

Scottish Association of Sign Language Interpreters

All registered and Trainee Sign Language Interpreters who are Members of the Scottish Association of Sign Language Interpreters (SASLI) will be expected to follow the Code of Conduct and Practice and be familiar with the Complaints Procedure.

Code of Conduct and Practice

• Confidentiality

Interpreters shall be bound by the strictest confidentiality which must be observed with regard to information gathered in the course of interpreting.

Interpreters will not disclose to any third party or make use of any information other than the purpose for which it was provided, unless legally required to do so.

Interpreters shall not derive any personal gain from confidential information acquired by them in the exercise of their duties as interpreters.

• Interpreting Skills and Knowledge

- Interpreters shall interpret to the best of their ability between parties.

Interpreters shall not accept work which they know to be beyond their linguistic and/or technical ability to provide a service of acceptable standard. In circumstances where a more suitable interpreter is not available an interpreter may accept such an assignment providing that both the user and contractor are informed of the implications and give their consent.

Interpreters shall always seek to increase their interpreting skills and knowledge.

• Impartiality

Interpreters shall be impartial. Any business or vested interests which the interpreter may have in an assignment must be disclosed beforehand to both user and consumer.

Interpreters should not offer personal opinions during or in relation to an interpreting assignment.

• Professionalism

Interpreters shall maintain the creditability and dignity of the Association by acting at all times in a professional manner.

Interpreters should act in a manner consistent with persons having mutual trust and confidence in each other. It is in the interest of the Association and those whom it serves that there be a corporate professional spirit based on co-operation.

Interpreters may advertise their services providing the information is factual and is not misleading not brings discredit to the profession.

An assignment, once accepted, should not be cancelled by the interpreter without good reason.

• Professional Fees

Interpreters shall be guided by the recommended scales of fees established by the Association.

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Complaints Procedure

Wherever possible interpreting problems should be sorted out at the time of the assignment. For problems which cannot be resolved at the time an approach can be made to SASLI. Below is a guide to the procedures for making a complaint.

All complaints must normally be received within 28 days of the interpreting assignment. Only in exceptional circumstances can complaints submitted at a later date be considered.

A video/letter will be sent to the complainer acknowledging receipt within 14 days. If necessary further information may be requested.

Either a copy of the video/letter or a summary of the complaint will be sent to the interpreter/trainee to allow an opportunity to answer. Usually a copy of the reply will be sent to the complainer for comment.

If necessary, a letter will be sent to the organiser or contractor seeking clarification.

It is expected that many complaints will be resolved quickly and easily after this consultation and if the complainer is satisfied no further action may be required.

If a complaint cannot be resolved in this manner then the Director of the Association will decide whether the complaint should be referred to the Discipline Committee for consideration of possible disciplinary procedures.

• **Disciplinary Procedures**

On receipt of a report from the Director of the Association referring the subject matter of a complaint against a member for consideration of possible disciplinary procedures the Discipline Committee shall decide whether or not to institute disciplinary proceedings. Before doing so they may appoint an investigator to look into and report to them on any matters for which they require further information relevant to the complaint.

If the Discipline Committee decide to go ahead with disciplinary procedures, they shall inform the member of the matters in respect of which those procedures are to be pursued and shall give the member an opportunity to be heard before them either in person or through a representative, and to lead any oral documentary evidence on the matters in question.

If there are disputed matters of fact, the Discipline Committee may request any investigator already appointed under clause 1. or any other competent person to investigate such matters further and to lead any relevant documentary or oral evidence thereon before the Committee.

If the Discipline Committee find that following disciplinary procedures the member has been in material breach of the Association's Code of Conduct and Practice, they may then decide one or more of the following:

- a. To issue a written warning to remain in force for a stated period of time

- b. To suspend the member from all interpreting duties and all SASLI activities for a stated period of time
- c. To expel the member from the Association.

The Discipline Committee's decision shall be final and shall not be subject to review or appeal unless an appeal is intimated by or on behalf of the member to the Association within four weeks from the date when the Discipline Committee's decision had been communicated to the member.

• **Appeal Procedure**

The member concerned may appeal against the Discipline Committee's decision within four weeks from the date when it is intimated to the member.

The appeal will be decided by one or more persons nominated for the appeal by the Executive Committee of the Association from an Appeal Panel whose members shall be appointed by the Executive Committee annually or for such term or terms as the Executive Committee may decide from time to time.

The person or persons hearing the appeal shall give the appellant member an opportunity to make representations in relation to his or her appeal either in person or through a representative and (subject to paragraph 4 below) to lead any oral documentary evidence on matters in question.

No appeal shall be allowed on any matters of fact decided by the Discipline Committee except in respect of new information which was not available, and could not reasonably have been obtained, by the time of and hearing before the Discipline Committee or (where there was no such hearing) the time of the Discipline Committee's decision; and any evidence before the person or persons hearing the appeal shall be restricted to such matters.

The person or persons hearing the appeal may allow or dismiss an appeal in whole or in part and may either confirm or quash any part of the Discipline Committee's decision and may substitute such other finding or penalty as may be considered appropriate. Such decision shall be final and no further appeal will be allowed.

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