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Section 1: Introduction

- 1.1 The objective of the Registration Panel is to ensure that high standards of integrity and professionalism are maintained. It is important that Panel members read, understand and meet the standards set out in the Code of Conduct for the Registration Panel ("this Code").
- 1.2 This Code sets out the expectations of Panel members. It is important that Panel members maintain high standards in their role, and that these standards are made public.
- 1.3 This Code particularly applies to Panel members whenever they take part in activities connected with the registration system.
- 1.4 Panel members should also bear in mind that due to the high-profile manner of their role, even when they consider themselves to be working in a private capacity, or for another organisation, they may still be viewed as a representative of, or an ambassador for the registration system and / or the Panel. They should therefore still be mindful of this Code.

Section 2: General Guidelines

- 2.1 Panel members and partners supporting the register should at all times in the conduct of their duties be cognisant of and follow the values and principles of the Register See **Register Structure and Governance**.
- 2.2 Panel members should at all times:
 - a) act in good faith and in the sole interests of the Register
 - b) act in accordance with the Register's objectives
 - c) adhere to this Code
 - d) treat others equally, fairly, and with respect

Section 3: Confidentiality

- 3.1 Most of the information to which Panel members have access, as part of their role, will be in the public domain. However, there will be times when they may have access to information that is confidential. This may include:
 - a) confidential information pertaining to decisions relating to entry and retention on the Register
 - b) names and personal details in relation to complaints/appeals
 - c) details contained in reports from other components of the Register, such as Complaints Process Reports, Appeals Process Reports, and Assessment Reports
 - d) information relating to Panel employees/secretariat
- 3.2 Panel members should not disclose confidential information to which they have access as part of their role on the Panel, without the consent of the Panel, or if required to do so by law.
- 3.3 Panel members should be compliant with all requirements set out in the GDPR policy and should take appropriate steps to ensure that confidential documents are stored securely.

Section 4: Attending meetings

- 4.1 Panel members should attend all Registration Panel meetings, and all meetings of sub-committee of which they are a member.
- 4.2 A quorum for the purposes of a Panel meeting shall be 50% plus one members.
- 4.3 There may be circumstances in which members are unable to attend a meeting, in which case they should send their apologies as soon as possible to the Panel Chairperson or Secretariat or the relevant sub-committee of the Registration Panel.
- 4.4 If a Panel member does not attend three consecutive meeting they are deemed to have resigned.

Section 5: Conflicts of Interest

5.1 Panel members are required to disclose any conflict of interest that may arise in considering matters as a Panel member. Specific requirements for the disclosure of interests of members of the Panel is set out in section 15 of the *Ethics in Public Office Act, 1995*: **Any member present at a meeting where a specified matter arises who has a material interest in that matter shall:**

- a) at the meeting or as soon as he/she is aware of a potential conflict of interest, disclose to the Chairperson of the Panel, the Chairperson of the sub-committee the nature of that conflict
- b) if it is deemed to be a conflict of interest, withdraw from the meeting/discussion for as long as the matter is being considered
- c) take no part in any deliberation of the members relating to the matter, and
- d) refrain from voting on any decision relating to the matter

Where:

- i. "material interest" is to be construed in accordance with section 2(3) of the *Ethics in Public Office Act 1995*,¹
- ii. "meeting" means a meeting of the Panel or of sub-committees
- iii. "member" means a member of the Panel or of sub-committees
- iv. "specified matter" means:
 - o An arrangement to which the Panel is a party or a proposed such arrangement, or
 - o A contract or other agreement with the Panel or a proposed such contract or other agreement

- 5.2 If a member discloses a material interest under section 5.1, the disclosure shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting concerned and for as long as the matter to which the disclosure relates is being dealt with by the meeting, the member shall not be counted in the quorum for the meeting in that discussion.
- 5.3 All Panel members must complete a **Declaration of No Conflicting Interests** (see Appendix 1), and thereafter take professional responsibility for ensuring that it is kept up to date.
- 5.4 To comply with the Ethics in Public Office regulation, members of the Panel should provide a list of their individual interests (as per the definition of the Act) to be maintained by the secretariat supporting the registration panel.
- 5.5 Members of the Panel, and the Secretariat must avoid accepting gifts, hospitality or benefits which could be construed as an attempt to gain influence or favour.

