



Lifelong Learning Programme

December 12 2013

Peter Llewelyn-Jones, president of efsli wrote the following reply on behalf of the efsliboard:

“The world is at last taking notice that untrained and, as in this case, incompetent interpreters are denying Deaf people access to important events that the rest of us take for granted. The use of an incompetent interpreter at Nelson Mandela’s memorial service is, of course, a scandal but perhaps an even greater scandal is that untrained and unqualified interpreters are used on a daily basis in most settings where, according to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Deaf people have the right to full and equal access, from schools and colleges to hospitals to courts of law. It isn’t the fault of the interpreters, the vast majority of whom are doing the best they can with inadequate access to appropriate training; instead it is the fault of the policy makers who often don’t think it is important that those who work to give Deaf people access to the essential services we take for granted are properly trained. It is pure coincidence that just seven days after this event, which has become a major news story across the world, efsli is at the European Parliament launching its ‘Learning Outcomes’ for interpreter training programmes. The initiative, which has been fully supported by the European Commission, is just the latest example of efsli’s commitment to raising the standards of interpreting across Europe and, with it, the ideal of full citizenship for Deaf people.”