

Supporting d/Deaf learners

Royal Association for Deaf people



Case study A:

In early 2010 the Royal Association for Deaf people (RAD) delivered an accredited food hygiene course to 22 Deaf students. The tutor was Deaf and the learning groups numbered 7/8 learners.

A Deaf client (referred to as client A) was referred to RAD's Food Hygiene course as a valuable accessible training opportunity. Client A has severe long term mental health challenges, experiences times of deep depression and has very low confidence. This client would not have been able to access mainstream training.

The client was accompanied by a support worker from RAD's social care team. With this support, and the tutor's ability to adjust her signing to meet the needs of the client group, client A was able to participate equally and achieve the certificate.

Following the course, client A's mental health support worker reported soaring confidence and as a result A's carer (spouse) reported a change in behaviour and mood at home. They said the change was hugely positive and had a massive impact on the family unit as a whole. Relationships between family members have improved significantly and Client A is now looking forward to progressing her newly acquired knowledge and skills.

Client A attributes this improvement in self confidence and positive outlook directly to the support received on the course. Having previously been too afraid and seriously lacking in confidence to access any courses, this one was fully accessible as it was delivered in BSL and other Deaf people were in attendance which made a huge difference and the client felt more included.

Case study B:

A Deaf man (volunteer A) approached RAD to enquire about volunteer opportunities and was recruited to provide administrative assistance to the Legal Service, working with a legal caseworker at outreach sessions in London, 1 day/week.

Volunteer A enjoyed this work and after several months approached RAD to enquire about additional volunteer opportunities. After a short informal interview with the office manager to discuss skills and experience and establish suitability, volunteer A was recruited as a volunteer receptionist.

Volunteer A currently works four days a week as a volunteer at RAD. As an organisation RAD wanted to give something back to this valuable member of the team. There were no suitable

subsidised training opportunities available to volunteer A in British Sign Language (BSL), however, RAD funded Volunteer A at a specialist external training provider that delivers IT skills training in BSL.

Volunteer A attended the course and gained a certificate in Microsoft software; Outlook and Word. He comments *“the course was fantastic as it was fully accessible and the trainer was able to make sure all those who were present fully understood the information”*.

Have you considered?

- **How being d/Deaf can affect a learner’s mental health and well being?**
- **Have you identified ways of supporting d/Deaf learners to access additional support for any particular mental health issues they might want to address?**
- **How can you support d/Deaf staff to upskill?**