

**Request to be expert witness**

***Practice* Based Scenario**

**About this document**

This document is designed to take you through a practice-based scenario to help you reflect on what you might do if faced with a similar situation. It can be used to guide your thoughts and prompt discussion with your colleagues. Working through this document counts towards your continuing professional development (CPD). Your reflections on this document are not assessed and you do not have to send your responses to the RCSLT.

You can work through it on your own, with a colleague or supervisor, or in groups, eg as part of an RCSLT Hub or Clinical Excellence Network.

This document is broken into six parts:

1. **The scenario:** for you to read
2. **The issues to consider:** for you to gather your thoughts on practice issues relating to this scenario
3. **Next steps:** for you to plan out what you would need to do next
4. **Prompts for consideration:** RCSLT prompts for further consideration
5. **Sources of further information:** links to professional guidance
6. **Update your CPD diary:** for you to do
7. **The scenario**

**You are contacted by a local authority asking you to attend a tribunal as an expert witness regarding your assessment report of a child you have not seen in 18 months.**



**What do you do in this scenario?**

1. **The issues to consider**

**What do you need to consider?**

Think about the above scenario and its implications and jot down your notes about issues you may need to consider. Please feel free to use extra sheets of paper if you need. Or, if you are in a group, you may like to record on a whiteboard or flipchart.

1. **Next steps**

**What steps do you think you need to take next?**

1. **Prompts for consideration**

For this scenario you will need to delve deeper into the reasons you are being called. For example, has the local authority also called on other speech and language therapists who have had more recent involvement with the child or are you the only one? Also, what is the nature of the evidence the local authority wants you to provide?

It is recommended that you think about the following prompt questions and formulate a considered strategy to deal with the problem.

Remember that if you are faced with a similar situation you will need to think about it in relation to the frameworks within which you work, such as the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) Standards, RCSLT professional guidance and resources, local and national policies and also policies of your employer (or your own policies if practising independently).

Please note that this list is not exhaustive and does not constitute legal advice.

**Prompt questions to consider**

1. Does your employer have relevant policies about this type of scenario?
2. If you are practising independently, do you have a policy about this type of scenario?
3. If there are no policies, can you seek advice from your support network such as your supervisor or the RCSLT?
4. Has the client been discharged?
5. Can you locate the client notes?
6. Why are you needed?
7. Will other speech and language therapists who have worked with the child more recently be involved in the tribunal?
8. Will the tribunal be recorded?
9. What are the implications for you if you do or do not attend?
10. What are the implications for resourcing if you attend (ie the time and cost of attendance if you are practising independently and backfill needs if you are employed)?

**Possible next steps**

1. Seek guidance from your employer, supervisor and the RCSLT.
2. Access client records to refresh your memory.
3. Ensure that you practice good record keeping so that you can easily access archived files if such a situation should arise.
4. **Sources of further information**

**The following information in the professional accountability and autonomy, and professional guidance sections of the RCSLT website is also particularly relevant:**

2 - [Communicate appropriately and effectively](https://www.rcslt.org/professional-autonomy-and-accountability-guidance#section-6)

9 - [Be honest and trustworthy](https://www.rcslt.org/professional-autonomy-and-accountability-guidance#section-9)

10 - [Record keeping](https://www.rcslt.org/professional-autonomy-and-accountability-guidance#section-14)

[Information governance](https://www.rcslt.org/information-governance)

[Information governance: requests for information](https://www.rcslt.org/information-governance-guidance#section-15)

1. **Update your CPD diary**

Working through this scenario counts towards your continuing professional development (CPD). Once you have completed this scenario, please record this learning and your reflections in your CPD diary.