National Register of Irish Sign Language Interpreters

Registration Scheme Process

Sign Language Interpreting Service

Contents

Section 1: Context, Objectives, Values & Principles

1.1 Context

The National Disability Inclusion Strategy (NDIS) 2017- 2021 has the objective to ensure: "Appropriate accommodations and resources are in place to ensure people who communicate in different ways can participate as equal citizens".

The NDIS commits to "resource SLIS to increase the number of trained Sign Language and Deaf Interpreters, to put a quality-assurance and registration scheme for Interpreters in place, and to provide on-going professional training and development for Interpreters.

The Irish Sign Language Act 2017 obliges Courts and public bodies to only engage the services of an Irish Sign Language (ISL) interpreter if their competence has been verified in accordance with the accreditation scheme to be developed:

A court or a public body, in compliance with its obligations under this Act, shall not engage the services of a person providing Irish Sign Language interpretation unless the person's competence has been verified by having been accredited in accordance with an accreditation scheme funded by the Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection. (ISL Act 2017, section 7)

The Irish Government ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) March 2018. Five articles specifically relate to Sign Language and the Deaf community including Articles 2, 9, 21, 24 and 30. Article 9 (Accessibility) specifically references the use of "professional sign language Interpreters". States are required to take appropriate measures to ensure equal access information and services, both in urban and in rural areas. These measures are to include the identification and elimination of obstacles and barriers to accessibility, (UNCRPD, Article 9).

In 2017, SLIS published *A Review of Literature and International Practice on National and Voluntary Registers for Sign Language Interpreters,* (Trinity College Dublin, SLIS, March 2017). Led by Professor Lorraine Leeson, the report concluded that significant work is required to strengthen the regulation of Sign Language interpreters in Ireland, and sets out 11 recommendations (see appendix 3) and a skeleton framework for development of a national voluntary register, based on the latest research and evidence base and on international practice. Based on this research and the latest best practice in regulation, SLIS published a consultation paper which outlined a framework for the development of a national register of Irish Sign Language interpreters (SLIS, January 2018).

The development of an Irish register of Irish Sign Language interpreters is guided by national policy and legislation, national practice and culture, as well as learning from international regulatory practice and research.

This process paper sets out how Irish Sign Language Interpreting Service (SLIS) will establish a quality assurance and registration scheme for interpreters from 2019.

1.2 Objectives

- Register qualified Irish Sign Language Interpreters
- Promote and foster the quality of registered Irish Sign Language Interpreters
- Maintain standards in the interests of the public

1.3 Values

- The register will foster the protection of consumers of interpreting, primarily the Deaf community and service providers through a standards based registration process for Irish Sign Language interpreters.
- The register will support social inclusion and access for Deaf sign language users, particularly to public and social services, so they can exercise their rights and entitlements.
- The register will support the quality of sign language interpreting in Ireland.
- The register will support service providers, particularly public services, facilitating the use of Irish Sign Language interpreting services so that they can better fulfil their missions and serve Deaf sign language users.
- The register will strive to do no harm.

1.4 Principles

- **Balanced:** actions will be appropriate to the risks posed and costs identified.
- **Accountable:** the register will be based on rational and sound decisions.
- **Fair:** rules and standards will be implemented fairly.
- **Focused:** regulation will focus on the problem, and minimise side effects.
- **Agile:** the register must be able to look forward and adapt to and anticipate change.
- **Transparent:** regulations and processes will be open and user friendly
- **Embedded:** the register will take account of the Irish context and the Deaf community and other customers it serves.

1.5 Definitions

Irish Sign Language (ISL) is a visual and spatial signed language with a unique linguistic structure and grammar. ISL is the indigenous language of about 5,000 Deaf people in Ireland and is used by an additional 40,000 people. ISL is also the native language of about 1,500 Deaf people in Northern Ireland. It is a separate language from other languages, for example English, Irish, British Sign Language etc. The ISL Act 2017provides for the recognition of ISL in Ireland.

An **Irish Sign Language (ISL) Interpreter** is a professional who facilitates linguistic and cultural communication between Irish Sign Language and another language (usually spoken English). The ISL interpreter has fluency in both languages and their role is to impartially interpret the information.

