



**WORLD FEDERATION  
OF THE DEAF**



**WASLI**

World Association of  
Sign Language Interpreters



**WFD-WASLI  
INTERNATIONAL SIGN  
INTERPRETER  
ACCREDITATION HANDBOOK**

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TABLE OF CONTENT

TABLE OF CONTENT ..... 1

1. INTERNATIONAL SIGN INTERPRETER ..... 1

2. WFD-WASLI INTERNATIONAL SIGN INTERPRETER ACCREDITATION ..... 2

3. ACCREDITATION ..... 2

    3.1 Essential skills ..... 2

    3.2 Qualifications ..... 3

4. CODE OF CONDUCT ..... 3

5. STAGES OF THE ACCREDITATION ..... 4

6. ACCREDITATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE ..... 4

7. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ..... 5

8. CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS ..... 5

9. REVOCATION ..... 5

10. AMENDMENTS ..... 5

11. CONTACT US ..... 5

    APPENDIX A: STAGE 1 REQUIREMENTS – Portfolio of evidence ..... 6

    APPENDIX B: ASSESSMENT FOR STAGE 1 – Portfolio of evidence ..... 7

    APPENDIX C: STAGE 2 REQUIREMENTS – Assessment ..... 8

1. INTERNATIONAL SIGN INTERPRETER

An International Sign (IS) interpreter is fluent in at least one national sign language and spoken/written language (English, Spanish & French are current testing options), and who interprets, usually simultaneously, in meetings where deaf people from different countries do not share a common national sign language. IS interpreters can be either deaf or hearing. IS Interpreters are often required to interpret in international forums. The following is a list of some of the situations or settings where IS interpreters *have already* been employed:

- Ad-hoc international conferences
- WFD Regional Secretariats Conferences
- UN Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF)
- UN Office of the High Commission for Human Rights (OHCHR)
- UN General Assembly
- UN Security Council
- UN Economic and Social Council
- UN Conference of State Parties to CRPD
- UN Human Council
- UN Forum on Minority Issues
- UN CRPD Committee Sessions
- WFD Congresses/Conferences and WASLI Conferences
- International Disability Alliance (IDA)
- Deaflympics
- Council of Europe
- European Commission meetings and conferences
- European Parliament events
- Press Conferences
- International conferences in Deaf Studies, sign language, linguistics and interpreting research
- African Forum of Sign Language Interpreters (AFSLI), or European Union of the Deaf (EUD) and european forum of sign language interpreters (EFSLI) seminars and conferences and events
- Research project meetings and conferences
- Training events

In most of these venues, the IS interpreter will be interpreting between English, or other UN official languages and IS, though in meetings with simultaneous spoken language interpreting, they may interpret between IS and another spoken language, and for presentations presented in a national sign language, the IS interpreter may interpret directly from a signed language into IS.

## 2. WFD-WASLI INTERNATIONAL SIGN INTERPRETER ACCREDITATION

The WFD-WASLI International Sign Interpreter Accreditation (hereafter **'the Accreditation'**) exists to meet the increasing demand of IS Interpretation in the international arena. It aims to:

- Set, maintain and promote standards in IS Interpretation
- Promote a quality-assurance system for credentialing practitioners
- Maintain a register of WFD-WASLI Accredited International Sign Interpreters (hereafter **'Accreditees'**)

## 3. ACCREDITATION

The accreditation process has two levels – pre-accreditation and full accreditation. Pre-accreditees are those who are close to meeting the requirements and would benefit from opportunities to work alongside Accreditees and mentoring and feedback from experienced Accreditees. Full accreditees are those that meet all the requirements.

There are two steps in becoming a candidate for accreditation:

- a. Submit a full portfolio indicating that you meet the requirements of an Accreditee or a Pre-Accreditee. If your portfolio meets all the requirements, you will be invited to proceed to the interpreting skills testing.
- b. Participate in an online test of your IS interpreting abilities.

