



## Transcription Guide

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## 1. Recording Guidelines

This guide covers the basics and should help you get the most from your recording and keep the transcription time to a minimum.

### Recording Dictation

- Choose a quiet recording environment.
- Do not use a voice activated recorder as it can result in the start of each sentence being cut off.
- Hold the microphone about a hand's length from your mouth.
- Avoid moving around too much.
- Speak clearly and not too fast.
- Spell out names and terms that may be unfamiliar to a lay person.
- Clearly indicate the start and end of the dictation.

### Recording an Interview

- Choose a quiet recording environment.
- Ensure the equipment is working correctly.
- If there is only one microphone, ensure this is placed nearest to the interviewee.
- Avoid interrupting the interviewee and use visual cues like nodding your head instead of saying 'uh huh'.
- Ensure the interviewee speaks clearly and ask them to repeat anything that you do not catch.
- Clearly indicate the start and end of the interview.

### Recording a Group Discussion

- Choose a quiet recording environment.
- If possible, place external microphones close to each participant.
- Ask participants to introduce themselves prior to discussion - this establishes identifiable voice patterns.
- Ask softly spoken participants to speak up or move closer to the microphone.
- Ask participants to avoid talking over one another.
- If possible, avoid refreshments during the discussion as the resulting noise can obscure speech.
- Clearly indicate the start and end of the group discussion.

## 2. Transcription Styles

A transcript is the written reproduction of dialogue and extraneous sounds captured in a recorded interview and should accurately reflect the words, grammar and speech patterns of the respondent, providing as authentic an account as possible.

Interview transcripts normally fall into one of two categories:

**Verbatim** - a literal rendition, with every utterance transcribed.

**Intelligent Verbatim** - allows a degree of latitude and judgement.

I provide an Intelligent Verbatim transcript within a consistent style and format as standard, unless otherwise instructed.

### Page Layout

The standard layout will be one inch margins all round, double spaced, 12 point Arial font with no right justification.

### Speaker Identification

Unless you wish the respondents to be personally identified, the following will apply:

- For one-to-one interviews, the interviewer's questions/comments will be in bold and the respondent's answers will be in normal text.

**Q** Interviewer's question/comment

A Respondent's answer

- For group discussions, the interviewer's questions/comments will be in bold and the respondents' answers will be in normal text prefixed with A1, A2, A3 and so on.

**Q** Interviewer's question/comment

A1 Respondent's answer

A2 Respondent's answer

A3 Respondent's answer

## Style Guide

- Interruptions to the flow of responses with feedback from the interviewer (yeah, uh-huh, sure) will be omitted unless it is a definite response to a point being made by the respondent.
- Words or phrases of interjection (yeah? see? you know?) will be kept to a minimum.
- Words or syllables used to interrupt, foreshorten or end responses will only be included if they convey meaning (Agreement: uh-huh; Disagreement: uh-uh).
- False starts will be retained if repetition is used for emphasis or is reflective of individual speech patterns. Stuttering and stammering will not be included unless it is intentional.
- Ellipses (...) will be used to indicate an interruption by another speaker, a resumption after an interruption, a change of course midstream or where a speaker trails off resulting in an incomplete sentence.
- Contractions such as it's (it is; it has), words commonly pronounced together in spoken English such as gonna (going to), wanna (want to), kinda (kind of) and words of informal language such as yeah (yes) are in the dictionary and will be transcribed as heard in the recording to more accurately reflect the dialogue.
- Grammatical errors that occur as a result of the speaker changing course midstream will be retained, although accidental singular/plural subject/verb disagreements will be rectified.
- Nonverbal sounds and interruptions that occur in the recording, especially if they intrude significantly and provoke a response from those present, will be noted and enclosed in square brackets, such as [laughter], [telephone rings].
- New paragraphs will be used wherever topics change, where other dialogue is introduced and to make for easier reading.
- In general, numbers from zero to ten will be written as words and 11 onwards in figures - except when a sentence begins with a number, the numbers need to stand out for quick comprehension (statistics, money, time, measurements, ages, etc.) or a paragraph lists several numbers relating to the same topic such as (10 to 100 not ten to 100).

## Indecipherable Sections

While I endeavour to transcribe everything and research terminology, spellings and names with which I may not be familiar, there are times when dialogue is indecipherable.

In such instances I indicate these as [inaudible] and time code the transcript in order for you to easily navigate to the point in the recording and verify what was said.

Should it transpire that your recording is of lesser quality than expected, I will contact you at the earliest opportunity to discuss the matter.

If your recording contains technical terms or unique names, providing me with a list of these beforehand can prove very beneficial, together with a list of the speakers involved.

## Proofreading

All transcripts are proofread upon completion.

### 3. Transcription Completion Times

Industry standards allow one hour to transcribe 10 to 15 minutes of clearly recorded speech within a controlled environment.

One hour of professionally, clearly recorded dictation or one-to-one interview will take between 4 and 6 hours to transcribe.

Recordings where there are multiple speakers and less scope for control invariably take a lot longer and one hour of professionally, clearly recorded audio can take anything between 6 and 8 hours to transcribe, depending on the complexity of the work involved.

Audio with any of the following characteristics will undoubtedly result in a lesser quality recording and, as a consequence, increase the above transcription times:

- Not professionally recorded
- Excessive ambient noise
- Heavy accents
- Muffled voices
- Participants speaking too quickly
- Participants mumbling
- Participants talking over each other
- Poor sound quality

It is in your best interests to ensure your audio is of optimum quality as lesser quality recordings will incur a surcharge and I reserve the right not to undertake recordings deemed to be of particularly poor quality.