A **member of the Irish Register of Sign Language Interpreters** is a professional interpreter who, through production of evidence pertaining to their route of qualification, has demonstrated an entry standard set of competencies in interpreting between Irish Sign Language and English (or within Irish Sign Language). Membership of the Register in itself does not indicate competency in higher-risk areas of specialisation, such as legal or medical interpreting.

The Register will establish and maintain Specialisation Panels of interpreters for particular domains of interpreting that take place within particularly complex linguistic or educational settings, require specialised knowledge, skills and competencies, and/or in which there are particular and significant risks to health, liberty, or life outcomes of individuals requiring interpretation services. For more information see papers entitled *Specialisation Panels – Procedures* and *Skills Checks - Procedures*.

Deaf Interpreters are Deaf or Hard-of-hearing people who possess fluency in ISL and have recognised skills in the interpretation/ translation of meaning between languages and cultures. Deaf interpreters often work in tandem with another interpreter. They provide supports that bridge a cultural or linguistic barrier that has been recognised within the community. It is their in-depth knowledge of Deaf culture and the Deaf community that provide supports and skills to a hearing ISL interpreter. Deaf interpreters often have a fluency in other signed languages. They are particularly used in the following settings:

- working with Deaf foreign nationals who are not fluent in ISL
- working withDeafBlind individuals
- working with individuals with additional needs or minimal language
- working at platform events e.g. conferences, performances etc. to work into a fluent, native ISL

Section 2: Governance

2.1 Governance

The register will be governed by the Registration Panel. The Registration Panel is responsible for:

- Establishing and maintaining the register of Irish Sign Language and Deaf interpreters.
- Setting entry and retention 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.
- Setting the code of professional conduct and ethics.
- Giving guidance to professionals on Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and evidence of work practice requirements.
- Setting registration renewal requirements.
- Setting any fees for entry to and / or retention on the register.

Members of the Registration Panel are appointed by SLIS until 2021. The Registration 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 Registration Panel. SLIS will provide administrative and operational support to the Registration Panel in order to administer the registration and quality assurance scheme. SLIS will not be a member of the Registration Panel.

See *Registration Panel Operation and Guidelines* for more information.

Section 3: Entry Requirements

Qualifications are required to meet *Criteria for Recognition of Education and Training Programmes* in order to be recognised for entry onto the register*.* Please note applicants may be requested by the Registration Panel to submit additional information to support their application. Canvassing by applicants or by others on behalf of applicants is strictly prohibited.

3.1 Recognised Qualifications & Accreditations
Initial Registration following the opening of the Register or being awarded your qualification:

Applicants with the qualifications below applying for initial registration should apply:

- within 24 months of the Register being established, or
- within 12 months of being awarded their qualification.

To register after 24 months of the register being established or after 12 months of being awarded your qualification; please see section 3.2 Applications for Registration (General).

The list of qualifications and accreditations recognised by the Register are:

- **Bachelor Degree in Deaf Studies (Interpreting) from Trinity College Dublin**
- **National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 6 from Signature. Note Level 6 on the UK Framework of National Qualifications is equivalent to level 8 in the Irish National Framework Qualification (NFQ)**
- **MA in Interpreting Studies from Queens University Belfast**
- **Diploma in ISL/English Interpreting from Trinity College Dublin**
- **SLIS/ Irish Sign Link accreditation processes**
- **Diploma in Deaf Studies (ISL/English Interpreting) from the University of Bristol**

Applicants must submit proof of their qualifications and other information as requested by the Registration Panel.

Registration may be granted subject to one or more conditions of registration (See section 4.3 Registration with Conditions).For more information please see *Criteria for Recognition of Education and Training Programmes.*

3.2 Applications for Registration (General)

a) **Applications with recognised qualifications above (Section 3.1) but who apply for registration after the period specified in 3.1 above.**

Where the qualification was awarded some time before the application for registration was submitted, the Registration Panel may request additional information from the applicant. For example the Panel may consider whether the applicant has provided sufficient evidence of recent work as an interpreter.