Accreditees are practitioners who possess the following:

### 3.1 ESSENTIAL SKILLS

- Proficiency in IS (C1 [CEFR](#))
- Proficiency (C1 [CEFR](#)) in one of the testing languages (currently English, Spanish or French)
- Proficiency in a national sign language and national spoken and/or written language

**Accreditees** will have:

- Five years of experience (at least 150 days<sup>1</sup>) in interpreting for conferences<sup>2</sup> or high-level meetings at national level in the national sign and spoken languages
- Three years of experience (at least 50 days) in IS interpreting at international or regional events within conference or high-level meeting settings
- Skills in co-working or team working with other practitioners

**Pre-Accreditees** will have:

- Four years of experience (at least 120 days<sup>3</sup>) in interpreting for conferences<sup>4</sup> or high-level meetings at national level and regional level in the national sign and spoken languages
- Two years of experience (at least 20 days) in IS interpreting at regional events within conference or high-level meeting settings
- Skills in co-working or team working with other practitioners

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<sup>1</sup> A day is single interpreting assignment of at least 2 hours of interpreting work.

<sup>2</sup> A conference setting is one where the interpreting is provided with the expectation the speaker will not be interrupted, e.g. Deaf Association business meeting, conference, meetings of officials, etc.

<sup>3</sup> A day is single interpreting assignment of at least 2 hours of interpreting work.

<sup>4</sup> A conference setting is one where the interpreting is provided with the expectation the speaker will not be interrupted, e.g. Deaf Association business meeting, conference, meetings of officials, etc.

### **3.2 QUALIFICATIONS**

1. Formal recognition with a professional registration body of sign language interpreters (if possible)
2. A university degree preferably in a relevant field, e.g. interpreting and/or translation studies, sign language interpreting
3. Membership of national and international professional interpreter organisations, e.g. the interpreter's national sign language interpreter's organisation, and WASLI, AFSLI, EFSLI, AIIC<sup>5</sup>
4. Membership of regional, national and international deaf organisations, e.g. the interpreter's national deaf organisation, WFD, EUD

In addition to the essential skills and qualifications, candidates for accreditation should consider if they have proficiency in a second national sign language and a second spoken/written language. It is important that candidates have a broad base of knowledge on current affairs, e.g. international geography, history, cultures and social affairs. It is also desirable that candidates have familiarity with the history and international structure of deaf and sign language interpreter organisations, e.g. WFD, WFD Regional Secretariats, Deaflympics, WASLI, AFSLI, EFSLI, etc. As well, candidates will require knowledge of the international institutions that cooperate with the international deaf and sign language interpreter organisations, e.g. UN, UN regional structures, IDA, regional political organisations, etc. Finally, knowledge of national countries, diverse cultures, along with political and historical features is very useful.

## **4. CODE OF CONDUCT**

Both Accreditees and Pre-accredited interpreters are to adhere to the WFD-WASLI [Code of Conduct](#) for WFD-WASLI Accredited International Sign Interpreters; they are held accountable via the Professional Conduct Review Process.

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<sup>5</sup>Accreditees may wish to apply for the International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC) membership as an additional way to have their skills and abilities recognised at the international conference level. While the AIIC membership is not a requirement for work, the AIIC does have the formal role of negotiating working conditions at the United Nations for all interpreters. The AIIC, through the Sign Language Coordinator, are promoting the use of the WFD-WASLI Accreditees and lobbying for working conditions that are consistent with the WFD-WASLI guidelines for international work.

## 5. STAGES OF THE ACCREDITATION

APPLICATON FOR REGISTER OF WFD-WASLI IS INTERPRETER ACCREDITATION	
<b>WHO</b>	Practitioners who are interested in joining the list of WFD-WASLI Accreditees who meet the criteria (see 3.1.1.) or Pre-Accreditees who meet the criteria (see 3.2.1)
<b>STAGE ONE: APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS</b>	Portfolio of evidence for all criteria (see Appendix B)
<b>STAGE TWO: ASSESSMENT</b>	Successful application leads to an assessment of IS work assessed against specific criteria (see Appendix C).
<b>PROCESSING FEE*</b>	<p>Applicants from Global South**:</p> <p>Accreditation – €150 Pre-Accreditation – €100</p> <p>Applicants from non-Global South:</p> <p>Accreditation – €550 Pre-Accreditation – €400</p>
<b>ACCREDITATION VALIDITY</b>	5 years
<b>APPLICATION TYPE AND PERIOD</b>	Minimum of one time per year starting September 2016 Open to all meeting the application criteria

