



# Professional Standards for Educational Interpreters

Companion Resource



Department  
of Education

# Companion Resource

The Professional Standards for Educational Interpreters were endorsed by the Victorian Department of Education 2021. This adjunct document expands on the standards and defines their scope. Relevant terms and resources assist to provide depth and meaning to the standards.

The expanded definition for each standard provides an opportunity to explore more critically the purpose and meaning for each of the 21 standards and accompanying relevant terms and online resources are referenced where applicable.





# Domain 1

## Professional Knowledge

Standard	Expanded definition	Relevant terms and resources that relate to this standard
<b>1.1 Knowledge of how children learn, with focus on deaf and hard of hearing students</b>	<p>This standard refers to the knowledge of how children learn generally (social, emotional and cognitive). In addition it relates to the sequence of learning milestones necessary for language development in deaf children. Elements of this standard include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• An awareness of the major milestones of language development</li><li>• Understanding the difference between language delay and language deprivation</li><li>• Understanding the definition of theory of mind</li><li>• Understanding interpreting is a form of mediated communication</li><li>• Knowledge of the elements of executive functioning.</li></ul>	Theory of mind Executive functioning Bilingual Bimodal Language deprivation Language delay Mediated instruction Language development milestones
<b>1.2 Knowledge of working with students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds</b>	<p>Cultural competence requires a broad understanding of the different cultures commonly found in school classrooms. An understanding of the linguistic diversity in students who use Auslan, including the pathways to first language acquisition is critical. Further elements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• how language in the home and the age of language and Auslan acquisition can impact development</li><li>• familiarity with a range of tools to work with students who are linguistically diverse and the ability to incorporate these into your interpreting production</li><li>• understand the identity and culture of first nations people</li><li>• be cognisant of multiple intersections of culture, language, identity and ability.</li><li>• ability to alter Auslan production in order to meet the language needs of bilingual students who may require non-standard Auslan.</li><li>• to be able to work in a multidisciplinary team such as with Teachers of the Deaf in the Visiting Teacher service or in Deaf Facilities, mainstream teachers, other interpreters and school staff to understand the student's language use and needs.</li><li>• awareness and respect for multiple identities, including culture, gender, sexuality and use of identity first language.</li></ul>	Standard Auslan Non-standard Auslan Identity Intersectionality Linguistic diversity Identity first language Multi-lingual Multi-modal



# Domain 1

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Standard	Expanded definition	Relevant terms and resources that relate to this standard
<p><b>1.3 Knowledge of relevant National &amp; State curricula</b></p>	<p>The school curriculum is a statement of the purpose of schooling. It defines what it is that all students have the opportunity to learn as a result of their schooling and sets out a series of learning progressions. Enabling students' progress along this learning continuum is the fundamental role of teachers and schools. Accessing curriculum is a key preparation strategy for educational interpreters and provides essential content knowledge necessary to deliver an accurate and effective interpretation.</p> <p>Curriculum bodies exist at both the national and state level. Practitioners will confidently navigate the curriculum and understand how teachers implement the relevant curriculum in the classroom.</p> <p>The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) is an independent statutory authority with a vision to inspire improvement in the learning of all young Australians through world-class curriculum, assessment and reporting.</p> <p>Each state also has its own curriculum body.</p>	<p>Curriculum</p> <p><a href="#">Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority ACARA</a></p> <p><a href="#">Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority VCAA</a></p> <p><a href="#">Home   NSW Curriculum   NSW Education Standards Authority</a></p> <p><a href="#">Curriculum - The Department for Education, Children and Young People Tasmania (decyp.tas.gov.au)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Home   Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (qcaa.qld.edu.au)</a></p> <p><a href="#">School Curriculum and Standards Authority   Home (scsa.wa.edu.au)</a></p> <p><a href="#">NT school curriculum   NT.GOV.AU</a></p> <p><a href="#">Our Curriculum - Education (act.gov.au)</a></p>
<p><b>1.4 Knowledge of how classroom teachers deliver content through language and interaction</b></p>	<p>This standard references understanding of common mainstream teaching strategies, how teachers use language in the classroom to engage and interact. Practitioners will be able to reflect on the adaptation of these strategies for bilingual students, with reference to social and contextual demands. In addition, awareness and understanding of specialised teaching strategies employed by Teachers of Deaf is required. Understanding teacher intent and learning practices is essential for interpreters to align their interpreting practices in a mediated environment.</p>	<p>Pedagogy</p> <p>Discourse features</p> <p>Rephrasing</p> <p>Paraphrasing</p> <p>Discursive practices</p> <p>Non-verbal communication</p> <p>Scaffolding</p>
<p><b>1.5 Knowledge of roles and functions of interpreters in educational settings</b></p>	<p>Key considerations for an educational interpreter are the expectation and policy of the Department of Education or their employer, the individual school region and the school itself. Understanding the role of the interpreter must be considered both broadly and in context of the individual school, classroom, cohort and critically, the individual student. An educational interpreter must seek clarity and specificity around responsibilities and functions to enable complete assessment of their capacity and capability to perform the role.</p> <p>A clear understanding of the role of the Teacher of the Deaf, whether working as part of a deaf facility or visiting teacher service, relevant allied health professionals, Education Support staff and coordination roles is essential. Educational interpreters must be able to clearly articulate their role to their education colleagues.</p>	<p>Job role</p> <p>Job function</p> <p>Job task</p> <p>Mediated education</p> <p>Direct education</p>