The Panel may decide to request the applicant to:

- o Successfully complete training, mentorship/supervision or other activities recommended by the Registration Panel in advance of obtaining registration; and/or
- o Successfully complete an assessment in advance of obtaining registration.

b) **Candidates who do not hold a recognised qualification or accreditation listed above (See Section 3.1)**:

Candidates must submit their qualifications, course syllabus, transcript(s), experience and other information as requested. This is to evaluate the interpreter training qualification. The course provider may be invited to a meeting with members of the Registration Panel to support the panel in evaluating the qualification. It will be a matter for the Panel to decide whether the qualification is sufficient for registration.

The Panel may request the applicant to do any of the following:

- o Successfully complete training, mentorship/supervision or other activities recommended by the Registration Panel in advance of obtaining registration; and/or
- o Successfully complete an assessment in advance of obtaining registration.

c) **Returning to the Register:**

For those returning to the Register, the Registration Panel may consider the length of time that has passed since the person worked as an interpreter and any evidence of recent work as an interpreter together with any other factors deemed appropriate in the circumstances.

The Panel may decide to request the applicant to:

- o Successfully complete training, mentorship/supervision or other activities recommended by the Registration Panel in advance of obtaining registration; and/or
- o Successfully complete an assessment in advance of obtaining registration.

    The Registration Panel will determine the requirements for returning to the register, depending on the duration of the practice break and other factors.

- Registration may be granted subject to one or more conditions (See Section 4.3).

For more information please see *Criteria for Recognition of Education and Training Programmes*.

3.3 Education and Training Providers can apply for recognition of their interpreter qualification

- **Educational and Training providers can also apply for recognition of their interpreter education programme.** They must submit the course syllabus, transcript(s) and other information if requested. This is to evaluate the qualification and interpret whether it is equivalent to a recognised qualification. The course provider may be invited to a meeting with members of the Registration Panel to support the panel in evaluating the course. For more information see *Criteria for Recognition of Education and Training Programmes.*

- The Registration Panel may of their own accord evaluate other qualifications provided by Educational and Training providers and interpret whether they are equivalent to a recognised qualification.

- The list of recognised qualifications will be maintained by the Registration Panel and updated from time to time and will be accessible to the public.

3.4 Deaf Interpreters – Alternative Route to Registration

Deaf applicants can apply for registration providing evidence of their qualification or accreditation as detailed above in section 3.1 or 3.2.

Deaf applicants who <u>do not</u> hold a qualification or accreditation from the options listed above can apply for registration using the application form in **Appendix 2**.

Applicants will be required to provide proof of:

- **Evidence of their ISL proficiency.** Evidence that can be used includes:

  o Evidence that the applicant has completed the majority of their primary and secondary education where ISL, or English and ISL, were the languages of instruction. The applicant must provide confirmation of the number of years of education completed.

  o Completion of third level course where the ISL, or English and ISL, where the languages of instructions. For example a diploma or degree in ISL teaching or Deaf Studies from Trinity College Dublin.

  o Referees from work, education and/or Deaf organisations/club.

  o Video outlining their ISL proficiency

- **Evidence of work practiced as a Deaf interpreter (voluntary/pro bono or paid work). Evidence that is accepted includes:**

  o Two work reference letters (from interpreting agency and/or other organisation), which demonstrate the applicant has successfully completed a number of Deaf interpreting assignments.

  o Video demonstrating an example of the applicant's interpreting skills from or into ISL.

- **Evidence of proficiency in other languages** may also be provided.

- **Any other information deemed necessary by the Registration Panel.**

For more information see *Guidelines for Registration of Deaf interpreters.*

Applicants whose applications are deemed to meet the minimum criteria will be required to attend for an interview.

The Registration Panel may request the applicant to:

- Successfully complete training/activities recommended by the Registration Panel.
- Successfully complete criterion referenced assessment.
- Register the applicant with conditions (see 4.3).

3.5 Garda Vetting

The applicant provides the required information to undergo Garda Vetting in accordance with National Vetting Bureau. For more information see Garda Vetting Policy & Guidelines.

Section 4: Admissions Procedure

4.1 Application Form

Complete an application form (see appendix 1 or 2) and submit by email to register@slis.ie or by post/in person to:

Registration Panel
Sign Language Interpreting Service
Deaf Village Ireland
Ratoath Road
Cabra
Dublin 7

The applicant may be requested by the Registration Panel to submit additional information to support their application.

