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Section 1: Functions and Scope of Panel of Assessors

- 1.1 The Registration Panel shall appoint a Panel of Assessors (“Assessors”) to undertake assignments or assessments and to make recommendations to the Registration Panel and/or sub-committees and/or the Appeals Panel. These assignments or assessments may include one or more of the following:
- a) Skills Checks (Baseline) assessments in the case of applications for registration, where **the candidate does not hold a recognised qualification or accreditation** listed in the *Registration Process* paper, and where the Registration Panel, sub-committees or Appeals Panel are of the opinion that such an assessment is required.
 - b) Skills Checks (Baseline) assessments in the case of applications for registration, where candidates have a recognised qualification, but **apply for registration after the period specified** in section 1.1.1(b) of the *Registration Process* paper and where the Registration Panel, sub-committees or Appeals Panel are of the opinion that such an assessment is required.
 - c) Skills Checks (Baseline) assessments in the case of applications for registration, where **candidates are returning to the Register** after having left or after being removed from it, as per the *Registration Process* paper, and where the Registration Panel, sub-committees or Appeals Panel are of the opinion that such an assessment is required.
 - d) Skills Checks (Baseline) assessments in the case of decisions by the **Complaints Sub- committee** following a complaints process. See the *Complaints & Mediation Process*.
 - e) Skills Checks (Specialised) assessments in the case of applications for membership of a **Specialisation Panel**, where the Registration Panel/Registration Subcommittee are of the opinion that such an assessment is required.
 - f) **Evaluation of CPD Checks** carried out on registered interpreters who have been chosen for a CPD check (audit).
 - g) Such other assessments as may be deemed necessary from time to time.

Section 2: Recruitment, Selection and Appointment

2.1 General Principles

- 2.1.1 Those involved with RISLI shall aim to have sufficient members on the Panel of Assessors for the profession of ISL / English interpreting, to assist the Registration Panel, sub-committees or the Appeals Panel in its work.
- 2.1.2 Assessors are normally engaged based on their role as an educator (on an approved professional programme) or as a practitioner.
- 2.1.3 Both educators and practitioners will be required to have appropriate professional experience in their roles.
- 2.1.4 The Selection process will be reviewed regularly to ensure that it fulfils requirements in respect of equal opportunities and diversity.

2.2 Purpose of Recruitment

2.2.1 In relation to the recruitment of the members of the Panel of Assessors, RISLI will:

- a) Provide a fair and systematic basis for selecting the most suitable candidates, and to ensure that all selection procedures are carried out fairly and equitably.
- b) Provide equality of opportunity for all eligible candidates and to avoid unfair discrimination on any ground.
- c) Clearly outline what is required of assessors in relation to the preparation and delivery of assessments.

2.3 Selection Criteria

2.3.1 Panel of Assessors members may be drawn from one or more of the following fields of expertise:

- a) **ISL teachers**, possessing
 - i. A qualification in ISL Teaching
 - ii. 10+ years of experience of assessment of Irish Sign Language within their teaching practice
- b) **Registered interpreters**, possessing
 - i. 10+ years post-qualification or post-accreditation experience as a working interpreter
 - ii. Experience in assessment of interpreters
- c) **Specialist registered interpreters**, possessing
 - i. 10+ years post-qualification or post-accreditation working interpreter experience
 - ii. A high level of expertise in the a relevant specialised domain(s) of interpreting, i.e. legal or medical interpreting
- d) **Subject Experts**, possessing
 - i. A high level of expertise in the domain(s) relevant to Specialisation Panels

2.4 Appointment of Panel of Assessors

2.4.1 Members of the Panel of Assessors are appointed by the Registration Panel or sub-committee.

2.4.1 Prior to officially joining the Panel, Assessors will be required to sign on their appointment:

- a) **Terms of Agreement**
- b) **Confidentiality Agreement**

2.4.2 Assessors may be requested to undergo appropriate induction. If induction is provided, it may consist of matters such as an introduction to the policies, processes, background to RISLI and explanation of duties.

2.4.4 Assessors may be required to undertake training if so directed by the Registration Panel. The Registration Panel may require that no further work is assigned to an assessor who fails to meet training requirements.

2.6 Removal from the Panel

2.6.1 An Assessor may be removed from the Panel of Assessors following a decision of the Registration Panel. Circumstances which may give rise to such a decision include, but are not limited to:

- a) Breach of the Panel of Assessors' Code of Conduct.
- b) Failure to comply with training requirements.
- c) Unsatisfactory standard of work.
- d) Any action which places the outcome of the process, or the reputation of the work of the Registration Panel or RISLI, in question.