## Domain 2 Professional Practice

Standard	Expanded definition	Relevant terms and resources that relate to this standard
<b>2.1 Knowledge of interpreting practices in educational settings</b>	<p>Interpreting strategies are essential to optimise the opportunity for understanding and to support clear communication. Strategies include but are not limited to: strategic omissions and additions, message accuracy and effectiveness, reading in Auslan and code switching. A range of skills and practices are available to the educational interpreter, who will utilise these skills with reference to the educational goals of the student and their language skills. Where relevant, the educational interpreter will work as part of the broader educational team (such as with a Deaf Facility, teacher of the deaf and/or with a mainstream teacher) to inform their choice of interpreting strategies.</p>	<p>Strategic omission Code switching Strategic addition Interactive interpreting Mediated instruction</p>
<b>2.2 Ability to prepare for classroom interpreting</b>	<p>Preparation is an essential task in the process of educational interpreting. The educational interpreter will use a variety of preparation strategies to ensure optimal understanding of the classroom content, educational goals, assessment techniques as well as the individual needs of the students they work with. Essential preparation techniques include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• searching and locating accessible materials</li> <li>• understanding curriculum</li> <li>• working in a team with the mainstream teacher and the Teacher of the Deaf to understand the learning needs of each session</li> <li>• sourcing specialist Auslan language vocabulary where necessary</li> <li>• prereading or pre-rehearsing content where necessary</li> <li>• working with a Deaf Language Model or Auslan coach</li> <li>• advocating for essential preparation time</li> </ul>	<p>Research skills Vocabulary Glossaries (English/Auslan) Rehearsal techniques</p> <p><a href="#">Demand Control Schema</a></p>
<b>2.3 Knowledge of modes of interpreting</b>	<p>Modes of interpreting include consecutive and simultaneous. Additionally educational interpreters will need to sight translate or interpret via remote technologies, such as Webex or Zoom. The educational interpreter will be able to confidently move between modes, depending on the needs of the communication event. Additionally, the Interpreter may need to explain the impact of a different mode, and augment understanding to work successfully with all communication participants.</p>	<p>Consecutive Simultaneous Sight translation Video Remote Interpreting (VRI)</p>
<b>2.4 Knowledge of co-construction principles</b>	<p>Traditional and antiquated models of interpreting have described the interpreter as a 'conduit' where information passes passively between the student and teacher. Co-construction principles acknowledge that meaning is created between the communication participants, including the interpreter. All participants create meaning collectively. The decisions made by the interpreter, language and management decisions, impact all participants. Active listening and analysis of the meaning is essential to produce a message that optimises potential for understanding and considers the learning goals and language of the students.</p>	<p>Co-construction Free/literal interpretation</p>



