

## Transcription News - 23rd November 2022

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Good afternoon and welcome to the November 2022 edition of Transcription News from University Transcriptions and TP Transcription Limited. Our newsletter includes updates on our charitable foundation's work, best way to record an interview and being charged VAT if a charity. If you would like to get in touch with us to have any questions answered, request an article, or include anything in future editions please drop us a line to [jonathan@tptranscription.co.uk](mailto:jonathan@tptranscription.co.uk)



### Leeds Women's Aid - Ten Percent Foundation Award - £500

In the Ten Percent Foundation's latest round of donations, Leeds Women's Aid has been chosen by the trustees to receive £500. The charity was suggested to us by one of our clients.

The trustees of the Ten Percent Foundation decided to donate £500 to Leeds Women's Aid, a charity set up over 50 years ago (they have just celebrated their 50 year anniversary) to provide services to women and families who are victims and survivors of violence and abuse; forced marriage; trafficking; stalking and harassment. They are part of a local network of organisations called the LDVS - Leeds Domestic Violence Service. The service was nominated by one of our clients with knowledge of their work.

#### What does the charity do?

Services include providing emergency refuge accommodation to adults and children, community services including a 24/7 helpline, training programmes and interventions.

#### How will the donation help?

"On behalf of Leeds Women's Aid, we want to thank you and the Ten Percent Foundation for donating £500 to our charity. This money will help fund our Emmeline Garden Project: a new children's outdoor play area and dedicated tranquil garden space for our residents to rest, recover and connect with others. We really appreciate your support." Laila Fletcher, Leeds Women's Aid.

## Further information

For further details about the charity please visit their website here: <https://leedswomensaid.co.uk>

## Why this charity?

We like to support smaller sized charities where we can see that our small donations may make a difference. Our client spoke very highly of the work of Leeds Women's Aid.

## What is the best way to record a qualitative research interview?

We were asked this question this week by someone within the NHS looking to undertake a series of interviews with patients, and enquiring whether they needed specialist equipment.

### Smartphones are the best

Firstly, smartphones are so advanced in terms of their audio technology, that the sound quality you will get from using a standard iPhone put on a table between the two speakers is, in most cases, absolutely fine.

### Voice recorders are old hat

It used to be the case that voice recorders, such as the Olympus DSS range were much more useful than a smartphone or other type of phone, but the smartphones now are so advanced, and the software so good, this is easily the best way of doing it.

NB: there has been a lot of debate over whether the correct spelling is 'smart phone' or 'smartphone'. It seems that over time 'smartphone' has become the dominant spelling in the same way that VHS trumped Betamax!

However, there are a couple of caveats to this. If you are in a very busy environment with lots of background noise, then unfortunately not only is your smart phone is going to pick up your voice but also all the noise around you. The noise around you may well be so loud it makes the job of the transcriber very difficult when it comes to providing you with a transcript of the interview. With this in mind, you may want to consider the use of a unidirectional condenser mic plugged in, or even two unidirectional microphones pointing at you as the interviewer and at the interviewee. This would then in theory cut out most of the background noise for you, or at least reduce it to more acceptable levels.

### Group recordings

The advice above is completely different if you are interviewing a group of people rather than just one or possibly two. In this case, you definitely need a quiet environment to complete the recording, because otherwise you are going to pick up lots of background noise, together with lots of speakers all speaking into the recording at different directions, which will make it very difficult to phase out any of the background noise.

If you are recording a group, for example a seminar or a focus group, then the optimum way of doing it is to consider the use of an omnidirectional or stereo microphone, which plugs into whichever type of recording device you are using (or connects via Bluetooth), and picks up the voices without too much interference. You can get unidirectional and stereo/omnidirectional mics that connect up to smart phones, and by way of quick example, a Zoom iQ7 Professional Stereo Microphone for iOS will set you back about £89. Microphones also have condenser options as well,

which reduces some of the room effect or background noise.

You may find that the smart phone is fine for multiple speakers on its own, but it does depend on the acoustics of the room.

