



**POST-SECONDARY COMMUNICATION ACCESS SERVICES
TRANSCRIBER TRAINEE RECRUITMENT**

It has proven challenging to recruit suitable candidates for TypeWell training. It is hoped that these documents will assist with recruitment challenges. In all situations, the role of PCAS is to provide resource materials and to consult as needed to assist Disability Services with the recruitment process. You are also encouraged to review the recruitment tips developed by TypeWell: <http://support.typewell.com/customer/portal/articles/1297890>

INTRODUCTION TO THE DOCUMENTS

- **Recruiting Transcriber Trainees: Recommended Attributes and Recruitment Considerations**

This document provides background to inform the recruitment and hiring process. One of the challenges related to transcriber recruitment has been the perception that all that is needed is good typing skills, which is definitely not the case. Transcribing is challenging work on a number of dimensions.

Not everyone who appears to be a good candidate should be encouraged to pursue the demanding TypeWell application process or training program. For example, interpreters who appear to be strong candidates in terms of their background knowledge, experience, and commitment to the field may not be good candidates for other reasons. The same is true for current notetakers or verbatim transcribers (e.g. court reporters) as outlined in this document, which is particularly relevant and important for those new to the recruiting and hiring of transcribers.

- **Recruitment Responsibilities**
- **Targets for Recruitment and Where to Advertise**

The 1st document outlines the responsibilities of the institutions and PCAS in transcriber recruitment, and suggests a two phase approach to recruitment. The 2nd document complements this by suggesting targets for recruitment and advertisement.

It has been found that individuals already connected to the institution or its Disability Services are most likely to commit to working for that institution once they complete the training. Offering TypeWell training as a complement to the skills existing service providers already possess makes sense in some situations. It allows employees gaining part-time work in student support roles to expand their expertise and hours, though individuals currently providing note-taking service are discouraged from attempting the TypeWell training. Hiring students makes sense in some circumstances but not others. These considerations are addressed in the previous document, *Recruiting Transcriber Trainees: Recommended Attributes and Recruitment Considerations*.

External postings have had mixed results, generally more positive in small communities than in the Lower Mainland or South Island. In these urban areas, postings on college websites have been most effective.

- **Detailed Job Notice**
- **External Job Posting**

Two versions of job postings are provided, the second abbreviated to suit external postings. We have found that it is difficult to adequately reflect the challenging nature of transcribing work without discouraging potential candidates. If the institution is offering sponsorship, or while PCAS sponsorship is available, then the advantage of receiving fee training obviously needs to be emphasized in any posting. If HR departments are involved in the hiring, they will want to ensure that postings reflect standard institutional language.



Recommended Attributes and Recruitment Considerations

1. Recommended Attributes for Transcriber Trainees

a) Typing

- TypeWell required: at least 60 wpm, without errors; Typewell recommended: 65 wpm or higher (Note: the TypeWell test is more difficult than other typing tests)
- Also required: ability to maintain typing speed and accuracy while summarizing auditory input

b) Communication Skills

- Excellent oral skills (speaking and listening)
- Excellent vocabulary, spelling, grammar and sentence structure skills including proof-reading (Note: the TypeWell application process assesses English skills)

c) Cognitive Skills

- Excellent short term memory (Note: the TypeWell application process includes an auditory test)
- Ability to understand and re-state complex English quickly and accurately
- Ability to rapidly extract meaning/concepts from complex speech
- High level multi-tasking skills: ability to grasp meaning, retain information as more information comes in, capture meaning in abbreviated format using dictionary of abbreviations
- Ability to spend extended periods of time focused on information-processing
- Excellent problem-solving skills

d) Motor/Physical Skills

- Capacity to sit for extended periods
- No history of pain in arms or wrists; capacity for long periods of repetitive motion

e) Professionalism and Team Skills

- Demonstrated motivation to research transcribing work and commitment to work of this nature
- Motivation to complete demanding training program independently
- History of professional conduct; ability to adhere to required ethical standards
- Ability to develop positive working relationships with students, faculty and staff
- Ability to work as part of an educational team, requesting assistance as needed
- Ability to work independently, maintaining high standards with minimal supervision
- Demonstrated flexibility and adaptability to changing circumstances and varying environments
- Demonstrated ability to defuse and resolve difficult situations
- Willingness to work variable hours, potentially including evenings and weekends



f) Computer Skills

- Familiarity and ease with all types of computers, particularly laptops
- Excellent knowledge of MS Office applications
- Ability to assist in resolving technical problems related to the service/equipment

g) Knowledge/Experience

- High school graduation and some successful post-secondary participation required; completion of a post secondary credential preferred
- Knowledge of Deaf culture and understanding of educational issues related to students who are deaf or have hearing loss, or willingness to learn
- Preferred: knowledge and experience related to post-secondary access for students with disabilities.

