

Sensory support training at Mary Hare Courses

Helen Nelson, Sarah Davis and Joy Rosenberg describe how their courses are shaping the future

Postgraduate studies

Nearing our silver anniversary, the MA/MSc Deaf Education Studies Programme at Mary Hare, now partnered to the University of Hertfordshire, has trained more than 1000 professionals in the field – Educational Audiologists, Teachers of the Deaf and Early Years Interventionists. The ‘new’ normal of our blended learning programme, following two academic years impacted by Covid and based on consultations with students and stakeholders, will return to our acclaimed face-to-face residential weekends on the campus of a special school for the deaf, with a reduced schedule. Supplementary to the residential weekends, we will provide a greater proportion of online learning, which has been commended due to its flexibility, repeatability and benefit to learning and teaching. Learning and teaching on the programme include expert lectures and demonstrations, student-led seminars and work-based placements.

This academic year we are taking the opportunity to thank Emmanouela Terleksi, who has undertaken the role of external examiner for the programme for the last four years, for her input in her role as a critical friend to the programme. In the academic year 2021–22 we look

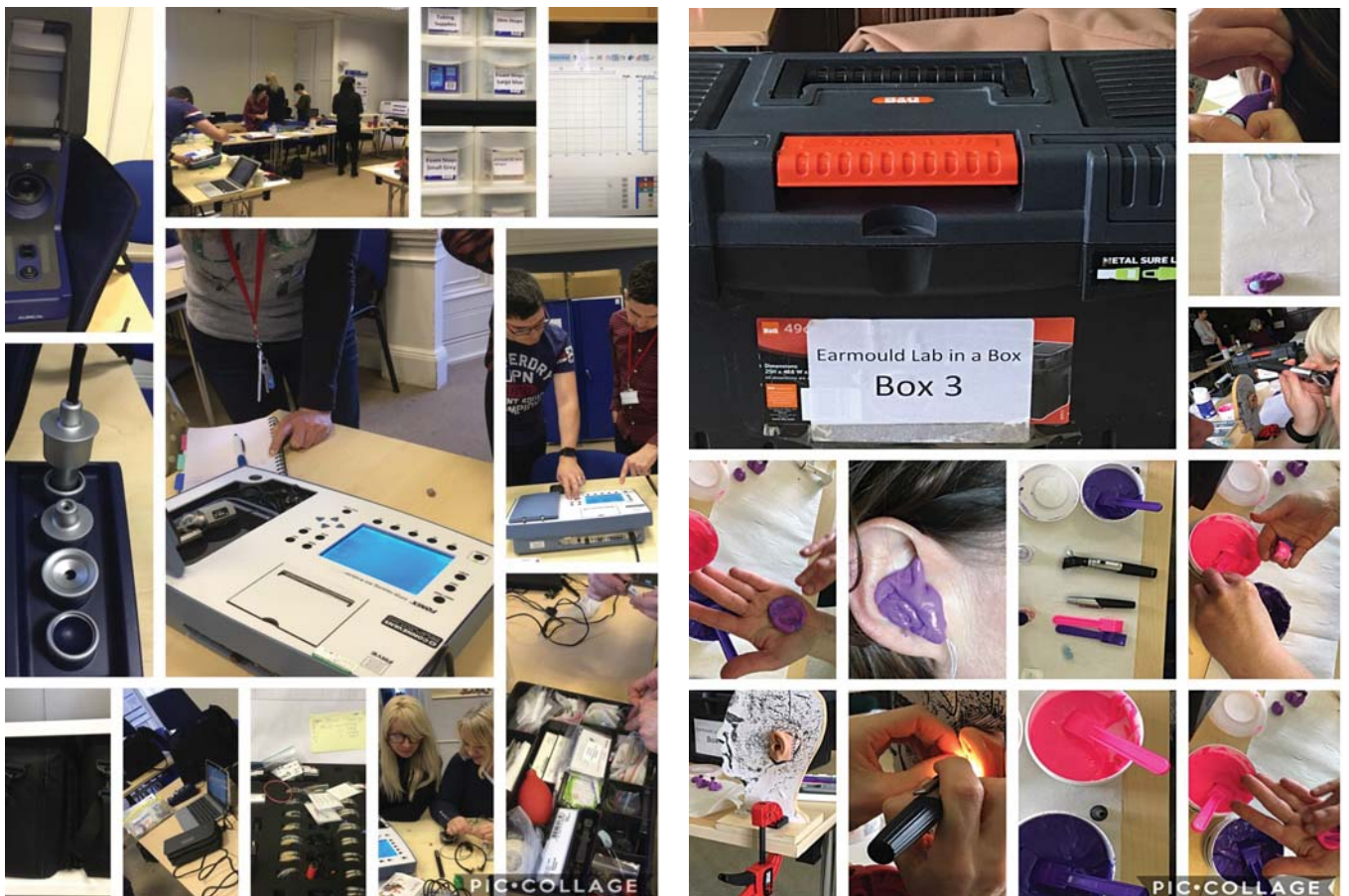
forward to welcoming Stuart Whyte to this role and to having his valuable input to the programme.

