

National Occupational Standards for Interpreting Review

A National Occupational Standard (NOS) is a document that describes the knowledge, skills and understanding an individual needs to be competent at a job.

The NOS are the raw material on which apprenticeships and vocational programmes are built and are designed to provide a set of competence statements that describe what the fully competent worker should know and be able to do. The interpreting standards are designed to cover all forms of interpreting including conference and non-spoken languages, and not just public service interpreting. They provide a benchmark that allows institutions and employers to develop and design curricula and training programmes and assessment, and ultimately provide the foundation to lead to job opportunities. NRPSI uses the NOS to assess qualifications.

A review of the Interpreting NOS was carried out in 2017 to update current practice and future occupational requirements and included consultations with interested parties, including NRPSI Registrants. This review was funded by NRPSI along with the National Registers of Communication Professionals working with Deaf and Deafblind People (NRCPD), Scottish Association of Sign Language Interpreters (SASLI), Institute of British Sign Language (IBSL), Interpreter Now and Red Dot who came together to engage Instructus to manage the review.

Earlier reviews had been undertaken in 2006 and 2010.

Some of the key changes implemented as a result of the review include:

- removal of the trainee standards
- standards were combined in key functional areas where appropriate, for clarity
- new standard added for remote interpreting
(<https://www.ukstandards.org.uk/PublishedNos/CFAINT09.pdf>)
- updating of knowledge and understanding of spoken and signed language required e.g. complex level for interpreters' working languages (equivalent to C1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for languages)
(<https://www.ukstandards.org.uk/PublishedNos/CFAINT01.pdf>)
- "Support interpreting through sight translations of simple written documents" competence was replaced by "Produce sight translations within interpreting assignments" (<https://www.ukstandards.org.uk/PublishedNos/CFAINT06.pdf>)
- The term "draft translation" was replaced by the term "immediate translation" to reflect the facts both that the translations produced by interpreters are often used as the final form of the translation, eg in police statements, and that the translation is required as part of an interpreting assignment, making it impractical to engage a separate qualified translator for the work
(<https://www.ukstandards.org.uk/PublishedNos/CFAINT07.pdf>)

All of the completed and approved NOS are kept on a database – [UK Standards](#). NRPSI includes a link to the standards on its [Related Links](#) website page.

Overview of the latest Interpreting NOS

The National Occupational Standards for Interpreting comprise a suite of nine standards:

Assess your ability to undertake interpreting assignments (CFAINT01)

This standard is about assessing your ability to undertake interpreting assignments. This involves establishing the nature of the interpreting assignment, the scope of the assignment, the degree of complexity and any health and safety considerations, for example, physical, emotional and personal safety. It also includes assessing your availability and your level of skills and competence to professionally deliver the assignment in line with ethical considerations and relevant codes of conduct.

This standard is for all interpreters who undertake interpreting assignments.

Prepare for interpreting assignments (CFAINT02)

This standard is about preparing for interpreting assignments. This involves using a range of information sources to prepare for interpreting assignments (for example, internet, leaflets, video, glossaries and technical journals), planning appropriately and organising interpreting activities to create the best conditions for effective interpreting including planning any health and safety considerations (for example, physical, emotional and personal safety). It also includes the need to be fully aware of the role of the professional interpreter, the principles of professional practice, relevant codes of conduct and any relevant legal requirements. This standard is for all interpreters who undertake interpreting assignments.

Interpret one-way as a professional interpreter (CFAINT03)

This standard is for interpreters who carry out one-way interpreting assignments. This involves being able to interpret accurately, one-way, in the target language. It includes being able to select and use the appropriate mode of interpreting for the occasion (i.e. consecutive or simultaneous/whispered) and being able to use technology and equipment effectively and safely, for example microphones, telephones, video technology, video link, interpreting booth and mobile interpreting equipment, as appropriate. It also includes monitoring the effectiveness of the interpreting and addressing any problems and issues that may arise.

Interpret two-way as a professional interpreter (CFAINT04)

This standard is for interpreters who carry out two-way interpreting assignments. This involves being able to interpret interactions between two or more language participants. It includes being able to select and use the appropriate mode of interpreting for the occasion (i.e. consecutive or simultaneous/whispered) and interpreting accurately, the meaning intended by participants, who are communicating with each other between two languages. It also includes being able to use technology and equipment effectively and safely, for example, microphone, video link and telephone, as appropriate, monitoring the effectiveness of the interpreting and addressing any problems and issues that may arise.

Evaluate and develop your professional practice as an interpreter (CFAINT05)

This standard is about evaluating and developing your professional practice as an interpreter. This is expressed in two elements:

- Evaluate professional practice as an interpreter
- Plan and implement continuous professional development (CPD)

This involves reflecting on and evaluating your preparation, planning, delivery and management of interpreting assignments including reflecting on your professional practice and behaviour as an interpreter. It includes being able to identify the current and future requirements of your role and professional practice as an interpreter, identifying any gaps in your knowledge and skills and making use of feedback, support and advice from others, for example, participants, colleagues, mentors, peers, supervisors, line managers and professionals who work in the specific domain, where relevant. It also includes being able to plan and implement continuous professional development by creating a professional development plan to develop your professional practice, knowledge and skills.

NRPSI Registrants might want to review this standard to provide an overall structure to their CPD practice.

Produce sight translations within interpreting assignments (CFAINT06)

This standard is for interpreters who produce sight translations of written/video texts from the source language into the target language as part of interpreting assignments. The interpreter may be required to do this within the context of an interpreting assignment, when there is a text, the content of which needs to be translated at sight. This involves being able to assess whether a sight translation can be undertaken within a reasonable time during the interpreting assignment and producing a sight translation of the text, conveying its meaning accurately and fluently. Text can include correspondence, personal status certificates, information leaflets, administrative forms, video clips and text messages.

Produce immediate translations within interpreting assignments (CFAINT07)

This standard is for interpreters who produce immediate translations of written or signed texts (for example, police witness statements, voicemail, emails, text/video messages, signed complaints) into written form, within interpreting assignments. This involves assessing whether an immediate translation of the text, as part of the interpreting assignment, is appropriate and can be produced considering the restrictions of time, the purpose of the immediate translation and any requirements for additional preparation and research.

This also includes being able to produce an immediate translation that accurately reflects the overall meaning and function of the source text in the target language, within the timescales agreed, as part of the interpreting assignment.

Work with other interpreters (CFAINT08)

This standard is about working with other professional interpreters (including relay interpreting). This involves carrying out any necessary preparation with colleague interpreters for interpreting assignments and negotiating and agreeing with colleague interpreters how the assignment will be conducted in the most effective way. This includes working effectively with other interpreters and supporting colleague interpreters, where necessary. It also includes evaluating the effectiveness of the assignment with colleague interpreters.

This standard is for interpreters who work with other professional interpreters in joint/team interpreting assignments, including co-workers.

Undertake remote interpreting assignments (CFAINT09)

This new standard is for interpreters who undertake remote interpreting assignments using technology and equipment. Remote interpreting is where the interpreter and/or one or more of the participants are in different locations. Examples include interpreting via telephone and/or video conferencing and/or other remote systems. This involves setting up and preparing for remote interpreting assignments, interpreting in a manner appropriate to the technology and equipment being used and evaluating the delivery of remote interpreting assignments, seeking participant's feedback, where relevant.

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