



## Strategies to Support Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing to access lessons via WebEx, Teams or other Interactive Platforms

The School of Special Educational Needs: Sensory has produced this document to highlight important strategies teachers need to be aware of if they are intending to deliver lesson content through any online, interactive platform such as WebEx or Teams.

If a teacher is intending to deliver lessons to targeted groups via an interactive online platform at any time, it is vital they understand the accommodations that should be put in place to ensure students with a hearing loss have the best possible chance of accessing the content on an equitable basis.

### **SSEN: S recommends the following strategies:**

Have the camera positioned so your face is no more than one metre away and your whole face is clearly visible.

Sit facing front on, looking directly at the camera—sitting even slightly at an angle will distort lip patterns and affect the ability of the student with a hearing loss to read your lips effectively.

Always face the camera and if possible speak slightly slower than you would normally to ensure the student with a hearing loss can see and process your lip patterns through the screen.

Check the students can all hear clearly before beginning and check for ongoing auditory access at regular intervals during the lesson.

Do not look down or look away from the camera while speaking.

Do not hold anything up in front of the camera which will obscure your face. If you need to do this, then do not speak at the same time

Do not position the camera facing windows or with your back to windows, as this will put your face in shadow and make speech reading impossible.

Try to ensure there are no background distractions (if using Teams, utilise the background blurring option)

Always utilise the live captioning option if using Teams for online lessons.

If students are speaking to you during the online lesson, always restate what they say as the student with the hearing loss may miss this information without access to speech reading cues.

Allow the student with a hearing loss extra time to process what you have said and if asking questions, give him/her extra thinking/processing time before they answer. Remember there may be a lag between you saying it, the student receiving it and processing it before he/she can answer.

If the student requires an Auslan interpreter the camera should be positioned so the student can see both you and the interpreter clearly. The top half of the interpreter will need to be in clear sight by the student at all times.

**If you have any queries or would like further information on how to support students with a hearing loss access their studies using interactive platforms or in the home context please contact SSEN: S on: 9402 6409 or [sensory@education.wa.edu.au](mailto:sensory@education.wa.edu.au)**