




Academic Communication Equity – BC

Post-Secondary Sign Language Interpreting Screen

Guidelines & Terms of Services

May 2012



The following are Guidelines for the provision of interpreting services at post-secondary institutions in British Columbia. This document is meant to facilitate an ongoing dialogue of collaborative decision making between students, faculty, interpreters and accessibility coordinators

Academic Communication Equity (ACE-BC) is available for consultation, and assistance with these responsibilities. When issues regarding educationally sound delivery of service arise institutions are encouraged to consult with ACE-BC.

A. Students' Responsibilities

Post-secondary institutions agree that the following are the responsibilities of a student in relation to interpreting services:

Eligibility Criteria

Eligibility for interpreting services is governed by individual post-secondary policies. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the policies of the institution they plan to attend and for complying with any procedural rules set out by those institutions. This includes the lead time required by each institution. In addition, to be eligible for the provision of interpreting services at post-secondary institutions, a student must:

- Provide documentation including an audiogram and audiological report that indicates their hearing status and the functional implications in an educational setting
- Be registered at a public post-secondary institution.

If students do not provide the necessary information required by an institution in a timely manner they may risk a delay in the provision of services.

Establishment of Services

To facilitate service provision, the student should:

- Meet with Accessibility Services to discuss interpreting requirements with as much notice as possible (preferably four months) in advance of class start date(s)
- Meet deadlines for priority registration
- Notify Accessibility Services of program, schedule and service needs at the time of admission to help ensure an appropriately qualified interpreter will be available
- Notify Accessibility Services of any changes to their schedule
- Request interpreting for out of class activities such as meetings with instructors etc. through Accessibility Services indicating the date, time, location, and nature of the activity. Advanced notice will typically be required
- Introduce themselves to the instructor and review the services which they will be using in class
- Discuss communication preferences with the interpreter
- Notify Accessibility Services if service is not meeting their needs.



Class Preparation and Class Time

The student should also:

- At the beginning of the term establish an optimal way to maintain contact with the interpreter (e.g. an e-mail address)
- Work with the interpreter and instructor on communication strategies for technical and other specialized language components
- Advise the interpreter when signs used are not understood
- Check that the interpreter is available for out-of-class assignments (e.g. group projects, examinations) and has the preparation materials the student will be using
- Ensure the interpreter has received preparation material for class presentations.
- Ensure the interpreter has the materials the student will be using for out-of-class assignments for preparation
- Ask clarification from the instructor to explain points of the lecture, do not ask the interpreter.

Attendance

Note: Service providers will begin interpreting upon the arrival of the student in class.

Students should:

- Contact the interpreter and Accessibility Services with as much notice as possible, preferably not less than 24 hours in advance, when they expect to be late, sick or unable to attend class, or the class has been cancelled. If the student has not notified the interpreter and does not attend class, the interpreter will wait for a student 15 minutes for a one-hour class and 30 minutes for a class longer than one hour
- Meet with Accessibility Services to discuss service delivery if they have cancelled interpreting services without 24 hours notice two or more times. Student absences without notice or good cause will result in the student needing to meet with Accessibility Services to discuss service delivery in accordance with institute, department or program policies
- Contact Accessibility Services immediately before deciding to withdraw from a course or no longer attend a course for which interpreting services were being provided.

Monitoring

The student needs to:

- Complete a feedback form on interpreting services if requested
- Contact Accessibility Services when issues related to interpreting need resolution.



B. Post-Secondary Institutions' Responsibilities

Post-secondary institutions agree that the following are their responsibilities in relation to interpreting services:

When such services can be provided without undue hardship institutions will make reasonable attempts to provide some level of interpreting services. The level of interpreting services provided will be determined on a case-by-case basis for:

- Classes: full-time, part-time and continuing education
- Appointments on campus
- Labs
- Seminars
- Field trips and co-op placements
- Exams
- Class related meetings (e.g. appointments with instructors, group project meetings)
- Special events at the institution
- Institutionally-based services
- Extra-curricular activities

