



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 school/college/university 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 Should co-operate with and, where possible support other communication professionals (e.g. speech to text reporters, lipspeakers, deafblind interpreters, etc) in order to ensure 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, English vocabulary which does not translate well). However, this must be limited to the benefit of clear communication and should not be tutoring per se.

- 2.2 The teacher/lecturer may assume students have 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, should aim at all times 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/hearing students to direct their comments or questions to the Deaf student, not 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, which is 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. In addition, this does not preclude the interpreter from 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 interpret 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 classes (e.g. academic vs. vocational)
- 5.3 The interpreter's competency in English and BSL
- 5.4 The interpreter's ability to represent English into BSL and vice versa
- 5.5 Atypical interpreting situations (e.g. assemblies, field trips, video)
- 5.6 The student's competency in English and BSL
- 5.7 The ability to be flexible in their use of language to meet 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 The National Register of Communication Professionals working with Deaf and Deafblind People (NRCPD).

<http://www.cilt.org.uk/standards/NOSIrev2006principles.pdf>

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

http://www.signature.org.uk/interpreters/Registered_LSPs/BSLEngInt/CodeofEthics.pdf