

Advice to Service Providers

SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION OF SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS

FEES FRAMEWORK 2006 – 2007

Statement of Ethics

SASLI believe that access to goods and services should not be prohibited or restricted on the basis of colour, ethnicity, language preference, gender, disability or sexual orientation. In the spirit of this principle therefore we firmly believe that Interpreting services must be fairly priced and mindful of the economic context in which they operate. To this end our members are strongly encouraged to take into account all practical, logistical and economic considerations when agreeing fees with the service purchaser. These considerations include balancing the accessibility of their service with fair financial remuneration for the provision of a quality service.

Service Purchasers are encouraged to consider the fair market prices for a professional service and are reminded that it is essential that all relevant information is given to the service provider at time of negotiation. This will ensure the best possible fee is negotiated and agreed upon prior to the assignment taking place.

Should there be any dispute regarding the fee charged for a piece of work, SASLI would expect both the provider and purchaser to discuss and attempt to resolve the issue in the first instance. Only after resolution has been seen to be impossible can the matter be brought to SASLI. Service purchasers are reminded that SASLI can only consider a case if there has been a breach of the Code of Conduct (Ethics) by the Service provider and will, in the first instance, attempt to be a mediator between both parties. Service Providers are reminded that SASLI cannot engage in the pursuance of outstanding fees on their behalf.

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Background Information

The field of Interpreting has changed dramatically in the past 10 years with different, often competing, expectations affecting the way services are provided. SASLI too has evolved and is moving towards ever more stringent quality control mechanisms in the monitoring of professional standards. In a market place that is constantly developing, questions of ethics can often present themselves. It is hoped that the ethical statement contained within this Framework for Fees will be a guide for our members when used with the following recommendations.

It is helpful to have a clear understanding of the categories of membership of the Association and what these mean in terms of levels of ability. Members who fall into the first 2 categories carry an ID card with them which shows their registration number. This is renewed every year and subject to the fulfilment of Continuous Professional Development (CPD). This ID card gives clients the assurance that the Interpreter with whom they are in negotiation is a SASLI registered member and abides by the Code of Conduct, Principles and Governance of the Association. It also demonstrates that you are covered by the SASLI Complaints Procedure, have a current Enhanced Disclosure Scotland check, Public Liability Insurance and are engaged in a Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programme. Service Purchasers are encouraged to contact SASLI if they are in any doubt about the status or training position of the Interpreter they wish to book. **Those providing Interpreting services are asked to use the ID card as a means of clearly stating their Registration status to purchasers of services.**

Categories of Membership

Registered Member: Interpreters who have been assessed and registered by the Association as fit to practice in all domains.
The current recommended fee for RMSASLI is £24 per hour.

Associate Member: Interpreters who have been granted membership of the Association and are undertaking further training and assessments leading to Full Registration. Associates should declare their status to any service purchaser at time of negotiation and are encouraged to only accept assignments in which all parties are aware of their “in training” position. Associate members are restricted from providing Interpreting services in Legal settings due to guidelines laid down by the Crown Office Prosecution Service (COPFS) to which SASLI adheres.
The current recommended rate for AMSASLI is £20 per hour.

Co-opted Member: Those members of the public with a declared interest in any aspect of the field of Interpreting who have affiliated themselves to the Association in order to support its principles and aims. Whilst some of these members may be working in a Communication Support Worker role and may also be in the initial stages of training to become AM/RMSASLI, they are not deemed “fit to practice” by the Association and therefore are not issued with an ID card. These members are therefore not covered by the SASLI Code of Conduct, the PLI or the Complaints Procedure. **Consequently, there is no recommended rate for such members of SASLI.**

While SASLI recommend that our members attempt to work within the following fee scales, the Association recognizes that individual members and agencies will necessarily create their own pricing policies. The association presumes that all justifiable costs will be clearly stated to Service purchasers.

