

Frequently Asked Questions about ITI and translation/interpreting



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1 What is ITI?

ITI stands for the Institute of Translation & Interpreting, the UK's premier independent, professional association for freelance and salaried translators and interpreters, translation and interpreting companies and educational bodies teaching translation and interpreting. ITI is a professional membership association and standard-setting institute that can also put potential clients in touch with qualified translation and interpreting service providers.

2 What ITI is not

ITI is not a translation and interpreting company nor is it a teaching college or university. Please do not apply directly to ITI for posts related to translation and interpreting and associated services, or for freelance work (please see question 5). If you wish to apply for membership of ITI, please consult the relevant section of the ITI website or contact ITI office on +44 (0) 1908 325250 for further details.

3 Can ITI help me find the translation or interpreting services for my particular requirements?

ITI can assist by referring you, free of charge, to its members who are qualified, experienced, freelance translators and interpreters with relevant specialist knowledge. These individuals have passed the Institute's stringent admission standards, and uphold a Code of Conduct monitored by a Professional Standards Committee.

The Institute can also refer enquirers to translation/interpreting companies who are its corporate members. Such companies are often able to supply a range of services outside the scope of most individual translators and interpreters. Corporate members of ITI also abide by a Code of Conduct. ITI itself is not a translation company nor agency taking commission on assignments. It does not set fixed rates of remuneration for its members, who will specify their own charges. A report of the 2001 ITI Rates & Salaries Survey is available for purchase through the Publication page of the website or contact the ITI office on +44 (0) 1908 325250 or email to info@iti.org.uk.

In addition to translation or interpreting, many members of ITI offer one or more of the following services: language training, proof-reading, abstracting, DTP/typesetting, editing, revising, subtitling, voiceovers, transcription of tapes, software localisation, and copywriting.

To find a supplier to meet your needs, in the first instance please access our online Directory of Members. The most comprehensive directory of its kind in the UK, it allows the user to specify a range of search criteria to help locate suppliers

meeting their specific needs. Alternatively, please call the ITI office on +44 (0) 1908 325250.

4 I need an "official" or "certified" translation, can ITI help me?

For most purposes, this usually requires either using the services of a sworn translator (this would be a translator sworn before a court in a non-UK jurisdiction), or a Fellow (FITI) or Member (MITI) of ITI who may self-certify the translation. You can also have the translation notarised before a Notary Public or Notary Scrivener (usually listed in Yellow Pages). ITI publishes a set of guidelines and seals for self-certification by its members.

5 How can I find work as a translator and interpreter?

You may find it useful to read some of ITI's careers orientated literature, which can be obtained using our Publications Order Form or downloaded from www.iti.org.uk. Freelance work and staff vacancies in translation/interpreting companies or in other organisations are often advertised in the national press, and especially in specialist trade media. These include ITI's own bulletin (free to ITI members), Multilingual and many newsgroups/organisations' websites on the World Wide Web. You can also advertise your own services in different media, including some of those mentioned above.

Work is also obtained by referrals from colleagues, networking and approaching companies in relevant sectors directly. Company details can be obtained from various sources, such as business/local library directories, Yellow Pages and mailing list companies. Further information can be found by exploring both the ITI Resources and Publications sheets.

6 Can I be a member of ITI if I am resident abroad or not a UK citizen?

You may become an ITI member even if you are not a UK citizen. You may also be a member if you are resident abroad. Although there is no legal obligation on individuals to join ITI to be able to practise as translators or interpreters in the UK, membership offers a range of benefits (see question 14 below), not least of which is that many companies prefer to use ITI members to meet their needs. ITI does not advise on taxation issues (e.g. VAT) directly, refer to the Resources sheet on the website for other organisations to contact and also some useful information for those setting up or running small businesses.

