staff can help you decide what sort of job you want to do. Then we help you to find, learn and keep a job. We will also help you settle into the workplace and make new friends.

This happens in five stages:

1.Registration

To apply, call our Newcastle office on 4929 7711 and ask for the 'Pre-employment Officer'. If you live outside the Newcastle area, contact details of your nearest office will be given to you.

When making an appointment make sure you discuss your communication needs, e.g. interpreter needed.

To register you must:

- Have a disability/deafness, hearing impairment
- Be aged between 15 and 65
- Be keen to work
- Meet Centrelink requirements

2. Pre-employment

We will talk about what you need to do at work and you may try a few different jobs. Our staff will help you prepare your resume and have some interview practice.

3. Jobsearch

Our staff will contact employers to help find a job for you. Sometimes this can take a while. You can contact employers too or let us know if you hear of any possible jobs.

4. On the Job Training

Once you have a job, a Castle Employment Officer can go to work with you and help you learn to do the job.

5. On-going Support

When your training is finished and you can do the job by yourself, an Employment Officer can call in from time to time to see how you are going. If you need more help or training, they will be able to assist.

If Castle Personnel cant help you, we will tell you why and try to refer you to another service that can help.

The Department of Family and Community Services fund Castle Personnel Services Inc.

PART 3

Other Organisations

Need some assistance which may not be directly related to work? The Newcastle Branch of the Deaf Society can assist you either directly or by providing support to access other services.

Australian Communication Exchange manage the National Relay Service as well as provide deafness/hearing impaired related products.

The Hunter Community Legal Centre can assist you with legal matters.

The Deaf Society of NSW

The Deaf Society of NSW which is based in Parramatta in Sydney provides a range of services for Deaf people who use Auslan (Australian Sign Language) throughout NSW. The Deaf Society also has an office in Newcastle. The aim of the Deaf Society services is for Deaf and hearing impaired people to have the same rights and to take responsibility as any other member of the community.

Services Provided

This list includes services provided by the Deaf Society as a whole. The Community Access and Information Service is available from the Newcastle branch. Interpreters for people in the Newcastle area can be organised through the Sydney office. A limited Independent Living Skills service, Community Education and Training program and Employment Service are available to people living in Newcastle through the Sydney office.

Community Access and Information Service

Community Workers provide support and general information for Deaf people and their families. This may include talking about problems at home, school or work and assisting you get help from services close to where you live. The Community Access and Information Service may help you with filling in forms, understanding letters or giving you information about the Deaf community and the general community.

A Drop In service is available at both Newcastle and Parramatta offices at regular times each week. You do not need an appointment to come to 'Drop In'.

If you need help and support for a serious situation and one visit is not enough to help, the Community Worker will ask you if you want to become a casework client. The Community Worker will make a plan with you to get the right help for you.

Contact the Co-ordinator, Community Access and Information Service at Parramatta or the Senior Worker, Newcastle for more information.

Interpreting Service

The Deaf Society provides high quality and professional Auslan Interpreters for the following situations:

- private medical situations including visits to general practitioners, specialists and private hospitals
- other specialist health services –counselling
- private legal visits
- appointments with banks
- meetings and conferences
- employment e.g. for job interviews.

The role of an Interpreter is to facilitate effective communication between Deaf and hearing people.

If you need an interpreter, it is best to book two to three weeks before the appointment - phone the Interpreting Service Clerk.

Independent Living Skills Program

Social Educators provide support and training to assist deaf people who are 18 years and over with additional disabilities or who require extra assistance to live independently. Support and training is provided on a one-to-one basis. Social Educators help with household management (e.g.; budgeting, cleaning and cooking), travel training, social skills, community access and personal health.

Contact the Co-ordinator, Independent Living Skills Program for more information.

Education and Training Program

The Community Educator provides education and training workshops for the Deaf Community and school students in NSW.

Discussions are held with the Deaf community to work out which workshops to provide. Some topics include career awareness and the use of Sign Language Interpreters. For school students, a number of educational workshops are available including personal development, career development and Deaf Studies.

For more information, contact the Community Educator.

