

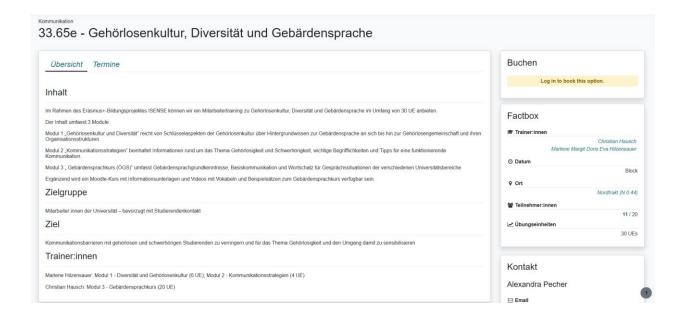
# SONAR Training Program - Piloting Report

#### NATIONAL PILOT REPORT - AUSTRIA

#### 1. Introduction

ZGH's staff training took place during February 2025. This date was chosen because it was after the exams at the end of the winter semester in January and before the start of the summer semester in March. There are no lectures during February (holiday for the students), so the university staff has less student-related work and a more flexible schedule.

We also managed to include our staff training in the Personnel Development offer of our university, so that it would appear in their programme and would also be officially recognized by the university (see screenshot of Personnel Development page for our staff training "Deaf Culture, Diversity and Sign Language"):















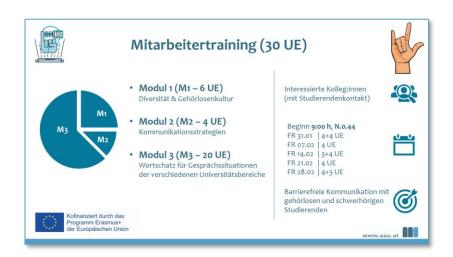








Furthermore, we presented a slide for the training during the faculty conference of our faculty (Faculty of Arts, Humanities & Education) on November 15 and also sent out e-mail information to the staff, based on a flyer:



There was a lot of interest in the training; finally, we started with twelve participants (some people who had already registered or shown interest in attending could not participate after all, due to illness or other obligations). Most of them were university staff who may have contact with Deaf/hard-of-hearing students (from the office of the rectorate, from the office of the dean, the bursar's office, the library, the e-learning department, the Student Union, the Department of Instructional and School) but also one PhD Psychology student from Luxembourg.

The training was held by two teachers:

- Marlene Hilzensauer (Associate Professor, hearing) for the theoretical inputs
- Christian Hausch (Certified Austrian Sign Language teacher, Deaf) for the Austrian Sign Language course

The administrative work/dissemination and communication was done by Alexandra Pecher.

The training took place on five Fridays from January 31 to February 28 in the seminar room N.0.44 of ZGH:

- January 31 (8 units)
- February 7 (4 units)
- February 14 (7 units)
- February 21 (4 units)
- February 28 (7 units)





















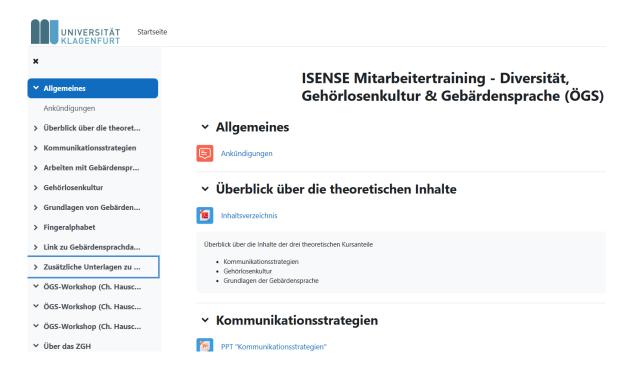
## 2. General participants' information

The theoretical contents were based on the three modules (PPT slides) provided by TUCEP:

- **Module 1: Deaf Culture and Diversity Management**
- Module 2: Skills and Strategies to communicate with Deaf people
- Module 3: National Sign Language Basics

The English original PPTs were translated into German and adapted to Austria and Austrian Sign Language where necessary. These slides served as the basic structure of the course, which was then supplemented with materials used for other lectures and presentations on Deaf Awareness, Deaf Studies and Deaf Culture, as well as newly developed content.