The postgraduate teaching team commends the endeavours of our students in pursuing their studies for the last two years with significant challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic. We are very proud of them and the resilience, motivation and fortitude that they have demonstrated.

Educational Audiologists

Early years focus in training can now be achieved via the Educational Audiology course with options to emphasise early years intervention for each assignment and the MSc dissertation. Interest during our first year of offering this option has included not only students from our previous PGDip in Early Years, but also others who might not otherwise have focused on further early years intervention, noting the pleasing expansion of expertise that it allows.

Educational Audiology modules can now be taken as stand-alone modules by Teachers of the Deaf, Clinical Audiologists, or other professionals as CPD. Interest in this and early years focus during our first year has been substantial and students have fed back:

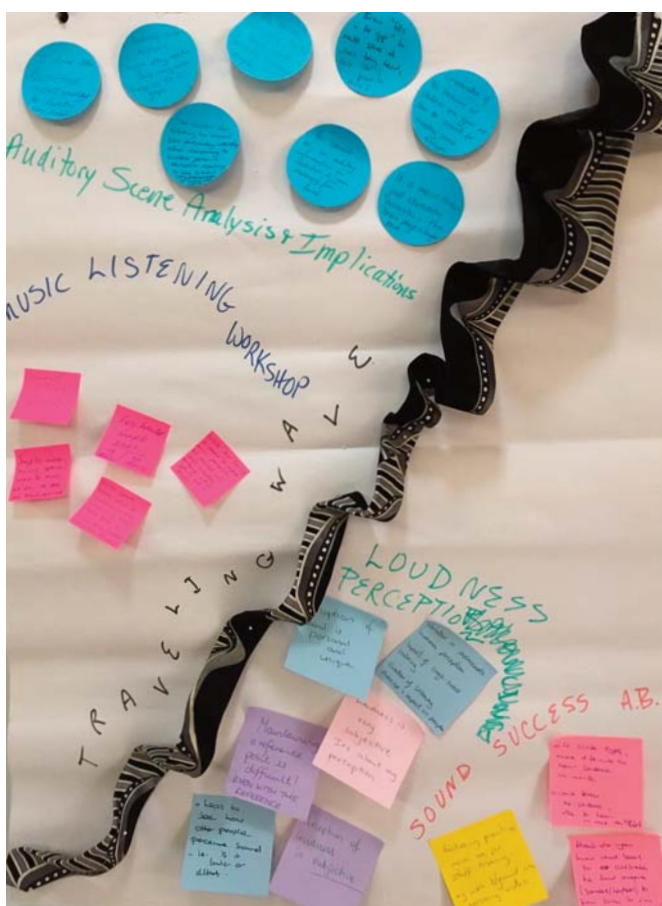




● It has been a fantastic eye-opener for me that I now feel is an even bigger priority than before in my work with early years children and their families. The knowledge is invaluable; I now have much better insight into the audiology world that supports the children I work with at such a critical age in their lives – the early years. It

