



ToD training at Mary Hare

Helen Nelson outlines the courses available at Mary Hare and the benefits for teachers who choose to study there

What do our recent graduates say?

"The variety of training opportunities helped us to develop the range of skills required to become effective and reflective ToDs."

"Between the tutors and fellow students, I have come away with a vast array of knowledge, understanding and empathy which is invaluable."

"The ToD course at Mary Hare gave me a good breadth of experience which has prepared me well for my current work as a ToD."

"I found the audiology and language elements of the course particularly interesting. The placements required as part of the course gave me a chance to see, and try, best practice."

"Being a ToD is full of rewards and celebration. However, there are times when it feels like an uphill battle. That's when my training kicks in and the most important question rises to the top: What's the best case scenario for these pupils and how do we help them get there?"

How is training with Mary Hare/University of Hertfordshire different?

Training to be a Teacher of the Deaf at Mary Hare in

partnership with the University of Hertfordshire is a unique experience, as it is the only initial training course of its type that it is delivered within the setting of a leading Special School for the Deaf. This provides the opportunity to observe the work of experienced practitioners in both the Primary and Secondary departments, undertake teaching placements and have access to research opportunities within the Mary Hare Schools.

Mary Hare has offered a nationally recognised postgraduate course, leading to the mandatory qualification for Teachers of the Deaf, since 1996. The course was delivered for 17 years in partnership with Oxford Brookes University and in 2013 a successful new partnership with the University of Hertfordshire was begun. To date over 250 Teachers of the Deaf across the UK have attained the mandatory qualification via Mary Hare and its partner universities. Mary Hare has recently achieved reaccreditation by the NCTL/DfE as an approved provider of the mandatory qualification.

Course Content

The Postgraduate Diploma qualification, which entitles students to achieve mandatory qualification status, consists of four core modules. Modules taken in Year 1



lay the foundations of skill and knowledge which are then built upon within two further modules in Year 2. All modules must be passed to attain the mandatory qualification.

PG Diploma Compulsory Modules:

- Module 1: Impact of hearing loss on language and listening – 30 credits
- Module 2: Issues in teaching, learning, access and inclusion – 30 credits
- Module 3: Extending language, listening and literacy skills – 30 credits
- Module 4: Securing outcomes through effective professional practice – 30 credits

MA Additional Module:

- Module 5: Research methods and dissertation – 60 credits

Work-based learning is a key element of the course and modules 2 and 4 have a compulsory practical experience component of 20 days' duration each, which takes place within specialist provision and support services. In addition, students are required to undertake observational visits to a range of education, health and third sector organisations for children and young people who are deaf. On completion of the mandatory qualification, students have the opportunity to focus on a specific area of interest and develop a research project to progress to an MA qualification.

At the heart of the course is the requirement for students to recognise the need to have high expectations of children and young people who are deaf across the 0-25 age range with an emphasis on life-long objectives and outcomes. The participation of parents and young people in decision-making and planning is central to teaching across the component modules. Students are required to evidence that they are rigorously tracking the progress and attainment of the pupils they are working with. The key areas at risk from hearing impairment (i.e. language, listening and literacy skills) are studied in depth.

Students are encouraged to become reflective practitioners with the ability to employ effective evidence-based teaching strategies. The promotion of research-informed practice is secured via an emphasis on current research within the curriculum and access to up-to-date technological information (eg via input from cochlear implant centres and manufacturers of hearing aids and implantable devices).

The MA is awarded following the successful completion of the Postgraduate Diploma modules and a dissertation, which involves a third year of part-time study in which a small scale research project is undertaken.

Mode of delivery

The PG Diploma/MA Educational Studies (Hearing Impairment) course is a part-time course of two or three years in duration. Delivery is via a blended learning

approach which combines face to face tuition, on-line, self-directed and work-based learning. Students attend 11 study weekends over two years of study to attain the Postgraduate Diploma and 12 weekends for the MA qualification. Completion of the PG Diploma leads to attainment of the mandatory qualification as a Teacher of the Deaf.

Teaching Staff/Guest Speakers

All teaching staff are highly experienced practitioners in the fields of education of the deaf, audiology and related disciplines and possess a range of relevant postgraduate qualifications, including at doctoral level. The majority of team members hold the mandatory qualification and have a specialist teaching experience of between 20-30 years each, obtained within a range of types of provision and communication approaches. A real strength of the course is that some members of the team currently work as Teachers of the Deaf within Local Support Services, so bring current real-world experience to bear upon their teaching. In addition, some course tutors have qualifications in Educational and/or Clinical Audiology and the team includes a Specialist Speech and Language Therapist. Other professionals from a range of related disciplines contribute to course delivery (e.g. health professionals, educational psychologists).

Course materials are under constant review and are regularly updated to reflect current research findings. Staff attend and present at national and international conferences in addition to keeping up-to-date via access to peer-reviewed journals and professional bodies.

Guest speakers from a range of universities deliver lectures in relation to their own research and this input is highly regarded by the student body. Mary Hare has an active research group which undertakes research itself. It also approves studies and supervises projects

Searching for a QToD?

Job vacancies can be advertised on the BATOD website at a cost of £250.00

If you have to re-advertise the same post, the cost is reduced to £150.00

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undertaken by external researchers, staff at Mary Hare and postgraduate students.

Support for Learning

The course offers a high level of face-to-face teaching as well as extended opportunities for learning and collaboration as a result of the residential nature of the study weekends. Recent student feedback notes that one of the strengths of the course is the quick response rate to student queries. Students recognise that tutors are accessible and approachable and that effective feedback is provided via tutorial support. All students have access to Studynet, the University of Hertfordshire virtual learning platform. Within this platform they are able to access lecture slides, additional reading, learning activities, video materials and to interact electronically with their tutors and fellow students. Students have access to the range of additional online facilities available to all University of Hertfordshire students and are able to access journals and ebooks electronically via the University online library.

Assessment

Assessment takes a variety of forms to reflect the different learning styles of students and the range of skills and abilities required to undertake the ToD role. Assignment is via academic essays, child study, portfolio work, presentations, teaching placement, practical demonstration of audiological management and analysis of language.

Opportunities for further study/CPD

In addition to the initial training course Mary Hare also offers a range of short courses suitable for practising ToDs and classroom assistants. Please see the website for further information or email. All short courses can be

offered as bespoke training in your own workplace.

Early Years

In 2016-17 two postgraduate modules will be on offer:

Module 3: Working with families and other professionals – 30 credits

Module 4: The deaf baby with additional and multiple needs – 30 credits

These can be taken as independent modules or jointly to qualify for a PG Certificate in Educational Studies (Early Years and Deafness).

For those wishing to gain more experience in relation to Early Years without undertaking study at postgraduate level a short course is in development and will be available in 2016-17.

Opportunities to progress to MA

ToDs who have a recent qualification at PG Diploma level (awarded within the last 5 years) from either Mary Hare or other course providers are welcome to top up this qualification by undertaking the dissertation module.

BTEC Advanced Award for Teaching Assistants

This 5-day course is designed for those working with children with hearing and/or visual impairment and is delivered in partnership with the Berkshire Sensory Consortium.

To find out more about any of the courses on offer please see the website: maryharschool.org.uk/courses or email courses@maryhare.org.uk

Helen Nelson is Head of Courses at Mary Hare and Course Leader of the MA Educational Studies (Hearing Impairment).