Canvassing by applicants or by others on behalf of applicants is strictly prohibited.

4.2 Notification of Registration

The applicant will be notified in writing (email/post) if:

- The application is successful and the applicant is registered
- The applicant is unsuccessful
- The applicant is registered with conditions (see below)

Successful applicants and applicants who are registered with conditions will be provided with

- a **Certificate of Registration** with a unique registration number
- A **Register Membership Card** featuring name, registration number, and details of registration status. This should be presented to service users

4. 3 Registration with Conditions

An applicant may be registered with conditions. Examples of conditional registration may include:

- o **Additional training:** The applicant agrees to successfully completing specific training within an agreed time period. The training will be in addition to the standard CPD requirements for maintenance of registration.
- o **Mentorship/ Supervision:** The applicant agrees to undergo a defined period of mentorship/ supervision by a registered member approved by the Registration Panel. The training will be in addition to the standard CPD requirements for maintenance of registration.
- o **Any other conditions** as deemed necessary by the Registration Panel.

- Entrants on the register, who have been awarde**d their qualification less than 12 months prior to registration**, may be registered under the condition that they participate in a structured Mentorship programme. For more information, see paper entitled *Register Mentoring Scheme*.

- All conditions will be determined by the Registration Panel and will be put in place for a specified period.
- An applicant can appeal the decision of the Registration Panel to impose conditions to the Appeals Committee (See Section 12).
- If the Registration Panel is of the view that any condition(s) are not complied with within the specified period, the registered member will be removed from the register