The three German PPTs as well as additional materials (online courses produced with Rise 360 and Replay 360, scientific articles on Deaf Culture, links to relevant videos and a video presentation on Deaf Awareness, Communication Strategies and Sign Languages, Austrian Sign Language videos) were available online to all participants in a Moodle course hosted by Universität Klagenfurt:



As the contents were split into two parts (theoretical input and Austrian Sign Language training) with two different teachers, we decided to change the sequence of the original three modules. In order to prepare the participants for the first contact with their Deaf teacher, we started with Module 2: Communication Strategies.





















The training consisted of three days with theoretical and sign language input (morning and afternoon) and two days with sign language training only (morning). The training was limited to four units at the most for each input.

The following table gives an overview of the contents:

Date	Units	Morning	Afternoon
Jan. 31	4 + 4 Units	Communication Strategies	Austrian Sign Language
Feb. 7	4 Units	Austrian Sign Language	
Feb. 14	3 + 4 Units	Deaf Culture and Diversity	Austrian Sign Language
Feb. 21	4 Units	Austrian Sign Language	
Feb. 28	4 + 3 Units	Austrian Sign Language	Sign Language Basics (Theory)

# **Theoretical Input (10 Units):**

MODULE "Communication Strategies"	CONTENT		
Day 1 (January 31, 2025) 4 Units	<ul> <li>INTRODUCTION</li> <li>How many d/Deaf people are there?</li> <li>How do you recognize d/Deaf people?</li> <li>Deafness is invisible         <ul> <li>Misunderstandings</li> </ul> </li> <li>Stereotypes of d/Deaf people and prejudices</li> <li>No homogeneous group</li> <li>Name signs</li> </ul>		





















# • PPT ISENSE Module 2 + FURTHER INFORMATION

## • Different Kinds of Hearing Loss

- o Conductive hearing loss
- Sensorineural hearing loss
- o Perceptual hearing loss
- Mixed hearing loss
- o What does hearing loss sound like?

## • Technical hearing aids

- o Hearing aids
- Hearing implants
- Cochlear implant (CI)
- o Induction coil

#### Deafness

- o Prelingual vs. postlingual
- Terminology: "Deaf", "deaf", "deaf and dumb"
- Different views of deafness

## Deafblindness

o Lorm alphabet/Tactile sign language

## • Communication Strategies

- Nonverbal communication
- Visual perception and eye contact
- Getting d/Deaf people's attention
- Lip-reading
- Hand alphabet
- How to work with sign language interpreters
- Written communication
- Writing systems for sign languages

## Glossing and examples

- o Pointing gestures (indices)
- o Possessive
- Agreement verbs





















MODUL "Deaf Culture"	CONTENT		
	PPT ISENSE Module 1 + FURTHER     INFORMATION		
	<ul> <li>Reasons for hearing loss and consequences</li> <li>Legal provisions</li> <li>Deaf organisations:         <ul> <li>"World Federation of the Deaf"</li> <li>"European Union of the Deaf"</li> <li>"Austrian Deaf Association"</li> </ul> </li> <li>Children's rights</li> </ul>		
Day 2 (February 14) 3 Units	<ul> <li>Deaf Culture:</li> <li>Deaf culture and sign language         <ul> <li>A linguistic minority</li> </ul> </li> <li>Characteristics of Deaf Culture</li> <li>Differences and similarities between Deaf Culture and Hearing Culture</li> <li>High-Context culture vs. Low-Context culture</li> <li>Collectivistic vs. individualistic culture</li> <li>Exchange of information</li> <li>Politeness in Austrian Sign Language</li> <li>Direct vs. impolite</li> <li>"Deaf Time": Saying goodbye takes a long time</li> <li>Customs, conventions and traditions</li> <li>Differences in etiquette</li> <li>What you should not do</li> <li>Important symbols of Deaf Culture</li> </ul>		
	<ul> <li>The Deaf Community</li> <li>How to become a part of the Deaf Community</li> </ul>		
	<ul> <li>Important terminology:         <ul> <li>Audism / Deafhood / Deaf Gain</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
	<ul> <li>"Stupid questions" that d/Deaf people get asked</li> </ul>		





