2. Recruitment Considerations

a) Hiring priorities

- Consider the predominant subject areas in which transcribing is likely to be used when weighing strengths of individual candidates, since It is beneficial to have transcribers familiar with the content area of the classes in which they are transcribing.
- Assess potential new hires individually to determine the areas in which they will need additional training and mentoring, and whether such training/mentoring is available.

b) Recruiting and Cross-Training Captionists and Notetakers

TypeWell does not recommend selection of individuals currently providing either verbatim reporting or notetaking, given difficulties they are likely to encounter switching to the TypeWell system.

c) Recruiting and Cross-Training Interpreters

Current interpreters may be interested in cross-training to acquire a new skill set, make themselves more employable, and provide steadier work. Interpreters use many of the same skills and are subject to the same ethical requirements as transcribers. If they have worked in the post-secondary system, they will be familiar with academic culture, language, standards, etc. In some situations interpreters may be the best candidates for training, and providing cross-training may give them enough work that they can remain in the community and continue their connection to a specific institution.

However, there are some potential limitations to interpreter recruitment/hiring, including:

- interpreters may be fully utilized/needed as interpreters;
- interpreters are likely to give priority to interpreting opportunities in order to maintain their skills;



- Since transcriber training has been available for some time, at this point interpreters who haven't already taken advantage of training may not be highly motivated; and
- Interpreters will generally not be willing to work as transcribers unless they are paid their interpreting wage rate, thus eliminating the cost advantage of transcribing over other communication access options.

There are benefits to both cross-training interpreters and to training non-interpreters. Decisions about the most advantageous mix of interpreter/non-interpreter trainees are generally best made at the local or regional level.

d) Recruiting and Training Students

Students may be ideal candidates for recruitment under certain circumstances. The following should be considered:

- Generally, only students with a part-time course load should be recruited as they will have more time to devote to training and greater availability for work assignments. Students will need to realize that that they will not likely be able to maintain other part-time work.
- Students must understand that this work entails greater commitment than other entry level on-campus work: e.g. student transcribers must be available as scheduled, no matter what their own academic workload.
- Generally it makes sense to recruit students in longer duration programs as they will be on campus and available longer; however, short program students, or part-time students not in a specific program, may be suitable if they are committed to the institution and/or to remaining in the region.
- Students' academic record should be a factor: if they are struggling already they may not be suitable in terms of their cognitive skills or their ability to commit time to transcribing assignments.
- Students in disciplines where transcribers are needed may be more familiar with the required vocabulary, environment, etc., and interested in continuing to work in their field after graduation.



Recruitment Responsibilities

Recruitment will be a shared responsibility between PCAS (the Transcriber Recruitment and Training Project) and the institutions. Recruitment will generally follow two phases:

Phase	Who:		What Action:
	Inst.	PCAS	
Phase 1: Word of Mouth, Direct Contact and Internal		√	PCAS provides Disability Services with criteria for TypeWell transcriber trainee selection and detailed job notice
	√		Human Resources or Disability Services make contact directly with potentially suitable individuals who work or have worked for the institution
	√		Disability Services makes contact directly with students who have prior Disability Services work experience, or with key departments (e.g. Applied Business Technology) where suitable candidates may be available
	√		Institution (Disability Services or HR) recruits additional internal student and employee candidates if needed through broadcast employee or student email, student newspapers or employee newsletters, student employment centres, etc.
Phase 2: External		√	PCAS provides sample external posting
	√		Institution posts on website
	√		Institution posts in community publications and locations as appropriate



