

Meeting with representatives of Visual Language Professionals (VLP)

10 am, 15 February 2012, York

Present:

VLP: Alan Haythornthwaite, Van Holtom, David Wycherley

NRCPD: Paul Parsons, Angela Nunn

Findings of consultation report and decisions made:

We discussed information from VLP that some of its members are unhappy with the introduction of a revalidation requirement for registration. Paul explained the board sets out what it requires as evidence that standards for professional practice are met and maintained. Based on long deliberations the board decided to set out in its consultation a revalidation scheme and asked for views on how to implement it. The scheme in the consultation document was amended to take account of the responses received.

At their renewal point in 2013 Registered professionals will have to show that they have done 12 hours (including a minimum of 6 structured hours) of development work in the previous 12 months. 24 hours in the second year and 35 in the third and subsequent years. VLP pointed out that a working week for an interpreter is 5 days x 6 hours a day. This equalled 30 hours and not 35 hours as proposed. VLP was asked to put this in writing to the Board.

VLP asked for more information about the revalidation model the board had chosen and asked which others were researched. Originally NRCPD had considered using the ASLI model, when a new Chair was appointed, the discussions on revalidation started anew and NRCPD looked at several different systems including CIPR, CIPD and the Law Society.

Paul clarified that ASLI (or any other organisation) will need to seek annual approval from NRCPD for its CPD scheme to be recognised/approved/accepted.

Trainee Interpreters: VLP asked for clarification of the arrangements for introducing the new Trainee Sign Language Interpreter category. During 2012 the new Trainee Sign Language Interpreter (TSLI) category will be phased in. As a transitional arrangement all current trainees (JTI and TI) will become TSLI automatically on renewal. There will be a four year cut off period for TSLI to remain in this category.

At their renewal point in 2013 they will have to provide evidence that they are on a clear development path that leads to NRCPD Registered status.

VLP currently accepts Trainee Interpreters as Associate members of their association. They expressed concern that they would no longer know if a TSLI meets their eligibility criteria. Angela assured VLP that she would be able to advise them on an individual basis whether someone meets their eligibility criteria.

NRCPD will allow notified career breaks and special arrangements for individuals with evidence of exceptional circumstances. The details of career breaks are still to be published, but NRCPD is working on the premise that each individual on a career break would be requested to return their ID card but would still be subject to the code of conduct and complaints procedure if for any reason they were working. VLP challenged this decision and felt it was contradictory to return an ID card but still be subject to the code of conduct. It was agreed this would be considered further. It could be that a note is recorded on the individual's register entry stating that they are 'not working' or something similar.

Communication Professionals Portal: The portal currently only mentions ASLI's insurance. Angela informed VLP that she had asked for a more general statement to be recorded on the portal ie asking people to provide evidence of insurance which covers them for the work they undertake. When the new website is launched in March it will mention that evidence of insurance can be provided via a professional association.

NRCPD Board: VLP would like NRCPD board to have representatives of practitioners. NRCPD explained the board is a strategic body overseeing all registration categories. Positions on the board are not reserved for individual representatives. Board members are appointed because of the range of skills they bring.

The views of working interpreters can be fed into the board in the following ways:

- Via these meetings
- Via the Practitioners' Forum
- By letter which will be tabled as "correspondence "at board meetings.

Updated Complaints Procedure: The new complaints procedure effective from 1 March 2012 was circulated to VLP. It is clearer and in plainer English. A BSL version will be available on the new website. Corrective sanctions are also clearer. VLP asked about a policy for whistleblowing ie anonymously reporting bad practice/unsatisfactory competence of their fellow interpreters. NRCPD explained the principle they apply is that a person against whom a complaint is being made has a right to know from where that complaint is coming. If there are clear deficiencies in this approach we could ask the board to look at the issue at a future meeting. VLP also asked whether NRCPD would consider a complaint from VLP on behalf of someone else eg an agency. Paul mentioned that agency endorsement to be considered later in the year and agencies may be added to the search facility.

Any other business: A register for Sign Language Translators was opened at the beginning of January 2012. Eligibility criteria is the Level 6 Diploma in Sign Language Translation.

Deaf people have been able to register as interpreters since September 2010 if they achieve Level 6 NVQ Diploma in Sign Language Interpreting using ISL/BSL or ASL/BSL etc.

The meeting closed at 12.15 pm.