MODUL "Sign languages and their structure"	CONTENT		
	PPT ISENSE Module 3 + FURTHER     INFORMATION		
Day 3 (February 28) 3 Units	Sign Languages  Many different sign languages Sign language dialects Sign language families International Sign GESTUNO Hand alphabet  Iconicity Iconicity in spoken languages Iconic signs Language change Iconic ≠ immediately understandable transparent – semi-transparent – not transparent Loss of iconicity because of language change Iconicity is not universal Iconicity ≠ concrete How to represent forms: handshape vs. "Tracing"		
	Elements of signs     Building blocks and rules		





















- Simultaneity in sign languages
- **PHONOLOGY**
- Sign play with sign parameters
- **MORPHOLOGY**
- Classifiers
  - Abstract classifiers
  - Plural classifiers
  - Size and shape classifiers
    - straight
    - round
  - Instrumental classifiers
  - Handling classifiers
    - Touch classifiers
  - Body (part) classifiers
  - "Tracing" classifiers
- **SYNTAX**
- Questions
  - Yes-No questions
  - Wh-questions
- Basic sentence structure: SOV
- Time specifications
- Negation
  - o NEIN<sub>1</sub>
  - o NEIN<sub>2</sub>
  - o NEIN<sub>3</sub>
  - Negation elements
- Welcoming a person and introducing yourself

The Austrian Sign Language course started out with general basics for the first three days, then focused on the specific requirements of the participants. The training incorporated vocabulary, sentences and dialogues that were typical for communication situations at the university in general, as well as vocabulary for specific departments. In order to teach realistic dialogues, we had asked earlier to send us vocabulary items and sentences from typical work situations. Some of the participants sent us respective lists (e.g., the library) which were then used to base the specific training on.













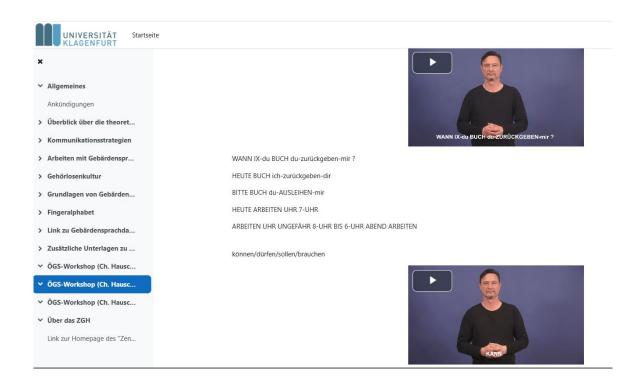








The Deaf teacher, Christian Hausch, filmed the basics as well as the specific vocabulary/sentences and uploaded them to the Moodle course (see screenshot for an example):



He signed each vocabulary item/sentence twice, so that you could look at it first and then watch it more thoroughly the second time. This was received very well by the participants (see evaluation), as it is very hard for sign language beginners to remember all the signs shown in class. Having the option to look them up as often as you want was regarded as very helpful.

We also put links to two sign language databases into the Moodle course, so that the participants could look up more signs on their own:

- o Our own online sign dictionary "LedaSila" (Lexical Database for Sign Languages) for Austrian Sign Language, which also includes the variations in the Austrian Sign Language dialects
- o The multilingual sign language dictionary "Spreadthesign", where ZGH has been a partner since 2013, responsible for the Austrian Sign Language part

The Austrian Sign Language course was taught on five days for 4 units each.





