### **Background noise and multiple speakers**

Quite a bit of the background noise on a recording can be traced back to the acoustics in the room the recording was completed in. For example, if you have multiple speakers spread out around a church, then there is a very good chance that the recording you get will be very echoey, and voices will be hard to pick up. Similarly, if you record a lot of people squashed into a very small room, it can be very hard to detect the difference between each voice and provide a transcript with individual speakers identified.

### **Room sizes**

A good sized room for completing one to one interviews is a small hotel bedroom sized room, with the smart phone or microphone placed equal distance between the two speakers.

The optimum size room for a group of speakers is one that probably is the size of a hotel suite, assuming you have less than 15 speakers.

If you have more than 15 speakers then you probably need to be looking at a room double that size in order to get the right acoustics for a good quality recording.

### **Good recording practice**

Our advice is usually to start a recording by getting the interviewer and the interviewee to say a few lines and then play back the recording to make sure that it has picked both of them up equally well, and that the recording is clear and crisp wherever possible.

### **Summary**

If you are recording on a one to one basis in the right sized room with very low background noise , you will not need to worry too much about specialist equipment. However if you are going to regularly be recording groups in loud or difficult environments, you may want to consider investing in a condenser stereo microphone.

## **Should we be charged VAT if we are a registered charity?**

This question comes up regularly in relation to transcription services, and the quick answer is yes you should be charged VAT, because the provision of business services to a charity is not exempt from the imposition of VAT.

We work with academics, and we provide specialist, qualitative research transcription and translation services to universities, organisations and businesses across the world. We have had a number of conversations with clients about VAT over the years because in the main it is not something they work with on a daily basis.

### **VAT in a nutshell**

Here goes with a very short description as to what VAT is.

VAT is a tax set by HMRC in the UK, and is applied on all sales of goods and services unless particular circumstances apply. A business that generates less than a particular level of turnover (at

the moment it is £85,000) does not have to charge VAT, but still has to pay it on all purchases of goods and services they make themselves. A business turning over higher than £85,000 will be registered for VAT, and so all the goods and services they supply to their customers will have to have VAT imposed on them. At the time of writing, VAT is charged at 20% of the price of the goods or services.

### **Misunderstanding - companies benefit from VAT**

The first misunderstanding that often occurs is the idea that the business applying the VAT in some way benefits from it. Nothing could be further from the truth. Applying VAT is a total and utter headache for all companies and business, as it is simply a question of collecting the VAT on behalf of the government and paying it to them on a monthly, quarterly or annual basis. The only thing a business benefits from is that if they themselves are supplied with goods or services by another supplier, then they will be paying out VAT, and HMRC (HM Revenue and Customs) allow the business to deduct this from the overall amount of VAT paid to the government.

So, for example, if I generate £100,000 worth of business and charged £20,000 of VAT on top of this, then if I have purchased in services costing £50,000 with £10,000 of VAT applied, I only have to pay the government £10,000, which is the balance between the VAT I have collected on my own sales and the pay out to the other supplier on the goods or services they have supplied to me. I have not profited from this arrangement at all, and in fact have had to pay someone within the business to perform the calculation on VAT in order to make the payment to the government of the balance.

### **Misunderstanding - charities are exempt from VAT**

Charities are in some circumstances exempt from paying VAT on particular goods and services, and this is why we often get queries from university staff as to whether or not we should be charging them or their institution VAT.

The specific circumstances for supplying goods or services to charities where VAT is not applied are listed below. You will see that there is a theme to the list, and it is usually around not having to pay VAT on items relating to particular types of charity work, for example the provision of medical services or goods relevant to specific scientific research.

- advertising and items for collecting donations
- aids for disabled people
- construction services
- drugs and chemicals
- equipment for making 'talking' books and newspapers
- lifeboats

- and  
associated  
equipment,  
including  
fuel
- medicine  
or  
ingredients  
for  
medicine
- resuscitation  
training  
models
- medical,  
veterinary  
and  
scientific  
equipment
- ambulances
- goods  
for  
disabled  
people
- motor  
vehicles  
designed  
or  
adapted  
for  
a  
disability
- rescue  
equipment

Unfortunately, there is no loophole for the provision of business services, which is what transcription is, and so very often when this question is asked we refer our clients through to the HMRC website, and the list above.

