

National Register of Irish Sign Language Interpreters

Skills Checks - Procedures

Sign Language Interpreting Service

Contents

SECTION 1: SKILLS CHECKS (BASELINE) (SC-B) 2

SECTION 2: SKILLS CHECK (SPECIALISED) (SC-S) 2

SECTION 3: PANEL OF ASSESSORS 3

SECTION 4: METHODOLOGY OF ASSESSMENT 4

SECTION 5: REPEATING SKILLS CHECKS 5

REFERENCES..... 6

Section 1: Skills Checks (Baseline) (SC-B)

1.1 The Skills Check (Baseline), or SC-B, is a means of assessment for baseline interpreting knowledge, skills, and competencies. SC-Bs are utilised when qualifications or accreditations recognised by the Register are not held, or when there is reason to believe that a candidate's baseline knowledge, skills, and competencies may be in question.

1.2 SC-Bs are utilised in the following scenarios:

- Applications for registration, where the candidate does not hold a recognised qualification or accreditation listed in the Registration Scheme Process paper, Section 3.1; as per **Registration Scheme Process paper, Section 3.2**
- Applications for registration, where candidates have a recognised qualification, but apply for registration after the period specified in the Registration Scheme Process paper, Section 3.1; as per **Registration Scheme Process paper, Section 3.2**
- Applications for registration, where candidates are returning to the Register after having left or been removed from it, as per **Registration Scheme Process paper, Section 3.2**
- Applications for registration by Deaf Interpreters, as per the Alternative Route to Registration, **Registration Scheme Process paper, Section 3.4**
- Decisions by the Complaints Committee where the interpreter subject to a complaint is asked to complete an assessment, as per the **Complaints & Mediation Process, Section 7.6**

Section 2: Skills Check (Specialised) (SC-S)

2.1 The Skills Check (Specialised), or SC-S, is a form of assessment of interpreter knowledge, skills and competencies, tailored to the requirements of a particular domain of interpreting specialisation. It is not intended as a means of assessment for baseline interpreting knowledge, skills, and competencies.

2.2 The SC-S aims to assess whether candidates possess *both* of the following:

- An excellent general ability interpreting between ISL and English
- An appropriate level of knowledge, skills and competencies in the specialisation

2.3 SC-Ss are utilised in the following scenarios:

- Applications for membership of a Specialisation Panel, where information supplied by a candidate in their application may be deemed insufficient to satisfy the Registration Panel about the ability, knowledge, skills and competencies of the candidate to interpret effectively in the domain of interpreting.

Section 3: Panel of Assessors

3.1 The Register will arrange for a permanent panel of freelance, independent Assessors to be put in place, to be responsible upon direction of the Registration Panel for carrying out Skills Checks (Baseline) and Skills Checks (Specialised)

3.2 The Panel of Assessors will be comprised of up to twelve individuals who meet the following criteria:

- **3 x Category A:** Experienced Deaf ISL teachers or Deaf interpreters, with a qualification in ISL Teaching, and experience of assessment of Irish Sign Language.
- **3 x Category B:** Registered interpreters (Deaf or hearing) with at least ten years post-qualification or post-accreditation working interpreter experience, plus experience in assessment of interpreters.
- **3 x Category C:** Registered interpreters (Deaf or hearing) with at least ten years post-qualification or post-accreditation working interpreter experience, plus high levels of recognised expertise in a domain or domains of interpreting linked to Specialisation Panels.
- **3 x Category D:** Subject experts in the domains of interpreting relevant to Specialisation Panels.

Category D Assessors can be Deaf or hearing, and can also be interpreters. Category C, D and E Assessors may be selected from outside Ireland if sufficient expertise or availability proves hard to find within Ireland.

3.3 Each Skills Check, or Specialised Skills Check, will be carried out by a team of three members of the Panel of Assessors, selected by a process which identifies and mitigates any possible conflicts of interest.

3.4 A **Skills Check (Baseline) Team (SC-B Team)** shall be composed of:

- 1 x Category A
- 2 x Category B (ideally 1 Deaf, 1 hearing)

3.5 A **Skills Check (Specialised) Team (SC-S Team)** shall be composed of:

- 1 x Category A
- 1 x Category C

- 1 x Category D

3.6 Upon initial establishment of the Register, or of any new Specialisation Panel attached to the Register, initial batches of Skills Checks / Skills Checks (Specialised) may be arranged and carried out *en bloc*, depending on the capacity of the Panel of Assessors and availability of candidates.

3.7 In the general running of the Register, SC-B and SC-S Checks will be individually organised by the Panel of Assessors upon request from the Registration Panel within six weeks of the date of request.

3.8 The Register's Quality Development Officer will assist with administrative support required by the Panel of Assessors, as well as assisting in identifying or creating materials for use in Skills Checks.

Section 4: Methodology of Assessment

4.1 The Panel of Assessors shall discuss, research, develop and utilise appropriate assessment methodologies, rubrics, and marking criteria for Skills Checks and Skills Checks (Specialised) in collaboration with the Registration Panel, and following international best practice in the field of sign language interpreting assessment.

4.2 Skills Checks (Baseline) and Skills Checks (Specialised) may each use different combinations of a number of the following assessment types:

- A. Practical assessment of interpreting, ISL to spoken English
- B. Practical assessment of interpreting, spoken English to ISL
- C. Practical assessment of sight translation, ISL to written English
- D. Practical assessment of sight translation, written English to ISL
- E. Practical assessment of skills in interpreting within ISL / between different variants of ISL
- F. Written test (Multiple Choice Questions / Sample Scenario-based open question)
- G. 'Role-play' mock scenarios
- H. Interview based on Register Code of Conduct

4.3 Assessment types A through D may be administered using any of the following configurations:

- 1) In 'live' format, with SC-B Team or SC-S Team members present, at a designated centre
- 2) In 'live' format, at a designated centre, with performance recorded for later evaluation by SC-B / SC-S Team

- 3) By candidate pre-recording and submitting a sample performance to SC-B or SC-S Team, as evidence of skills

4.4 For the Skills Check (Specialised), all assessment types employed will be based on and utilise materials, settings, and scenarios appropriate, relevant and applied to the specialism in question.

Section 5: Repeating Skills Checks

3.7.1 Should a candidate successfully complete their Skills Check or Skills Check (Specialised), a written confirmation of same shall issue to them within no later than six weeks.

3.7.2 Should an unsuccessful candidate be required, or request, to redo their Skills Check or Specialised Skills Check, a repeat will be organised for them within three months of the original SC or SSC date.

3.7.3 Repeat candidates will be required to redo only the elements of the original Skills Check or Specialised Skills Check in which they were formerly unsuccessful. Successful completion of these repeated elements will result in an overall completion of the SC or SSC.

3.7.4 Detailed feedback and signposting of relevant CPD areas and opportunities will be supplied to all candidates who undergo Skills Checks, whether successful or unsuccessful.

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Page 6 of 8

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