The following tables give an overview of the contents of the Austrian Sign Language training:

MODULE "AUSTRIAN SIGN LANGUAGE (OEGS)" Part 1	CONTENT			
Day 1 (January 31)	Greetings (HELLO, GOOD MORNING, GOOD DAY, GOOD EVENING, GOOD NIGHT, BYE, etc.)  Signed sentences: Do you understand? I don't understand. Please sign it again.  Pointing gestures (Deixis) Signs: DEAF, HEARING  Yes-no questions with respective facial expression  Introducing yourself Hand alphabet Name sign  Signs: WHAT, WHERE  First sentences: I am Deaf/hearing. I am (profession). What is your name? What are you? What is your profession? Where do you work?  First text: Introducing yourself (hearing/Deaf, name, name sign, profession, department)  First dialogue (asking about a person)			





















<ul> <li>How are you?         <ul> <li>Well</li> <li>Not well</li> <li>Etc.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Practising dialogues (asking how someone is)</li> </ul>
<ul><li>Agreement verbs:</li><li>HELP</li><li>GIVE</li><li>SHOW</li><li>BORROW</li></ul>
<ul> <li>Requests         <ul> <li>Please help me</li> <li>Please give me</li> <li>Signs for different objects</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul> <li>Practising dialogues (asking for something, thanking the person)</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>Possessive pronouns</li> <li>Practising dialogues (Is that yours? etc.)</li> </ul>

MODULE "OEGS" – Part 2	CONTENT		
	Repetition of Day 1		
Day 2 (February 7)	Numbers and practice     Phone numbers     ISBN numbers     Room numbers		
	<ul> <li>Days of the week and practice</li> <li>Months and practice</li> <li>Dates</li> </ul>		





















Time of the day
o What time is it?
o I will arrive at (time).
().
Making appointments
• Making appointments
Wh-questions and respective facial
expression
<ul> <li>Practising questions</li> </ul>
- '
Modal verbs and practice
1 Todat Volbo and practice
Negation and practice
Negation and practice
NOT + verb
o NEED-NOT
o CANNOT, etc.
<ul> <li>Adjectives and practice</li> </ul>
o Size
o Colours
<ul> <li>Negation of adjectives</li> </ul>
o magazinas

MODULE "OEGS" – Part 3	CONTENT				
Day 3 (February 14)	<ul> <li>Repetition of Day 2</li> <li>LEFT, RIGHT, UP, DOWN and practice</li> <li>Giving directions         <ul> <li>How to get to someone's office</li> <li>How to get to the buffet</li> <li>Where is the bathroom?</li> </ul> </li> <li>BREAK         <ul> <li>Classifiers</li> <li>Spatial arrangements with classifiers</li> <li>University buildings</li> <li>Where to find a book?</li> </ul> </li> <li>Giving orders</li> </ul>				























MODULE "OEGS" – Part 4	CONTENT		
Day 4 (February 21)	<ul><li>Repetition of Day 3</li><li>Practising dialogues</li></ul>		
	New vocabulary (university-related)		

MODULE "OEGS" – Part 5	CONTENT			
Day 5 (February 28)	<ul> <li>Repetition of Day 4</li> <li>Practising dialogues</li> <li>New vocabulary (university-related)</li> </ul>			













