If you’re working with someone who’s deaf

**Communication tips:**

* Make sure you have the person’s attention before you start speaking – make eye contact
* Avoid standing in front of windows or a light source, as your face will be in shadow, making it difficult to read facial expressions and to lip-read
* Speak clearly and at your normal pace, using natural facial expressions and gestures
* If you’re talking to a deaf person and a hearing person, focus on both of them
* Keep your voice at a normal level – don’t shout
* Talk directly to the person with hearing needs, and not to their BSL interpreter or note-taker
* Use plain English and don’t waffle
* Find a suitable place to talk, with good lighting and away from noise and distractions
* Face them – avoid moving and turning your face away while speaking to help with lip-reading
* Avoid covering your mouth or face while talking as this makes lip-reading difficult
* Where Covid precautions are needed, please use a clear face mask or visor so a student can still lip-read
* If someone doesn’t understand what you’ve said, try saying it in a different way
* Repeat as many times as is necessary. Never say “it doesn’t matter”

**Delivery tips:**

* Allow the deaf person to choose where to sit in the room – they may need to be at the front in order to lip-read
* Consider a horseshoe set up for group discussions
* Minimise background noise for the best listening experience
* Encourage members of the group to raise their hands when contributing to discussions
* Repeat questions from the floor
* Indicate who is speaking if others make contributions
* Recap significant ideas or contributions in group discussions
* Provide session content and PowerPoint files at least 24 hours prior to the session
* Ensure all video clips/DVDs are provided with subtitles (please check these are fit for purpose as automated captions can be of very poor quality)
* Provide all audio clips with a transcript
* Upload lecture capture via ChiPlayer
* Note important vocabulary and concepts on the whiteboard
* Don’t expect a deaf person to be able to follow a lecture/seminar and take notes as this is not possible when lip-reading
* Allow time for a deaf student to read electronic notes or follow a BSL interpreter, and then process the information, before responding
* Indicate when a topic is closed and you are moving on to a new topic
* Hearing aids work best at a distance of less than 1.5 metres
* Hearing aids do not restore hearing to normal, they just amplify all sound
* Encourage inclusivity in sessions, providing opportunities to work with everyone and ensuring that group work activities are accessible i.e. listening tasks
* Be aware that lip-reading is extremely tiring and is 75% guess work!