



**terptree**™  
changing the world for deaf people



# MIDDLESEX UNIVERSITY

SHARON RANKIN  
DISABILITY OFFICER

**To allow deaf students to fully access the education offered at University it is essential to have qualified and experienced British Sign Language (BSL)/English Interpreters available. terptree provides all the BSL/English Interpreters for Middlesex University and in this case study; Disability Officer Sharon Rankin explains how the relationship benefits deaf students.**

“terptree were established as a supplier to the University when I arrived, but not to the level that they are now. We were initially using a mixture of terptree and other communication support workers, however the other support workers weren't up to the same high standard of Interpreters from terptree, so I switched everything over to terptree. Part of this outreach work included a concert suitable for children and adults with

autism, sensory and communication impairments and learning disabilities as well as individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind and partially sighted.

“I wanted a proper-level Communication Professionals who had enough Interpreter experience and the qualifications to deal with undergraduate level studies, or postgrad studies. So it was essentially the qualities that I know that terptree Interpreters offer.

“Those offering the interpreting support are responsible for going into the lecture and being able to translate the lecture and what is happening within the lecture environment, allowing the students actually engage and access the lecture.

***“In my previous experience trying to actually secure interpreters for a booking is usually quite difficult, so simply put one of the greatest benefits of having interpreters from terptree is how available they are to meet our demands. Because of the way terptree are organised, they have access to a wide range of interpreters and you know that they're all qualified to the right level.*”**

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*“I am able to fulfil bookings with really short notice. For instance, I can contact terptree and say ‘have you got someone?’ and they will find someone. So as you can imagine we use them for everything; any interviews that students have, I’m talking about at the stage of application, as well as students that are currently here.*”

“It is because of the services we can offer through terptree that deaf students are actually able to come here. They have the ability to access all their classes and attend appointments. And that’s integral because if they haven’t got an Interpreter then they can’t access any information and they might not be able to come to University.

“In the last couple of weeks they’ve been a Godsend, because we’ve got a high number of deaf students at this university that in turn means that we usually have a number of Interpreter’s onsite on a daily basis.

“This was really fortunate when we had a student attend an interview last week who was profoundly deaf and required an interpreter - but no arrangements had been made. I made a call to terptree and they made it happen to help the student, which was a lifesaver.



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“The interpreters are very flexible; they could’ve turned down an extra meeting or interview or said we hadn’t booked or ‘I’m too tired, I’ve been interpreting all day’, but their flexibility helping out at half a minute is really helpful.

*“These are the key reasons we use terptree; the standard of service and the availability, however there is more still. I’ve just read their newsletter and they’ve introduced a ‘Communication Professional of the month’, which in terms of the management structure is really nice, because it’s good to feel valued, I think that gives good recognition at their end- recognising their staff for what they do for clients like us; just showing appreciating for services delivered.*”

“Do you know that the owner of terptree, Victoria Williams came over here last year, just before Christmas at the end of the first term to meet all of our profoundly deaf students and had 1-1s with them, bought them coffee – and just to see how they were getting along. I think that’s going above and beyond in terms of service delivery; she didn’t charge for any of that and the purpose of that was to check if that the students had any problems they might not have shared with disability support, which I think is great.

“I would definitely recommend them; one of the main reasons being is because I do think they offer a professional service. I also feel apart from the fact that they’ll find you interpreters at short notice; there is the extra service, like Victoria’s offer to come in and give training to our staff. **They are an exceptional organisation.**”



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