4.4 Flow chart on registration process
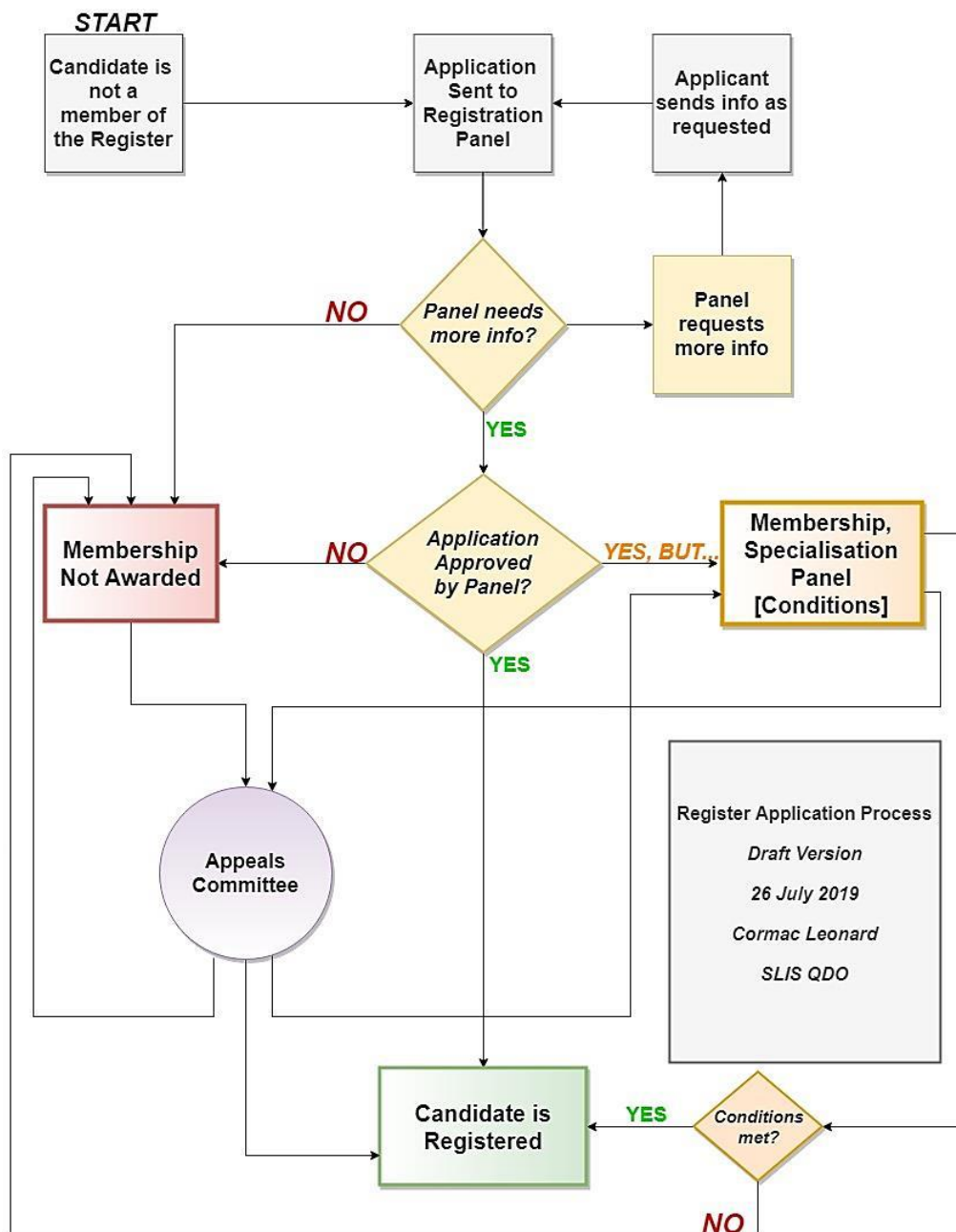
Section 5: Maintaining Registration

5.1 Requirements to maintain registration

The registered interpreter must:

- Recognise and act in accordance with the professional **Code of Conduct**.
- Complete the **Continuous Professional Development (CPD)** and training required for maintenance of their registration.
- Complete the amount of **interpreting practice work** required for maintenance of their registration.
- Provide the requested information for **auditing** of their CPD, training and evidence of practice work.
- Cooperate with the **Complaints Process**.
- Successfully complete any **assessment** required by the Registration Panel.
- Provide the required information to undergo regular **Garda Vetting** in accordance with National Vetting Bureau.
- Comply with **registration renewal** requirements.

While not a requirement for registration, we recommend that interpreters have sufficient **Professional Indemnity and Public Liability insurance**.

fSection 6: The Published Register

6.1 What information will be publically available?

- Once registered, the registered interpreter's name and registration number will be published electronically on the register which will be accessible at www.slis.ie.

- Registered interpreters are responsible for ensuring that the information they provide for inclusion in the published register is accurate and up to date.

- Requests for changes to the register will only be accepted from the affected registered interpreter. Third party requests will not be accepted under normal circumstances.

- The following information may be included on the published register, with the consent of the registered interpreter:
  - Name
  - Photo
  - ISL interpreter or Deaf interpreter
  - Contact details
  - Area of work (For example county, province etc.)

For more information on what personal data we keep and why, please see our *Privacy Policy*.

6.2 Information for the public

- The names of registered interpreters will be published electronically on www.slis.ie.
- Members of the public can check the register online for the names of registered interpreters.
- See *Guidelines for working with ISL interpreters and Deaf interpreters* for information on working with interpreters.
- See *Complaints Policy and Process* for more information on making a complaint against a registered interpreter.

Section 7: Leaving the register

7.1 Cancelation of registration (voluntary)

The registered interpreter may at any time leave the register by writing to the Registration Panel. On receipt of the written request, the Registration Panel will take the interpreters name off the register.

Where a complaint has been made in respect of a registered interpreter he or she will not be able to voluntarily remove himself or herself from the register or lapse registration until the conclusion of the consideration of the complaint.

7.2 Removal from the Register by the Registration Panel

- The Registration Panel may send a written notification to the registered interpreter to inform them of the termination of their registration. In making its decision, the Registration Panel may consider the following:
  o Any recommendation from the Complaints Committee.
  o Whether there has been a failure to abide by maintenance of registration requirements (see Section 5).

7.3 Appeals

- The registered interpreter will be given 21 working days to appeal the decision of the Registration Panel. If the registered interpreter appeals the decision of the Registration Panel, the case will go to the Appeals Committee.
- If the registered interpreter does not appeal the decision within 21 working days or the Appeals Committee upholds the decision of the Registration Panel, the registered interpreter's name will be removed from the register.

For more information on appeals see Section 12.