*\*The processing fee is payable upon submission of the application/renewal for the Accreditation. All processing fees are non-refundable. Successful applicants will receive confirmation by letter from the WASLI within eight (8) weeks of application submission. Upon completion of the assessment process, successful applicants will receive:*

- *A digital ID card with their name and photograph showing their IS interpreter recognition status*
- *A certificate of accreditation*
- *Name and contact details of Accreditees will be added to a directory that will be featured on the WFD and WASLI webpages.*

*\*\*Refer to <https://www.worlddata.info/developing-countries.php>*

## 6. ACCREDITATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The current International Accreditation Advisory Board (ISAAB) consists of individuals, approved by both the WFD and WASLI Boards, and consists of:

- Chair: Experience of interpreting accreditation and registration
- Representative: World Association of Sign Language Interpreters (WASLI)
- Representative: World Federation of the Deaf (WFD)
- Representative: WFD-WASLI Accredited Interpreters
- Representative: WFD-WASLI aspiring Accredited Interpreters
- Representative: WFD-WASLI Accredited Interpreters service user

The Committee shall convene, when necessary, to oversee different aspects of the Accreditation including Application Assessment, Guidelines and Policy Review, Professional Development Review, Complaints, Dispute Resolution, Suspension and Revocation.

## 7. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Accreditation requires all Accretees to keep professional knowledge and skills up to date. To maintain the Accreditation, Accretees must:

- Undertake 24 hours of activities per year that helps you develop your professional practice.
- Keep a record and evidence of your activity with relevant information such as what you did, when you did it, why you chose to do it, how it contributed to your professional development.
- Submit the record to [wasli.office@gmail.com](mailto:wasli.office@gmail.com) by 15 December of each year.

Whilst the WFD-WASLI have set requirements for professional development, the WFD-WASLI also strive to be flexible. If there are any difficulties meeting the requirement, or uncertainty if an activity is acceptable, please contact the WFD-WASLI. Failure to meet the requirement with no satisfactory explanation offered may result in suspension or revocation of the Accreditation.

## 8. CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS

If you think an Accretee, or pre-accredited interpreter has not followed the [Code of Conduct](#) you should make a complaint in writing or International Sign video to [is.accred.wasli@gmail.com](mailto:is.accred.wasli@gmail.com) with the following details:

- Your name and contact details
- Name of Accretee you are making a complaint about
- Part or parts of the Code of Conduct you think the Accretee didn't follow
- What, when and where it happened
- Name of witnesses, if any

The WFD-WASLI will only accept a complaint/complaint of incidents with complete information and that occurred within the past 3 months. Upon receipt of complaints, the Accreditation Advisory Panel shall convene and investigate the matter. Depending on the nature of the complaints, the Accreditation Advisory Panel shall strive to provide a resolution within 2 months.

## 9. REVOCATION

The WFD-WASLI reserves reasonable rights to revoke the Accreditation with prior notice to the Accretee. Any violation of ethical or professional conduct outlined in the [Code of Conduct](#) may also result in the Accreditation being revoked.

## 10. AMENDMENTS

The WFD-WASLI may reasonably alter or amend the Accreditation Handbook, with approval from the WFD and WASLI Board, at any time at its own discretion with prior notice to the Accretees.

