

## ***Irish Register of Sign language Interpreters (IRSLI)***

### **Registration Panel – Membership and Operation (draft)**

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## 1. Terms of Reference

**1.1** The name of the Panel shall be the **National Register of Sign Language Interpreters Registration Panel**.

### **1.2** *Functions of the panel*

1.2.1 The Registration Panel (“the Panel”) will develop and operate a national register (“the Register”) and quality assurance scheme for Irish Sign Language and Deaf interpreters in Ireland.

### **1.3** *Scope of the panel’s remit*

1.3.1 The Panel is responsible for:

- Establishing and maintaining the register of Irish Sign Language and Deaf interpreters.
  - Setting entry and maintenance requirements and standards for registration.
  - Approving education and training programmes for the recognition of qualifications.
  - Setting criteria for the selection and operation of individual assessments, when required.
  - Preparing and maintaining the Code of Conduct or other policies, codes or documents relating to matters including the ethics and professionalism of registered interpreters.
  - Giving guidance to professionals on Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and evidence of work practice requirements.
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- Hearing submissions and deciding on appropriate sanction(s) where the Complaints Committee decides that a complaint is upheld.
  - Setting any fees for entry to and / or retention on the register, if required.

### **1.4** *Membership & Appointment*

1.4.1 Members of the Panel are appointed by Sign Language Interpreting Service (SLIS).

1.4.2 The Panel will be chaired by one of its members, who shall be elected by the members of the Panel as Chairperson.

1.4.3 While SLIS Board or staff members will not be eligible for membership of the Panel, SLIS staff members will provide administrative, secretarial and other support to the Panel, and staff will be present at meetings. SLIS staff may be asked to leave a Panel meeting on request while particular topics are being discussed, at the discretion of the Panel Chairperson.

### **1.5** *Decision Making*

1.5.1 The Panel will act with autonomy and independence in the best interest of the Register. Decisions in relation to the operation and development of the Register will be made by the Panel.

1.5.2 The SLIS Manager, SLIS Quality Development Officer or other appointed staff member, will provide administrative and operational support to the Panel in order to administer the register and quality assurance scheme.

1.5.3 Decisions will be primarily made by consensus, or on the casting vote of the Panel Chairperson. In circumstances where a consensus cannot be reached, a vote may take place with the decision of the Panel made by way of simple voting majority. In the event of a tied vote, the Chairperson shall have a second or casting vote.

1.5.4 Outside supports, such as legal and other advice, may be accessed by the panel as required, including attendance or advice from SLIS staff or Board members.

1.5.5 The Panel may make recommendations to the SLIS Board with regard to vacancies on the Panel and appointment of members.

1.5.6 The Panel may be advised and assisted by Sub-Committees, and may recommend that Sub-Committees be established as deemed necessary. SLIS representatives, or representatives of other stakeholders, may be included within these Sub-Committees on the recommendation of the Panel.

## **1.6 Frequency of and Recording of Meetings**

1.6.1 Meetings will take place as necessary, and it is expected that the Panel would meet at least two times a year. A minute of each meeting of the Panel will be prepared.

## **1.7 Reporting Mechanism**

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1.7.1 The Panel will provide update reports to the Board of SLIS. These reports will provide

- general information in relation to the Register
- names of those accepted onto the Register
- policies, procedures, and any changes thereto
- recommendations.

1.7.2 Information that will not be provided to the Board of SLIS, other than in exceptional circumstances, include

- confidential details of decisions with regards to entry and retention on the Register
- names of those not accepted on the Register
- names and personal details in relation to complaints/appeals.

## 2. Panel Membership

2.1 The Panel will consist of between 9 and 11 members.

2.2 A member of the Panel, first constituted, is appointed by the SLIS Board for a term of either 2 or 3 years. Approximately one half of the members of the Panel, first constituted, will hold office for a term of 2 years from the date of their appointment, with the other half holding office for a term of 3 years. This is to ensure consistency and continuity in the future, by avoiding a situation where the entire Panel goes out of office at the same time.

2.3 It is envisaged that a member of the Panel appointed thereafter will hold office for a term of 3 years from the time of appointment.

2.4 Panel members cannot remain members for more than 2 consecutive terms.

2.5 It is intended that the Panel will comprise

- a) at least 3 Deaf members;
  - b) at least 2 interpreters (upon establishment of the Register, to become: 2 registered interpreters);
  - c) 1 international expert in sign language interpreter registration;
  - d) 1 member with expertise in another Irish professional register, which could be in the form of a Council / Board member, Committee member, or member of staff;
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- e) 1 service user / public body with experience of using interpreters;
  - f) other members, as required.

It is envisaged that these categories shall not be mutually exclusive.

2.6 Panel members shall be selected who are

- a) familiar with the Deaf and disability sectors in Ireland, or can demonstrate capacity to acquire this knowledge, as well as the legislative, educative, and regulatory environment in which the Panel operates;
- b) experienced in panel, committee or board membership and/or public administration experience

2.7 Panel members should ideally possess the following qualities:

- a. A track record of relevant experience in the Deaf community and interpreting world, or the corresponding profession or industry in which they are based;

- b. A track record of effective judgement, decision making, initiative and analytical thought;
- c. Demonstrated experience in identifying solutions to complex issues and understanding their impact and implications;
- d. Excellent interpersonal and team-working skills, with proven ability to build relationships with different stakeholders;
- e. Excellent communication skills in written / spoken English and/or Irish Sign Language, with the ability to negotiate and challenge when necessary;
- f. A strong sense of ethics, integrity and probity;
- g. The ability to bring objectivity and scrutiny to the operation of the Register.

2.8 Members will be expected to attend all Panel meetings.

2.9 Members may also be nominated to serve on committees or sub-groups.

2.10 Members will be required to devote as much time as is necessary for the proper and efficient discharge of their duties. This may include

- a) time in preparation for Panel meetings;
  - b) attending and preparing for meetings;
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- c) stakeholder events;
  - d) other *ad hoc* meetings as required.

2.11 Members are obliged to comply with the relevant provisions of the **Registration Panel - Code of Conduct**. Members should also be aware of, and work within, SLIS compliance with the **Charities Code of Governance**.

2.12 Panel members serve on a part-time basis. While there is no remuneration for the position, members can claim travel and subsistence allowances, which will be paid in respect of journeys undertaken to attend meetings or to transact its business. This will be in accordance with approved public sector rates.<sup>1</sup>

2.13 Meetings are usually held in the Deaf Village Ireland, Cabra, Dublin 7. Meetings may occasionally take place in other premises.

2.14 Most communication between Panel members is electronic. Members must be willing to accept communications through electronic means. Equal respect will be given to the use of signed languages in communications, to be facilitated by SLIS.

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<sup>1</sup> See <https://www.revenue.ie/en/employing-people/employee-expenses/travel-and-subsistence/civil-service-rates.aspx>

2.15 Appropriate induction will be provided to all members. This induction will involve ensuring that Panel members have familiarity with all the functions, policies and processes of the Panel. Topics within the induction will include:

- the governance structure of the Panel and SLIS
- the legislative and administrative framework in which the Register sits
- the Code of Conduct used by the Register
- the Registers' complaints and appeal processes
- the processes around membership of Specialisation Panels
- issues surrounding confidentiality and GDPR as they pertain to the Register.

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## 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](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](http://coru.ie/uploads/documents/Guide_for_Council_and_Registration_Board_Members_-_Online.pdf)