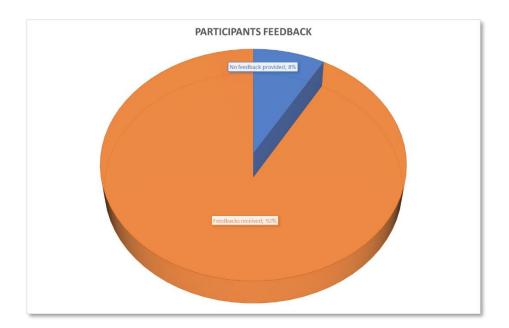




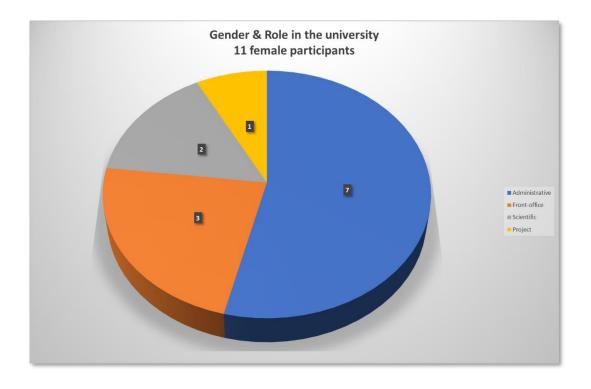




## 3. Evaluation of the training course/module



From the twelve participants we received eleven completed ISENSE feedback questionnaires.



Of these 11, all were female. As to their background, some of them marked two options. The majority (7) came from the administration, followed by the front-office (3). There also were two scientists and one project collaborator.











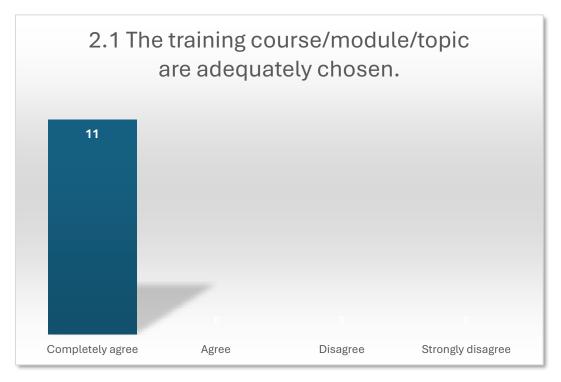




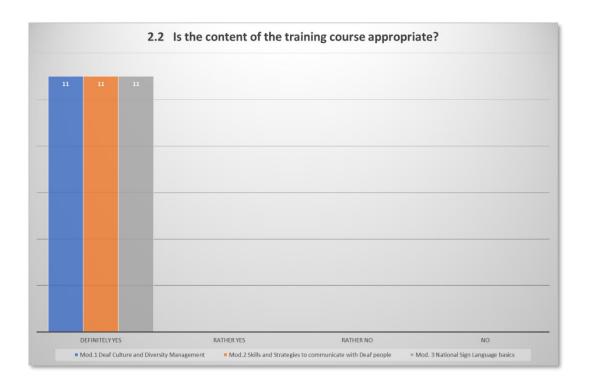








Of the 11 feedbacks, all eleven completely agreed that the course modules and topics were adequately chosen.



They also definitely agreed that the content of the training course was appropriate.























The participants seem to agree that the two modules on communications strategies and sign language basics are more relevant to real work situations; 10 out of 11 marked "Definitely yes" for both topics, one person "Rather yes". For the other module, Deaf Culture, seven thought that it was very relevant to their work ("Definitely yes"), four marked "Rather yes".











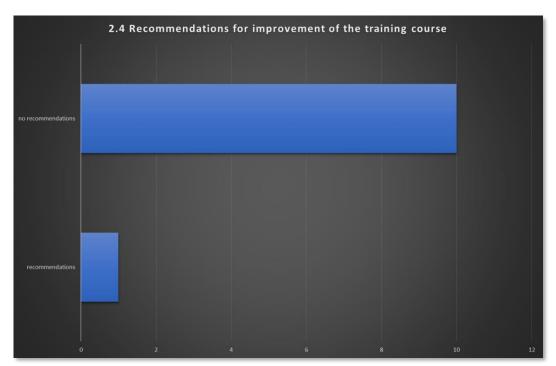












There was one recommendation, namely to split the trainings into half-days. Three people used the recommendation slot to give positive feedbacks mentioning the informative, interactive and inspiring character and the supportive video material.



Of the 11 responses, nine agreed completely that the training course is feasible in the practice, two agreed.











