

NRCPD Draft Code of Conduct

October 2014

What is the purpose of the Code?

The NRCPD Code of Conduct ('the Code') sets out what we expect of the communication professionals we regulate ('registered professionals'). We use the Code to make sure the rights and interests of service users and the public are protected and respected by registered professionals.

If you are a registered professional the Code contains the standards and values we require you to uphold and comply with when practising. Communication professionals are required to agree to abide by the Code before they can be registered by us. The Code applies to both qualified and trainee professionals who are registered with us.

If you are a service user or a member of the public the Code contains the standards you can expect of registered professionals. We have also included information about the professions we regulate and our role.

The role of NRCPD

NRCPD is the UK regulator of communication professionals who work with deaf and deafblind people. We are committed to safeguarding the wellbeing and interests of people who rely on the services communication professionals provide.

Our core mission is to protect the public by promoting the value and importance of professional standards for professionals who work with deaf and deafblind people.

Who do we regulate?

The following communication professionals are registered by the NRCPD:

- Interpreters for deafblind people
- Lipspeakers
- Notetakers
- Sign language interpreters
- Sign language translators

- Speech to text reporters

The glossary at the end of this document includes information about each of these professions.

Ethical principles

The Code is based on ethical principles. We expect registered professionals to exercise these principles in performing every aspect of their duties. The following principles structure and inform the Code and are fundamental to our regulatory approach.

Registered professionals should:

- Do no harm (or, in rare circumstances where causing harm is unavoidable, the least amount of harm).
- Strive to do good.
- Act justly and fairly.
- Be honest.
- Keep their word.
- Respect the personal choices of service users.

We expect registered professionals to make informed and reasonable decisions about their practice to make sure they abide by the Code. This might include seeking advice where appropriate from other colleagues or from their professional body. They must be able to justify their decisions.

What happens if the Code is breached?

Breaches of the code are investigated through our complaints procedure. This is available on our website.

In the event of a complaint a registered professional will be asked to explain how they met the Code in the decisions they made.

The Code of Conduct

In the Code, we have used 'you' and 'your' to refer to registered professionals. We have used 'must' where registered professionals are expected to meet the standard in all circumstances. We have used 'should' in the Code to indicate how the standard can be met or where it might not be possible to meet the standard in every situation.

Service user interests

1. You must act in the best interests of your service users

- 1.1 You must treat service users with respect.
- 1.2 You should, wherever possible, take the time to understand your service user's needs and requirements and adapt your approach accordingly.
- 1.3 You must not unfairly discriminate against service users by allowing your personal views to affect the services that you provide. This includes, for example, your views about a service user's age, disability, gender, race, religion or sexual orientation.
- 1.4 If you have concerns about the wellbeing of a service user, you must take appropriate action to protect them from harm.
- 1.5 You must be open and honest with service users about any mistakes you make and take action where possible to put matters right.

Confidentiality

2. You must treat information arising from an assignment as confidential

- 2.1 You must only share information with third parties where you have consent or where the law requires or allows you to, such as where this is necessary to prevent harm to other people

Competence

3. You must work within the limits of your knowledge, skills and experience and, if necessary, refer the service user to another practitioner

- 3.1 You must keep within your scope of practice. This means that you must only carry out work for which you have appropriate education, training and experience.

- 3.2 You should seek appropriate advice when you are unsure whether an assignment is within your scope of practice.
- 3.3 You should strive to ensure that complete and effective communication takes place.
- 3.4 You must not add or take anything away from the intended meaning of the communication.
- 3.5 You should make sure, as far as possible, that the necessary conditions for effective communication are in place.

Continuing professional development (CPD)

4. You must keep your professional knowledge and skills up to date

- 4.1 You must undertake CPD to maintain and develop your competence and performance.

Health

5. You must not allow your health to interfere with your work

- 5.1 You must limit your work or stop practising if your performance or judgement is negatively affected by your health. This includes declining an assignment if you consider that a mental or physical health condition or a personal issue will prevent you from undertaking your duties effectively.

Professionalism and integrity

6. You must behave with professionalism and integrity

- 6.1 You must not get involved in any behaviour or activity which is likely to damage the public's confidence in you or your profession.
- 6.2 You must maintain high standards of personal and professional conduct.
- 6.3 You must adhere to the laws of the country in which you are working.
- 6.4 You must not abuse your professional position for your own benefit.
- 6.5 You must avoid undertaking any activity that represents, or could be perceived to represent, a conflict of interest.
- 6.6 You must ensure that any advertising you do is fair and accurate.

Information about conduct or competence

7. You must provide any important information about your conduct or competence

- 7.1 You must inform the NRCPD if you accept a Police caution or if you are found guilty of a criminal offence.
- 7.2 You must take appropriate action if you have concerns about the conduct or competence of someone you work with. This might include, for example, reporting your concerns to the NRCPD.
- 7.3 You must give a constructive and honest response to anyone who complains about your services.
- 7.4 You should co-operate in any investigation about your conduct or competence or that of others.

Glossary

Sign Language Interpreter	A communication professional who facilitates communication either between users of a sign language such as British Sign Language (BSL) and users of a spoken language, or between users of two different sign languages. Interpreters will use their skill and knowledge of the two languages, and their understanding of any cultural differences that might exist between those for whom they are interpreting, to receive a message given in one language and pass it on in the other language.
Sign Language Translator	A communication professional who translates written text from one language into another. Most often this will be written English into a signed language for the purposes of broadcasting or web access.
Lipspeaker	A communication professional who repeats a speaker's message for people who lipread the spoken word. Lipspeakers use unvoiced speech to achieve clear communication, and if required by a lipreader, the lipspeaker can support the speaker's message with appropriate facial expression, natural gesture and fingerspelling.
Interpreter for Deafblind People	A communication professional who uses the Deafblind Manual Alphabet when facilitating communication between a Deafblind person and a hearing person.
Speech to Text Reporter (STTR)	A communication professional who uses a phonetic machine shorthand system to provide simultaneous verbatim text from the spoken word for display on a computer and/or projector screen.
Electronic Notetaker	A communication professional who produces an accurately typed summary which a deaf person uses and may take away, e.g. as a saved file, for revision or reference. [Electronic notetakers should not be confused with STTRs: electronic notetakers provide a précis service, while STTRs provide a verbatim service.]
Manual Notetaker	A communication professional who takes handwritten précis notes which a deaf person uses and may take away for revision or reference.