



THE ETHICAL CODE AND CODE OF PRACTICE

Deafblind Interpreters (Manual)

Introduction

In this document, the term Deafblind Interpreter (Manual) (DBI(M)) means any person who is registered by the CACDP Registration Panel for Deafblind Interpreters (Manual) as a Member of the Register of Deafblind Interpreters (Manual) in accordance with the conditions of registration.

DBI(M)s are expected to abide by the Ethical Code and work to the Code of Practice for Deafblind Interpreters (Manual). It is the view of CACDP that when DBI(M)s are managing training, supervising or mentoring other DBI(M)s, 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 DBI(M). The purpose of the Ethical Code is to ensure that the DBI(M) carries out his/her work with a due regard for the fundamental rights of deafblind and hearing people involved in, or affected by, all aspects of the communication process. The DBI(M) must be able to justify any course of action by reference to the ethical principles below.

The DBI(M)'s duty is to:

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

These five principles support the Code of Practice. Under the Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure the DBI(M) 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 a DBI(M) 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 DBI(M)s 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 DBI(M) 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, DBI(M)s must keep to the content and spirit of the Code.
- 1.3 DBI(M)s must know about the Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure. They must co-operate with the Registration Panel for Deafblind Interpreters (Manual) should an investigation be necessary. They will give this information to anyone who wants to know.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 'Consumer' means any person, or group of people, who use a DBI(M).
- 2.2 'Work' means carrying out the activities of a DBI(M) or the teaching of DBI(M)s, or activities connected with it.
- 2.3 A 'DBI(M)' in this document, means a person who uses the Deafblind Manual alphabet when facilitating communication between a deafblind person and a hearing person.

3. Standards of Work

- 3.1 DBI(M)s will work as accurately as possible between deafblind and other people. 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 DBI(M)s will use the Deafblind Manual chosen by the deafblind person at the speed which is best for them. They will give the mood of the situation and information about what can be seen, the way people are talking and background information.
- 3.3 If something difficult happens when working, the DBI(M) will say that they are having problems. They will try to overcome the problem in a professional way. If they cannot, they will stop working.

4. Acceptance of Work

- 4.1 DBI(M)s will only accept work, which they think they can do well.
- 4.2 If a suitable DBI(M) cannot be found, work may be accepted if all the people agree. They must be told of the risks and what might happen.
- 4.3 When the DBI(M) accepts work which may be difficult, the DBI(M) will think about the professional advice and guidance s/he can get from employers, mentors or other support networks.
- 4.4 When the DBI(M) accepts work s/he will say if s/he is a registered DBI(M).

- 4.5 DBI(M)s may refuse (say no to) work they do not want. They do not need to say why.
- 4.6 When DBI(M)s have accepted work they will not cancel without a good reason. If the DBI(M) cannot go, they will tell the person who made the booking and explain to the people involved quickly. The DBI(M) will be responsible for trying to find another suitable DBI(M) to do the work for them.
- 4.7 DBI(M)s must not give their work to another DBI(M) without the agreement of the people involved.
- 4.8 DBI(M)s will ask to be paid in a professional way. They will agree the amount to be paid and working conditions when they accept the work. These cannot be changed later. Any problems after the work should be resolved with the person who booked the DBI(M). This may not be the deafblind person.

5. Confidentiality

- 5.1 Any information DBI(M)s learn when working, will be confidential. This includes telling others that they are doing a particular job.
- 5.2 Evidence may be needed for training or assessment, e.g. NVQ witness statements. The DBI(M) will respect the consumer's right to confidentiality. The DBI(M) 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 in public is not confidential.

6. Impartiality

- 6.1 DBI(M)s will not give advice or their own opinion about what is being discussed or about people in the room when working.
- 6.2 DBI(M)s will be impartial (fair) and show no bias or preference to either side when communicating.
- 6.3 DBI(M)s will not work in any situation when people could question their impartiality.
- 6.4 DBI(M)s will not benefit unfairly from any information learned while they are working.
- 6.5 DBI(M)s will say if they have any business, financial or other interest that might make it difficult to be impartial (fair). They will say before the work starts or as soon as possible.

7 Professional Behaviour and Relationships

- 7.1 DBI(M)s will support the reputation of DBI(M)s and improve their professional standards and status. They will not do anything to damage the profession.
- 7.2 DBI(M)s will respect the ethics and the working practices of other professions.

- 7.3 DBI(M)s will try to be sure that the environmental conditions are as good as possible when working.
- 7.4 DBI(M)s will dress properly all the time. Many deafblind people like DBI(M)s to wear dark, plain colours. Jewellery on hands and wrists can get in the way. The DBI(M) will ask, when booking, what the deafblind person likes.
- 7.5 DBI(M)s may advertise their services, but what is advertised must be accurate, relevant and must not mislead. It will not be harmful to deafblind people or the profession.
- 7.6 DBI(M)s will help other DBI(M)s when working together.
- 7.7 DBI(M)s will co-operate with other Language Service Professionals (e.g. BSL/English Interpreters, Lipspeakers, Speech to Text Reporters) when working, and make sure they do not do anything that makes it difficult for them to carry out their work.
- 7.8 If the DBI(M) is working with a deafblind person, it is part of their job to guide at the place where s/he is working. It may not be part of the job to guide the deafblind person **to and from** that place. The DBI(M) and all the people must agree this from the beginning of the assignment.
- 7.9 The DBI(M) has a right to breaks. If the deafblind person has other help at lunch and going to the toilet, the DBI(M) may also have meal breaks. The breaks and the person who will support the deafblind person in the breaks, must be agreed when booking the work.

8. Professional Development

- 8.1 DBI(M)s 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 DBI(M)s will encourage and help other DBI(M)s with their professional development. They will try to make opportunities for new DBI(M)s to learn.