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Guidance on Fee Calculation

The Association currently supports the recommendation that Interpreters charge a minimum 2 hours fee plus travel costs for any assignment. There are, however, a number of factors which the Service Provider may consider when charging for any given assignment. Some of these factors are listed below and the Association recommend that all Service Providers discuss them in full with any potential client before a booking is finalised. All SASLI Interpreters should be prepared to supply full terms & conditions upon request. Factors to consider are:

Travel Time

SASLI recognize that Interpreters may have to travel excessively in order to fulfil assignments and therefore travel time is seen as a legitimate cost which can be included within the final negotiated fee. Travel time may also be charged if start/finish times are outwith normal office hours (see **Unsocial Hours**) or the assignment takes place outwith Scotland. The association does not recommend that this is a *presumed* cost but recognizes that it is a *legitimate* charge in certain circumstances. Regular Purchasers of services may have an agreement in place which presumes travel time to be included in the final fee e.g. Police, COPFS, SCS and certain Statutory Bodies particularly in the Highlands of Scotland. This should be clarified at time of booking. All Providers of Interpreting services should be prepared to explain the justification for the inclusion of this cost.

Domain

The Association recognizes that certain types of assignment can incur a higher than minimum fee or that a Day fee may be levied. The Service Provider should endeavour to secure as much information as possible in order to ensure that clear guidance on the charges that will be incurred can be given. If the assignment is known to be of the type that carries an additional burden of preparation i.e. theatre, conference or religious/civic ceremonies then this should be clearly explained to the client and fees clarified.

Cancellation

SASLI recognizes that cancellation fees are legitimate charges and recommends a full discussion with clients before a booking is finalised. The current average cancellation policy in Scotland is:

5 working days (inclusive):	full fee
6 – 7 working days (inclusive):	half fee
8 or more working days (inclusive):	no fee.

Should an appropriate alternative assignment be found to replace the cancelled task, SASLI recommend that cancellation fees be waived or an administration fee only be charged. This may vary depending on the status of the Service Provider i.e. agency, broker or self employed but all information should be clearly stated at time of booking.

Unsocial Hours

SASLI currently recommend that unsocial hours should be taken to mean any time falling outwith the hours of 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday. During unsocial hours a Service Provider may choose to levy different charges according to the difficulty of the task and the time of day/night. The hourly rate to be charged and factors such as travel time, minimum fee and call out charge which have an effect on the final fee should be discussed with the client before the booking is taken and confirmed.

Specialist Domain

It is recognized that certain Interpreters may have acquired a great deal of specialist knowledge or experience in a particular domain and therefore may alter their charging policies when practicing in that domain. The Association recommend that Interpreters must evidence any claim to specialism in the form of Certificates of specialist Training or Testimonials from previous Service Purchasers/Users.

Preparation Time

As mentioned in **Domain**, certain types of assignment require a substantial amount of preparation prior to the event. A Service Provider may make an additional charge for this. The most common types of assignment to incur this charge are Conferences and Theatre performances although Religious and Civic ceremonies also require more than usual preparation and research time and therefore may incur additional fees. The Association recognizes that **many** domains not explicitly referred to in this document may require more than usual preparation time, that it is a vital part of the interpreting process and is a legitimate charge. Since each assignment is unique, the Association does not recommend a specific number of preparation hours but encourages its members to clearly communicate with the purchaser about the amount required to be done in order to ensure a successful piece of work. Preparation time is normally chargeable at the aforementioned minimum hourly rate.

Role

In certain assignments where more than one interpreter is required there may be a need to appoint a Co-ordinating Interpreter. In such cases all decisions should be negotiated and decided upon in collaboration with the Purchaser of the Interpreting service and the justification for such a role should be explained fully. Since this is an additional but sometime necessary charge it should be included in any initial quote given at time of booking.

Administration Fee

An administration fee may be levied as an additional cost when services are booked through Agencies or anyone acting as a Broker. VAT, administration charges and agency fees should be clearly explained to the client before a booking is finalised.

SASLI presumes that the Ethical Statement that begins this document is adhered to by all its members no matter which category of registration they hold. Service Purchasers and Providers alike should endeavour to deal fairly and professionally with each other within the spirit of the Framework here outlined.