

## **Leveraging CEFR in the politics of sign language teaching and learning policy in Scotland**

***Graham H. Turner, Gary Quinn, Ella Leith & Audrey Cameron: Heriot-Watt University***

British Sign Language (BSL) teaching and learning moved onto a professional footing, led by Deaf experts, in the mid-1980s

(<https://www.signteach.eu/index.php/5-8-uk/clark-denmark-remembers>).

Twenty years later, it was reported to be the second most popular adult evening class subject (Sutton-Spence & Woll, 2004).

Unlike other countries, though (notably the US – Wilcox 1992; Rosen 2008), there has been no tradition here of teaching BSL as a language subject to school pupils.

The headline goals of the Scottish Government’s first National Plan for British Sign Language (BSL) include commitments to “developing Scottish Qualifications Authority awards in BSL” and “expanding the teaching of BSL as a language to hearing pupils in schools”

(see <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00526382.pdf>).

These are exciting ambitions, but not easy to deliver. In 2015-16, we led a major national initiative

(<https://www.scottishinsight.ac.uk/Programmes/ViewProgramme/tabid/5828/pid/23/rdid/5827/Default.aspx>) designed to work out a ‘road map’ setting out how it could be done. We articulated a vision for a coordinated, incremental set of actions that could put in place a sustainable national framework by 2030.

In this presentation, we will:

- Sketch the background for this development
- Outline the outcomes of the 2015-16 project
- Report on subsequent progress
- Reflect upon the challenges ahead
- Explore the part of CEFR and ProSign in achieving our ambitions.