## 11. CONTACT US

For matters relating to the Accreditation, contact [is.accred.wasli@gmail.com](mailto:is.accred.wasli@gmail.com)

## APPENDIX A: STAGE 1 REQUIREMENTS – PORTFOLIO OF EVIDENCE

Applicants for Accreditation (both Accretee and Pre-accreditation) must demonstrate the following essential skills and competencies as detailed above:

ESSENTIAL SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proficiency in International Sign (C1 <a href="#">CEFR</a>)</li> <li>• Proficiency (C1 <a href="#">CEFR</a>) in one of the testing languages (currently English)</li> <li>• Proficiency in a national sign language and national spoken/written language</li> <li>• Skills/ability in co-working/ team working with other interpreters</li> </ul>

Applicants for accreditation must also demonstrate:

ESSENTIAL SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES - ACCREDITATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five years of experience (at least 150 days<sup>6</sup>) in interpreting for conferences<sup>7</sup> or high-level meetings at national level in the national sign and spoken languages</li> <li>• Three years of experience (at least 50 days) in International Sign interpreting at international or regional events within conference or high-level meeting settings (can be virtual)</li> </ul>

Applicants for pre-accreditation must also demonstrate:

ESSENTIAL SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES – PRE-ACCREDITATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Four years of experience (at least 120 days<sup>8</sup>) in interpreting for conferences<sup>9</sup> or high-level meetings at national level in the national sign and spoken languages</li> <li>• Two years of experience (at least 20 days) in International Sign interpreting at national or regional events within conference or high-level meeting settings. (can be virtual)</li> </ul>

Applicants in Stage 1 are required to submit a portfolio of evidence (see [Appendix B](#)) that includes:

EVIDENCE	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA
Application form	Identification and Experience
Two (2) letters of recommendation from practitioners who have worked either WASLI or WFD events.	The letters shall include description of your experience and competence and addressing the qualities in point <a href="#">3.1</a> .
Two (2) letters of recommendation from deaf consumers.	Referees must have had experience working with you (i.e. have seen your visual interpretation). The letters shall include description of your experience and competence and addressing the qualities in point <a href="#">3.1</a> .
A letter of recommendation from national deaf associations or interpreting agencies (including associations and private companies).	The letter shall include description of your experience and competence and addressing the qualities in point <a href="#">3.1</a> .

<sup>6</sup> A day is single interpreting assignment of at least 2 hours of interpreting work.

<sup>7</sup> A conference setting is one where the interpreting is provided with the expectation the speaker will not be interrupted, e.g. Deaf Association business meeting, conference, meetings of officials, etc.

<sup>8</sup> A day is at least 2 hours of interpreting work.

<sup>9</sup> A conference setting is one where the interpreting is provided with the expectation the speaker will not be interrupted, e.g. Deaf Association business meeting, conference, meetings of officials, etc.

**APPENDIX B: ASSESSMENT FOR STAGE 1 – PORTFOLIO OF EVIDENCE**

**SCORING RUBRIC**

**PORTFOLIO OF EVIDENCE – EVALUATION**

Please rate for each of the following by marking your response clearly.

Scores from Weak (1) Satisfactory (2) Strong (3) Very Strong (4)

<b>NO</b>	<b>DOCUMENTS</b>	<b>Score (1-4)</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N.A</b>
1.	Application form				
2.	Curriculum Vitae				
3.	Certificates of General Education				
4.	Copies of National Interpreting Training				
5a.	Certificates of Attendance for International Sign Training. If N.A, go to 5b. If 'Yes', rate strength of evidence provided.				
5b.	200-word justification about why International Sign Training has not been attended				
6.	2 x letters of recommendation from deaf consumer				
7.	2 x letters of recommendation from practitioner				
8.	1 x letter of recommendation from national deaf association or interpreting agency				
9.	Logbook/spreadsheet of contracted International Sign Interpreting bookings (50 days for hearing/25 days for Deaf interpreters)				
10.	Processing fee payment				

<b>TOTAL SCORES:</b>	0	/40	--	
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APPENDIX C: STAGE 2 REQUIREMENTS – ASSESSMENT

MEANING BASED INTERPRETING RUBRIC<sup>10</sup> (Debra Russell, Sheila Johnston, and Christopher Stone)

