

Programme Specification

BA (Hons) British Sign Language, Deaf Studies & Linguistics

<i>School:</i>	Education, Language and Psychology
<i>Subject area:</i>	Language and Linguistics
<i>Entry from academic year:</i>	2024-25
<i>in the month(s) of:</i>	September
<i>Awarding institution:</i>	York St John University
<i>Teaching institution:</i>	York St John University
<i>Delivery location:</i>	York St John University
<i>Programme/s accredited by:</i>	Not applicable
<i>Exit awards:</i>	Certificate of Higher Education British Sign Language, Deaf Studies & Linguistics Diploma of Higher Education British Sign Language, Deaf Studies & Linguistics BA (Ord) British Sign Language, Deaf Studies & Linguistics
<i>UCAS code / GTTR / other:</i>	Q1L9
<i>Joint Honours combinations:</i>	Not applicable
<i>QAA subject benchmark statement(s):</i>	Languages, Cultures and Societies 2015
<i>Mode/s of study:</i>	Undergraduate periods of study ¹ for full-time
<i>Language of study:</i>	English and British Sign Language
<i>Paired with foundation year</i>	No
<i>Study abroad opportunities:</i>	No
<i>Placement year opportunity:</i>	Yes

Introduction and special features

The British Sign Language, Deaf Studies and Linguistics programme offers you the chance to partake in an in-depth study of the language, history, cultures and identities of deaf people, combined with broader study of language structure and use, as well as providing an opportunity to learn British Sign Language to an advanced level. The course draws on contemporary research, some of which will be your lecturers', to explore the experiences of deaf people and communities in both historical and contemporary contexts. For students considering a career working with deaf children as a teacher, SEN specialist or Speech and Language Therapist, you will have the option of studying the multilingual classroom, speech and language impairments, and the role of language in educational discourse.

You can enter this programme as a beginner in British Sign Language. If you have prior knowledge of British Sign Language, then you can enter the programme, but the British Sign Language modules may contain some element of revision.

Special features:

¹ The standard period of study will apply unless otherwise stated

- Start British Sign Language from beginners or with prior study. On arrival at York St John University you will be placed at an appropriate level, either Accelerated British Sign Language 1 or Enhanced British Sign Language1.
- Take a nationally recognised Signature British Sign Language qualification, included in the tuition fee. This is valuable if you wish to continue working with deaf people upon graduation.
- Take part in extra-curricular activities related to BSL, Deaf Studies and Linguistics: the student-led BSL Society for social events and to practice your BSL, the student-led Linguistics Society which runs academic and social events, collaborative staff and student community engagement programmes such as Sign Bar, where you can engage with the deaf community and communicate using British Sign Language, and Hearing Dogs for the Deaf where you can organise and participate in fundraising activities and events.
- Access specialist spaces for students: a Linguistics Lab, Languages Workshop, Lounge and Study.
- Learn about current research issues and methods from guest lecturers in our Colloquium Series on a variety of topics related to programmes in Languages and Linguistics.
- Apply to join the University's Students-as-Researchers scheme or present your dissertation research at ULAB, the Undergraduate Linguistics Association of Britain conference.

Admissions criteria

You must meet the University's general entry criteria for [undergraduate](#) study.

If your first language is not English, you need to take an IELTS test or an equivalent qualification accepted by the University (see <https://www.yorks.ac.uk/international/how-to-apply/english-language-requirements/>).

If you do not have traditional qualifications, you may be eligible for entry on the basis of [Recognition of prior learning \(RPL\)](#). We also consider applications for entry with advanced standing.

Programme aim(s)

By the end of this programme, you will be an independent user of BSL (CEFR level B2), and will be at a standard where you will be able to take your Signature Level 3 BSL awards if you wish. You will understand the main issues faced by Deaf people from historical and social perspectives, and have an appreciation of how to conduct ethical and effective research with Deaf people and communities.

