

I speak a Rare Language, where shall I get my DPSI from?

The National Register of Public Service Interpreters (NRPSI) accepts interpreting qualifications at level 6 from two different awarding bodies, both of which are regulated and recognised by Ofqual:

1. CioL (Chartered Institute of Linguists), and
2. TQUK (Training Qualifications UK)

The CioL is a membership body for language practitioners and through Ciol Qualifications (new trading name for IoL Educational Trust) has offered exams (to a national and internationally recognised standard) for interpreters and translators since the 80s.

TQUK offers hundreds of qualifications, some of which have been created in recent years for interpreters and translators. These have been welcomed in the market due to their flexibility as the assessments (exams) can be taken online.

The CioL and TQUK are only awarding bodies, which means they award the Level 6 Diploma in Public Service Interpreting (amongst other diplomas), but they do not offer interpreting nor translation courses.

The CioL has a list of course providers on their website but does not recommend nor endorse any in particular. Preparatory courses are offered by different course providers, such as private individuals, colleges, universities and agencies. All these courses are very different in content, not vetted or checked by any accreditation body, and are not widely advertised for an informed decision by those interested in buying them. Most of them are face-to-face courses, and some providers are also exam centres.

Although a preparatory course is not mandatory nor required by the CioL before the exam, those who follow a good preparatory course have better chances of passing their exams. They have a notoriously low pass rate because of this.

To successfully pass an interpreting exam you need to master both consecutive and simultaneous interpreting as well as provide sight and written translations that are fit for purpose. Therefore practice is of the utmost importance.

TQUK has two main centres approved to deliver the DPSI Law exam online:

1. ISL (International School of Linguists)
2. DPSI Online with Helena El Masri

ISL was the first centre to offer the DPSI Law exam online in 2016 and although a candidate can just sit the exam without prior preparation just like the CioL, they recommend a preparatory course if a candidate has no interpreting experience.

DPSI Online was the second centre to be recognised to offer the Level 6 TQUK qualifications online. As a course provider and approved centre they follow stringent rules and learners seeking a qualification need to achieve strict criteria in order to receive their Diplomas.

The aim of DPSI Online is to offer qualifications and exams in languages considered Rare Languages, because such languages have been historically difficult to achieve or simply not available in the UK. They have been training Rare Languages since 2014 and these students were never able to gain a qualification.

Until now that is.

A big difference with DPSI Online is that they have been on the CloL list of course providers since 2005 and are now able to provide training for both awarding bodies. This means the choice is given to interpreters seeking this qualification. If the exam is not available face-to-face with the CloL then there is always the possibility to sit the exam with DPSI Online.

DPSI Online is now ready to take candidates on demand.

So the choice falls on you, the candidate. Which one do you prefer?