

The Independent Registration Panel

IRP

for
British Sign Language/English Interpreters

Factsheet issued by the Independent Registration Panel following its meeting on 13 July 2006

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1. Registration of Interpreters

Number of Registrations 2006 – 2007

The Ratification Committee recently met to consider **61 applications for registration or upgrading between categories** for 1 September 2006 registration. Not including the 61 new applications/upgrades, the number of registered interpreters is as follows:

Members of the Register (MRSLI)	=	275
Trainee Interpreters (TI)	=	47
Junior Trainee Interpreters (JTI)	=	63

Total number of registered interpreters	=	385
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We therefore anticipate that on 1 September 2006, the number of interpreters in the 3 categories of registration will be around 440 which is the highest number of registered interpreters ever. This includes 298 MRSLIs – also the highest number ever.

2. Applications for 1 January 2007 Registration

Please note that the deadline for applications for 1 January 2007 registration is:

31 October 2006

The closing date for submitting supporting evidence is the same as for applications. Only applications (with supporting evidence) received by 31 October 2006 can be considered for January registration as the Ratification Committee meeting will take place at the beginning of November.

Please ensure that:

- you have Professional Indemnity Insurance in place when you submit your application;
- you allow sufficient time to obtain CRB Enhanced Disclosure.

If you are awaiting results which will be verified by 1 January 2007, please submit your application form by the deadline with all other supporting information. Your application will be ratified conditionally subject to receiving confirmation of results by 1 January 2007.

3. Membership of the IRP as at 13 July 2006

Deaf Consumers	Shirley Farthing (Vice-chair) Ilan Dwek 2 vacant
Interpreters (ASLI)	Trudy Field (Chair) Liz Mercer Chris Stone
Training Providers/Assessment Centres	Judith Jackson Frank Harrington
External Examiners/Verifiers	Roger Beeson 1 vacant
Agencies/Employers	2 vacant
Non-voting – Co-opted	Philip Gerrard 1 vacant
CACDP	Miranda Pickersgill
Administrator – Angela Nunn	
Registrar – Christine Wagstaff	

The terms of office of 2 members of the IRP have recently come to an end and one member has resigned due to ill health. We are awaiting nominations from the respective stakeholder groups. Shirley Farthing has served on the panel for 3 years, representing Deaf consumers and in the capacity as vice-chair. She has been re-elected to serve as vice-chair for a further 3 years.

4. Feasibility Study Update

Alsbury Management Solutions Limited was appointed to investigate the feasibility of the register, presently administered by the IRP, becoming financially independent. The initial report was presented to the July 2006 IRP Meeting. Members of the IRP have been asked to comment on it before a proposal is sent to the Board of CACDP. There will be wider consultation before any changes that may be proposed are implemented.

5. 2006 CILT National (Occupational) Standards in Interpreting

CILT has revised the National Standards in Interpreting – developed in 2005-06 and approved by the UKCG in 2006. The IRP has therefore adopted the 2006 National (Occupational) Standards in Interpreting (NOSI), replacing the previous Interpreter Registration Standards. As a result, minor changes will be made in the registration process.

Once the new Level 4 NVQ in Interpreting (BSL/English) has been accredited (which should be towards the end of September 2006), people following the NVQ route to become Trainee Interpreters will then need to have achieved **either** the Level 4 NVQ in BSL **or** a BSL module from a university which has been mapped at this level for registration purposes **and** be a registered candidate for all of the interpreting units of

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the Level 4 NVQ in Interpreting (BSL/English). Although the changes that CILT have made mean that the language units will no longer form part of the Level 4 NVQ in Interpreting (BSL/English), for registration purposes an externally verified BSL qualification is still required.

The IRP will be investigating the implications of the new NOSI on currently recognised training programmes.

6. Ratification Committee Meeting Decisions

We are pleased to announce that the Durham University *Postgraduate Diploma in Interpreting with the Deaf Community* has been successfully mapped for Trainee Interpreter status and Junior Trainee Interpreter status (dependent on BSL achievement and completion of practicum).

We are also pleased to announce that the Belfast Institute for Further and Higher Education's *Introduction to BSL/English Interpreting* programme has been successfully mapped for Junior Trainee Interpreter status at the end of the first year.

The Level 3 Certificate in BSL has now been accredited by QCA and will now be accepted for registration purposes for Junior Trainee Interpreters.

7. Complaints and Appeals

There have been no official complaints against registered interpreters since the last IRP Meeting in April.

8. Roles of Deaf People in Interpreting/Translation

Currently the National (Occupational) Standards in Interpreting, and the register that the IRP administers, relate to the role of BSL/English Interpreters working between BSL and English (spoken and occasionally written forms).

However, the IRP acknowledges the range of communication work undertaken by Deaf people working in the legal system, mental health system, on television, and elsewhere. At present, there are no national standards or recognised qualifications for Deaf people who work in these settings. (Although there is an Intermediary qualification for working in courts with vulnerable witnesses, which has been achieved by at least one Deaf person). However, the IRP believes that the focus should be on skills, irrespective of the professional's hearing status.

Initially, the Deaf field has to agree the job roles that entail working between registers of BSL, and between BSL and written English, and perhaps other roles that incline towards advocacy. Only once these roles have been identified, can standards be agreed for the competencies, knowledge and professional practice required of these roles. Once standards have been agreed, then qualifications can be developed to match these standards, and consideration given to setting up a new register or registers for the various roles.

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We know that CACDP is already working to identify potential national units and qualifications at Levels 3 and 4 on the national framework, as part of the development of its new unitised portfolio of qualifications, which could be used as a basis for qualifications and registration. It is likely that some Higher Education institutions will also want to develop/adapt training to meet agreed standards for these roles.

Members of the IRP welcome these developments and look forward to more discussion on the communication roles undertaken by Deaf professionals, leading to routes to registration.

9. Information from the Interpreter Working Group

A circular has been received from the Home Office and sent to the Chief Officers of the Police and court services in England and Wales about the use of interpreters within the criminal justice system. The circular is reiterating that they must wherever possible use interpreters from the NRPSI or CACDP register, but if this is not possible, then checks should be carried out to ensure that the interpreter selected meets standards at least equal to those for registration.

10. IRP Fees

Registration fees have been revised for BSL/English Interpreters with effect from 1 April 2007. The increase is in line with cumulative inflation as the fees have remained the same for 5 years. From April 2007, advertising in the online directory will be free of charge, i.e. there will no longer be an advertising fee of £25. This will mean many interpreters will actually pay less than they have this registration year.

11. Reminder!

Many interpreters' CRB certificates will be over 3 years old on 1 April 2007. If this applies to you, you will need a new Enhanced Disclosure Certificate that is less than 3 years old before re-registration on 1 April 2007. We understand that this process is currently taking several weeks.

We would recommend that you apply in sufficient time for your CRB check to be carried out.

12. November 2006 Meeting

The next IRP meeting will take place in November 2006. If you want to comment on any of the information contained in this factsheet or you wish to raise any other points, please contact your representative on the IRP or the IRP Registrar at the address below.