Programme learning outcomes

Upon successful completion of the programme students will be able to:

Level 4

- 4.1 Communicate in British Sign Language using simple and direct exchange of information on routine and familiar matters
- 4.2 Identify and discuss key features in the history and culture of deaf communities
- 4.3 Handle, analyse and present data in an ethical way using appropriate digital tools
- 4.4 Recognise and explain the socio-cultural, political and/or historical contexts of language use
- 4.5 Source and interpret a range of academic literature in order to communicate effectively in writing and/or orally, adopting referencing conventions where appropriate
- 4.6 Describe and analyse structures of language using appropriate terminology

Level 5

- 5.1 Describe experiences and events in British Sign Language and give reasons and explanations for opinions
- 5.2 Analyse and present naturalistic and/or experimental data in an ethical way
- 5.3 Identify and use appropriate theoretical frameworks
- 5.4 Investigate and interpret socio-cultural, political and/or historical contexts of language use
- 5.5 Communicate professionally in writing and/or orally, evidencing arguments through correctly referenced, appropriate sources
- 5.6 Demonstrate an awareness of professional values

Level 6

- 6.1 Communicate in British Sign Language using good control in a range of contexts
- 6.2 Understand British Sign Language in a range of contexts across the UK
- 6.3 Design and carry out an independent research study, presenting and critically analysing data in an ethical way
- 6.4 Investigate and critically evaluate socio-cultural, political or historical contexts relevant to deaf lives and/or the structure or use of British Sign Language
- 6.5 Select and apply appropriate theoretical frameworks
- 6.6 Appropriately adapt language to communicate professionally with a range of audiences
- 6.7 Construct a convincing argument, evidenced by critical engagement with appropriate sources
- 6.8 Demonstrate professional and transferable skills

Programme structure

Code	Level	Semester	Title	Credits	Module status	
					compulsory or optional to take C or O	non-compensatable or compensatable NC or X
Year 1/Level 4						
<i>Students will take either module LAB4011M or LAB4013M. This is dependent upon language proficiency.</i>						
LAB4011M	4	1	Accelerated British Sign Language 1	20	C ¹	X
LAB4013M	4	1	Enhanced British Sign Language 1	20	C ¹	X
LAL4008M	4	1	Deaf History	20	C	X
LAL4013M	4	1	Introduction to Language and Linguistics	20	C	X
<i>Students will take either module LAB4012M or LAB4014M. This is dependent upon language proficiency.</i>						
LAB4012M	4	2	Accelerated British Sign Language 2	20	C ²	NC
LAB4014M	4	2	Enhanced British Sign Language 2	20	C ²	NC
LAL4009M	4	2	Deaf Cultures	20	C	X
LAL4004M	4	2	Descriptive Grammar of English	20	O	X
LAL4006M	4	2	Multilingualism	20	O	X
LAL4005M	4	2	Phonetics	20	O	X
Year 2/Level 5						
LAB5010M	5	1	British Sign Language for Education	20	C	X
LAL5013M	5	1	Sociolinguistics of British Sign Language	20	C	X
LAL5006M	5	1 or 2	Analysing Texts	20	O	X
LAL5002M	5	1 or 2	Applied Phonetics and Phonology	20	O	X
LAB5011M	5	2	British Sign Language for Employment	20	C	NC
LAL5022M	5	2	Deaf Social Theory	20	C	X
LAL5007M	5	2	Language at Work	20	C	X
Year 3/Level 6						
LAB6006M	6	1	British Sign Language for Recreational Activities	20	C	X
LAL6003M	6	1	Attitudes to Language	20	O	X
LAL6004M	6	1	Language, Identities and Cultures	20	O	X
LAL6006M	6	1	Speech and Language Pathology	20	O	X
LAB6007M	6	2	British Sign Language for Mental and Physical Health	20	C	X
LAL6010M	6	2	Dissertation	40	C	NC

¹ If you have sufficient prior knowledge of British Sign Language proficiency you will start at *Enhanced British Sign Language 1*.

² You will progress to the next level as follows: *Accelerated 1* is followed by *Accelerated 2*; *Enhanced 1* is followed by *Enhanced 2*

Please note that not all options will be available every year as they depend on student demand and staff availability.

Exemptions for modules

There may be some circumstances where an exemption is appropriate from the work experience module. An alternative module may be offered in this situation at the discretion of the University.

