



Interpreter Qualifications Framework

The Qualification Framework for interpreters forms part of the Language Services contracts that went live on 5 October 2026.

This framework is the result of an independent review into the qualifications requirements of the Ministry of Justice (MoJ). It ensures that we are matching the competencies required for MoJ bookings to the capabilities of our interpreters.

Professional Level 6 (RQF Level 6) – at this level an interpreter combines knowledge of **specialist legal contexts and terminology** with the **oral and written** professional skills to provide high level **consecutive and simultaneous interpreting, sight and written translations in two directions** – into and out of English.

Level	Qualification(s)	Experience	Notes
Qualified Professional Interpreter An interpreter holding a full specialist professional or educational Qualification in interpreting including Qualified legacy MoJ interpreters	Full professional Qualification: Diploma in Public Service Interpreting (DPSI) (Law) (or CCI, forerunner to DPSI) Diploma in Police Interpreting (DPI) Diploma in Community Interpreting (DCI) (with Police/Courts specialism)	200 hours	Newly qualified interpreters or those qualified but with less than 200 hours experience are restricted to community level assignments until experience threshold is met.
		Newly qualified or with less than 200 hours experience	Non-UK professional interpreting Qualifications must be of proven equivalent standard to the DPSI/DPI/DCI (RQF Level 6 equivalence with the full skills profile: consecutive/simultaneous, bidirectional sight and written translation, and justice specialism) (e.g. UK ENIC (previously NARIC) or certified translation). Separate arrangements apply for partially qualified interpreters (see Community level criteria).

	Diploma in Public Service Interpreting (DPSI) (Health or Local Government) Diploma in Community Interpreting (without Police/Courts specialism)	200 hours (of which 100 justice related)	Newly qualified interpreters or those qualified but with less than 200 hours experience (of which 100 justice related) are restricted to community level assignments until experience threshold is met.
		Newly qualified or less than 200 hours experience or no justice related experience	Non-UK Qualifications must be of proven equivalent standard (see above). Justice-related experience may be gained through completion of community level assignments or justice-related CPD. Experience and CPD can be combined to meet the experience threshold.
	A Pass or higher in one of the following educational Qualifications: BA/MA/Degree in Interpreting (may be combined with translation), or BA/MA/Degree in Conference Interpreting	200 hours (of which 100 justice related) Newly qualified or less than 200 hours experience or no justice related experience	Non-UK degrees must have proven equivalent standard to RQF Level 6 (Bachelors) or Level 7 (Masters) (e.g. UK ENIC (previously NARIC) or certified translation) and must include English. Newly qualified interpreters or those qualified but with less than 200 hours experience (of which 100 justice related) are restricted to community level assignments until experience threshold is met. Justice-related experience may be gained through completion of community level assignments or justice-related CPD. Experience and CPD can be combined to meet the experience threshold.

	Interpreters listed at Complex/Complex Written level who meet above criteria.	See above	Transfer of registration is subject additionally to no outstanding or unresolved performance issues.
Experienced Professional Interpreter An interpreter qualified in languages, supplemented with interpreting experience Or Holding a government accreditation Or With experience only Or Experienced legacy MoJ interpreters	BA/MA/Degree in Modern Languages (includes Language Degrees in English for other language speakers)	400 hours (of which 200 justice related)	Requires proof (e.g. UK ENIC (previously NARIC) or certified translation) of: • language level at RQF Level 6 or equivalent in both • languages (English + other language)¹ • interpreting skills (consecutive and simultaneous interpreting, sight translation, written translation) in both language directions Uncertified skills to be assessed against the professional standard.
	IND, AIT (formerly IAA), UKVI, UK Border Agency Certificate	400 hours (of which 200 justice related)	
	Experience only – only for languages in which no formal qualification is available	400 hours (of which 200 justice related).	Requires proof (e.g. UK ENIC (previously NARIC) or certified translation) of: • language level at RQF Level 6 or equivalent in both languages (English + other language)¹ • interpreting skills (consecutive and simultaneous interpreting, sight translation, written