Hiring Interpreters

- Hire interpreters who have graduated from a recognized Interpreter Training program and are members of the West Coast Association of Visual Language Interpreters (WAVLI)
- Give preference to interpreters who participate regularly in professional development
- Give preference to interpreters who have taken the Interpreting Screen, and have been deemed “competent”
- Utilize the Jobsline registry of interpreters qualified to work in the post-secondary system
- Coordinate payment of interpreters according to collective agreements or institutional policy for contractors

Establishing Services

- Inform students about interpreting services, their responsibilities and the responsibilities of the institution
- Provide students and interpreters with relevant institutional policies and procedures, including reporting lines within Accessibility Services
- Assess each assignment to determine the need for additional interpreters or other educational support services. This assessment will include consistency of interpreters, consideration of course content and delivery, physical demands, length and complexity of the assignment, etc. Discussion with students, instructors, interpreters, and others as necessary is recommended (see **Appendix A – Teaming Factors**)
- Determine paid prep time in consultation with the student, faculty and the interpreter. Preparation time may vary significantly depending on the assignment, interpreter experience, etc. (see **Appendix B –Preparation Guidelines**)
- Reassess service provision, in consultation with the interpreter(s) should the conditions of the class assignment change (e.g. physical demands, length and complexity of the assignment etc.)

- Ensure that interpreters have access to: instructors' names and contact information; course outlines; videos; textbooks/course materials; access to the LMS used, and safety equipment as necessary and as available, preferably before the course begins.

Instructors

- Explain the role of the interpreter to the students' instructors at the beginning of the term
- Before the commencement of class, send an information package to the instructor that includes: an explanation of the interpreting service and, and with permission, identification of the student; an outline of the student's right to confidentiality in class; the role of the interpreter; and tips on effective communication
- Request Course Outlines and materials from instructors for use in interpreter preparation
- Request that instructors notify interpreters of changes to course outlines to facilitate class preparation
- Encourage instructors to provide sufficient breaks in their class schedule to accommodate interpreters.
- Develop a monitoring process for interpreting services
- Share feedback with the interpreter regarding service delivery, with the student's written permission in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act
- Report as required regarding service delivery.

C. Interpreter's Responsibilities

Post-secondary institutions and interpreters agree that the following are the responsibilities of an interpreter in relation to interpreting services:

- Interpreters working on post-secondary campuses as contractors should check with the Human Resources Department to ensure they have WorkSafe BC coverage
- Familiarize himself or herself with the policies of the institution where they are working and comply with any procedural rules set out by those institutions.

Re-assignment

- The interpreter will accept reassignment of interpreting duties when an existing assignment is cancelled as long as the interpreter is qualified to perform such an assignment.

Student Contact

- At the beginning of the term, establish an optimal way to maintain contact with the student including an email address.



Class Preparation

The interpreter will:

- Contact instructor(s) prior to class start date
- Become familiar with the course material
- Schedule preparation time within the contracted class time, as much as possible; for example, utilize time when students are working independently.
- Begin interpreting upon arrival of the student in class.

Attendance

The interpreter will:

- Notify the student and Accessibility Services with as much notice as possible, preferably not less than 24 hours in advance, when late, sick or unable to attend in order to facilitate hiring a substitute
- Wait 15 minutes for a student to arrive for a one-hour class and 30 minutes for a class longer than one hour unless previous notification has been given to the interpreter by the student
- Contact Accessibility Services when interpreting services are not required as scheduled.

Professionalism

The interpreter will:

- Abide by the institution's policies and procedures , including reporting lines for Accessibility Services
- Refrain from discussing the student's disability with instructors
- Direct any student/faculty concerns to Accessibility Services OR report any of his or her concerns to Accessibility Services
- In consultation with the coordinator, obtain feedback from the student, and instructors regarding the communication process, in the classroom, and adjust services accordingly
- Maximize student independence by referring them to Accessibility Services should any issue arise
- Participate regularly in professional development
- Be an active member of WAVLI and CASLI, and adhere to the Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Professional Conduct
- Strive to meet the standards of the Interpreting Screen
- Participate as a member of the student's Educational Team in order to maximize educational success. Limit expertise to interpretation. Comments on the overall effectiveness of the interpreting process and communication access should be expressed only within the context of the educational team.

