



JE/CW

11 January 2011

Huw Vaughan Thomas  
Chair  
NRCPD  
c/o Mersey House  
Mandale Park  
Belmont  
Durham DH1 1TH

Dear Huw

Since May 2009 we have been reviewing our lip speaking, notetaking and speech-to-text reporting qualifications, working with stakeholders to improve the qualifications.

Our initial plan was to complete the review of those units in winter 2009/10 and launch replacements in May 2010 for delivery from September 2010. When those deadlines passed we rescheduled our plans to prepare the replacement qualifications for accreditation to the QCF ready for a January 2011 start. Unfortunately we did not reach that position.

As discussions to achieve agreement on a way forward continued in last month, Ofqual unexpectedly offered awarding bodies the opportunity to extend the accreditation for certain qualifications that were due to expire in December 2010, if they met certain tests. The offer gave our discussions with the professional associations and other stakeholders a very useful focus and energy for the debate.

Association of Lip Speakers gave its support to continue with the lip speaking qualification. On that basis we agreed to make the application to extend its accreditation. Discussions with representatives from Association of Notetaking Professionals and Association of Verbatim Speech to Text Reporters resulted, in each case, with general agreement that the gap between the qualifications and the needs as defined by the associations was too great to simply extend provision.

That means we currently offer no professional level notetaking or STTR qualifications, which will have an immediate impact on eligibility for NRCPD registration.

Our discussions with stakeholders have revealed that a major barrier to improving the effectiveness of our qualifications in each of these three disciplines is the lack of agreed professional standards.

We have made a commitment to work with each of the associations toward achieving occupational standards in each of the disciplines. Those standards will make sure practitioners are skilled and safe to work with deaf people. Discussions continue and we hope, over the next few weeks, to agree a programme of partnership work with that aim.

If we are successful in implementing that programme of work it will create a firm foundation, on which we can build strong qualifications that carry the support and respect of users, practitioners and other stakeholders.

These are exciting pieces of work that should lead to improved availability of communication professionals who will improve everyday accessibility for the thousands of deaf people in our society who use accessible English.

I'm sure you will want NRCPD to be involved in the work, so I will keep you up to date with developments.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Jim Edwards". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Jim Edwards  
Chief Executive

**Please address further correspondence to:**

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