

## Working with a notetaker in the classroom

### What does a notetaker do?

- A notetaker takes notes for deaf students who are not able to take their own notes due to the need to focus on an Auslan interpreter or to lipread/listen to the teachers or students.
- A notetaker will include all written and spoken information presented during the class, including group discussion, content written on the whiteboard, in a powerpoint or raised in a video.
- A notetaker will aim to organise this information so it is clear, easy to read and concise. This includes highlighting key terms or any points that have been emphasised.
- Notes may be written by hand or typed onto a laptop, depending on student and notetaker preference.
- A notetaker may sit next to the student, so the student is able to look at the notes as required. However, in some instances, the student may not want to sit next to the notetaker, and their preference should be respected.
- A notetaker is not a qualified teacher and should not be employed to assist students with their work.

### Occupational Health and Safety issues

- Notetaking can be a mentally challenging and physically demanding task. This is particularly true when material is complex or delivered quickly. It is therefore vital that notetakers be given regular breaks to enable them to catch up on the notes or have some much needed 'down time'.

### Tips for working with a notetaker

- Where possible, provide the notetaker with a course outline or session plan. This will allow them to become familiar with subject specific terminology and the aims and objectives of your class.
- At the start of a class, it is beneficial to give the notetaker a copy of your powerpoint presentation and any handouts you are using. This will allow them to add comments or highlight points raised during the presentation and draw the student's attention to these.
- Be mindful of OH&S issues and consider planning your lesson so there are natural and regular breaks.
- It is vital that the notetaker be considered part of your teaching team and building a relationship with this professional is beneficial for both yourself and the student. It will also enable you to plan and schedule breaks more effectively.
- Ensure the notetaker is able to view any video in advance. This is critical as videos often compress a lot of information in a very short timeframe and are therefore difficult to summarise in notes without adequate preparation.
- If the notetaker is working in a trade environment, consider any safety or clothing requirements (e.g. footwear) and advise the notetaker accordingly.
- The notetaker and student may meet just before a class to discuss the student's preferences for notes.

**Issues?**

- You should expect notetakers to be punctual and to be professional at all times.
- Notetakers are not students in your classroom and should not be encouraged to ask questions or participate in the class for their own learning, they may seek clarification on certain points but it is important to treat them as you would any other professional in your class.
- If you have any concerns, raise them with the notetaker in the first instance, or your DLO.

**Further information:** [www.deafconnected.com.au](http://www.deafconnected.com.au)