¹ *Ethics in Public Office Act, 1995* Section 2(3): "For the purposes of this Act, a person or a connected person has a material interest in a matter if the consequence or effect— (a) of the performance by the person of a function of his or her office, directorship, designated position, or position as a special adviser, as the case may be, or (b) of any decision made in relation to or in the course or as a result of the performance of such a function by the person, concerning that matter may be to confer on or withhold from the person or the connected person a significant benefit without also conferring it on or withholding it from persons in general or a class of persons which is of significant size having regard to all the circumstances and of which the person or the connected person is a member."
<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1995/act/22/section/2>

- 5.6 The Panel is discouraged from receiving gifts and there are strict limits placed on the type of gift that can be accepted. In order for a gift to be accepted all of the below conditions must be met:
- i. the gift must not be in the form of cash or a cash equivalent (such as a voucher)
 - ii. the gift must be valued at €30 or less (for the purposes of calculating this amount gifts from the same source over a 12 month period should be aggregated)
 - iii. the person/company offering the gift must not be under consideration as part of any relevant procurement process
 - iv. the Chairperson must have consented to the acceptance of the gift by the relevant member
- 5.7 For these purposes, a “gift” is any item or benefit which is given free of charge or at less than its commercial price. Any gift above an estimated value of €30 should be refused or returned. Under no circumstances are members permitted to solicit gifts, directly or indirectly. Members may also not approach any business with which they have contact through their official duties seeking sponsorship or support for themselves or for any individual, club, charitable organisation, association, trade union or other organisation.
- 5.8 In connection with their role within the Panel members may receive invitations to attend business hospitality events organised or sponsored by third parties. The only forms of business hospitality that may be accepted are the provision of a working meal or invitations to attend educational, knowledge building or networking forums that take place within Ireland and that relate to an area of expertise relevant to the Panel No other forms of business hospitality (e.g. invitations to sporting or cultural events) may be accepted.

Section 6: Breach of the Code

- 6.1 Any breach of the terms of this Code by a member of the Registration Panel will be dealt with in the first instance informally. For example, the Chairperson of the Panel, or to the appointing body representative in the case of the Chairperson, may draw the breach to the Panel member’s attention during a meeting.
- 6.2 If a Panel member is concerned that another Panel member may be in breach of the terms of this Code, the matter should be raised with the Panel Chairperson, or to the appointing body representative in the case of the Chairperson.
- 6.3 Where there is evidence of a deliberate, serious or continued breach of the terms of this Code by a Panel member, this will be taken up by the Panel Chairperson, or to the appointing body representative in the case of the Chairperson, in a specially convened meeting of the Panel.
- 6.4 If the Secretariat supporting the Register breaches the terms of this Code, this will be dealt with by the Chairperson through their line management.

Section 7: Removal of a Registration Panel Member

- 7.1 A Registration Panel member may be removed from the Panel in the following scenarios:
- a) resignation of the Registration Panel member
 - b) a breach of this Code by the Registration Panel member
 - c) non-attendance of a Registration Panel member at three successive Panel meetings
- 7.2 A Registration Panel member may resign from the Panel following a letter of resignation to the Chair. The resignation will take effect at the next Panel meeting.

References

CORU, *Code of Conduct for Council and Registration Board Members*.

http://coru.ie/uploads/documents/Code_of_Conduct_for_Council_and_Registration_Board_Members.PDF.pdf

CORU, *Guide for Council and Registration Board Members*.

http://coru.ie/uploads/documents/Guide_for_Council_and_Registration_Board_Members_-_Online.pdf

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Appendix 1: Declaration of No Conflict of Interest

I [_____], do hereby declare that neither I nor my spouse, nor any relative or connected person have any actual or potential conflict of interest (including any “Registrable Interest” as defined in the Ethics in Public Office Act 1995) with regard to the Registration Panel of the Register of Sign language Interpreters (The Regulatory Centre for Irish Sign Language Interpreters Ireland. CLG. (RCISL)

I further declare that in the event of such an actual or potential conflict coming to light at any time, I shall immediately notify the Panel Chairperson or the Secretariat and the company The Regulatory Centre for Irish Sign Language Interpreters Ireland. CLG. (RCISL).

I further undertake to maintain strict confidentiality with regard to the Panel, and not to discuss the deliberations of the board with unauthorised third parties at any time.

Print Name: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____