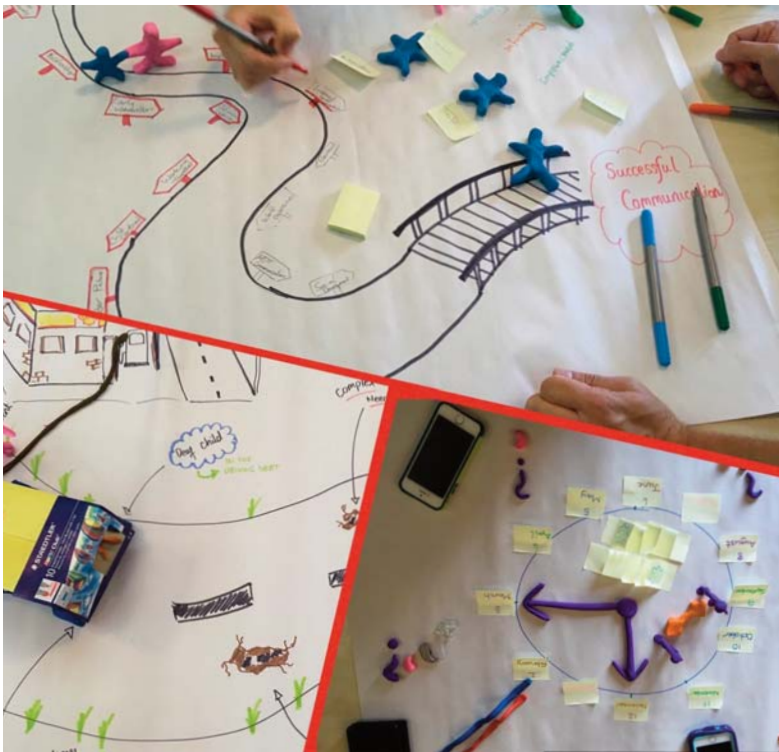
helped me to link the world of health and education before children start school.

- The course offers a readily usable wealth of helpful resources and tutors who are very responsive to student needs for enhancing the learner experience.
- As a deaf person, I appreciate the effort you have put into the course to make it accessible and I certainly feel that I am enjoying study this time around, more than I have in the past.
- Highly-rated really valuable assignments in terms of learning to use and apply the knowledge.



A pilot study on interprofessional cross-sector education took place in 2019–20. Four clinicians attended residential study weekends by invitation. The experience was very well received and resulted in presentations by cross-sector professionals for both British Society of Audiology and British Academy of Audiology events, remarking that Ed Aud modules are “a great foundation for the interprofessional working that will be encountered in job roles, eg, multidisciplinary team meetings and integrated receiver and technology management”. The follow-up study to the pilot was impeded by Covid but will be taken up once again in 2021–22.

An Educational Audiology qualification develops knowledge and critical reflection on scientific principles behind audiological practice and habilitation of children and young people who are d/Deaf, bridging health and education. Students critically reflect on the connection of evidence-based practice to their professional role and undertake work-based experience in a combination of NHS audiology clinics, and education-based audiology roles, supervised by well-qualified and experienced practitioners. Practical skills training includes British Society



Deaf in training, and this has been borne out by recent feedback from our stakeholders. As a result, we have adjusted the balance of the mixed-mode delivery of the course to a new model, with a more compacted regular two-day study weekend (Friday to Saturday) and enhanced online lectures and learning materials.

Producing students who have strong audiological skills and a deep understanding of language development, assessment and facilitation remains at the core of the qualification offered at Mary Hare/University of Hertfordshire. Moving forwards, to support the online learning aspects of our modules, we have now added many more links to the online 'how to' videos to demonstrate the practical aspects of delivery, such as a PARROT and SIN (Speech-in-Noise). From September 2021 we will also be using the Aurical HIT testbox alongside the standard Fonx FP35 testbox for our practical sessions to ensure that students have experience in the use of the most up-to-date equipment. In relation to language assessment and development, students will again have access to

of Audiology (BSA) certificates in basic audiometry and in impression-taking for over five-year-olds. Short courses offering just these certificates are also on offer.