Section 8: Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

8.1 Requirements for CPD

- Complete a minimum number of hours of appropriate and relevant CPD within one calendar year.
- Complete the minimum number of hours of the following categories:
    - Structured CPD
    - Unstructured CPD
    - Deaf Community Engagement (DCE)
- Keep a record, evidence and explanation of CPD activity.
- Comply with any request from the Registration Panel to audit CPD records (see 8.5).

Please see *Guidelines for CPD and evidence of work practiced* for more information on how to comply with your requirements, including a CPD Portfolio template and evidence to provide when chosen for audit.

8.2 Structured CPD

- Attending a training course
- Completing a qualification
- Being formally supervised or mentored
- Attending seminars or webinars
- Attending a conference
- Attending formal meetings related to the interpreting profession and practice

8.3 Unstructured CPD
Examples include:

- Attending or being involved in Deaf community events (3 hours minimum)
- Reading articles, books, journals, reports, research and seminar papers
- Observing other professionals
- Attending informal meetings of interpreters to discuss practice
- Getting and reflecting on feedback from clients
- Receiving informal mentoring or supervision, including informal/ non-facilitated peer group supervision
- Giving formal mentoring or supervision
- Shadowing other professionals
- Private study
- Researching or writing an article, paper, book or similar
- Development and delivery of training course
- Being involved with an association or other activities that helps develop the profession.

8.4 What does not count as CPD?

- Routine preparation for a specific interpreting assignment.
- Any training or activity that does not contribute to your professional development as an interpreter.

If you are uncertain whether an activity counts as structured or unstructured CPD, you can contact register@slis.ie.

8.5 CPD Portfolios

- Registrants will be provided with a *CPD Portfolio Template* which can be used to record completed CPD.
- CPD Portfolio's should include:
  - o **Personal Learning Plan:** Identify the learning and development needs you plan to address during the CPD cycle and state your desired learning outcome.
  - o **What you did**: Provide the name and a brief description of your CPD activity. Note whether the CPD activity was structured or unstructured.
  - o **When you did it:** Dates, times and duration spent on the CPD activity.
  - o **Reflection:** Provide information on what you learned from the CPD activity and how it contributed to your professional development.

8.6 CPD audits

- CPD audits will be conducted annually
- Approximately 5% of the total registered interpreters will be chosen at random annually for an audit.
- The Registration Panel may also request that a registered interpreter be chosen for an audit. An interpreter could be chosen for audit if they fail to abide by one or more of the maintenance of registration requirements (see section 5).
- The registered interpreter will be notified in writing if they have been chosen for an audit, and given three months to supply the relevant CPD information.
- A registered interpreter, who successfully completes an audit process, will not be chosen for audit for the following two years.
- If the information provided is not satisfactory, the interpreter will be given a further 3 months to complete the required number of CPD hours and submit updated information.
- If the registered interpreter still fails to meet the CPD requirements, the case will be brought to the Complaints Committee for consideration. The registered interpreter can appeal the decision of the Complaints Committee (see Section 12).

8.7 CPD exemptions

Registered interpreters may apply to have their CPD requirements reduced or suspended for one calendar year.

Applications for CPD exemption need to be made in writing to the Registration Panel stating:
- Why you are unable to meet your CPD requirements and provide evidence if applicable.
- What amount of CPD you think you will be capable of completing in the calendar year.

Reasons for your inability to meet your CPD requirements may include:
- Illness
- Injury
- maternity leave
- bereavement
- Or another issue that affects your ability to meet your CPD requirements

Section 9: Evidence of work practiced

9.1 Requirements for work practiced

- Complete a minimum of 12 assignments or 12 hours over a 12 month period (calculated from date of registration).
- The assignments can be for paid or voluntary work.
- Comply with requests from the Registration Panel to audit evidence of work practiced.

Please see *Guidelines for CPD and evidence of work practiced* for more information on how to comply with your requirements.

9.2 Audits of work practiced

- Evidence of work practice audits will be conducted annually
- Approximately 5% of the total registered interpreters will be chosen at random annually for an audit.
- The Registration Panel may also request that a registered interpreter be chosen for an audit. An interpreter could be chosen for audit if they fail to abide by one or more of the maintenance of registration requirements (see section 5).
- The registered interpreter will be notified in writing if they have been chosen for auditing purposes, and given three months to supply the relevant evidence of work practiced.
- If the information provided is not satisfactory, the interpreter will be given a further 3 months to provide evidence of work practiced and submit updated information.
- If the registered interpreter still fails to meet the requirements, the case will be brought to the Complaints Committee for consideration. The registered interpreter can appeal the decision of the Complaints Committee (see Section 12).

