



Participant Information Sheet

1. Study Title

Guiding principles and codes of practice: Do Teachers of Deaf Children and Young People need them?

2. Invitation paragraph

We would like to invite you to take part in a research study into the ethical dilemmas that Teachers of Deaf Children and Young People (ToD) have experienced and continue to experience.

You may have faced ethical dilemmas such as how to deal with interventions and advice from other professionals e.g. consultants, audiologists and speech and language therapists involved in the care of a deaf child, language policy particularly in relation to sign languages and the lack of resources with which to provide a service to local deaf children. We would like to ask you what tools you work or worked with when faced with such ethical dilemmas, and what kind of dilemmas you have encountered in your careers.

Before you decide, you need to understand why the research is being done and what it would involve for you.

Please take the time to read the following information carefully. Ask questions if anything is not clear or if you would like more information. Please take time to decide whether or not you would like to take part.

3. What is the purpose of the study?

Rachel O'Neill (University of Edinburgh) and Rob Wilks (UWE Bristol) want to explore whether ToDs need guiding principles and codes of practice that take into account the nature of their role.

We consider that the profession of being a ToD is unique compared to the wider teaching profession. You are or have been involved in a deaf child's life from the point of diagnosis, often at a very early stage when decisions are being made quickly to achieve the perceived best outcomes for the child. As a result, you develop or have developed close relationships with pupils and their families and are or were often regarded as authority figures to hearing parents of newly diagnosed deaf children who have mostly not had previous contact with deafness.

This places or placed you in a position of some authority which can influence parents' and guardians' decisions in relation to audiological intervention, language acquisition

and choices, bilingualism and schooling during the deaf child's formative years. It has become clear through our initial research, however, that there are no guidance principles nor codes of practice tailored for your unique roles. You are required to adhere to the codes of practice for schoolteachers in your respective nations (i.e. England, Wales or Scotland), but these do not deal with the issues that you often face or faced.

4. Why have I been invited?

You are a current or retired ToD, and we believe that you are uniquely placed to offer your views about the role of the ToD and this is why you have been invited to participate in this study. We are particularly interested in how you think through issues when faced with an ethical dilemma. We are also interested in your experiences of working with deaf children in early years (aged 0-5) within parents' homes as well as with older deaf children and young people at school (up to the age of 18).

5. Do I have to take part?

It is up to you. We will describe the study and go through this information sheet, which we will give to you, and will answer any questions you might have about the research and your involvement. If you are willing to take part, we will then ask you to sign a consent form to show you have agreed to take part. You are free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason. If you have already completed the interview and want to withdraw from the study, we will ask if you are happy to allow us to keep the anonymised transcript until after publication of the article. We will respect your wishes.

6. What will happen to me if I take part?

Your participation in this study will entail an interview conducted on either Microsoft Teams or Zoom of no longer than one-hour duration, to be arranged at a date and time convenient to you.

If you agree to participate in this study following our initial contact, we will send you a copy of this information sheet, a short questionnaire and the consent form. It would be appreciated if you could sign the consent form and return both the consent form and the questionnaire to us via email prior to the interview. We will be happy to answer any questions or deal with any concerns prior to or at the beginning of your interview. We will choose people to interview to create a balanced sample of ToDs from across the UK.

Each interview will be conducted by Rachel O'Neill or Rob Wilks. In the case of Rob Wilks, a BSL/English Interpreter (funded by Access to Work) will be present when he interviews to facilitate communication and/or provide a voiceover for the purpose of transcribing.

Each interview will be recorded (video and audio) and then transcribed by the University of Edinburgh and stored in a secure folder at the University of Edinburgh using our SharePoint facility.

A copy of the transcript will be sent to you for you to check and approve. The audio and video recordings and any other data will then be processed in line with section 12 below. We will keep you informed of the project's progress and outcomes through our webpage at <https://www.ssc.education.ed.ac.uk/> and our blog at <https://blogs.ed.ac.uk/deafeducation/>.

7. Expenses and payments

No expenses will be covered, nor will any payments be made.

8. What will I have to do?

Your involvement in the study will entail the following:

- Read this information sheet and the consent form;
- Complete the short questionnaire, sign the consent form and send them to us prior to your interview. An email signature by typing is fine if we have your email.
- Attend and participate in your interview at the agreed date and time; and
- Check and approve the subsequent written transcript of your interview.