Graduates are employed mainly in educational services and also auditory implant centres. Alumni from the British Association of Educational Audiologists provide support in terms of guest lecturing and volunteer discussion partners in case studies. Educational Audiologists can now be registered professionally with the Registration Council for Clinical Physiologists and two cohorts have graduated with automatic eligibility to do so. More information about the role and training can be found in the video 'Linking Up Listening Life' found at <https://www.maryhare.org.uk/professional-courses/postgraduate-courses> and also at <http://www.meshguides.org/guides/node/1892?n=1859>

Teachers of the Deaf

As with the postgraduate programme as a whole, the ToD course is adapting delivery for September 2021 onwards. The Covid-19 pandemic forced us to adapt resources quickly to a solely online learning format and many students have appreciated the opportunity to view pre-recorded and subtitled lectures in their own time and at their own pace. The key thing that students have missed is the opportunity for face-to-face collaborative learning and the informal opportunities for sharing experiences and ideas that the study weekends facilitate. At Mary Hare, we have always felt strongly that face-to-face live interactive learning is an important part of the development of Teachers of the

hands-on opportunities to explore, deliver and interpret relevant test materials and to use assessment data to inform planning.

A real strength of the teaching team continues to be the fact that many members of the course team work in both an academic role and as practitioners in the field, which supports the application of 'real world' contexts to the student's learning. This includes our Audiology Lead for ToD, Chris Haigh, who also leads the HI Team in Liverpool, and Lorna Gravenstede, our lead for Language Development, who also Heads the Burwood Centre for Childhood Deafness. This year we are pleased to welcome a new member of the team, Sarah Davis. Sarah is an alumna of both the ToD and Educational Audiology courses at Mary Hare, and in addition to her role within the postgraduate and BTEC courses, works as a QToD





that students have encountered during the current pandemic.

BTEC Teaching Assistants

The BTEC Level 3 accredited course is aimed at teaching assistants working with d/Deaf children and young people. The course is delivered by experienced Teachers of the Deaf/Educational Audiologists from both Mary Hare and our partners in the Berkshire Sensory Consortium and is the only externally-accredited course of its type.

Recent developments in online learning have seen the course develop over the past year. The course is now delivered online using a blended learning model, making it more accessible to a wide range of teaching assistants across the country. Students can complete the course via online access to taught sessions with support from their local mentor for the practical aspects of the course, irrespective of their geographical location, and we hope that this will facilitate wider access to this unique training opportunity.

The course is taught across five units (each unit comprises two study afternoons) and gives learners an opportunity to develop skills to support learning and development, to develop knowledge of supportive technology and to learn about barriers to listening in the classroom.

For more information, contact Courses@maryhare.org.uk or see www.maryhare.org.uk/professional-courses. We are very much looking forward to welcoming new and returning students across the various courses to the coming academic year, shaping sensory support as we secure the future for d/Deaf children and young people. ■

within the Leeds Sensory Service. Sarah is leading our year 1 Teaching and Learning Module and within this module is creating enhanced opportunities for our students to critically analyse their practice and act as reflective practitioners. Similarly, within our team of Teaching Placement supervisors we are able to employ supervisors from senior leadership backgrounds in a range of provision and modes of communication, and this academic year we have been able to add to and enhance this valuable team. The quality of support from the teaching team remains a strong feature of our student feedback and particularly so in the difficult situations



Helen Nelson, Head of Courses Department, Course Leader MA/PG Diploma Deaf Education Studies (Teacher of the Deaf)
Sarah Davis, BTEC Teaching Assistants Course Leader, Lecturer & Module Leader Postgraduate Courses

Joy Rosenberg, Postgraduate Programme Leader, MA/MSc Deaf Education Studies (Educational Audiology and Teacher of the Deaf courses)

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