9.3 Evidence of work practiced

- Information to provide if chosen for an audit may include:
    - Letter from an interpreting agency confirming you have completed a set number of interpreting hours/assignments.
    - Invoices for work completed
    - Letter from employer or an organisation confirming you have completed a set number of interpreting hours/assignments.
    - Attendance sheets
    - Signature from a co-interpreter at an assignment (e.g. conference).
    - Other information as may be required.
- When submitting evidence of practice work, please ensure that all confidential information is removed and /or ensure you have the informed consent from all parties named in the documentation submitted.
- Steps make be taken to verify the information provided.

9.4 Exemptions for work practiced

We are conscious that registered interpreters work in different circumstances and some may not have the same practice work opportunities as others. Registered interpreters may apply to have their requirements reduced or suspended for one calendar year.

Applications for exemptions need to be made in writing to the Registration Panel stating:

- Why you are unable to meet your requirements and provide evidence if applicable.
- What amount of practice work you think you will be capable of completing in the calendar year.

Reasons for your inability to meet your requirements may include:

- Illness
- Injury
- maternity leave
- bereavement
- Or another issue that affects your ability to meet your work practiced requirements

Section 10: Registration Renewal

10.1 Renewal of Registration

Registered interpreters who have met all the maintenance of registration requirements (see section 5) will have their registration renewed by the Registration Panel and be provided with an up to date Certificate of Registration.

10.2 Practice breaks of less than 12 months

- The registered interpreter can take a break from practising but stay on the register if the registered interpreter is prevented from practicing due:
  - Illness
  - Injury
  - maternity leave
  - bereavement
  - Or another issue.
- The practice break is less than 12 months.
- The registered interpreter will need to notify the Registration Panel in writing and provide evidence of their inability to work and duration.
- The request will be considered by the Registration Panel who may reduce the annual CPD and work practice requirements depending on the circumstances of each individual case.

10.3 Practice breaks of more than 12 months

The registered interpreter should notify the Registration Panel in writing of the practice break. The registered interpreters name will be removed from the published register.

Section 11: Appeals

Applicants and registered interpreters can appeal a decision by the Registration Panel in relation to their application or registration. Appeals are considered by the Appeals Committee. The Appeals Committee will be a three person panel, with a solicitor or barrister of a minimum of three years post qualification experience acting as chairperson.

- The appeal must be made in writing within 21 working days of receiving the decision of the Registration Panel.

- The applicant can include additional information to the Appeals Committee to support their appeal.

- Having considered the appeal, the Appeals Committee may
-
  - Confirm the original decision of the Registration Panel
  - Change the original decision of the Registration Panel
  - Request additional information is provided by the applicant and/or requests the applicant to attend an in-person meeting with the Appeals Committee.
  -
- The Appeals Committee will make a decision as soon as possible after the meeting to consider the appeal.

- The applicant will be informed the outcome of the Appeals Committee within 21 working days of the decision being made.

For more information see *Appeals Policy and Process.*

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United Nations https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities-2.html

Appendix 1 - Application Form for Registration

Application Form for Registration

Appendix 2 - Application Form – Alternative Route for Registration for Deaf Interpreters

Application Form – Alternative Route for Registration for Deaf Interpreters

Appendix 3 CPD Portfolio

Appendix 4 - Recommendations from *A Review of Literature and International Practice on National and Voluntary Registers for Sign Language Interpreters*

Recommendations from *A Review of Literature and International Practice on National and Voluntary Registers for Sign Language Interpreters,* (Trinity College Dublin, SLIS, March 2017)[1].

1. Establish a voluntary register of interpreters, which will allow for automatic registration of candidates who hold a recognized ISL/English interpreting qualification from an accredited body whose training meets the required competency thresholds for practice. We suggest that the European Forum of Sign Language Interpreters (2013a) Learning Outcomes be adopted in this regard. Other documents that should be referenced include the UK's CILT Occupational Standards (2011), the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (2001) and Sign Languages and the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Leeson et al. 2016)[2]. Following from international best practice, we propose that a degree-level qualification or equivalent be the minimum standard required for any new entrants to the register.