9. What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

We consider that there are minimal possible disadvantages and risks of you taking part in this study.

It is possible that the interview will be a source of distress and anxiety for you as you recall any ethical dilemmas you faced that were particularly difficult. If this happens to you, we will signpost you where appropriate to counselling services and other organisations and/or local educational authorities.

10. What are the possible benefits of taking part?

We anticipate being able to provide recommendations regarding a code of ethics or practice for ToDs and our findings will inform the shape and content of such a code. This will have a direct benefit for the ToD profession and for the deaf children who benefit from the services of ToDs.

11. What if there is a problem?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you should ask to speak to the researcher who will do their best to answer your questions by email (rachel.oneill@ed.ac.uk or Rob.Wilks@uwe.ac.uk).

If you remain unhappy and wish to complain formally, you can do this through the University of Edinburgh's Scottish Sensory Centre (SSC), which provides the governance for this project. The contact name is Professor John Ravenscroft, Head of the SSC, and his email is john.ravenscroft@ed.ac.uk.

12. Data Protection Privacy Notice

The data controller for this project will be the University of Edinburgh. The Data Protection Officer provides oversight of university activities involving the processing of personal data. Their email is dpo@ed.ac.uk.

Your personal data will be processed for the purposes outlined in this information sheet. Standard ethical procedures will involve you providing your consent to participate in this study by completing the consent form that has been sent to you. However, the legal basis on which this task is being performed is public interest, approved by the Moray House School of Education and Sport Ethics Committee.

If you are concerned about how your personal data is being processed, please contact the Data Protection Officer (dpo@ed.ac.uk).

Details of your individual rights are available on the ICO website at: <https://ico.org.uk/fororganisations/data-protection-reform/overview-of-the-gdpr/individuals-rights/>.

13. Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?

All information collected about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential, and any information about you which leaves the university will have your name and address and any other identifiable details removed so that you cannot be recognised.

It is possible you may want to discuss issues about child protection as this is an ethical dilemma. In this case, we will ask you if the case was reported under usual school child protection procedures. If as a research team we feel an incident has not been reported, we will discuss this with you after the interview is over and decide on the best action to take together.

Each interview will be recorded (video and audio) and then transcribed by a transcriber from the University of Edinburgh and stored in a central cloud folder using our SharePoint facility. A copy of the transcript will be sent to you for you to approve.

Your data and the interview recordings will be retained kept for no more than 5 years and may be destroyed earlier if they are no longer of use to the study.

14. What will happen if I do not carry on with the study?

You are free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason, up until the publication of our findings. If you withdraw from the study after publication of our findings, we will delete any data that we hold about you, but we will not be able to withdraw any of the anonymised data which forms part of publications.

15. What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results of the research project will inform the design and content of an article to be included in a special issue of the *Deafness and Education International* journal focusing on Professional Responsibility and Relationality in Deaf Education, with guest

editors Kristin Snoddon (Toronto Metropolitan University) and Michele Friedner (University of Chicago). We will also present our findings at conferences.

The article will also be disseminated to:

- the ToD profession as a whole through BATOD,
- ToD course providers (i.e. Universities of Birmingham, Edinburgh, Leeds, Manchester and Mary Hare in partnership with the University of Hertfordshire), and
- the Sign Bilingual Consortium (Rachel O'Neill and Rob Wilks are members of the steering group).

16. Who is organising or sponsoring the research?

This study is organised by Rachel O'Neill (University of Edinburgh) and Dr Rob Wilks (UWE Bristol). No funding has been received for this research, and it is being undertaken for an article due to be published in a special issue of the Deafness and Education International journal on Professional Responsibility and Relationality in Deaf Education.

17. Further information and contact details:

Role	Name	Email
Principal Investigator	Rachel O'Neill	rachel.oneill@ed.ac.uk
Co-Investigator	Dr Rob Wilks	Rob.Wilks@uwe.ac.uk
Governance	Professor John Ravenscroft	john.ravenscroft@ed.ac.uk
Data Protection Officer		dpo@ed.ac.uk