



GUIDELINES FOR INTERPRETERS WORKING IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

Professional Conduct

Interpreters working in educational settings:

- 1.1 Are responsible for developing a professional relationship with teachers/lecturers/learners which includes making all parties aware of the role of the interpreter.
- 1.2 Will be an active part of the classroom dynamics, however, should not impose their own views and beliefs or take part in activities.
- 1.3 Are subject to the schools/colleges/universities' policies on Equal Opportunities, Equality and Diversity, Health and Safety, Child Protection, and all other national laws as appropriate.
- 1.4 Should take advantage of opportunities for Continuous Professional Development (CPD) specific to Education.
- 1.5 Interpreters should co-operate with and, where possible support other language service professionals (e.g. speech to text reporters, lipspeakers, deafblind interpreters, etc) in order to ensure the provision of the best quality service to all consumers.

Complete and Effective Communication

Interpreters should take all reasonable steps to ensure complete and effective communication between the parties, including intervention to prevent misunderstanding and incorrect cultural inference. This includes conveying the content and spirit of the signer/speaker using language most readily understood by the person(s) they serve.

- 2.1 It is recognised that some Deaf students may not fully understand an interpreted message due to differences in culture, language or experience. It is appropriate for interpreters working in educational settings to clarify information that fits into this category (e.g. hearing-

culture jokes, certain English vocabulary which does not translate well). However, this is to be done on a limited basis, dependent on subject matter, for the benefit of clear communication and should not be tutoring per se.

- 2.2 The teacher/lecturer may assume a certain level of knowledge about a topic that the Deaf student may not have. It is not the interpreter's role to fill this knowledge gap but to encourage the Deaf student to seek clarification from the teacher/lecturer as appropriate.
- 2.3 Interpreters working in educational settings, as in all interpreting settings, are required to match the preferred sign variation of the student whilst retaining all technical language.

Impartiality

Interpreters shall interpret impartially between the various parties with regard to the circumstances prevailing at the time.

- 3.1 Interpreters working in educational settings should encourage teachers/lecturers/peer groups to address comments or questions to the Deaf student and not directly to the interpreter.
- 3.2 Interpreters working in educational settings should enable interaction between deaf and hearing students/teachers/lecturers.
- 3.3 As one of the few adults (even the only adult) with whom the Deaf student can freely express themselves, an interpreter working in an educational setting may be treated by the student as a counsellor, advocate or advisor. Following a personal disclosure, the interpreter should remain impartial and signpost the Deaf student to the appropriate professional within their setting.

Confidentiality

Interpreters shall maintain confidentiality at all times and treat any information, which may come to them in the course of their work as privileged information; not to be communicated to any third party without authority. This does not preclude disclosure when legally required to do so or when not disclosing information could render the interpreter liable to prosecution. This also does not preclude sharing information on a strictly confidential basis within recognised structures of professional support and training whilst respecting client confidentiality.

- 4.1 Interpreters working in educational settings may discuss information relating to an assignment with other members of the team who are directly responsible for the educational programme and access for the

Deaf student.

- 4.2 The Deaf student's behaviour may be discussed with other members of the team by relaying the behaviour of the student accurately and commenting on barriers to communication and effective interpretation.
- 4.3 Interpreters working in educational settings in schools should either interpreter or participate in Individual Education Plan/Annual Review meetings, but not do both.

Competence

Interpreters shall refuse work when they know that they lack sufficient linguistic competence or specialist knowledge for that assignment. Interpreters accept assignments using discretion with regard to skill, setting and the consumers involved:-

- 5.1 The age level of the student
- 5.2 The content of the various classes (e.g. academic vs. vocational)
- 5.3 Competency in English and BSL
- 5.4 Ability to represent English into BSL and vice versa
- 5.5 Special interpreting situations (e.g. assemblies, field trips, video)
- 5.6 The student's English/BSL skills
- 5.7 Flexibility in the use of sign language in meeting the needs of the deaf student

ASLI ascribe to the National Occupational Standards as laid down by CiLT, The National Centre for Languages and also to the Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Professional Practice for British Sign Language/English Interpreters as laid down by Signature.

http://www.cilt.org.uk/home/research_and_statistics/research/cilt_activities/occupational_standards.aspx

http://www.signature.org.uk/documents/communication_professionals/bsl_english_interpreters/bsl_eng_guidelines_for_professional_practice.pdf

<http://www.nrcpd.org.uk/page.php?content=30>