



**WORLD FEDERATION  
OF THE DEAF**



**WASLI**

World Association of  
Sign Language Interpreters



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

**March 2026**

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# 1. INTERNATIONAL SIGN INTERPRETER

An International Sign (IS) interpreter is proficient in at least one national sign language and at least one spoken and/or written language (currently English, Spanish, or French for assessment purposes). IS interpreters work—often simultaneously—in multilingual environments where Deaf participants do not share a common national sign language.

IS interpreters may be Deaf or hearing professionals. They typically work in international and high-level settings, including but not limited to:

- United Nations bodies (e.g., General Assembly, Security Council, CRPD Committee Sessions)
- European Parliament events
- Conferences organised by WFD and WASLI
- International Disability Alliance (IDA) meetings
- Deaflympics
- Academic and research conferences
- Regional Deaf and interpreter association events

In many settings, IS interpreters work between International Sign and one of the official UN languages. In other contexts, they may interpret from a national sign language into IS, or between IS and another spoken language.

# 2. WFD–WASLI INTERNATIONAL SIGN INTERPRETER ACCREDITATION

The WFD–WASLI International Sign Interpreter Accreditation (hereafter referred to as “the Accreditation”) was established by the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) and the World Association of Sign Language Interpreters (WASLI) in response to the growing global demand for qualified IS interpreters in international contexts.

The objectives of the Accreditation are to:

- Establish and uphold professional standards in International Sign Interpreting
- Ensure quality assurance in credentialing processes

- Maintain an official register of Accredited and Pre-Accredited IS Interpreters

## **3. ACCREDITATION FRAMEWORK**

The Accreditation recognises two levels of status:

### **3.1 Full Accreditation**

Awarded to applicants who meet all eligibility criteria and successfully complete the full assessment process.

### **3.2 Pre-Accreditation**

Awarded to applicants who demonstrate substantial competence but do not yet meet all requirements for Full Accreditation. Pre-Accredited interpreters are expected to undertake mentoring and supervised professional development.

## **Application Process**

- 1 Submission of a complete Stage 1 portfolio demonstrating eligibility for either Full Accreditation or Pre-Accreditation.
- 2 Upon successful portfolio review, completion of the Stage 2 interpreting assessment (conducted online).

## **4. ESSENTIAL SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS**

### **4.1 Essential Skills – Full Accreditation**

Applicants must demonstrate:

- C1-level proficiency in International Sign (aligned with CEFR descriptors)
- C1-level proficiency in one designated testing language (English, Spanish, or French)
- Professional proficiency in at least one national sign language and one spoken/written language

- Demonstrated competence in team interpreting and co-working practices

## **Professional Experience Requirements**

- Minimum of 5 years (150 days\*) of conference or high-level national Interpreting
- Minimum of 3 years (50 days) of IS interpreting in international or regional high-level settings

## **4.2 Essential Skills – Pre-Accreditation**

Applicants must demonstrate:

- Minimum of 4 years (120 days\*) of conference or high-level national Interpreting
- Minimum of 2 years (20 days) of IS interpreting in regional high-level settings
- Demonstrated competence in team interpreting

*A “day” is defined as a single assignment comprising a minimum of two hours of interpreting.*

## **4.3 Qualifications**

Applicants are expected to demonstrate:

- 1 Registration with a recognised professional interpreter body (where available)
- 2 A university degree (preferably in interpreting, translation studies, or sign language interpreting)
- 3 Membership in relevant professional organisations (e.g., national interpreter associations, WASLI, regional bodies, or the International Association of Conference Interpreters)
- 4 Membership in, or active engagement with, Deaf organisations at national, regional, or international levels

Desirable additional competencies include:

- Knowledge of international institutional systems and governance

structures

- Understanding of global Deaf community history and leadership
- Broad awareness of international affairs, cultures, and geopolitics

## **5. CODE OF CONDUCT**

All Accredited and Pre-Accredited interpreters are required to adhere to the WFD–WASLI Code of Conduct.

Compliance is monitored through the Professional Conduct Review Process. Breaches may result in investigation, suspension, or revocation of status.

## **6. STAGES OF ACCREDITATION**

### **Stage 1 – Portfolio Submission**

Applicants must submit in numerical order:

1. Completed application form
2. Curriculum Vitae
3. Educational certificates
4. Evidence of interpreting education and training
5. Logbook documenting IS assignments
6. Required letters of recommendation
7. Payment of the applicable processing fee

### **Required Letters of Recommendation**

- Two letters from Deaf consumers
- Two letters from WFD/WASLI Accredited interpreters
- One letter from a national Deaf association or recognised interpreting agency

## Stage 2 – Interpreting Assessment

Applicants who successfully complete Stage 1 must undertake a live or recorded IS interpreting assessment.

Performance is evaluated using a meaning-based rubric (Appendix C).

### Scoring Requirements

- Each rubric domain must achieve an average score of **at least 3 (Satisfactory)**
- Minimum overall score required: **12**

Failure to meet minimum standards in any rubric domain will result in a non-passing outcome.