7 Does ITI offer courses in translation/interpreting?

ITI is not a teaching college or university. It does not offer undergraduate or postgraduate diplomas/degrees in translation or interpreting. However it does offer short professional development courses and workshops aimed at

developing the business, linguistic and technological skills of translators and interpreters. It also holds a prestigious annual conference. All ITI and other non-ITI translation or interpreting-related events are announced in the Calendar of Events of the ITI bulletin (available on subscription). ITI produces a list of translation and interpreting courses available in the UK, available as a download from www.iti.org.uk

8 I want to study on a translation/interpreting course in the UK, but will my foreign (non-UK) qualifications be recognised?

You should consult the admissions department or the department running the course at the institution where you hope to study to see whether your current qualifications are acceptable and meet their minimum entry requirements. You may also find useful information available from NARIC (National Academic Recognition Information Centre) whose contact details can be found on the Resources sheet.

9 Can ITI recommend a postgraduate course in translation and interpreting?

ITI cannot recommend one postgraduate level qualification over another one. You should examine each qualification and course on offer carefully. Consider the structure of the course, the qualifications of those teaching, try and talk to current and previous students and find out where the majority of students who pass out of the course are now employed. AGCAS (Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services) have produced a survey of postgraduate T/I courses that may also be of interest. Refer to the Resources sheet.

10 Is it possible to work as a translator or interpreter without having a degree or a specialised language qualification (e.g. translation/interpreting diploma)?

It is possible (especially in the case where no high-level preparatory courses and qualifications exist for certain languages), but not necessarily easy. You would generally need to have strong, prior, relevant work experience in translation and interpreting and may be asked to validate your specialist linguistic competencies through tests demanded by potential clients (e.g. translation companies).

11 Do I need professional indemnity insurance as a translator or interpreter?

The Institute has always wished to be regarded as the country's premier professional body for the freelance translator and interpreter. We continually strive to demonstrate that the use of an ITI member guarantees both quality and integrity of service.

The Institute is now in the enviable position where members can take advantage of specially negotiated rates with a leading insurer, MacParland Finn Ltd. For further information contact - ITI Membership Officer on +44 (0)1908 325251 or email info@iti.org.uk.

12 How do I advertise in the ITI Bulletin or the website?

A range of advertising possibilities is available within the bimonthly ITI bulletin and on the website. For full details, including rates, refer to bulletin pages on the website or phone +44 (0) 1908 325250 or preferably email bulletinads@iti.org.uk.

13 How can I get in touch with other national translation and interpreting associations?

A good place to start is to contact FIT (International Federation of Translators) which is a federation of many such bodies (www.fit-ift.org, or Fax +43 1 440 3756). The Translator's Handbook, published by ASLIB (www.aslib.co.uk, or Tel +44 (0) 20 7903 0000, email aslib@aslib.co.uk) also lists some contact details for other associations.

14 Why should I join the Institute of Translation & Interpreting?

Membership is available at a number of levels: Fellowship (FITI), Qualified Membership (MITI), Associateship, Student and a number of categories of Corporate Membership.

Benefits of membership include:

- Professional recognition; being a member (FITI, MITI or corporate member) is a mark of quality
- Professional development; ITI and our Network and Region Groups run short courses and events to develop your business and linguistic skills, with discounted access for members; participation in the language Networks and Region groups' activities can offer invaluable support and help solve problems, as well as being a source of new referrals for work
- Professional solidarity; ITI campaigns to promote, protect and represent your interests.
- Directory of members; online version and referral system marketing your services widely (FITIs, MITIs and corporate members)
- ITI bulletin free, and options to advertise within it at reduced rates (all members)
- Professional Indemnity Insurance for Fellows, Members, Associates and Corporate Members at reduced rates.
- ITI Peer Support Scheme
- Discounts on translation software products such as Atril and Trados (all members)
- Access to a free 24 hr. legal help-line (all members)

- Model Terms & Conditions of Business (all members)
- Arbitration service
- Advice and information (all members)

15 How do I join the Institute of Translation & Interpreting?

For details of membership criteria and application forms, please contact ITI office or download the necessary forms from the www.iti.org.uk

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