	SCORE	Proficient – 5	Competent – 4	Satisfactory – 3	Developing – 2	Beginning – 1
Effective meaning-based interpreting	0.0	Interpreting is meaning-based	Interpreting is primarily meaning-based		Interpreting is consistently influenced by the SL	Interpreting is heavily influenced by the SL
	0.0	Little or no SL influence	Some SL influence that does not skew the message	Some SL influence that does not significantly skew the message	SL skews the message	Several main topics are missing, and very little detail is included
	0.0	Includes all main topics and most details from source text	Main topics are included with some level of detail	Main topics are included	Some main topics are missing. Inadequate level of detail	Message is significantly skewed and/or incomplete
	0.0	<b>SUBTOTAL</b>				
Salient linguistic features of grammar and language use	0.0	Interpreting both culturally and linguistically is highly appropriate	Interpreting is culturally and linguistically appropriate	Interpreting is in the main culturally and linguistically appropriate	Interpreting is somewhat culturally and linguistically appropriate	Interpreting is culturally or linguistically inappropriate
	0.0	Articulation is clear	Articulation is mostly clear	Articulation is clear enough	Articulation is unclear at times	Articulation is often unclear
	0.0	TL is highly cohesive	TL is cohesive	TL is usually cohesive	TL cohesion inconsistent	TL lacks cohesion
	0.0	TL includes highly appropriate topic boundaries	TL includes appropriate topic boundaries	TL consistently includes topic boundaries	TL topic boundaries are inappropriate	TL topic boundaries are insufficient
	0.0	TL correct grammatical structure throughout	TL has a few minor grammatical errors	TL has some grammatical errors	TL has numerous grammatical errors	TL contains serious and frequent grammatical errors
	0.0	<b>SUBTOTAL</b>				

<sup>10</sup> Adapted from: Claudia Angelelli (2009). Using a rubric to assess translation ability. In Angelelli, C. & Jacobson, H (eds). *Testing and assessment in Translation and Interpreting Studies*. Philadelphia: John Benjamins. p. 13-47.

**WFD-WASLI INTERNATIONAL SIGN INTERPRETATION ACCREDITATION HANDBOOK**

<b>Goals, Affect, Style, Register</b>	<b>0.0</b>	Vocabulary choices and inflection consistently convey participant's goals	Vocabulary choices and inflection sufficiently convey participant's goals	Vocabulary choices and inflection generally convey participant's goals	Vocabulary choices and inflection inconsistently convey participant's goals	Vocabulary choices and inflection do not convey participant's goals
	<b>0.0</b>	Participant's affect, register and style of the source are effectively incorporated throughout	Participant's affect, register and style of the source are incorporated throughout	Participant's affect, register and style of the source are mostly incorporated throughout	Participant's affect, register and style of the source are inconsistently incorporated	Participant's affect, register and style of the source are not incorporated
	<b>0.0</b>	<b>SUBTOTAL</b>				
<b>Situational Appropriateness</b>	<b>0.0</b>	Demonstrates masterful ability to achieve the purpose of the interpretation in the TL	Demonstrates proficient ability to achieve the purpose of the interpretation in the TL	Demonstrates the ability to achieve the purpose of the interpretation in the TL	Inconsistently demonstrates the ability to achieve the purpose of the interpretation in the TL	Is not able to demonstrate the ability to achieve the intended purpose of the interpretation
	<b>0.0</b>	Vocabulary choice is skilful and apt	Vocabulary choice is consistently very good	Vocabulary choice is consistently good	Vocabulary choice are sometimes appropriate and sometimes either too formal or too colloquial for the situation	Most phrasing and/or word choices are either too formal or too colloquial for the TL and participants
	<b>0.0</b>	Cultural references, discourse and register are completely appropriate for the TL domain and the participants	Cultural references, discourse and register are consistently appropriate for the TL domain and the participants	Cultural references, discourse and register are mostly appropriate for the TL domain and the participants	Cultural references, discourse and register are inconsistently appropriate for the TL domain and the participants	Cultural references, discourse and register are inappropriate for the TL domain
	<b>0.0</b>	<b>SUBTOTAL</b>				
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>	<b>0.0</b>					

The minimum total score required to be accredited is 3 per each band (averaged) for a minimum of 12 to be satisfactory.