



THE ETHICAL CODE AND CODE OF PRACTICE

Speech to Text Reporters

Introduction

In this document, the term Speech to Text Reporter (STTR) means any person who is registered with CACDP by the ACE/Deafblind Registration Panel as a Member of the Register of Speech to Text Reporters in accordance with the conditions of registration.

STTRs are expected to abide by the Ethical Code and work to the Code of Practice for Speech to Text Reporters. It is the view of CACDP that when STTRs are managing, training, supervising or mentoring other STTRs, or are working with consumers, they abide by the Ethical Code and work to the Code of Practice.

Ethical Code

The Ethical Code sets out the principles that must underpin the work of the STTR. The purpose of the Ethical Code is to ensure that the STTR carries out his/her work with a due regard for the fundamental rights of deaf and hearing people involved in, or affected by, all aspects of the communication process. The STTR must be able to justify any course of action by reference to the ethical principles below.

The STTR's duty is to:

- do no harm;
- be honest;
- keep their promises;
- act justly and fairly towards other people;
- recognise the personal choices another person makes.

These five principles support the Code of Practice. Under the Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure the STTR may be asked to explain why they have done something which seems to break the Code of Practice. They may defend their choice of action using the principles above. If there is conflict between the principles, principle one "do no harm" is the most important.

Issues of professional competence, and practice and procedures that are specific to the role of an STTR are covered by the Code of Practice.

Code of Practice

1. Status and Spirit of the Code

- 1.1 This Code gives standards of how STTRs must behave and work. If they do not follow the Code when working, it may be necessary to investigate the behaviour and ability of the STTR using the Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure.
- 1.2 If a way of behaving or working is not found in this Code, this does not mean that it cannot be used for disciplinary purposes. When they are working, STTRs must keep to the content and spirit of the Code.
- 1.3 STTR must know about the Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure. They must co-operate with the ACE/Deafblind Registration Panel should an investigation be necessary. They will provide information about the Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures if requested.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 'Consumer' means any person, or group of people, who use a STTR.
- 2.2 'Work' means STT Reporting or the teaching of STT Reporting, or activities connected with it.
- 2.3 'STTR' means a person providing simultaneous verbatim text from the spoken word on to a computer and/or projector screen.

3. Standards of Work

- 3.1 STTRs will report as accurately as possible. They will not add anything or take anything away from the meaning, and they will keep to the spirit of what is said.
- 3.2 If there are problems during an assignment, STTRs will do their best to solve them using their professional skills. If this is impossible, they will stop reporting and let the consumers know there is a problem.

4. Acceptance of Work

- 4.1 STTRs will only accept work where they have appropriate qualifications, skill, experience and competence.
- 4.2 If a suitable STTR cannot be found, work may be accepted if all the people involved agree. They must be told of the risks and what might happen if the STTR is not able to manage difficulties.
- 4.3 When the STTR accepts work, s/he will say that s/he is a registered STTR.
- 4.4 STTRs may refuse any assignment without giving a reason.
- 4.5 When an assignment has been accepted, the STTR will not cancel it without good reason. If the STTR cannot go to an assignment s/he will tell the people concerned as soon as possible, and try to find another registered STTR to take her/his place.
- 4.6 STTRs will not pass on an assignment to another STTR without the agreement of the people involved.

- 4.7 STTRs will ask to be paid in a professional way. They will agree the amount to be paid and the working conditions when they accept the work. Any problems after the work should be resolved with the person who booked the STTR. This may not be the deaf person.
- 4.8 STTRs will ask for papers and information from the people who are organising the assignment no later than one week before the assignment. This will allow them to update their dictionaries. If the organisers do not give the information to the STTR, the STTR will explain that it is not possible to give the best service without a fully updated dictionary, and that the text may have some words that are spelt incorrectly.

5. Confidentiality

- 5.1 Any information STTRs learn when working will be confidential. This includes telling others that they are doing a particular job.
- 5.2 Evidence of reporting may be needed for training or assessment. STTRs will respect the consumer's right to confidentiality. STTRs can leave out agreed information, or the consumer may agree to a prepared statement.
- 5.3 They may also give information from their work if they could be prosecuted for not doing so or if asked to by law.
- 5.4 They may also give information to protect the welfare of an individual or the community.
- 5.5 Information given and reported in public is not confidential.

6. Impartiality

- 6.1 STTRs will not give advice or offer their own opinion about anything discussed or about people in the room in an STTR assignment.
- 6.2 STTRs will be impartial, and show no bias or preference to either side when reporting.
- 6.3 STTRs will not work in any situation when people could question their impartiality.
- 6.4 STTRs will not benefit unfairly from any information learned while they are working.
- 6.5 STTRs will say if they have any business, financial or other interest that might make it difficult to be impartial. They must do this either before the assignment takes place, or as soon as possible.

7. Professional Behaviour and Relationships

- 7.1 STTRs will support the reputation of the STT Reporting profession and work to improve their professional standards and status. They will not do anything to damage the profession.
- 7.2 STTRs will respect the ethics and the working practices of other professions.
- 7.3 STTRs will use their knowledge of the correct environmental conditions to help in communication with deaf and hearing people. This includes making sure that the environmental conditions (light, positioning, background) are suitable.
- 7.4 STTRs will not wear clothing and jewellery that may be distracting to deaf people.

- 7.5 STTRs may advertise their services but what is advertised must be accurate, relevant and must not mislead. It will not be harmful to deaf people or to the profession of STT Reporting.
- 7.6 STTRs will support each other when working together.
- 7.7 STTRs will co-operate with other Language Service Professionals (e.g. BSL/English Interpreters, Lipspeakers, LSPs - Deafblind Manual) and make sure they do not do anything that makes it difficult for them to carry out their work.

8. Professional Development

- 8.1 STTRs will try to improve and develop their skills and knowledge. They will try to take any training and development opportunities offered to them.
- 8.2 STTRs will encourage and help other STTRs with their professional development. They will try to make opportunities for new STTRs to learn.