

## Q+A – follow-up from our webinar on Wed 19 August

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***Will someone write a resume of today's Q&A for us to access? That would help us to remember useful information after the meeting :)***

Here you go!

These answers are provided by staff members, and there is always a possibility to human errors. Please have a look at our study regulations (can be found as appendix in Handbook from year 2017, here: <https://www.eumasli.eu/wp-content/uploads/sites/25/2015/09/EUMASLI-3-Handbook-Feb2017.pdf> )

If our answers contradict with the regulations, the regulations are the one to believe 😊

### Content

***What kind of assignments will we be given during the program? Written format, signed videos? How are exams executed? What kind of tasks and assignments are included in self-study?***

All sorts of assignments, including: more traditional academic writing tasks, like essays; research projects; signed academic texts; signed presentations; reflections; translations; live interpreting; presentations; group tasks; ...

Many assignments are conducted in self-study periods (i.e. we give you a deadline and you submit something by the deadline, either alone or in a team), but some happen in face to face contexts. For example, at the end of semester 4, we have a two day face to face event, where students present a research project in spoken English or IS, while others interpret this at the same time. Many assignments involve cooperation with fellow students from different countries and language backgrounds.

***For the MA thesis, will we be given the opportunity to use a local supervisor of our own choice (depending of course on choice of topic for the thesis)?***

We will try to match the supervisor to your topic as much as possible and aim to find good matches between supervisor and supervisee. There are always two supervisors from two different partner universities. Supervisors will be EUMASLI staff, and in that sense, they are probably not “local”, though one of them could possibly be from the same country as the supervisee.

***Regarding the MA thesis, is there any subject "off-limits"? Or are there some themes or topics that are recommended?***

The topic should relate to something related to aspects covered in the programme, but as we cover a wide range of topics, there will be a wide range of topics and students will steer their focus points themselves after discussion with their supervisors. The topic should also be feasible and manageable with the resources available and within the time period.

The topic will relate to some aspect of either the performance or the profession of SLIs, but generally we are open to suggestions and to find something that fits the experience and motivation of the students is crucial for us.

***What are the success stories of people who have completed this degree in terms of at the workforce on an international platform? For example, I am interested in learning more about international interpreting -specifically the ethics of interpreting as so that I can build a trustworthy interpreting training/agency in a developing country. Would this program be beneficial by receiving the support after the completion of the degree?***

Graduates from EUMASLI #1 have shown over a number of years now how their learning has added value to their work. Oliver Pouliot has taken Overseas Interpreting (<http://www.overseasinterpreting.com/>) from strength to strength at the international level. Maya de Wit (<https://www.mayadewit.nl/>) has led numerous developments at international level, laying a path for others to follow. Both have been pioneers in terms of securing recognition for SLIs within the leading professional association, AIIC (<https://aiic.org/>). These are only some examples, there are others, e.g. doing PhDs, being leaders and/or teachers in the field, etc.

As we noted in the meeting, the EUMASLI network of graduates (now over 50 from around the world) have collaborated in, facilitated and supported one another's advances over the last decade and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. There's no formal 'alumni' association, but the bonds are strong and very much actively used and valued by EUMASLI graduates.

## **Preparation and commitment**

***How much time would you expect students need to focus on their studies each week?***

EUMASLI is "half-time", so about half of the time you'd normally use for work each week. This might be something like 20h/week. However: semester 5, the MA thesis during the last 6 months, is full-time work.

***Is there any pre-reading you would advise prospective students to do?***

Any reading within interpreting/translation studies and linguistics is always recommended!

Academic literature on (sign language) interpreting in English is useful. To be more specific, people do not go wrong if they read Pöchhacker 2016 (Introducing Interpreting Studies), Napier & Leeson 2016 (Sign Language in Action) or Hale & Napier 2013 (Research Methods in Interpreting).

***What have been the main challenges faced by previous students that we can learn from to improve our experience?***

From student feedback over the years, we would highlight two areas. One is that the working languages of the programme are English and International Sign (the latter becoming increasingly prominent as the semesters progress). You *\*will\** have to read and become familiar with a body of literature, most of which is in English. You *\*will\** have to write in English at postgraduate level – and we will support you in developing confidence and skills in this area. You *\*will\** have to work towards using English (receptively and productively) professionally as an interpreter/translator. We will select students who demonstrate an *aptitude* for International Signing at interview: we don't expect you to be using it as if you were born fluent at the point of entering the programme, but we *\*will\** expect you to display promise in this highly visual, creative idiom, and a commitment to extending your skills. And we'll expect you to improve those skills semester-by-semester through working use of IS in the classroom and in practical tasks.

The second challenge is time management. Almost all EUMASLI students have maintained working careers as practitioners alongside their studies. If your work is intensive and time-consuming – and especially if you *also* have family, caring or other demanding commitments in your life – then making the time for studying will be a challenge. However, you may know the saying “If you want something done, ask a busy person” - and we have certainly found that many EUMASLI students just *are* the kind of people who thrive when faced with a challenge, organise themselves efficiently, and are motivated by proving their ability to themselves and to the world!

