



National Register of
Public Service Interpreters

The UK's National Register of Public Service Interpreters

Our Strategy for 2019 – 2021

“Promoting and maintaining standards in interpreting”

The importance of professional interpreters

The UK benefits from a multicultural society in which over one million people regard their English skills as ‘non-proficient’. With a population of over 65 million and net migration of over 105,000, the need for increasing professionalism and ensuring effective regulation of those acting as interpreters in their potentially life-changing interactions with the public services have never been more important.

NRPSI Background

The 1985 case of R v Iqbal Begum highlighted the importance and need for professional interpreters. In overturning her murder conviction the Court of Appeal said in a landmark ruling that highlighted the problems that can occur from inaccurate court reporting:

‘It is beyond the understanding of this court that it did not occur to someone that the reason for her [the defendant’s] silence..... was simply because she was not being spoken to in a language which she understood.’

The subsequent 1993 Runciman Royal Commission recommended the establishment of a register so that only trained and qualified interpreters, governed by a Code of Conduct, should be used in Court. In 1994 NRPSI was established by the Chartered Institute of Linguistics and became an independent body in 2011.

What NRPSI does

NRPSI is the independent voluntary regulator for those acting as interpreters across the range of the public services in the UK. In order to do this we:

- Assess and determine the standards required for registration
- Ensure that registered interpreters meet our standards for professional conduct and practice
- Maintain the National Register of Public Service Interpreters, providing a free online resource, accessible to all
- Recognise the qualifications needed to become a professional interpreter
- Investigate complaints about an interpreter’s conduct or competence through a transparent process
- Promote the role of the regulator and the importance of registration to ensure understanding of added value, both to the profession and to society more widely



The future

The core activities of the NRPSI remain as relevant now as when the organisation was founded in 1994. We intend to embody and enhance our regulatory role, acknowledging that it is voluntary and therefore requires the engagement of both the interpreters themselves and the users of their services.

Our objectives

- Bring about statutory regulation of public service interpreting
- Ensure protection of title of RPSI

Our continuing tasks

- Run NRPSI effectively and sustainably
- Increase the number of NRPSI registered interpreters
- Promote the use of NRPSI and registered interpreters
- Provide a robust professional complaints service for users of interpreters
- Lobby central government and promote to the public services to use only registered interpreters
- Review the standards that form the registration requirements
- Promote the value of the register to all users in the public and linked private sector
- Ensure that NRPSI is relevant to all parts of the UK
- Maintain openness and honesty with all
- Communicate widely and effectively our aims, standards and approach
- Raise professional standards

Our strategic aims for 2019 – 2021

- Assist our registrants to maintain and improve their professional skills through the promotion of CPD
- Influence government regarding their sourcing of language services and in particular persuade the MoJ to insist on the use of RPSIs for the next wave of contracts
- Establish the means to achieve our objectives of statutory regulation and protection of title
- To be recognised by all as the arbiter of quality in interpreting
- Launch a register for translators – NRPST
- Review the potential impact of new technology, assessing the needs for changes to training and skills of Registrants
- Encourage the use of the register to users in the private and voluntary sectors
- Increase the number of new entrants to the profession and onto the register
- Manage our post-Brexit future and maintain and develop relationships with other registers in linked areas in the UK and Europe
- Seek to be recognised as the government's arbiter of quality definition and maintenance across all levels of linguistic practitioners

“NRPSI - Promoting and maintaining standards in interpreting”