Employment Service

The Employment Officer can help you find a job. We can assist with writing your resume, looking for the right job, planning a new career, preparing for an interview, providing information about different jobs, finding work experience, and access to jobs using the Internet.

For further information contact the Co-ordinator for the Employment Service.

Contact Details

Head Office

Macquarie House
Level 4, 169 Macquarie Street
PARRAMATTA NSW 2124
TTY: (02) 9893 8858
Fax: (02) 9893 8333
Voice: (02) 9893 8555
Email: deafsoc@tig.com.au

Newcastle Branch

CML Building
Suites 1 -6, Level 6,
108 - 110 Hunter Street
NEWCASTLE NSW 2300
TTY / Voice: (02) 4929 7494
Fax: (02) 4929 1404
Voice: (02) 4929 7494
Email: deafncle@idl.com.au

Australian Communication Exchange (ACE)

ACE is a national company which aims to provide access to the telecommunication network for people who are Deaf, hearing impaired or have a speech or communication impairment.

Services provided by ACE include:

- The National Relay Service (NRS)
- Deafness Resources Australia (DRA)

The National Relay Service (NRS)

ACE provides a service called “The National Relay Service” (NRS) to assist people who are Deaf or hearing impaired make contact with others, using a TTY or a computer with a modem.

The NRS will allow you to contact the people you need to communicate with about your further education and/or employment needs without having to rely on others to do it for you.

How does it work?

When you place a call using the NRS there are three people involved: you, a relay officer, and the person you are contacting.

- After contacting the NRS you type your conversation using a TTY or computer modem.
- The Relay Officer becomes your voice and reads your conversation to the other person.
- The Relay Officer listens to the other person and types their conversation to you for you to read.

ACE will provide training on how to use the NRS. If you or your family, friends and/or people you work with need training, contact ACE on the numbers listed for ACE.

There are also other ways to use the NRS. Contact ACE to find out more information.

Contacting the NRS to make a call

The NRS operates 24 hours a day, every day of the year. Local and toll free calls can be made without an account, while other calls, which are long distance or time-charged require an account.

- All calls within Australia: 133 677
- Tollfree calls within Australia: 1800 555 677
- To call Australia from overseas: 61 7 3815 7799
- NRS emergency service: 106

106 Emergency Relay Service

Using this number is like dialling 000 on a voice telephone. After dialling 106, the NRS Relay Officer

will ask you if you want Police, Ambulance, or the Fire Brigade. The Relay Officer can then connect you with the right service and relay your conversation.

Contact Details

To open an account or request more information contact:
Australian Communication Exchange
P0 BOX 473
Stones Corner QLD 4120

Deafness Resources Australia (DRA)

ACE sells a large range of Deafness/hearing impaired related products and services through a retail outlet called Deafness Resources Australia (DRA).

The type of things available from DRA include:

- Products for using televisions and telephones, including TTY's
- Alarm clocks
- Doorbells
- Books and videos
- Advice about products for Deaf or hearing impaired people

DRA has a book called the Deafness Resource Guide' which has information about all the products, which are available through DRA. You can get the Deafness Resource Guide free from DRA.

If you are unsure about what you need from DRA, special consultants can give you advice about DRA's products and services.

You can buy DRA products from the DRA shop, over the telephone, TTY, or fax.

Contact Details

Ground Floor
33 Argyle St
Parramatta NSW 2150

Voice: (02) 9895 2970
TTY: (02) 9895 2971
Fax: (02) 9895 2972
E-mail: dra@aceinfo.net.au
Website: www.aceinfo.net.au

The Hunter Community Legal Centre

If you need to find out more about your legal rights or want to talk about a legal problem with a solicitor, you can contact the Hunter Community Legal Centre.

Free legal advice is available for all people who need to talk about any problem they may have.

The Legal Centre aims to provide all members of the Hunter community with equal access to their services. To make it easier for Deaf and hearing impaired people to contact them, the Community Legal Centre has a TTY and fax number.

If you need to see a solicitor, please make an appointment.

If you need an interpreter, tell the Legal Centre at the time that you make your appointment.