## **Application**

***Will you interview all the applicants?***

§ 4.2 of the Selection Regulations has this to say on the matter:

“All applicants who satisfy the general admission requirements set out in Art. 4 paras. (1) and (2) will be admitted to the assessment procedure. Applicants will be notified in writing no later than 2 weeks before the scheduled date of their participation in the assessment procedure and the examination date and mode of access.”

***What sort of information do I need to provide to prove that I have three years professional work experience as an interpreter?***

We are not asking for any very specific kind of proof because this will differ very much from country to country. Anything is welcome that makes credible what applicants will outline in their CVs and letters of motivation. So, it might be employment records, continuing education certificates, documents showing memberships to professional associations or other relevant affiliations, lists of assignments, references, etc.

***I was hoping to get some clarification on the working experience requirement of three years. Is it three years' experience by time of application, or by the start date of the program?***

§ 4.2 of the exam regulations clarifies the matter:

“Applicants must demonstrate substantial professional experience in the field of sign language interpreting, i.e. they must have worked as sign language interpreters for at least three years *by the time of admission to the programme.*”

Admission to the programme = registration at one of the partner universities will take place after the selection procedure but before the start of the programme. I am sure we won't be counting days.

Also worth noting that the Finnish legislation only requires 2 years of experience, so in principle person with less than 3 years but over 2, can be accepted as an applicant in Humak.

***Does the CV has to be made according to UK criterias: no photo, no age, no nationality to avoid discrimination?***

***Is there a recommended length for the cover letter? Or for the CV?***

There is no specific format. Let us know about yourself and make it meaningful for the purpose.

***How many places are available? How many students does each university accept?***

There are 24 places, 8 in each university.

***I wonder what the number of applications have been to previous EUMASLI groups. Will you let us know how many applicants there are this year when the deadline is out?***

So far this hasn't been public information. We will discuss the matter and see what we can do.

***Which University would you recommend applying to if one is interested in taking PhD after EUMASLI? Is there a difference between the three Universities?***

Heriot-Watt is the only one of the three participating universities that has a PhD programme. We understand that some universities around the world would prefer PhD applicants to have a master's qualification from a university like Heriot-Watt, rather than from a more applied institution. However, that's not true of all PhD programmes around the world: for example, Heriot-Watt itself would be perfectly willing to accept PhD applications from people holding MAs from Humak or Magdeburg.

***Is there a possibility for a student from non-EU or EEA country, but part of CoE, to use the benefits intended for students from EU-countries. More precisely, would we be able to apply to Humak University with no fee, since that would be the only possibility for the interpreters from Western Balkans, for example, to be part of these studies?***

Answer from Humak Application services:

“Tuition fee is charged from students coming outside the EU/EEA and Switzerland area. For more information, please see [who is required to pay the tuition fee](#).

No tuition fee will be charged from students who are citizens of the EU/EEA area and Switzerland. EU countries are: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and Gibraltar. (Please note: during the Brexit transition period (i.e. until the end of 2020), students from the UK are not subject to a tuition fee. However, this may change in early 2021, depending on the contract between the EU and the UK. The information will be updated later.)

EEA countries are: Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.”

***Are students with college degree eligible for this programme?***

Our exam regulations § 4.1 state:

“The prerequisite for admission to the Master's degree programme is an internationally recognised first academic degree from a university or university of applied sciences.”

We would encourage you to apply, and to make the strongest case you can with your CV and other documents. We appreciate that not everyone who would be a great participant in EUMASLI has had the opportunity to study through the traditional academic levels. So we will consider each application on its merits, looking above all for evidence of your ability to benefit from and contribute to this programme.

***By being a Deaf person who have worked with interpreters for more than 20 years, although minimal amount of interpreting as a DI, would it be possible to be eligible for this program?***

We are asking for “substantial professional experience in the field of sign language interpreting”: We are afraid *using* an interpreter does not automatically count as professional experience. But we would encourage you to apply, and to make the strongest case you can with your CV, cover letter and other documents.

***How to show me possess knowledge of English at level B2 of the Common European Framework of Languages? Does a certificate must be show?***

You don't need to provide proof of English skills in advance of the selection procedure. We will test this during a written test and an interview in October. However, if you already have proof of your English skills already, please attach them with your application. We will still ask you to participate in the tests in October, but it will provide additional information.

***Are we expected to already have the international sign language skills already in the interview (if selected)? Or are you just looking for the skills/openness to communicate in any signed language?***

We will select students who demonstrate an *aptitude* for International Signing at interview. We don't expect you to be using it as if you were born fluent at the point of entering the programme, but we *will* expect you to display promise in this highly visual, creative idiom, and a commitment to extending your skills. And we'll expect you to improve those skills semester-by-semester through working use of IS in the classroom and in practical tasks.