## Processing Fees

### Applicants residing in Global South countries:

- Full Accreditation: €150
- Pre-Accreditation: €100

### Applicants residing in other countries:

- Full Accreditation: €550
- Pre-Accreditation: €400

All fees are non-refundable.

**Note:** If one applies for pre-accreditation however their testing results is full accreditation, candidates will be required to pay the Full Accreditation rate. If candidates apply for full accreditation however their testing results in pre-accredited status, there is no refund of fees.

## Validity of Accreditation

Accreditation is valid for a period of **five (5) years** from the date of approval.

Successful applicants will receive:

- A digital identification card
- An official Accreditation certificate
- Inclusion in the official WFD–WASLI directory

## **7. INTERNATIONAL SIGN ACCREDITATION ADVISORY BOARD (ISAAB)**

The International Sign Accreditation Advisory Board (ISAAB) is jointly appointed by the Boards of WFD and WASLI and comprises:

- Chair (expert in accreditation systems)
- WASLI Representative
- WFD Representative
- Accredited Interpreter Representative
- Aspiring Interpreter Representative
- Service User Representative

ISAAB is responsible for:

- Reviewing applications and assessment outcomes
- Recommending policy updates
- Monitoring compliance with professional development requirements
- Reviewing complaints and disputes
- Recommending suspension or revocation decisions

## **8. CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD)**

Accredited interpreters are required to complete:

- **A minimum of 24 hours of CPD per calendar year**

Accreditees must:

- Maintain accurate records of CPD activities
- Submit documentation annually by 15 December

Failure to meet CPD requirements, without satisfactory justification, may result in suspension or revocation of Accreditation.

## 9. CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS

Complaints must be submitted within **three (3) months** of the alleged incident.

Complaints may be submitted in written form or via an International Sign video and must include:

- Name and contact details of the complainant
- Name of the interpreter concerned
- Description of the alleged breach of the Code of Conduct
- Date, location, and relevant contextual details
- Names of witnesses (if applicable)

Complaints are reviewed by ISAAB. A formal response is typically issued within two (2) months of receipt.

## 10. SUSPENSION AND REVOCATION

WFD–WASLI reserves the right to suspend or revoke Accreditation, following due process and prior notification, in cases including but not limited to:

- Ethical violations
- Professional misconduct
- Failure to maintain required standards or CPD compliance

## 11. AMENDMENTS

WFD–WASLI may amend this Handbook at its discretion, subject to approval by both governing Boards. Accredited and Pre-Accredited interpreters will be notified in advance of substantive changes.

## 12. CONTACT

For all accreditation-related matters:

[is.accred.wasli@gmail.com](mailto:is.accred.wasli@gmail.com)

[wasli.office@gmail.com](mailto:wasli.office@gmail.com)

### APPENDIX A: STAGE 1 REQUIREMENTS – Portfolio of Evidence

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

#### **Essential Skills and Competencies**

- [Proficiency in International Sign \(C1 CEFR\)](#)
- [Proficiency \(C1 CEFR\) in one of the testing languages \(currently English, Spanish or French\)](#)
- [Proficiency in a national sign language and national spoken/written language](#)
- [Skills/ability in co-working/ team working with other interpreters](#)

Applicants for accreditation must also demonstrate:

#### **Essential Skills and Competencies - ACCREDITATION**

- [Five years of experience \(at least 150 days\) in interpreting for conferences or high-level meetings at national level in the national sign and spoken languages](#)
- [Three years of experience \(at least 50 days\) in International Sign interpreting at international or regional events within conference or high-level meeting settings \(can be virtual\)](#)

Applicants for pre-accreditation must also demonstrate:

#### **Essential Skills and Competencies – PRE-ACCREDITATION**

- [Four years of experience \(at least 120 days\) in interpreting for conferences or high-level meetings at national level in the national sign and spoken languages](#)
- [Two years of experience \(at least 20 days\) in International Sign interpreting at national or regional events within conference or high-level meeting settings. \(Can be virtual\)](#)

Applicants in Stage 1 are required to submit a portfolio of evidence that includes:

<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Assessment criteria</b>
<a href="#">Application form</a>	<a href="#">Identification and Experience</a>
<a href="#">Two (2) letters of recommendation from WASLI-WFD Accredited Interpreters</a>	<a href="#">The letters shall include description of your experience and competence and address the qualities in section 3.1.1.</a>
<a href="#">Two (2) letters of recommendation from deaf consumers.</a>	<a href="#">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 address the qualities necessary</a>
<a href="#">A letter of recommendation from national deaf associations or interpreting agencies (including associations and private companies).</a>	<a href="#">The letter shall include description of your experience and competence and address the qualities necessary</a>