Contact Details

Hunter Community Legal Centre
123 King Street
NEWCASTLE NSW 2300

Voice: (02) 4926 3220
TTY: (02) 4927 8908
Fax: (02) 4929 7996

PART 4

Other Information

- Do you know your work rights as a deaf person?
- What workplace adjustments does an employer need to provide for deaf people?
- I need an interpreter .how do I arrange an interpreter?

These are all common questions faced by deaf people. This section provides answers to the above questions.

Your Legal Work Rights

Deaf and hearing impaired people have the right to:

- **Apply for and be fairly considered for jobs, apprenticeships and traineeships on the basis of merit.**

If you are the best person for the job and you can do all the essential things that the job requires then you should get it. In addition, employers must provide any special facilities or services you need to do the job - unless it would cause them ‘unjustifiable hardship’ to do so.

Obviously, there will be times when an employer will be able to say that it would cost them too much, for example, to provide expensive special equipment. Before they decide that this would cause them “unjustifiable hardship” they must first take into account the benefit that you, and the workplace generally, would get from the service or facility if they provided it.

Employers can refuse to give you a job if you can’t do the essential or inherent requirements of the job.

- **Be trained, promoted, get all other work benefits, and have to follow all other work rules fairly in the same way as other employees.**

Again, employers must provide you with any extra help or facilities you need - as long as this won’t cause them “unjustifiable hardship”.

- **Stay on the job. An employer can only dismiss you, medically retire you, or make you redundant because of your disability - if the disability stops you from doing your job properly.**

Again, employers must not make you do non-essential parts of the job, and they must provide you with any facilities or services you need to stay in your job - as long as this won’t cause them “unjustifiable hardship”.

Employers must do this if you, your relative or associate had the disability when you started the job, or if the disability began after you started the job.

- **Not be harassed about your disability.**

When you apply for a job, when you are at work, or when you leave your job.

Source: Anti-Discrimination Board Fact Sheet ‘*Disability Discrimination - Your Rights*’, Page 2.

Contact Details

For more information, or to make a complaint, contact:

The Anti-Discrimination Board
Level 1,414 Hunter St
NEWCASTLE WEST NSW 2302

Voice: (02) 4926 4300
TTY: (02) 4929 1489
Fax: (02) 4926 1376

Workplace Adjustment

What is the Workplace Modifications Scheme?

The Workplace Modifications Scheme encourages employers to employ Deaf or hearing impaired people by helping with the cost of leasing, hiring or buying workplace modifications, special and/or adaptive equipment.

How much?

The maximum amount of funding for any Deaf or hearing impaired person is \$5,000. Funding is provided by the Department of Family and Community Services (FACS).

What are the rules/conditions?

There are a number of conditions to be met before a person can get a workplace modification. These conditions apply to the employee, the job and the employer. The Deaf or hearing impaired person must be an Australian citizen or permanent resident, and receive help from an employment agency e.g. Deaf Society of NSW. The Deaf or hearing impaired person must work more than eight hours a week and have a job which will continue for more than thirteen weeks.

Payment is on a reimbursement basis only so you need to work out who is going to pay for the modification or equipment before applying.

What type of assistance can I get?

All assistance must be work related. Technological modifications which can be made under the Workplace Modification Scheme and which may benefit Deaf and hearing impaired people may include but are not limited to:

- **Telephones and accessories.** A telephone can be modified with a flashing light to show that the telephone is ringing or a volume control to make a callers voice louder. Telephone couplers can also be installed so a person with a hearing aid with a "T" switch hears only what is said on the phone without background noise or distortion. This is very helpful in noisy workplaces.
- **Flashing light smoke detectors and fire alarms.** These make sure that Deaf and hearing impaired people are aware of emergencies or fire drills. Fire drills should also be conducted with a sign language interpreter present to make sure Deaf and hearing impaired staff are aware of the fire drill procedure.
- **Vibrating pager.** A vibrating pager vibrates to get the attention of the wearer. This is useful for Deaf or hearing impaired employees who need to travel or be in close contact with the office.
- **Teletypewriter (TTY).** A TTY is a communication device similar to a typewriter that allows Deaf and hearing impaired people to communicate via the telephone. When a letter on the TTY is typed, a series of tones are transmitted over the telephone line to another TTY where they are decoded and displayed on a small screen. TTYs are also useful for receiving calls from Deaf and hearing impaired customers.
- **Hearing Loops.** A hearing loop allows a person with a hearing aid with a "T" switch to receive sound without background noise or distortion through an FM transmitter. The loop can range in size from small meeting rooms to large conference facilities and may also be portable. Hearing

loops are unobtrusive as they can be installed in the ceiling space or under flooring.

