

Voice technologies aid students **with** hearing impairments

In 2006 Sunshine Coast TAFE received \$27 500 for its E-interpret project from the Inclusive e-Learning Project of the Australian Flexible Learning Framework. Students with hearing impairments will be testing innovative voice recognition technology, which will help overcome barriers to education and employment.

E-interpret aims to research a range of 'real time' voice recognition software and test it on students who are deaf or have a hearing impairment. Sunshine Coast TAFE Director of Learning Services, Francis Howes, said currently student participation on campus depends on the attendance of an interpreter. With voice recognition technology, as the teacher speaks the words are interpreted and displayed straight away on the student's screen. Lectures can then be uploaded onto the TAFE's learning management system so students can go back to the lesson and learn at their own pace, creating a useful resource for all students. E-interpret will pilot voice recognition software with five students in a range of vocational and technical education areas, such as work-based apprenticeships as well as on campus.



Sunshine Coast TAFE Disability Services Co-ordinator Brett Thomson and TAFE student Nicole Duncan try out hand-held technology to assist hearing-impaired students. Nicole is profoundly deaf but that hasn't stopped the Caloundra resident from studying Aged Care at Sunshine Coast TAFE.

Resource **on the Deaf community**

Griffith University's Centre for Applied Studies in Deafness has produced a set of resources describing the life and language of signing Deaf people. The 'Deaf Studies Program' consists of a curriculum document, teachers' guide, seven videos (soon to be available on DVD) and a CD-ROM containing activities related to the videos. The Centre hopes many people in the community will use these materials (especially the videos, which can be bought separately and individually) to gain a better understanding of the lives, activities and history of a unique Australian community.

For more information contact Emeritus Professor Des Power AM, d.power@griffith.edu.au. A PowerPoint presentation about the materials can be viewed online at <http://www.griffith.edu.au/centre/casdl>.

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