Learning, teaching and assessment

British Sign Language

You can enter this programme if you are a complete beginner or if you have studied British Sign Language before. On arrival at York St John University you will be placed at an appropriate level. If you have sufficient prior knowledge of British Sign Language you will start at Enhanced British Sign Language 1. If not, you will start at Accelerated British Sign Language 1. You will progress to the next level as follows: Accelerated 1 is followed by Accelerated 2; Enhanced 1 is followed by Enhanced 2.

As you progress through the programme topics will broaden, starting with routine and familiar matters at level 4. At level 5 topics will include the appropriate register for teaching children, young people and adults, question forms, vocabulary relevant to primary, secondary, further and higher education and Lifelong Learning Teaching skills in the BSL Education module. For the BSL Employment module topics will include Deaf people's rights in the workplace (e.g. Access to Work, Equalities Act), vocabulary for different careers/jobs, translation skills and using communicative technology (e.g. video conferencing platforms) effectively with deaf people. The BSL modules will be assessed through conversation, video and micro teaching. At level 6, the BSL for Recreational Activities module will include using filming technology in informal environments, traditional Deaf social/recreational information, Deaf people's access to mainstream recreational activities and vocabulary relating to social/recreational activities. The BSL for Mental and Physical Health module will include vocabulary for mental health how to describe body parts, vocabulary for common diseases and further translation skills.

In addition, if you wish you can elect to take the nationally recognised Signature British Sign Language qualifications during level 6 for no additional fee. This is valuable if you wish to continue working with deaf people upon graduation.

We encourage students to join the student-run British Sign Language Society. We also provide opportunities for extra-curricular involvement in collaborative staff and student community engagement programmes: Sign Bar, where you can engage with the deaf community and communicate using British Sign Language, and Hearing Dogs for the Deaf where you can organise and participate in fundraising activities and events.

Deaf Studies and Linguistics

Deaf Studies and Linguistics modules are delivered using a mixture of lectures, workshops and seminars. Academic and research skills are embedded in modules, for example, academic writing and referencing, peer review, use of web-based resources for document sharing, and the use of wikis and blogs. The assessment varies from module to module. There is an exam on the optional module LAL4004M Descriptive Grammar of English at level 4. Other assessment methods include essays, signed or spoken presentations, data analysis, online tests, peer reviews, blog posts and research proposals and reports.

At level 5, you will complete the compulsory module *Language at Work* where you will be encouraged to consider the skills you have and how these could apply in the workplace. There may be some circumstances where an exemption is appropriate from the work experience module, for example, where a student is retired and is no longer in need of careers orientation. In this situation an alternative module may be chosen from the optional modules above, at the discretion of the University.

Level 6

Level 6 modules challenge you to investigate and critically evaluate socio-cultural, political or historical contexts relevant to deaf lives and/or the structure or use of British Sign Language through independent study.

You learn research and academic literacy skills across both British Sign Language and Deaf Studies modules, enabling you to construct a convincing argument, evidenced by critical engagement with appropriate sources, in both English and British Sign Language. In the 40-credit dissertation module you conduct an independent research study of relevance to your programme, drawing on the research skills you have learned throughout the programme, and supported by additional skills sessions and up to six hours of one-on-one supervision.

In addition, if you wish you can elect to take a nationally recognised Signature British Sign Language qualification during level 6 for no additional fee. This is valuable if you wish to continue working with deaf people upon graduation.

Progression and graduation requirements

The University's [general regulations](#) for undergraduate awards apply to this programme.

Any modules that must be passed for progression or award are indicated in the Programme Structure section as non-compensatable.

Late result modules

Indicate any module codes where the result of the first attempt is not known in time for the June School Assessment Panels (or equivalent level progression point for non-standard entry points).

- LAL5007M Language at Work

Internal and external reference points

This programme specification was formulated with reference to:

- [University Mission Statement](#) [see page two]
- [Strategic Plan 2015-20](#) [see page four]
- [QAA subject benchmark statement](#)
- [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications](#)
- Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)
<https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/level-descriptions>

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