

***Do's and Don'ts for Educational Interpreting in Sign Language***—essential for maintaining professionalism, ethical practice, and supporting effective learning for Deaf and hard-of-hearing students.

*Tips, and Best Practices*

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### ***Do's for Educational Interpreting in Sign Language***

***1. Do Prepare in Advance***

*Familiarize yourself with the lesson plan, vocabulary, subject matter, and any specific terminology.*

***2. Do Foster Team Collaboration***

*Work closely with teachers and staff to ensure access and inclusion.*

***3. Do Position Yourself Appropriately***

*Ensure the student has a clear line of sight to both the interpreter and the instructional content (e.g., whiteboard, projector).*

***4. Do Use the Student's Preferred Sign Language***

*Adapt your interpreting style to match the student's preferred mode of communication.*

***5. Do Interpret Everything***

*Interpret both spoken instructions and incidental classroom talk (e.g., jokes, peer comments, off-topic remarks) when appropriate.*

***6. Do Monitor for Understanding***

*Be aware of student cues and clarify or request clarification when communication breaks down.*

***7. Do Promote Independence***

*Encourage students to interact directly with teachers and peers, not just through the interpreter.*

## ***Don'ts for Educational Interpreting in Sign Language***

### **1. Don't Omit or Alter Information**

*Do not filter, simplify, or change the message unless instructed (e.g., by an IEP plan or student request).*

### **2. Don't Intervene in Instruction**

*You're not the teacher—avoid giving your own examples, instructions, or explanations.*

### **3. Don't Take Over Student Tasks**

*Let the student respond for themselves; don't answer questions on their behalf.*

### **4. Don't Have Side Conversations**

*Avoid chatting with students or staff during class unless necessary for clarification.*

### **5. Don't Isolate the Student**

*Help integrate the student into classroom dynamics. Don't let them rely solely on the interpreter for interaction.*

### **6. Don't Assume Comprehension**

*Just because a student is looking at you doesn't mean they're understanding. Adjust your interpreting style if needed.*

### **7. Don't Use Inappropriate Register**

*Match the tone, level, and vocabulary of the speaker; don't simplify unless the speaker does.*

### **8. Don't Ignore Cultural Considerations**

*Be aware of Deaf culture and the educational background of the student when interpreting.*

### **9. Don't Multitask Unnecessarily**

*Stay fully focused on the classroom environment to catch all relevant communication.*

### **10. Don't Substitute for Support Services**

*You are not a note-taker, tutor, or behavioral aide unless explicitly assigned those roles.*

## ***Do's in Higher Education Interpreting***

### ***1. Do Prepare Thoroughly***

- *Review syllabi, readings, lecture slides, and course terminology.*
- *Request access to course materials in advance from professors.*

### ***2. Do Maintain Professional Boundaries***

- *Act as a communication facilitator, not a tutor or participant in class discussions.*
- *Stay professional, especially in peer-heavy environments.*

### ***3. Do Foster Direct Communication***

- *Encourage Deaf students to interact directly with professors and classmates.*
- *Voice for them only when requested or when necessary.*

### ***4. Do Interpret Accurately and Completely***

- *Preserve technical vocabulary, academic tone, and classroom discourse without simplifying.*

### ***5. Do Clarify Role and Expectations***

- *Introduce yourself to professors and students at the start of the semester to explain your role.*
- *Advocate for equal access without disrupting academic flow.*

### ***6. Do Be Adaptive***

- *Adjust signing styles based on the Deaf student's language proficiency*
- *Use visual aids or fingerspelling when appropriate for complex terminology.*

## ***Don'ts in Higher Education Interpreting***

### ***1. Don't Assume the Student Understands Everything***

- *If unsure, discreetly check in and clarify after class or through proper channels.*

### ***2. Don't Speak for the Student Without Consent***

- *Always allow the Deaf student the opportunity to voice their thoughts first.*

### ***3. Don't Get Involved in Academic Conflicts***

- *Stay out of grading, disputes, or any form of advocacy unless requested through formal processes.*

### ***4. Don't Become the "Only" Access Point***

- *Encourage professors to use accessible teaching methods—captions, visual aids, transcripts.*

### ***5. Don't Show Bias***

- *Even if familiar with the topic, avoid editorializing or favouring one point of view in your interpretation.*