

Lipreading teachers would often travel long distances to meet to exchange teaching material and provide mutual support. The need for a professional association was finally realised when ATLA was set up in 1977. Later, ATLA became a registered charity.

ATLA was born out of the firm belief that 'lipreading' belonged within education because it was important for the self-esteem of people with an acquired deafness to feel that they themselves were tackling their situation and working on their skills of lipreading and communication.

A City Lit trained lipreading teacher set up the lipreading teacher training course in Manchester, and graduates from that course were active in the setting up of teacher training courses in Scotland. In 2012 a lipreading teacher training course was set up in Wales. The four courses are now all recognised as 'ATLA approved' and subscribe to modules set out in the newly accredited City and Guilds 'Principles and Practice of Lipreading Teaching' unit no. L/504/0231.

Our Vision and Purpose

Vision: To create a world where lipreading classes are available to all who need them

Purpose: To provide a professional and recognised association for teachers of lipreading to adults, and to work in partnership with others to ensure that everyone challenged by hearing loss has access to lipreading classes and appropriate support

Our Aims

To raise the profile and priority of lipreading, and of those who are qualified to teach it, throughout the UK and beyond.

To generate awareness of the benefits of lipreading, related communication skills and tactics.

To promote understanding of the needs of people with hearing loss who want to use speech and/or lipreading to communicate.

To always promote continuous professional development so that the highest quality of lipreading teaching is available.

Our work is guided by the following values and principles

Confidentiality: We will respect the confidentiality of learners and colleagues at all times

Respect: We will embrace the principle of respect for individuality

Ethics: We will maintain ethical and professional standards at all times

Discrimination: We will embrace equality and diversity ensuring that our teaching practices are inclusive and accessible

Openness: We will be open, transparent and accountable in all that we do

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ATLA Publications and Activities

Catchword, the workbook of ATLA is distributed to all members twice a year. It is the only publication specifically for Teachers of Lipreading. **Catchword** is also a forum for the exchange of ideas and opinions. It reports on developments relevant to the teacher's work and contains suggestions for lesson material.

An **e-bulletin** is distributed to all members six times a year. It comprises items of current interest to members, reports on meetings and training days and notifies members of forthcoming events. It is also used as a vehicle for communication throughout the Association.

Regular regional meetings and training days are held for ATLA members on subjects relating to all aspects of acquired deafness.

Information

The ATLA Classes Information Officer keeps records of members and their classes, forwarding details of classes to anyone requiring information regarding the provision of lipreading tuition in their area. E-mail: classes@lipreading.org.uk

ATLA has its own website which includes a wealth of information for professionals or the public to access; has details of many lipreading classes throughout the country; has a discussion forum for members to log onto and a members only section full of material appropriate to lipreading teachers and their work. Go to www.atlalipreading.org.uk

Besides this leaflet, two other useful and informative leaflets are available:-

Lipreading – an aid to communication and
Basic Tactics to Improve Communication

These are available, free of charge, from the website.

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Information Leaflet

A Brief History

One of the earliest known lipreading teacher training courses in the UK was set up by the RNID (now Action on Hearing Loss) after the Second World War because there were a large number of war-deafened ex-servicemen who needed lipreading tuition. By 1970, before ATLA was formed, the training of lipreading teachers was being undertaken at the City Lit Centre for Deaf People in London. Over the years a small but dedicated and growing number of qualified lipreading teachers struggled to achieve proper recognition of the communication needs of people with acquired deafness who use speech. Their needs are different from those of deaf people who use sign language. These lipreading teachers were often very isolated having to work alone in different parts of the country to obtain funding to run free lipreading classes at a time when few deaf people or service providers knew about lipreading classes.