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<b>2.5 Provision of coherent and accurate target texts in Auslan and English</b>	Educational Interpreting requires excellent understanding of both English and Auslan. The interpreter must be able to understand the source message, understand its purpose in context of the educational environment and construct a target message into the relevant language that is coherent with the highest potential for understanding by the recipient. This standard recognises that practitioners will always be learning and developing both their English and Auslan receptive and expressive skills. Educational interpreters value reflective practice as well as the engagement in professional development activities that encourage feedback and opportunity for development of their interpreting practice.	Accuracy Source text Target text Accurate, coherent and cohesive Target text Affect Intent Reflective practice Receptive and expressive skills Depicting Signs and constructed action in Auslan
<b>2.6 Use of effective interaction management strategies</b>	Effective interaction management strategies refer to the situational management of communication in the classroom. As a mediator of communication, the Interpreter will experience a range of challenges and situations that may require action. Situational management, and interaction strategies are necessary to ensure that all participants receive the best possible opportunity to achieve their outcome through communication.	Situation/interaction management Ethical decision making Triad interpreting Group interpreting Platform interpreting
<b>2.7 Self-monitoring and self-assessment of interpreting process and output</b>	Auslan-English Interpreting requires ongoing development that relies on the practitioner continually developing a reflective practice and seeking to improve the quality of their interpreting practice. This standard supports the value of ongoing life-long learning and refers to practical strategies to promote self-assessment, reflective practice and skill development.	Reflective practice Life-long learning Self-monitoring techniques Self-assessment techniques  <a href="#">Demand Control Schema</a>



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<b>2.8 Knowledge of safe interpreting work practices</b>	<p>Safe work practices are essential to prevent injury, but also to maintain positive wellbeing in the workplace. This Standard encourages educational interpreters to recognise the specific OHS risks for interpreters and consider active strategies to mitigate these risks. Occupational Overuse Syndrome is highly prevalent within the interpreting industry and must be closely managed by interpreters. By having greater knowledge of safe work practices for interpreters, educational interpreters can have more informed conversations with leaders and classroom teachers on how to implement a safe work environment whilst balancing the needs of the educational environment.</p> <p>Educational interpreters need to be able to identify risks in their individual educational context and be able to identify controls to mitigate the potential risk. Safe work practices include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the ability to understand standard work practice and what situations may challenge or pose a risk</li><li>• understand our own intrapersonal demands and actions we need to take that are specific to us as individuals.</li></ul> <p>Department of Education employees will be guided by the norms in their dedicated working group, and the workplace will nominate a Health and Safety Representative (HSR), whose actions will be guided by a range of policies and procedures. Non-government schools are also bound by the OHS act and will have their own policies and processes in place. It is the responsibility of the practitioner to understand the processes and supports available in their workplace.</p> <p>Safe work practices should support physical, mental and emotional health, not just the prevention of injury.</p>	<p>Occupational Health and Safety</p> <p>Occupational risk</p> <p>Occupational Overuse Syndrome</p> <p>Control</p> <p>Intrapersonal demands</p> <p>Cognitive fatigue</p> <p>Vicarious trauma</p> <p>Social and emotional wellbeing</p>



## Domain 3

# Professional Engagement

Standard	Expanded definition	Relevant terms and resources that relate to this standard
<p><b>3.1 Knowledge of the Professional Standards for Educational Interpreters framework</b></p>	<p>The Professional Standards for Educational Interpreters describe the essential elements of Educational Interpreting in schools. The standards provide a framework against three domains: Professional Practice, Professional Knowledge and Professional Engagement. Knowledge and skills are described in relation to levels of proficiency. They are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic (limited, rarely displays)</li> <li>• Emerging (sometimes displays)</li> <li>• Proficient (comprehensive, consistently)</li> <li>• Highly proficient (advanced, consistently)</li> </ul>	<p>Framework Standards Proficiency Underpinning knowledge</p> <p><a href="http://deafeducation.vic.edu.au">Professional Standards for Educational Interpreters (deafeducation.vic.edu.au)</a></p>
<p><b>3.2 Identification and participation in relevant sources of professional learning</b></p>	<p>Professional learning is an essential requirement for any practice profession. Both the employee and employer have a responsibility to support and develop professional learning for the educational interpreter.</p> <p>Professional learning opportunities will be provided by the school, the Department (such as through the work of VDEI), and also initiated by the interpreter themselves. Independent professional learning can occur through a professional association such as ASLIA or AUSIT, through sector providers such as Expression Australia, or directly through learning institutions with specialist programs such as RMIT, Monash University or Macquarie University.</p> <p>Professional learning can occur:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In short courses</li> <li>• Specialist training programs e.g., Diploma of Interpreting, Masters of Interpreting</li> <li>• Generalist degrees and learning e.g., Bachelor of Arts or Education</li> <li>• Intern programs</li> <li>• Mentoring</li> <li>• Communities of practice</li> <li>• Joining professional bodies or committees e.g., ASLIA Interpreting in Educational Settings Committee</li> <li>• Employer mandated or provided training</li> </ul>	<p>Practice profession Reflective practice Professional learning Training Community of practice Mentoring</p> <p><a href="#">ASLIA</a> <a href="#">Ausit</a> <a href="#">Graduate Diploma of Auslan-English Interpreting I Macquarie University Sydney (mq.edu.au)</a> <a href="#">Translation and Interpreting studies - School of Languages, Literatures, Cultures &amp; Linguistics - Monash University</a> <a href="#">Language, translating and interpreting - Short courses at Monash</a></p>





