

Memo: NZSL Interpreter Standards - NAATI

To: NZSL Board
From: Office for Disability Issues
Date: 11 August 2022

Recommendation:

1. The Office for Disability Issues (ODI) sets up an Advisory group for the implementation of NAATI certification
2. ODI works with NAATI to develop the policy around NAATI certification for NZSL Interpreters.

Background:

Since May 2021, ODI has been working with the Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) to determine the suitability of National Accreditation Authority of Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) for NZSL Interpreters. This work included consultation with the Deaf and NZSL Interpreter community.

The NZSL Board considered NAATI a good fit if the following requirements could be met:

- NZSL Interpreter training in New Zealand was listed as a pre-requisite to become eligible for NAATI certification to avoid an alternative pathway to working as an interpreter
- The current workforce would be treated equally regardless of their qualifications, e.g Diploma vs Degree

Before the requirements could be confirmed, the existing AUT qualification had to become endorsed by NAATI. This was completed in August 2022.

NAATI has now confirmed that they are happy to discuss the finer details of how NAATI certification could be used for NZSL Interpreters and believe they can meet the Boards requirements.

Next steps:

Further work is required to understand how the NAATI framework can be introduced and applied to NZSL Interpreters including:

- Work with MBIE to include NZSL Interpreters in the Interpreter standards programme and inclusion in the Face-to-Face government contract for interpreters working in the public sector

- Setting up eligibility systems, including NZSL proficiency assessment for internationally trained interpreters working in New Zealand
- Development of an NZSL certification assessment and training of Assessor

An Advisory group working with ODI would help to understand the impact on the workforce and identify risks, solutions with the introduction of NAATI. ODI suggest the group is made up of a representative from:

- AUT as the only organisation delivering NZSL Interpreter training
- SLIANZ as the membership organisation for NZSL Interpreters

The Advisory group would monitor the implementation of NAATI alongside ODI.