

An Introduction to Irish Sign Language (ISL) in the Legal Setting

Date	10 & 24 February and 3, 10, 24, 31 March 2021
Time	4.00pm to 5.00pm
Venue	Live Zoom Meeting
Fee	€330
Discounted* Fee	€270
CPD Hours	6 Management & Professional Development Skills (by eLearning)
Event Code	S2059

Aim and Objectives

This course acquaints solicitors with basic Irish Sign Language (ISL)* skills. It gives guidance on how to work with Deaf and Hard of Hearing clients and on how to work with qualified interpreters in the legal setting. It provides information about the Deaf community, Deaf culture and Deaf people as a linguistic minority group.

By the end of the course, practitioners should expect to achieve ISL basic level skills. Practitioners will learn the skills to engage in a two-way conversation, comprehend a simple question and answer type discussion and sign basic personal expressions and information. Numbers on this course are limited to 15 participants.

Irish Sign Language is the indigenous language of the Irish Deaf community. It is a visual spatial language that has been passed down through generations. It has its own syntax, complex grammatical structure, is a highly inflected language and is independent from spoken Irish and English.

Topics to be covered include

- **Meeting Deaf people** - extending and deepening cultural awareness of varieties of greetings, starting conversations, interrupting, attracting someone's attention and more.
- **Fingerspelling** - fingerspelling of names for introducing oneself and others/colleagues, names of places.
- **Useful everyday expressions** - making people feel comfortable, eliciting important facts.

- **Vocabulary** - basic vocabulary specific to the legal profession as well as numbers, money, times/dates, family.
- **Non-Manual Features (NMF)** - how to use and understand facial expressions and the upper torso for grammatical purposes and to show basic emotional expression.
- **Grammatical descriptors** - Manual and non-manual negation, how to question, everyday verbs and sentence construction.

Instructor:

Patrick A Matthews, Patrick Matthews is an Assistant Professor in the Centre for Deaf Studies Trinity College Dublin on the Bachelor in Deaf Studies Programme. Patrick Matthews has played a pivotal role for many decades in the Irish Deaf Community in promoting and teaching ISL, and was the first Deaf person to carry out research on ISL. He has extensive knowledge and experience of teaching ISL both generically and within specific domains - to Deaf people as L1 learners and to hearing people as L2 learners. Mr. Matthews is also Deputy Chief Examiner for the Leaving Certificate Applied in Irish Sign Language. He was an Associate Project Manager for the translation of the relevant chapters from the *Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse Report* (The Ryan Report) into Irish Sign Language. He is currently the Chair for the Council of ISL Teachers (CISLT). Mr. Matthews, along with Pauline McMahon, created the curriculum for the Junior Cycle Short Course in ISL for the Post-Primary Languages Initiative. Patrick holds an M.Litt. in Applied Linguistics (TCD) and M.Phil. in Applied Linguistics (TCD).

Interpreter:

Pauline McMahon, Dip. ISL/English Interpreting, Centre of Deaf Studies, Trinity College Dublin, graduated in 2007. Pauline interprets in a wide variety of settings including statutory and voluntary sectors, health care, education, training and employment, community events, amateur theatre and conference settings - to name but a few. She is qualified in CELTA (Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) and ACELS (Accreditation and Co-ordination of English Language Services) – the advisory council for English language schools. She has a keen interest in translation and was Project Manager for the translation of the relevant chapters from the *Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse Report* (CICA – Ryan Report) into Irish Sign Language. Pauline, along with Patrick A. Matthews, created the curriculum for the Junior Cycle Short Course in ISL for the Post-Primary Languages Initiative.

*Law Society Finuas Skillnet members

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