¹ For first language non-English speakers, the following are accepted as proof of English at the required level: CEFR C1, Cambridge C1 Advanced, IELTS 7, Toefl 94-114, ESOL Level 2.

			translation) in both language directions • documented work record from previous three years that meets the experience requirement with three professional referees. Uncertified skills to be assessed against the professional standard.
	Interpreters previously listed at Complex / Complex Written level who do not hold professional educational qualifications	400 hours of completed Complex or Complex Written MoJ assignments or equivalent justice-related experience	Requires proof of language level and interpreting skills as for "Experience only" above, plus: • subject to no outstanding or unresolved performance issues • observation/assessment to be carried out within 12 months.

Community Level 3 (RQF Level 3) – at this level an interpreter has oral skills only and is able to provide basic consecutive interpreting and out-of-English sight translation in predictable, non-specialist situations. Qualifications at this level do not typically test simultaneous interpreting or written translation. These and other skills may be held by individual interpreters depending on experience (to be assessed at registration).

Level	Qualification(s)	Experience	Notes
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Qualified Community Interpreter An interpreter holding a full community interpreting qualification including qualified legacy interpreters previously registered with MoJ	RQF Level 3, 4 or 5 Community Interpreting or equivalent non-UK accredited Qualification	100 hours	Mandatory introduction to legal interpreting to be completed prior to deployment. Non-UK Qualifications require proven equivalence e.g. UK ENIC (previously NARIC) or certified translation.
	Partially qualified DPSI or DPI (min consecutive/simultaneous unit + sight translation out of English)	100 hours	Individual units are accredited at RQF Level 6 (professional) for the relevant skills. Additional mandatory introduction to legal interpreting to be completed prior to deployment for partial holders of DPSI Health or Local Government.
	Interpreters listed at Standard level who meet above criteria	See above	Transfer of registration is subject additionally to no outstanding or unresolved performance issues.
Experienced Community Interpreter An interpreter with language skills supplemented with community interpreting experience Or	Experience only – only for languages in which no formal qualification is available	200 hours	Requires proof of: - language level at minimum RQF Level 3 or equivalent in both languages (English + other language)² - interpreting skills (consecutive interpreting, sight translation out of English) - documented work record from previous

² For first language non-English speakers, the following are accepted as proof of English at the required level: CEFR B2, Cambridge B2 First, IELTS 6, Toefl 60-93, ESOL Level 1.

Experienced legacy MoJ interpreters			three years that meets the experience requirement plus two work referees. Uncertified skills to be assessed against the community level standard.
	Interpreters previously listed at Standard level who do not hold the Qualifications above	200 hours of completed Standard MoJ assignments or equivalent justice-related experience	Requires proof of language level and interpreting skills as for "Experience only" above, plus: • subject to no outstanding or unresolved performance issues • observation/assessment to be carried out within 12 months.

- All professional level registrations require proof of competence in the three core skills at RQF Level 6 or equivalent: language skills in two languages, interpreting skills and techniques, knowledge of legal contexts and terminology.
- An interpreter not yet meeting Professional level (partially qualified or lacking experience) may be registered at Community level, subject to meeting the criteria, pending acquisition of full qualifications or relevant experience. Progression to Professional level is dependent on acquiring and evidencing all necessary skills.
- Experience requirement may be measured by direct interpreting deployments or through other defined, approved measures (CPD, shadowing, mentoring etc).
- All registrations should include a record on the interpreter's profile of individual skills (consecutive and/or simultaneous interpreting; sight translation into and/or out of English; written translation into and/or out of English) in order for these to be matched against the skills requirement listed in assignment bookings.

- Proof of experience should normally be drawn from work completed in the previous three years. This allows for the impact on deployment levels arising from Covid and is subject to review.
- Whilst a good indicator of professional intent, membership of one of the professional membership or regulatory organisations (CIOL, ITI, APCI or NRPSI) is not sufficient on its own to meet the criteria for MoJ professional level registration. Member qualifications and experience still require checking against the relevant criteria.
- All interpreters, upon registration, are to declare any existing or outstanding disciplinary procedures of which they are the subject and any unresolved Complaints against them.