### **Outside the UK**

When we provide transcription or translation to clients inside or outside the EU, or in the USA, then very often completely different VAT rules apply. Our understanding at the current time of writing this article, is that usually when we supply our services to non-UK clients (we work with companies and organisations across the world, primarily in mainland Europe, including France, Spain, Portugal, Denmark, Belgium, The Netherlands and Germany), we do not have to apply VAT to the provision of our service.

I have included this to give an example as to why there is often confusion around VAT, why sometimes our clients think they should not be charged it, and confirmation that yes, you do have to pay VAT on business service, whether or not you are a charity, unless a specific exemption applies as per the list above.

### **Further information**

If you have any questions regarding the imposition of VAT on business services, you probably want to be speaking to HMRC or looking at their website. There is an incredibly helpful page on the HMRC website here: <https://www.gov.uk/vat-charities/what-qualifies-for-relief>

## Recent Advice Articles

[Machine Polishing Transcription](#)

[Transcribe it yourself - advice from some lecturers to students](#)

[Transcription for bosses - its harder than it looks](#)

[How long does it take to transcribe 20 minutes of audio?](#)

[Human transcription - why do automated companies recommend it?](#)

[How useful are DBS checks when ordering transcription work?](#)

[Ordering transcription work at universities - a guide](#)

[Spending research budgets before deadlines](#)

[For a full list of over 50 articles on our website please click here](#)

## Charity Donations for 2022

TP Transcription Limited and University Transcriptions donate 10% of annual net profits to charity via the [Ten Percent Foundation](#), a charitable trust set up to distribute monies to charities in the UK and Africa. We have been doing this for over 20 years and by way of example in 2021 our charitable donation was £19,317.30. The Foundation never incurs any administration costs - all monies are distributed to charities.

### Why do we donate?

We set up our companies over 20 years ago with the aim of being ethical in everything we did. As part of this we decided that a percentage of our profits should always be earmarked for charitable work and set the rate at ten percent. A sudden burst of inspiration meant we called ourselves the Ten Percent Group and it is what the TP in our name (TP Transcription Limited) stands for.

### Nominations 2022

The successful charities this year were as follows:

Arun Sunshine Group - £500

Ichthyosis Support Group - £500

Men in Sheds - £500

The First Step - £1500

Rights of Women - £750

Cure Parkinsons - £1000

Prison Choir Project - £500

PACE Charitable Trust - £500

Dundee Stroke Exercise Club - £1000

The Proud Trust - £500

The Cure & Action for Tay-Sachs - £1000

Leeds Womens Aid - £500

The Children's Heartbeat Trust – £1000

Mynydd Isa & Maeshafn Cricket Club - £1400 interest free loan

We will provide an outline of each charity every month for the next 12 months and how the money has been spent.

We have a strict list of criteria in relation our donating which is available on the [Ten Percent Foundation website](#). Donations tend to be within the range of £500-£2000 per charity per year, although in the past we have supported charities over a period of 5 years with donations going

towards specific ongoing projects.

If you have any questions about the work of the Ten Percent Foundation, please email [jonathan@tptranscription.co.uk](mailto:jonathan@tptranscription.co.uk) or visit our website at <http://www.tenpercentfoundation.org>

## **The Transcription Society - providing professional accreditation to academic and business transcribers**

The Transcription Society is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to improving standards in the transcription industry and providing accreditation to both individual and corporate members. The organisation is run on a not for profit basis and registered in the UK with Companies House. The society offers individual transcribers the chance to obtain professional recognition for their standards of work and provides corporate members with recognition that they subscribe to a professional level of industry standards for quality and ethics.

Needless to say, TP Transcription Limited is a corporate member and our directors sit on the board of the Transcription Society. For details of the transcription standards the Society promotes, please visit [www.transcriptionsociety.org](http://www.transcriptionsociety.org).

We hope you have enjoyed reading our monthly newsletter and look forward to hearing from you if we can assist further.

Kind regards

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