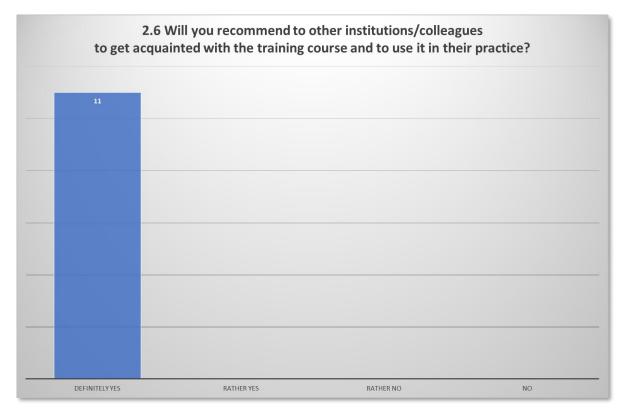












Eleven people marked that they will recommend the training course to other institutions or colleagues. In fact, we have already been asked if it would be possible to repeat the training at a future date, as e.g., some technical staff from the Central Computing Services were prevented from participating due to work obligations.





















## 4. Evaluation of the training sessions

Nine out of eleven participants evaluated the training sessions as "Very good" (5). Two people gave a 4 and 3 to "Preliminary information about the event", although we used the official channels (via the faculty meeting and the Personnel Development Department) to announce the training. Very useful was a last-minute e-mail reminder to all administrative/scientific staff, which resulted in two more participants.

One person evaluated the web-platform (Moodle course) with 4 ("Good"). We assume that this is related to an oral recommendation by one participant to upload the sign language videos to a private YouTube channel instead of the Moodle course as she could barely access them from home because of a poor internet connection and the data load of the HD videos.

Two people evaluated the overall course with 1 (i.e., "Not good"). As this does not fit in with the very positive feedback to the earlier questions and the very positive comments (there are no negative comments at all), we think that this might be the result of the Austrian grading system from 1 to 5, where 1 is the best grade ("Very good"). There have already been some other cases where people did not read or remember the feedback instructions and were prompted by their habituation to the grading system to tick the wrong column. Our recommendation is to use written evaluations (from "Very good" to "Not good") instead of just numbers (with the respective instructions above) in the future, in order to avoid such situations.

EVALUATION OF THE TRAINING SESSIONS	not good				very good
	1	2	3	4	5
Preliminary information about the event		1	1		9
Event room/ Event web-platform	2			1	8
Registration support	2				9
Materials provided	2				9
Quality of speaker/s	2				9
Quality of the whole content on the agenda	2				9
Did the event met your expectations	2				9
The topics addressed in the event were very interesting	2				9
The topics addressed in the event were very useful	2				9
In Austria "1" is the best grade you can get. We often see that people are used to understand scales 1-5 always identical to school grades. The two feedbacks filled in this way were highly positive in all other questions. Therefore, we strongly believe that the scale was misunderstood.			We communicated the course through the Personnel Development Department and sen a reminder via e-mail to all members of administrative and scientific staff a few days before the first session, where two participants decided spontaneously to join.		





















Four participants offered no further comments. The other seven written comments in the questionnaire stressed the positive attitude and the usefulness of the training:

- "The training offered valuable insights in the history of Deaf culture. Practising communication with Deaf people was very helpful. The combination of theoretical and practical inputs made learning very interesting and full of variety."
- "Free access to course material for all interested people inhouse would be nice."
- "Everything great! Many thanks to Christian, that he took the effort to record all words and phrases that came up during the course. Every sign language workshop started by repeating what was learned in the session before. The theoretical inputs were presented and brightened up by actual and funny videos that I will definitely keep in mind."
- "A great training to learn new skills. It will definitely help a lot further in communicating with Deaf or hard-of-hearing students."
- "Amazing what can happen within 5 weeks"
- "Video-material for the course is GREAT thank you!"
- "Excellent (!) videos provided in Moodle by Mr. Hausch"

