

Academic Readiness and Transition to Tertiary Education: Experiences of New Zealand Deaf Students

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**“Probably no area in the
life of deaf people has
changed as radically as
education”**

(Ozlin & Bridge 1999, p.51)

Research Questions

- **What are the current experiences of D/deaf students in New Zealand?**
- **What do these students perceive as barriers?**
- **What possible solutions are there to those barriers?**



Mixed methods study

- **Phase One: Written survey with a sample of D/deaf students**
- **Phase Two: Interviews with eight questionnaire respondents**
- **64 students completed the written survey**



The Students

- 84% were university students
- 64% had severe or profound loss 58% had hearing loss at birth or by three years of age.
- 3 students had received cochlear implants but only one used their implant while studying.



- **92% educated in regular classes during their schooling.**



- **60% of respondents, did not receive any itinerant teacher support at all during their secondary schooling.**
- **20% had not initially identified as having hearing loss when they enrolled.**

Pre- Admission Factors

- Prior schooling
- Personal skills and abilities
- Parental and teacher expectations
- Career knowledge
- Transition from secondary to tertiary education



Mum spent a lot of time with me making sure I understood topics and working on my writing skills.

Specific transition issues for DHH students

- The need to be more independent and proactive in order to receive appropriate services or accommodations.

“Well at school things were a bit different. There was a disability support person so she did everything. Where as, at university I had to organise everything”.

“You have to be more responsible and independent when you go to university. You can’t rely on the itinerant teacher like you do at primary, intermediate and high school”.

Self- Advocacy

- Instances of parental support in advocating within the tertiary education system
- More specific skills required students if they are to effectively self-advocate.



Expectations

“They (the teachers) have low expectations. University is not seen as an option. I wanted to go to university, but the teachers didn’t talk about it or encourage it”.

“University has been an expectation ever since I was born I think”.

Who is Responsible for Transition?



Career knowledge

“I definitely wasn’t prepared at all. I didn’t know what was going to happen. I had just left school so I hadn’t really found my path I don’t think and I was just carrying on doing something that I enjoyed. It wasn’t a really good year for me”.

“I suspect that many people do this, but for myself I regret now that I didn't choose a course that will benefit me career wise. But it does not mean I didn't enjoy doing my chosen subject rather I feel I didn't choose wisely”.

Understanding accommodations available

- Many indicated they were not aware of the type of accommodations available at the tertiary level.



Students' Own Solutions

- Being able to self-identify support needs confidently and knowledgably
- Knowing how to utilise the services of notetakers, interpreters, and other support staff successfully
- Good self-advocacy skills
- The capacity to believe in their own abilities.

So Who Should be Responsible?

Is it the careers advisor?

“Provide appropriate career education and guidance for all students in year 7 and above, with a particular emphasis on specific career guidance for those students who have been identified by the school as being at risk of leaving school unprepared for the transition to the workplace or further education/training”.

(NZ Ministry of Education 2009a, p. 5)

- The Resource Teacher of the Deaf?
- The Advisor on Deaf Children?

Or is there a better option?

- Collaboration between schools, tertiary education providers and Deaf Aotearoa New Zealand

- A programme specifically designed for D/deaf or hearing-impaired students in their last year or two of school who are thinking about further education, training, or looking for their first job. (DANZ, n.d., p.4)



Identified Issues and Recommendations

- **Transition planning needs to be urgently addressed – regional workshops/courses**
- **Role of transition advisor/tertiary advisor/ mentor for deaf students**

Online resource/Online mentor



The image is a composite graphic. On the left, a collage of seven cartoon characters (six white, one yellow) and one real person (a young man with curly hair) are shown. The characters are in various poses, some making hand gestures. A text box in the center of the collage reads "Agencies & Services". A "Next >>" button is in the top right of the collage. On the right, a sidebar menu for "DEAFinitely Stepping Ahead" is displayed. The menu has a "More info" link at the top. Below it, a "Want to know more?" section lists several topics with radio buttons. A "More Please!" link is also present. A "Things we can do for you" section lists three topics with radio buttons. At the bottom of the sidebar, a progress bar shows "04:18 / 08:12 Minutes".

Next >>

Agencies & Services

DEAFinitely Stepping Ahead

<<More info

Want to know more?

- ☐ DEAFinitely Stepping Ahead
- ☐ What is it?
- ☐ Using NZSL
- ☐ Who are we?
- More Please!

Things we can do for you

- ☐ Work and Income
- ☐ Study
- ☐ Lifestyle

04:18 / 08:12 Minutes

WE'RE LIKE A MAGNET
ATTRACTIVE

Magnet is a new youth-focused initiative from Deaf Aotearoa designed to grow, inspire and develop positive Deaf identity and leadership.



YOUTH

www.magnet.org.nz

Database

Need compilation of accurate statistics, including those students:

- intending to undertake tertiary education,
- currently studying at tertiary level, and
- their tertiary completion rates



Longitudinal Data

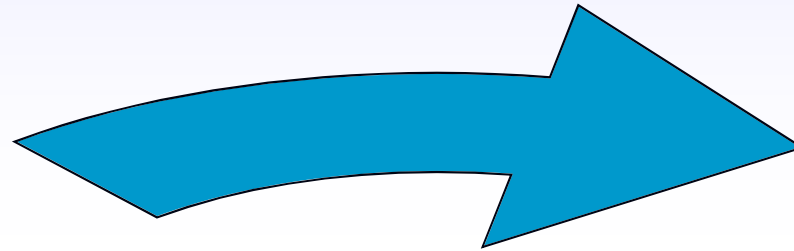
Findings could:

- aligning transition programmes to DHI students' needs,
- assist tertiary institutions become more knowledgeable and adept at meeting the needs of this group of learners, and
- assist students themselves to make successful transitions into the workforce

Thanks

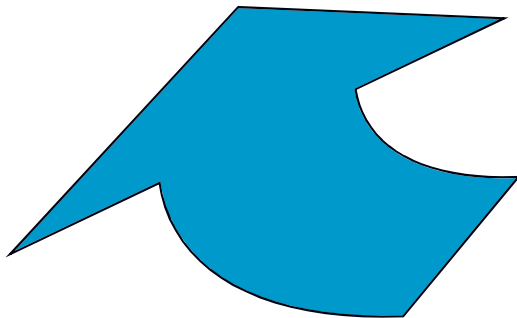
- Firstly my thanks to Prof Merv Hyde and Dr Renée Punch for sharing their time, knowledge and experience so generously.
- Thanks also to the Oticon Foundation for their generous financial support which allowed me to attend this conference.
- Finally, and most importantly, thanks to the D/deaf students who willingly gave their time and energy to take part in this research.

Over to you.....

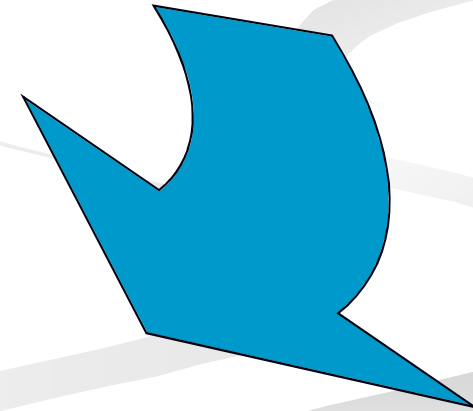


Feedback

Questions?



Comments?



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