I agree to the above responsibilities:

Student/Interpreter	Date
Coordinator/Advisor	Date

Appendix A

Teaming Guidelines

Team interpreting refers to the practice of using two interpreters in situations that require a collaborative approach in order to provide a cohesive and accurate interpretation. Given ideal conditions an interpreter may work alone, however, a teamed approach may be most effective in many situations. It is the responsibility of Accessibility Services to determine the level of teamed interpreting required. Each situation will be evaluated with the interpreting team, on an individual or case-by case basis.

1. **Length of Class:** Generally, any classroom situation over one hour is teamed unless adequate breaks are provided, or the structure of the class is based primarily on independent student work (e.g. a lab setting). The complexity of academic material and the dynamics of each situation should be considered when making decisions regarding teamed interpreting.
2. **Complexity of Program:** Content that is jargon based and/or highly technical in nature will require the support of teamed interpreting to ensure message equivalency. Highly interactive communication between students and instructor or lecture interspersed with videos or demonstrations may require teaming.
3. **Profile of Student:** If the student speaks for them self, teaming may not be required. On the other hand, if the student has more complex needs, (e.g. ESL/ASL) in all likelihood, teaming will be required.
4. **Profile of Instructor:** Variables such as accents and fast paced presentation styles may require teaming support. Often an interpreter has their back to the instructor and can be at a disadvantage in terms of comprehending the message, requiring the support of a team interpreter for clarification.
5. **Class Structure:** Small group vs. large theatre, physical layout of the room, lighting and other elements can necessitate more than one interpreter. For a wide range of language needs in one classroom (e.g. ASL users, contact sign users and oral deaf students) a team of interpreters will be required. However, this would not be representative of most college classrooms.
6. **Interpreter Experience:** The teaming needs of an interpreter who has worked with the student, instructor or program previously may be reduced compared with an interpreter new to the situation. However, regardless of experience, the team members share the workload, including the preparation activities, actively supporting each other in the interpreting process to produce effective and cohesive interpretation, and manage any challenges that arise through the course of the shared work.
7. **Scheduling Profile:** If an interpreter works in a full-time program, their ability to work alone will likely be reduced, given the scheduling and course load. However, if the setting is slow paced with built in breaks, this may reduce the need for teaming in some circumstances.

Appendix B

Preparation Guidelines

Preparation refers to required activities that assist interpreters in providing message equivalency in the interpretation [what the instructor means is fully conveyed to the deaf student and vice versa]. Preparation ensures that the interpreter use appropriate linguistic and cultural tools, understand course content, and determine the appropriate interpreting process with students and colleagues (in a teamed interpreting situations).

It is expected that interpreters will accept assignments for which they are qualified. Thus, the activities of reviewing basic vocabulary and content knowledge, as well as presentation format are not usually covered in preparation time. Should content specific terminology need to be researched or developed, rehearsal for student presentations etc. would be included in paid preparation time.

The amount of preparation time depends on the course or program content and structure, the interpreter's familiarity with the two, and the student's language profile. It is the responsibility of Accessibility Services to determine the level of preparation time required. Each situation will be evaluated on an individual basis, in consultation with the interpreter(s).

The following guidelines apply:

- Course/program content – less complex material requires less preparation
- Course/program structure – less active and diverse structures with more self-study or hands-on time requires less preparation
- Student profile – the student's linguistic background in both English and ASL will affect the interpretation process and the amount of interpretation that is required.

Possible preparation activities:

1. Read texts and course materials including hand-outs, graphics and online content.
2. Develop content vocabulary for technical terms, jargon, and other types of vocabulary used in a specific way.
3. Preview and/or transcribe videos, audio recordings and any other form of pre-packaged materials.
4. Meet with the instructor, guest speakers or other students to gather specific information such as the presenter's goals and objectives, handouts or other materials.
5. Work with a teamer or the student to share information, agree upon terminology etc.
6. Rehearsals for student classroom presentations
7. On occasions when accepting to work with an interpreting student on a practicum placement, preparation will be necessary, pre and post classroom assignments. Communication with students, instructors and Accessibility Services through the course of the practicum supervision is also expected.



Preparation can be scheduled:

- Before or after class time, to work with the student or instructor, to prepare from class materials, or to attend meetings with co-workers
- During interpreting “down-time” which may occur in labs, shop-time or during student self-study, to review materials for any course
- As a separate block of time.





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