As the training was part of the internal Personnel Development programme, the participants had to fill in their feedback questionnaire as well. We received the analysis of this very positive feedback, which supports our assumption that the lower values reported above were due to a confusion with the Austrian grading system. This second feedback from nine participants shows that they were really satisfied with the form of our training:



















Welchen Kurs haben Sie besucht?	Bewerten Sie bitte die fachliche und methodische/di daktische Kompetenz der ReferentInnen. [Fachliche Kompetenz]	Bewerten Sie bitte die fachliche und methodische/di daktische Kompetenz der ReferentInnen [Methodische/ Didaktische Kompetenz]	Anmerk ungen:	Bewerten Sie bitte den persönlichen Nutzen der Inhalte. [Persönlicher Nutzen]	Anmerkungen:	Konnten Sie Anregungen für Ihre berufliche Tätigkeit mitnehmen? [Anregungen mitgenommen]	Anmerk ungen:		Anmerk	Bewerten Sie bitte die zur Verfügung gestellten Unterlagen/Skriptum. (NUR bewerten - wenn es Unterlagen gegeben hat) [Unterlagen/Skriptum]	Anmerkungen:	Besonders gefallen hat mir.	Weniger gefallen hat mir:	Folgendes hätte ich bei der Veranstaltung noch gerne gehabt:	Was können wir Ihrer Meinung nach in der Internen Weiterbildung verbessern?	Summe aller Noten	Anzahl Feedback (FB)	Summe Noten / Anzahl FB
Kommunikation: Gehörlosenkultur, Diversität und Gebärdensprache (33,65e)	1	1		1		1		1		1		alles	dass die Veranstaltung an 4 aufeinanderfolgenden Freitagen stattfand, war schwerig. Ich hätte es besser gefunden, wenn die Termin über das Semester verteilt sattgefunden hätten.			6	6	1,0
Kommunikation: Gehörlosenkultur, Diversität und Gebärdensprache (33.65e)	1	1		1		1		1		1						6	6	1,0
Kommunikation: Gehörlosenkultur, Diversität und Gebärdensprache (33.65e)	1	1		1		1		1		1						6	6	1,0
Kommunikation: Gehörlosenkultur, Diversität und Gebärdensprache (33.65e)	1	1		1		1		1		1		Der gesamte Workshop und im speziellen die zur Verfügung gestellten Videos zum Üben				6	6	1,0
Kommunikation: Gehörlosenkultur, Diversität und Gebärdensprache (33.65e)	1	1		1	Ich habe sehr viel neues gelemt und werde dies weiter mitnehmen in die Kommunikation	1		1		1	Die Videos sind wirklich toll gemacht und helfen einem ungemein weiter.	Das Miteinander und der Austausch unter den verschiedensten Abteilungen.	Es gibt nichts zu bemängeln			6	6	1,0
Kommunikation: Gehörlosenkultur, Diversität und Gebärdensprache (33.65e)	1	1		1		1		1		1		Die angenehme Arbeits- und Lematmosphäre Das auf jede Frage konkret eingegangen wurde				6	6	1,0
Kommunikation: Gehörlosenkultur, Diversität und Gebärdensprache (33,65e)	1	1		2		1		1		1		Wie die Referent*innen den Kurs aufgebaut haben, und wie mit Humor die Inhalte vermitteit wurden + dass wir nicht nur im Raum geblieben sind, sondern auch um neues Vokabular zu lemen einfach Mal durch die Uni gelaufen sind. Auch hat mir gefallen, dass voherige Lerninhalte wiederholt wurden!!	Zuvel Vokabular auf einmal ab einem gewissen Punkt, aber da liegt auch Eigenverantwortung die Kursinhalte daheim zu üben, was gut möglich war, da alles auf Videos von unserem sy mpathischen Lehrer aufgezeichnet wurden.	1	Alles super.	7	6	1,2
Kommunikation: Gehörlosenkultur, Diversität und Gebärdensprache (33,65e)	1	1		1		1		1		1	Die Videos zu den Gebärden- Vokabeln auf Moodle waren eine hervorragende Idee. Vielen Dank für die Mühe.	dass der Kurs auf unsere Bedürfnisse abgestimmt war, man für einen wichtlige Vokabel in Gebärdensprache gelernt hat - gleichzeitig wurden einem beim Gang durch die Uni noch allgemeine Begriffe wie Notausgang ect. erklärt, wenn man gerade daran vorbeikam.				6	6	1,0
Kommunikation: Gehörlosenkultur, Diversität und Gebärdensprache (33,65e)	1	1		1		1		1		1		Dass der Kurs auf uns abgestimmt wurde (Abteilungen) und die gute Kommunikation.				6	6	1,0