Other adjustments which may assist Deaf or hearing impaired people but which will NOT be provided by the Workplace Modifications Scheme:

- **Interpreters.** Auslan/English interpreters who facilitate communication between Deaf/hearing impaired people and their work colleagues
- **Fax and electronic mail.** Fax and electronic mail allow employees to communicate with each other regardless of hearing or speaking ability and can greatly increase independence.

The devices described above are available from a variety of organisations including:

Deafness Resources Australia

TTY: (02) 9895 2971

Voice: (02) 9895 2970

Telstra Australia

TTY: 1800 808 981

Voice: (02) 913 2200

Printacall

TTY: (02) 9809 1283

Voice: (02) 9809 2392

How to apply

Send an application to the Department of Family and Community Services before leasing, hiring or buying the modification or equipment.

The Department will assess the application and advise if it has been approved.

Contact the Employment Service at the Deaf Society of NSW for more information.

Working With a Sign Language Interpreter

What is an Interpreter?

Many deaf people use Auslan as their main way to communicate. Most employers do not know Auslan so an interpreter may sometimes be needed at work.

An Auslan interpreter is a person who serves as a communication link - relaying messages between hearing and Deaf people. Interpreters are fluent in both Auslan and English. Interpreters also are aware of the social and cultural differences between Deaf and hearing people. Interpreters follow a Code of Ethics which are rules about behaviour when interpreting and helps interpreters make decisions about their role, rights and responsibilities.

When can I have an Interpreter?

At work, situations in which an interpreter may interpret include:

- Interviews - before you start work/promotion
- Appraisals/Job performance reviews
- Training sessions/presentations/seminars
- Group meetings

Can I have an interpreter for a job interview?

If you have applied for a job on your own, and the company has asked you to come for a job interview, it is your responsibility to book an interpreter.

If you are registered with an Employment Agency e.g. Deaf Society of NSW Employment Service, Castle Personnel or CRS Australia, they will organise an interpreter for your job interview and probably for any training which may happen when you first start work. After this time, it is your/your employers responsibility to organise an interpreter.

Booking an interpreter

- 1 Call the Interpreting Service at the Deaf Society of NSW or at the Deaf Education Network to book an interpreter.
- 2 At the time of booking, it is important to have the following information ready:
 - Name of Deaf and hearing client
 - Name and address of the organisation and where the appointment is happening
 - Type of appointment e.g. interview, training etc.
 - Date/time of the appointment
 - Type of interpreting required eg. Auslan /Signed English
 - Any other information which may help eg. special jargon, agenda

Where can I get an interpreter?

The Deaf Society of NSW - TTY (02) 9893 8858 and the Deaf Education Network - TTY (02) 8845 9411 provide Sign Language interpreters. The demand for Auslan interpreters is high so it is best to make a booking as soon as you know you will need an interpreter for an appointment.

Working with an Interpreter

With knowledge and experience, both Deaf and hearing people can learn to work well with interpreters:

- Usually the interpreter will arrive approximately 15 minutes early to prepare for the appointment.
- The interpreter usually sits next to the hearing person/main speaker so that the Deaf person can see both people at the same time.
- Speak/sign directly to the other person. Do not say "tell him, ask her".
- Speak/sign clearly at your usual speed. The interpreter will tell you if you need to change your speed.
- Do not ask for the interpreter's opinion/advice.
- Don't say things that you don't want interpreted -it is the interpreter's job to interpret everything.
- The interpreter will need breaks depending on the type and length of the appointment to avoid occupational overuse syndrome.