Section 3: Assessments and Reporting

- 3.1 Assessors may be engaged to work in teams for a variety of **Skills Checks**. For more information, see *Skills Checks – Procedures*.
- 3.2 Assessors may also be assigned to work individually on **CPD Checks (audits)**. See *CPD and Mentoring Policy*.
- 3.3 Assessors may be assigned to work on the **assessment of qualifications for registration purposes**. See *Registration Process*.
- 3.4 Assessors assigned in teams will be required to work together and to make appropriate arrangements for the completion of an assignment.
- 3.5 Assessors are expected to complete assignments within the timeframe set out by RISLI.
- 3.6 A complete **Assessment Report** on each type of assignment, with detailed feedback and clear recommendations, will be submitted to the Secretariat for presentation to the Registration Panel, sub-committees or Appeals Panel. This Assessment Report will not divulge any confidential or sensitive information. The Registration Panel, sub-committees or Appeals Panel may seek further information or clarification from the assessor upon receipt of the Assessment Report.
- 3.7 Assessors will be paid at a rate agreed by RISLI.
- 3.8 The Panel of Assessors will provide an **Annual Assessors Report** to the Registration Panel each year. This report will include;
 - a) General information in relation to Skills Checks, CPD Checks and qualifications assessed through the year, including numbers of cases, number of appeals, decisions, etc. This Report will not divulge any confidential or sensitive information.
 - b) Any observations or recommended changes to RISLI's policies and procedures.
 - c) Any other items as set out by the RISLI
- 3.9 The Quality Development Officer (QDO) will act as Secretariat to the Panel of Assessors, and will deal with any and all correspondence in relation to the processes described in this document.

Section 4: Assessors Code of Conduct

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.2 Assessors should be aware that high standards of conduct and personal integrity are essential to maintaining public confidence and for that reason RISLI operates this Code of Conduct which will be applicable to Assessors. It is important that Assessors read, understand and meet the standards set out in this Code of Conduct.

4.2 General Principles

4.2.1 In carrying out the Services referred to in the within Terms of Agreement, Assessors must:

- a) Act in good faith, with honesty, integrity and probity.
- b) Be aware of RISLI's objective of protecting the public.
- c) Treat others equally, fairly, and with respect.
- d) Take personal responsibility for adhering to this Code of Conduct.

4.2.2 Assessors must not

- a) Act in a manner which may bring RISLI into disrepute.
- b) Misuse their position for personal gain or to promote their own/other interests.

4.2.3 Illegal, dishonest, inappropriate or unethical conduct on the part of Assessors may result in the termination of any contract/ service agreement between the Assessor and RISLI.

4.3 Non-Discrimination

4.3.1 Assessors must treat others with dignity and fairness. Assessors must not discriminate against applicants / registrants and should be particularly conscious to avoid discrimination on the basis of gender, family status, civil status, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion, race, membership of the Traveller Community, residence or nationality or any further ground identified in law.

4.4 Conflicts of Interests

4.4.1 Assessors must disclose any interest which they may have (or might be seen to have) in relation to any assignment or assessment in which they are asked to participate. Assessors must also disclose any interest that could otherwise prejudice any service they are asked to perform.

4.4.2 Assessors must consider potential conflicts of interest at the earliest stage possible and declare any interest as soon as they realise it is necessary to do so.

4.4.3 Assessors must recognise that:

- a) In dealing with conflicts of interest, the test to be applied is not limited to whether an interest would influence their decision on a recommendation, but extends to whether a member of the public, acting reasonably, may think that it might have such an influence.
- b) Similar considerations apply to the interests of a spouse or close relative, as a member of the public, acting reasonably, may regard those interests as effectively being the interests of the Assessor.
- c) The key principle is the need for transparency in respect of any interest which may be regarded by a member of the public, acting reasonably, as potentially affecting the assessors' objectivity.

4.4.4 An Assessor who is unclear about any potential conflict of interest should seek guidance from RISLI.

4.5 Confidentiality

4.5.1 Assessors must not disclose or make any other use of confidential information to which they have access other than for a proper purpose relating to the performance of services for RISLI or as required by law.

4.5.2 Assessors must be particularly cognisant of the law in relation to data protection and the General Data Protection Regulation, and must ensure that they have adequate knowledge to operate within legal requirements.

4.5.3 Assessors must take appropriate steps to ensure that confidential papers and information are stored and disposed of securely.

4.5.4 Assessors must promptly notify RISLI of any breach in confidentiality of which they become aware. An Assessor who is unclear about the status of any information should seek guidance from the RISLI.

4.6 Performance

4.6.1 Assessors agree to perform their services within the timescale set by RISLI and to a reasonable and appropriate standard.

4.6.2 An Assessor who is unable to provide services which are requested by RISLI must notify the Secretariat as soon as possible.

4.6.3 An Assessor who is unable to provide services for a prolonged period should notify RISLI.

4.7 Training

4.7.1 RISLI provides Assessors with access to training courses to enable them to keep up to date with good practice.

4.7.2 In the event that RISLI considers that an Assessor is not up to date with good practice it may terminate its contract with the Assessor.

4.8 Fees and Expenses

4.8.1 Assessors will be remunerated for their work by RISLI at an agreed rate to be agreed.

4.8.2 Assessors must comply with the procedures for the payment of fees and expenses, as set up in the Terms of Agreement.

4.9 Breach of the Code

4.9.1 Compliance with this Code of Conduct is essential for all assessors and any breach may result in removal from the Panel of Assessors.

References

CORU Health and Social Care Professionals Council. *CORU Panel of Assessors Policy*, February 2019.
<https://coru.ie/files-vacancies/coru-panel-of-assessors-policy.pdf>.

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