***Is the deadline based on the mailing date? There are some...controversies with the postal services at the moment so getting transcripts plus mailing for universities that want a mailed in application have me a little concerned.***

Magdeburg answer in the Webinar was to be interpreted, that you don't need to worry, mailing in time will be enough.

## **Coronavirus and Brexit**

***Does Covid-19 impact the moments EUMASLI student are supposed to meet in different countries?***

We have set out the programme here <https://www.eumasli.eu/programme/>. At this stage, we are saying that semester one (ie the first half of 2021) will definitely be affected by Covid-19, and scheduled learning activities will all happen online. We will review this for semesters 2-5 in good time. We will aim to bring students together in person for the scheduled events as soon as it is safe to do so. If safety becomes problematic again later, we will take the necessary precautions, moving online again if we have to do so. We can only

promise to keep everything under review; to take no inappropriate risks; and to communicate plans to everyone at the earliest possible opportunity.

What you should bear in mind before committing to the programme, though, is that we *\*may\** have to operate online for some or all of the 2.5 years of EUMASLI: and, equally, we *\*may\** find that it's safe to get together in person, at which point we *\*will\** expect you to attend in the relevant country. So please don't sign up for EUMASLI *\*assuming\** *either* that you will definitely get chance to travel for your studies, *or* that you will definitely be able to study *\*entirely\** from your home country. Be prepared please!

***Does Brexit impact the Heriot-Watt partnership? Regarding the fees for instance?***

So far it has no effect, but we cannot be 100% certain what will happen.

***During the studies online on the first semester, will there also be a lot of group work with other students or will the tasks be more individual?***

Please be prepared for group and individual work of various kinds in every semester.

***If the pandemic situation improves a lot, would you consider having a seminar in the first semester anyway? (Being optimistic here)***

Sadly, no. In semester 1 (the first half of 2021), all scheduled learning events will take place online. (Of course, students who choose to meet in person outside of those events are welcome to do so – that's up to them!) We'll get back to face-to-face activities as soon as we safely can, though, because everyone involved in EUMASLI has always valued those highly.

***If I do apply for this program, but realized it is not the right timing due to COVID-19 and other responsibilities and can my position be deferred for the next cohort?***

No. Because EUMASLI cohorts only start every three years (or thereabouts), so much may have changed by the time applications open for EUMASLI #5 that we would start with a blank sheet of paper and you would need to apply again.

***How does the meeting via online work especially with time zone?***

This is very much on our minds. We will check this again when we know who is in the group and we will see where people are based. At the moment it looks likely that we will have students from Asia, Europe, possibly Africa and the USA – (of course, I don't know who will apply and what the final profile will be). Therefore, it looks likely that sessions would be in the morning (perhaps very early morning) for US students.

## Finances and Logistics

***I see Magdeburg-Stendal University fees are "tbc", are the amounts listed for home, EU and overseas students? Will there be higher fees expected for overseas students?***

No, same fees for everyone, i.e. probably 1,500 € per semester (plus a general university fee of about 100 €). Fees may be slightly but not very much higher.

***Is there any support in terms of suggestions of where to find accommodation in the different countries or suggestions from former students?***

Yes, each university will provide some information when the time comes for you to visit in person. You will probably find – and this is where the EUMASLI graduate networks start to be valuable! - that former students will also be delighted to give you advice, contact information, etc. There has always been a number of BA students, at least in Magdeburg, that have offered places to stay.

***How much literature is required to read during the 4 semesters? And how much money do you expect us to use on books and online access to articles?***

This is hard to answer at this stage. However, a lot of the more specific literature that is to be read will be provided and students can always use general resources, the libraries, e-books, etc. for little or no costs.

## General

***Would you still recommend participating in EUMASLI for interpreters who already have a Master's degree of sign language interpreting? Likewise, in terms of Translation and Interpreting Studies would there be too many overlapping subjects with other MA studies?***

It's hard to know without having more information about what you've studied before, and what you want from EUMASLI. Maybe this is worth a one-to-one conversation with a staff member, or an EUMASLI graduate?

But in general, all of our information suggests that no other programme is quite like EUMASLI (especially with the three-way focus on research, developing the profession, and working internationally), so our experience has been that every graduate looks back and sees that EUMASLI has offered them something absolutely unique to help enhance their knowledge and advance their career.

***Does your program have a support system regarding writing? My first language is ASL and it takes time for me to express my thoughts into paper and pen. That is why I am asking away.***

In semester one, we have one module where we focus quite heavily on academic writing. During the last round, this seemed to provide a good foundation for our students. We will also offer feedback on writing during the remainder of the programme, but we do not provide any additional support beyond this. We have talked about this in the past, but have not found a way of making this happen. It might be something we will revisit, but we can't promise anything at the moment.