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<p><b>3.3 Professional engagement with colleagues</b></p>	<p>Educational interpreters will often work regularly in the one school or location. This provides an opportunity to develop a professional and collegiate working relationship with other professionals in the workplace. Professionals that the interpreter will need to engage with include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School administration including the principal</li> <li>• Facility coordinator</li> <li>• Teacher of the Deaf</li> <li>• Fellow interpreters</li> <li>• Allied health professionals such as a Speech Pathologist</li> <li>• Mainstream teachers</li> <li>• Education Support staff</li> </ul> <p>Educational interpreters need to successfully build relationships within the school community in order to develop respectful and collegiate working relationships with administration and learning teams. Interpreters are a valuable member of the educational team and as such will be called on to contribute to the team and learning plans of students. It is appropriate for interpreters to discuss the language needs of deaf and hard of hearing (DHH) students and participate in case conferences. Additionally, the interpreter may need to provide expert advice to teaching staff to optimise the learning experience for the student.</p>	<p>Allied health professional Emotional agility Reflective practice Community of practice</p> <p><a href="#">ASLIA</a> <a href="#">Ausit</a></p>
<p><b>3.4 Meeting professional ethics and responsibility</b></p>	<p>Professional ethics and responsibility refer to the principles that inform decision making as a practice professional. An educational interpreter will need to be guided by their ethical and legal responsibility in the workplace. The ASLIA Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Professional Conduct set out the conditions common to all sign language interpreters. Impartiality and confidentiality are key principles for all interpreters and protect the privacy of deaf people. The principles need to be considered in relation to deaf children and the educational environment, with clear expectation of the interpreter in relation to the contribution to discussions of the student. In addition the practitioner must follow any further codes set out by the workplace. For example, interpreters working in the Victorian public sector will be informed by the Public Service Code of Conduct, and by any localised policies in their school. Non-government schools will also typically have a code of conduct or similar guide that staff will be required to be adhered to.</p>	<p><a href="#">Victorian Public Service Code of Conduct</a> <a href="#">ASLIA Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Professional Conduct</a> <a href="#">Code of Ethics   AUSIT   Translators and Interpreters Australia</a></p>



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<p><b>3.5 Comply with Legislative, administrative and organisational requirements</b></p>	<p>All workplaces have a range of mandatory requirements. In Victoria the Charter of Human Rights enshrines civil, political and cultural rights in law. The Charter sets out the basic rights, freedoms and responsibilities of all people in the state. It is about the relationship between government and the people it serves. In addition, there are many legislative and administrative responsibilities of an employer, some that are administered nationally (such as rules around wages and tax) and state based (Worksafe and OHS).</p> <p>The Fair Work Act 2009 (FW Act) and the Fair Work Regulations 2009 are the main legislation dealt with by Fairwork Australia. This legislation governs the employee/ employer relationship in Australia. They provide a safety net of minimum entitlements, enable flexible working arrangements and fairness at work and prevent discrimination against employees.</p> <p>Each workplace, specifically a school in the case of educational interpreters, will have their own policies, procedures and practices. Some are guided by law, such as those identified above, and some procedures will be local to the school. It is important to identify the expectations of your workplace and also be apprised of your own rights.</p> <p>Mandatory reporting refers to the knowledge that a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of physical and/or sexual abuse and/or the child's parents have not protected or are unlikely to protect the child from harm of that type. Whilst Education Support staff are not mandated to report any instances to child protection, they do carry a significant responsibility and duty of care. In this instance acting on concerns and suspicions of abuse as soon as practicable seeking appropriate advice or consulting with other professionals or agencies. It is imperative that interpreters understand the process that exists in their school environment.</p>	<p><a href="#">Human Rights Victoria</a>  <a href="#">WorkSafe Victoria</a>  <a href="#">Fairwork Australia</a>  <a href="#">Protecting Children — Reporting and Other Legal Obligations: Policy   education.vic.gov.au</a></p>
<p><b>3.6 Professional engagement with parents/carers and the school community</b></p>	<p>The school community is an important function and focus within a town or region. All schools engage with parents/ carers on a regular basis, via communication from the principal, the school council where appropriate and directly from the teacher. It is important to be mindful of the holistic relationship that the school has with any student.</p> <p>The interpreter is in a unique position as often the only person who can directly communicate with the student, and therefore their input may be required in the following situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case conferences with other allied health professionals</li> <li>• Student support group/Parent support group meetings to discuss the needs of the child, these will typically involve parents</li> <li>• Deaf Facility meetings to discuss student progress and learning approaches.</li> </ul> <p>It is critical to maintain the privacy of the students when discussing students and the work outside the school.</p>	<p>Individual Education Plan (IEP)</p>