## Some explanations of the German content:

COLUMN 1:  Please rate the expertise and the methodical/didactic competence of the teachers [Expertise]	We received only 1 ("Very good")
COLUMN 2:  Please rate the expertise and the methodical/didactic competence of the teachers [methodical/didactic competence]	We received only 1 ("Very good")
COLUMN 3: Comments	No comments
COLUMN 4: Please rate the personal value you got out of the training	8 participants rated the personal value as 1 ("Very good"), one person as 2 ("Good")
COLUMN 5: Comments	One comment:  "I learned a lot of new things and will take that with me into communication"
COLUMN 6: Did you get any impulses for your work?	We received only 1 ("Very good")
COLUMN 7: Comments	No comments
COLUMN 8: Please rate the organisation and the training schedule	We received only 1 ("Very good")
COLUMN 9: Comments	No comments
COLUMN 10: Please rate the training materials.	We received only 1 ("Very good")
COLUMN 11: Comments	There were two comments:  • "The videos are really great and an immense help."





















	<ul> <li>"The sign language videos in the</li> </ul>
	Moodle course were a great help. Many
	thanks for the effort."
	There were seven comments:
	"Everything"
	<ul> <li>"The whole training and especially the</li> </ul>
	videos that were provided for
	practising"
	<ul> <li>"The social togetherness and the</li> </ul>
	exchange between different
	departments."
	<ul> <li>"The pleasant working and learning</li> </ul>
	atmosphere; that all questions were
	directly answered"
	"How the teachers structured the
	course and how they managed to
COLUMN 12:	convey contents through humour and
I particularly liked	that we did not just stay in the room but
The second of th	also walked through the university to
	learn new signs. What I also liked was
	the repetition of earlier course
	contents!!"
	"That the course matched our
	requirements, that we learned signs
	that were important for what we do –
	simultaneously, we learned general
	vocabulary like "emergency exit" when
	we passed it on a walk through the
	university."
	"That the course matched our
	requirements (our departments) and
	the good communication."





















	There were three comments:					
	"That the training was held on four					
	consecutive Fridays. I would have					
	preferred to have it spread out over a					
	whole semester."					
201111111	"Nothing to criticise"					
COLUMN 13:	"Too much vocabulary at once from a					
What I liked less	certain point in time, but there is also					
	one's individual responsibility to					
	practise the course contents at home					
	which was entirely possible as our					
	likeable teacher had recorded					
	everything on video."					
COLUMN 14:	, ,					
What I would have liked in addition	No comments					
COLUMN 15:						
How could the Personnel Development be	One comment:					
improved?	<ul><li>"Everything fine".</li></ul>					
•	01: 01: 0 4 114					
COLUMN 16:	• 8 times 6 (i.e., 6 x 1, "Very good")					
Sum of all grades	• 1 time 7 (i.e., 5 x 1/"Very good"					
	+ 1 x 2/ "Good")					
COLUMN 17:	6					
Number of feedbacks						
COLUMN 18:	One 1,2 (i.e., close to "Very good")					
Sum of all grades divided by the number of	<ul><li>all others 1 ("Very good")</li></ul>					
feedbacks (average grading)	attotilois i ( voi y good )					
	I					

