Targets for Recruitment and Where to Advertise

Targets for Recruitment	Where to Advertise
College/University HR departments: Casual employees may be available who want part-time work (this is critical); also new retirees or those on maternity leave may be interested.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Direct Human Resources (HR) contact ▪ Employee newsletter or email
Past note takers/scribes or those currently working in other support roles may be suitable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Direct Disability Services contact
Interpreters may be interested in cross-training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Direct Disability Services contact ▪ PCAS <i>Jobsline</i>, WAVLI website and newsletter
<p>Students with less than a full course load (and not also committed to working elsewhere) may be suitable, in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students who have experience as peer tutors or in other support/volunteer roles (TW recommends against recruiting anyone currently doing notetaking) ▪ Students in 4 year (Vs 1 or 2 year) programs to make the investment in training worthwhile ▪ Applied Business Technology (ABT)/office administration students likely have the keyboarding/computing prerequisites and may be interested in continuing to transcribe after graduation ▪ In a specialized institution, students may be most likely to have the appropriate vocabulary and be committed to remaining in the environment after graduation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Personal contact through Chairs, transcribers, other students, etc. ▪ Email to the student population or key sub-sectors ▪ Campus Career/Employment Centres for students ▪ Student newspapers
Education students, new grads or those on TOC lists should have the prerequisite skills and may be interested in work which places them into challenging, interesting academic situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Education programs internally or in neighbouring institutions ▪ BCTF newsletter or website
Mothers of young children may be interested in work of this nature.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Resources for parents: parenting magazines, online (e.g. www.urbanbaby.com) or print (e.g. Island Parent, Urban Baby and Toddler); on-line career resources for moms
Former court reporters medical transcriptionists, or trainees unable to maintain the required pace for verbatim recording, may be interested (TW recommends against recruiting practicing court reporters or medical transcriptionists).	



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Other members of the general public may be interested and qualified.

- Institution web sites
- Community newspapers
- Craig's List or similar online network



Job Notice

{Institution} is looking for qualified individuals to transcribe for students with hearing loss during classes and other course activities. Transcribers learn to use specialized TypeWell software and condensing techniques to rapidly record lectures and discussions on a laptop, producing notes which are simultaneously viewed by students on a second computer.

The TypeWell transcribing course is completed on-line and requires approximately 6 weeks of intense part-time study.

Transcribing is demanding work but rewarding in the difference it can make to students' success, and exciting in the opportunity it provides to work in a variety of stimulating academic settings.

Qualifications:

Applicants must:

- Type 60 wpm (65 wpm is recommended) without error (no more than 4 errors in 5 minutes); maintain accuracy and speed while taking notes in academic lectures
- Have good listening skills and short term memory
- Have excellent oral and written English skills including grammar, spelling, vocabulary and sentence structure
- Demonstrate ease with computers and MS Office applications
- Have the capacity to sit for long periods, and no history of wrist or hand pain
- Have high school graduation and some successful post-secondary participation

In addition, in order to be successful in the transcriber course and as a transcriber, it is recommended that applicants:

- Be comfortable in academic settings with diverse populations
- Have excellent interpersonal and communication skills
- Be good at problem-solving
- Be able to work independently and as part of a team
- Demonstrate professionalism
- Be flexible, adaptable and willing to work in a variety of settings
- Be able to maintain focus on information-processing for extended periods of time
- Have some knowledge of educational issues related to students who are deaf or have hearing loss, or be willing to learn.

Work is generally part-time and schedules vary; evening work may be required. Pay scales differ according to qualifications and institutional standards and agreements.

Interested individuals should view the video at <http://www.bcit.ca/pcas/spechtotext.shtml> and thoroughly review the TypeWell website <http://www.typewell.com/transcriberfaq.html>. If they feel their skills and interests match the demands and opportunities of transcribing work, they should contact **Disability Services** for further information.



External Job Posting

Are you interested in gaining the skills to qualify you for work in stimulating post-secondary environments? If you meet the selection criteria, you can enroll in a part-time online educational program preparing you for part-time work as a transcriber, providing notes for college or university students with hearing loss. You may be eligible for sponsorship so that your tuition cost is covered and required equipment and software are provided.

This opportunity is right for you if you are:

- ✓ An excellent typist
- ✓ Comfortable with computers and word processing
- ✓ Proficient at spoken and written English
- ✓ A good listener with excellent note-taking skills
- ✓ A high school graduate and have successfully completed some post-secondary education.

After completing the training, you will be eligible to work as a transcriber in any post-secondary institution or in other sectors: transcribing is increasingly being used in the school system and everywhere that people who are deaf or hard of hearing need to communicate. To learn more about this exciting opportunity, please contact: ***Disability Services***