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<b>3.7 Engagement with professional interpreter and education networks</b>	<p>Educational interpreters are able to connect with the broader interpreting profession through dedicated professional associations. ASLIA, the Australian Sign Language Interpreters Association, is the peak body for Auslan-English interpreters in Australia. The Vic/Tas combined state branch is active across both states, delivering professional learning, providing representation and information to interpreters. Membership is open to all interpreters, regardless of certification status or level. ASLIA National also convenes an Interpreters in Education Sub-Committee. This group is specific to the role of the EI and provides professional learning, collegiate connection and representation on issues in the workplace and policy. Opportunities to engage include joining the committee itself, or registering for its Facebook group.</p> <p>AUSIT is the Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators, and represents spoken and sign language practitioners in Australia. They offer considerable professional learning opportunities and are an important body representing the translating and interpreting profession in Australia.</p> <p>There are various other avenues for connecting to fellow practitioners, and also keeping up to date with research in deaf education and interpreting. VDEI maintains a virtual hub, which includes a number of resources, a discussion space and a noticeboard. The virtual hub is open to any person working as an interpreter or performing interpreting as part of a different role.</p>	<p><a href="#">ASLIA   Australian Sign Language Interpreters' Association   Home</a></p> <p><a href="#">Interpreting in Educational Settings (ASLIA) - Facebook group</a></p> <p><a href="#">Australian Institute of Interpreters &amp; Translators   AUSIT   Join Now</a></p> <p><a href="#">VDEI Educational Interpreter Virtual Hub</a></p>
<b>3.8 Engagement with deaf and hard of hearing community, networks and organisations</b>	<p>Sign language users are diverse and evolving. The language itself changes and grows organically, as any community language. It is important for educational interpreters to stay connected to the adult signing population, to be in touch with new vocabulary and issues and stay across relevant organisations representing and supporting deaf people.</p> <p>Opportunities to connect with native sign language users include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Subscribe to newsletters or follow key organisations on social media</li><li>• Attend community events that are open to all</li><li>• Watch webinars or online learning that features adult sign language users presenting</li><li>• Join local catch-up groups</li><li>• Facebook groups that centre around language</li><li>• Volunteer in the community with deaf sports groups or other groups of interest</li></ul> <p>Key organisations to keep in touch with are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Expression Australia</li><li>• Deaf Connect</li><li>• Deaf Children Australia</li><li>• Access Plus WA</li><li>• Aussie Deaf Kids</li><li>• Deaf Victoria</li><li>• Deaf Australia</li></ul>	<p><a href="#">Home - Deaf Children Australia</a></p> <p><a href="#">Home   Expression Australia</a></p> <p><a href="#">Aussie Deaf Kids</a></p> <p><a href="#">Deaf Victoria - Deaf Victoria</a></p> <p><a href="#">Home - Deaf Australia</a></p> <p><a href="#">Home - Deaf Connect</a></p> <p><a href="#">Home - Access Plus WA Deaf Inc</a></p> <p><a href="#">Home - Deaf Australia</a></p>

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