2. Grand-father in individuals who are currently on the SLIS list of recognized interpreters and those who hold a Diploma level qualification (Level 7) in Irish Sign Language/English interpreting. We suggest that there should be a cut-off point applied for registering on this basis, e.g. candidates with these credentials must register within 24 months of the voluntary register being established. Candidates registered in this manner should be obligated to complete CPD and meet other criteria for continued membership of the register as candidates admitted via a recognized IEP.

3. Facilitate the training and criterion-referenced testing of Deaf interpreters and Deafblind interpreters who wish to work between two sign languages for candidates who have not had access to an accredited IEP. (We suggest that the NAATI descriptor of what constitutes a DI be adopted). We advise that testing be driven by international best practice (e.g. see Angelelli and Jacobson, eds. 2009, Hale 2012). Candidates registered in this manner should be obligated to complete CPD and meet other criteria for continued membership of the register as candidates admitted via a recognized IEP. It is recommended that a review of the requirements for registration in this category take place after 5 years to evaluate whether a move towards a requirement for completion of an IEP will be feasible.

4. We advise that the voluntary register be administered by SLIS, but that the decision-making relating to the entry criteria for registration and process review rest with an impartial Registration Assessment and Evaluation Board, following moves that have seen separation of registration evaluation processes from the body that holds the register in other jurisdictions (e.g. USA, UK). This entity should comprise representation from key stakeholders: Deaf community, CISLI, interpreter educators, agencies, along with, we suggest, an independent party, perhaps derived from a practice profession that has an established register, be that voluntary or statutory in nature. We also advise that independent experts be drafted in as required.

5. We recommend that Continuing Professional Development be mandated. We advise that a CPD cycle of 3 years be considered, with maternity/paternity leave built into a cycle as required. All certified interpreters should be obligated to complete CPD. We suggest that interpreters be required to complete and document a minimum of 30 hours of CPD over a three-year period. We also strongly recommend that guidelines be drawn up regarding the kinds of CPD that will be validated. We suggest that protocols established be reviewed regularly.

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[1] http://www.citizensinformationboard.ie/downloads/social_policy/SLIS_TCD_Review_of_National_Registers_of_Sign_Language_Interpreters_March_2017.pdf
http://www.citizensinformationboard.ie/downloads/social_policy/SLIS_TCD_Review_of_National_Registers_of_Sign_Language_Interpreters_March_2017.docx
[2] http://www.ecml.at/ECML-Programme/Programme2012-2015/ProSign/tabid/1752/Default.aspx

6. We recommend that in addition to a CPD requirement, that registered interpreters be required to provide evidence of work practice as an interpreter. We would suggest that the requirement be in the region of demonstrating an average of 12 assignments or 12 hours per year over a three-year period (36 assignments or minimally, 36 hours in total) for interpreting accreditations. An assignment is any job ranging in time from less than one hour up to a day).

7. All candidates for registration should be required to be Garda vetted and provide evidence that they hold indemnity insurance. It is also recommended that candidates demonstrate that they are in good standing as member of a professional association of interpreters (e.g. CISLI, ITIA, ASLI, efsli, WASLI, AIIC, etc.).

8. We recommend that the independent Registration, Assessment and Evaluation Board ensures that processes are clearly articulated in the public domain (e.g. on a website) in both ISL and English.

9. It is recommended that a robust "Concerns and Complaints" process be established, with mediation processes implemented. Such mediation should be independent from the Registration, Assessment and Evaluation Board. We suggest that the NRCPD's process is a good model for consideration.

10. We advise that the impact of registration be documented quantitatively and qualitatively, and analysed, with anonymized data published. This will facilitate the benchmarking of impact from an empirical standpoint, something that we have seen is sorely missing internationally (UKCES 2011).

11. We note that SLIS is a member of the ISL Recognition Group and is well placed to engage in discussion with key policy makers regarding any reference to (and potential increased regulation of) sign language interpreting as part of moves towards legislating for ISL.