APPENDIX C: STAGE 2 REQUIREMENTS – Assessment

**MEANING BASED INTERPRETING RUBRIC**

Debra Russell, Sheila Johnston, and Christopher Stone

	<b><u>SCORE</u></b>	<b><u>Proficient – 5</u></b>	<b><u>Competent – 4</u></b>	<b><u>Satisfactory – 3</u></b>	<b><u>Developing – 2</u></b>	<b><u>Beginning – 1</u></b>
<b><u>Effective meaning-based interpreting</u></b>	<b><u>0.0</u></b>	<a href="#">Interpreting is meaning-based</a>	<a href="#">Interpreting is primarily meaning-based</a>		<a href="#">Interpreting is consistently influenced by the SL</a>	<a href="#">Interpreting is heavily influenced by the SL</a>
	<b><u>0.0</u></b>	<a href="#">Little or no SL influence</a>	<a href="#">Some SL influence that does not skew the message</a>	<a href="#">Some SL influence that does not significantly skew the message</a>	<a href="#">SL skews the message</a>	<a href="#">Several main topics are missing, and very little detail is included</a>
	<b><u>0.0</u></b>	<a href="#">Includes all main topics and most details from source text</a>	<a href="#">Main topics are included with some level of detail</a>	<a href="#">Main topics are included</a>	<a href="#">Some main topics are missing. Inadequate level of detail</a>	<a href="#">Message is significantly skewed and/or incomplete</a>
<b><u>Salient linguistic features of grammar and language use</u></b>	<b><u>0.0</u></b>	<a href="#">Interpreting both culturally and linguistically is highly appropriate</a>	<a href="#">Interpreting is culturally and linguistically appropriate</a>	<a href="#">Interpreting is in the main culturally and linguistically appropriate</a>	<a href="#">Interpreting is somewhat culturally and linguistically appropriate</a>	<a href="#">Interpreting is culturally or linguistically inappropriate</a>

	<u>0.0</u>	<u>Articulation is clear</u>	<u>Articulation is mostly clear</u>	<u>Articulation is clear enough</u>	<u>Articulation is unclear at times</u>	<u>Articulation is often unclear</u>
	<u>0.0</u>	<u>TL is highly cohesive</u>	<u>TL is cohesive</u>	<u>TL is usually cohesive</u>	<u>TL cohesion inconsistent</u>	<u>TL lacks cohesion</u>
	<u>0.0</u>	<u>TL includes highly appropriate topic boundaries</u>	<u>TL includes appropriate topic boundaries</u>	<u>TL consistently includes topic boundaries</u>	<u>TL topic boundaries are inappropriate</u>	<u>TL topic boundaries are insufficient</u>
	<u>0.0</u>	<u>TL correct grammatical structure throughout</u>	<u>TL has a few minor grammatical errors</u>	<u>TL has some grammatical errors</u>	<u>TL has numerous grammatical errors</u>	<u>TL contains serious and frequent grammatical errors</u>
	<u>0.0</u>	<b><u>SUBTOTAL</u></b>				
<b><u>Goals, Affect, Style, Register</u></b>	<u>0.0</u>	<u>Vocabulary choices and inflection consistently convey participant's goals</u>	<u>Vocabulary choices and inflection sufficiently convey participant's goals</u>	<u>Vocabulary choices and inflection generally convey participant's goals</u>	<u>Vocabulary choices and inflection inconsistently convey participant's goals</u>	<u>Vocabulary choices and inflection do not convey participant's goals</u>
	<u>0.0</u>	<u>Participant's affect, register and style of the source are effectively incorporated throughout</u>	<u>Participant's affect, register and style of the source are incorporated throughout</u>	<u>Participant's affect, register and style of the source are mostly incorporated throughout</u>	<u>Participant's affect, register and style of the source are inconsistently incorporated</u>	<u>Participant's affect, register and style of the source are not incorporated</u>
	<u>0.0</u>	<b><u>SUBTOTAL</u></b>				
<b><u>Situational Appropriateness</u></b>	<u>0.0</u>	<u>Demonstrates masterful ability to achieve the purpose of the interpretation in the TL</u>	<u>Demonstrates proficient ability to achieve the purpose of the interpretation in the TL</u>	<u>Demonstrates the ability to achieve the purpose of the interpretation in the TL</u>	<u>Inconsistently demonstrates the ability to achieve the purpose of the interpretation in the TL</u>	<u>Is not able to demonstrate the ability to achieve the intended purpose of the interpretation</u>
	<u>0.0</u>	<u>Vocabulary choice is skilful and apt</u>	<u>Vocabulary choice is consistently very good</u>	<u>Vocabulary choice is consistently good</u>	<u>Vocabulary choices are sometimes appropriate and sometimes either too formal or too colloquial for the situation</u>	<u>Most phrasing and/or word choices are either too formal or too colloquial for the TL and participants</u>

	<b><u>0.0</u></b>	<a href="#"><u>Cultural references, discourse and register are completely appropriate for the TL domain and the participants</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Cultural references, discourse and register are consistently appropriate for the TL domain and the participants</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Cultural references, discourse and register are mostly appropriate for the TL domain and the participants</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Cultural references, discourse and register are inconsistently appropriate for the TL domain and the participants</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Cultural references, discourse and register are inappropriate for the TL domain</u></a>
	<b><u>0.0</u></b>	<b><u>SUBTOTAL</u></b>				
<b><u>TOTAL SCORE</u></b>	<b><u>0.0</u></b>					

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