CertTrans
Study Guide

CIOL Qualifications Level 6 Certificate in Translation

Languages, and the professional language sector itself, are constantly changing and developing, with new vocabularies, norms, technologies, and expectations emerging all the time – not least with constant growth of digital content and social media, new translation tools and changing expectations in communication across cultures.

The new CIOL Qualifications Level 6 Certificate in Translation (CertTrans)

What is the qualification?

The CIOL Qualifications Level 6 Certificate in Translation (CertTrans) provides evidence of working-level practical translation skills and knowledge for those wanting a career as a translator, to work as a translator for translation companies or to use their linguistic skills in international organisations worldwide.

The CertTrans is an accredited, UK-regulated qualification which can improve career prospects for people who want to work as translators or language specialists.

This qualification has been developed predominantly with entry-level and early career translation skills in mind, and as a foundation for progression opportunities towards higher levels of professional translation.

This qualification is aimed at career development for the following reasons:

- It equips candidates with translation skills necessary to respond to career and work opportunities in the international business, professional, government, cultural, NGO, and not-for-profit environment
- It provides opportunities for candidates to enter or progress in employment involving languages or translation

- It offers candidates an internationally recognised qualification
- It provides candidates with a global outlook and additional credentials to pursue international career pathways
- It supports and extends bilingual skills or those developed in university language degrees to a practical and professional use

Who is it for?

The CertTrans is for candidates who possess excellent writing skills in their first language and solid language skills in a second language. This could be at honours degree level or C1 in writing the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) or candidates who have some established translation skills in the field of business, professional and other contexts.

CertTrans qualification structure

To achieve this qualification candidates need to complete two units. The core

About the Units

Unit 01 General Translation

Unit assessment time is 3 hours

Candidates will be required to translate a text of about 500 words into their target language. The text will be of a medium level of dif culty but non-specialised in nature. The translation must be completed to a high standard of accuracy in the target language ensuring the following:

- Accurate transfer of information
- Appropriate use of terminology , vocabulary and any jargon
- Accurate transfer of subsidiary information as well as registe22atoot6oerect grammar22f t0of
- Correct grammar and syntax
- Appropriate or ganisation, cohesion and coherence 22f t0of ext
- Correct style, orthography , punctuation, accentuation.

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LO1: Be able to produce translation of a general text that shows accurate transfer of information

LO2: Be able to produce translation of a general text that is grammatically sound, cohesive and coherent in the target language

Units 02 and 03 Translation of Semi-Specialised Texts

About the assessment

The CertTrans is a working-level qualification that assesses translating skills to a high level of accuracy.

The pass mark for the assessment is 60%. Candidates who obtain between 72 – 88 out of 120 marks will be awarded a Pass and candidates whose marks fall between 89-104 marks will be awarded a Merit. Those reaching the aspirational Distinction grade will have achieved 105-120 marks. A translation can only be awarded a Pass if it is sufficiently accurate. Any translation which is not sufficiently accurate will be awarded a Fail.

Candidates will obtain the full CertTrans qualification only if they pass the core mandatory unit and one other mandatory option unit.

Advice to Candidates

Candidates are advised to study the Qualification Specification carefully and make sure that they are fully aware of the demands of the assessment. In particular, they should ensure that they have sufficient training and/or experience to attempt an assessment at this level.

Three factors determine how much preparation may be needed in the run-up to this assessment.

1. Is there sufficient knowledge of both languages and cultures for the translation tasks.

2. What knowledge of relevant subject areas and experience of translating to a high standard of accuracy candidates may have had beforehand.

3. The amount of translating practice, with feedback, that they have had or are able to receive prior to the assessment.

Additionally, in the preparation for the CertTrans assessment candidates may consider attending university or short professional courses, including modules in applied linguistics, translation, business and commerce, government and public service.

The choice of course will depend on requirements of each candidate and the level that they are at. Courses will provide some of the theory and an introduction to concepts and terminology for some of the topics offered within the topics for the CertTrans assessment. It is not possible to lay down any hard or fast rules regarding the extent and period of preparation that candidates require for the CertTrans assessment, since it depends on the knowledge of languages, specialised areas and level of experience in translating a variety of texts.

What can be said however is that a high level of language competence in the source and target languages is essential.

Candidates should be aware that professional translation can sometimes be a 'race against the clock'. In accordance, the assessment does introduce some time pressure which means that candidates need to select relevant texts and translate them within the time allocated for each part of the assessment. Candidates must

means that candidates may need to review the structure of those sentences or paraphrase; but at the same time, candidates need to make sure that the translation accurately represents the information contained in the source text.

Finally, when preparing for the assessment, it may be helpful to consider both the quantity and the quality of translating practice. The volume of practice is vital, but so is planned recovery time, otherwise there may be a feeling of 'burn out' and performance in the assessment may drop. Practice should be tailored to what will be really needed

Study skills and planning your learning

It is crucial that candidates start planning their learning well in advance of the assessment leading to the quali cation. This is particularly important for candidates with less translation experience.

Candidates must identify the skills which need to be further developed and improved. Language skills are crucial since each translation task will involve understanding the source text correctly (decoding) and rendering or transferring the information into a target language (encoding) in such a way that the text reads as if it had originally been written in the target language. Writing skills in the target language should be both accurate and professional and demonstrate the ability to write in a variety of different styles.

The text produced should be as technically sound as possible in terms of grammar, spelling, punctuation, accentuation and so on. Candidates ideally need to perform regular writing exercises with a native speaker if possible, to seek feedback and suggestions for improvemen

Research skills and pre-translation analysis

Research skills are vital for professional development of translators and more speci cally when candidates work on and re ne speci c texts. In preparation for the CertTrans assessment, candidates need to learn how to conduct searches for lexical items or particular issues they 67 Tons for l-10seepa
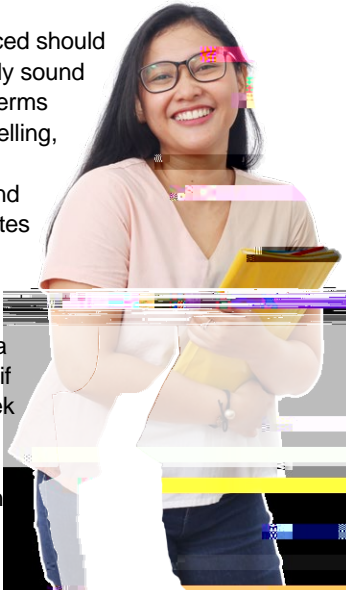
need to use dictionaries to research further any particular vocabulary, wording, proper names, cultural references or other information.

Before starting to translate, it is advisable to read the entire source text. Initial scrutiny of the source text is crucial at the beginning as it may not only reveal certain obvious features, some lexis and terminology and the basic argument or logic of the text, but also point to some cultural references, style and register, semi-specialist terminology, abbreviations, acronyms and extra contextual references which may need further re ection or research.

Generally speaking, it is at the reading stage that potential challenges start to emerge and where candidates will shape their general strategy or framework for the translation assessment. In other words, reading is aimed at overall comprehension and positioning the content and context.

Although there are time constraints, the importance of a thorough pre-translation reading of the source text should not be underestimated. The nal translation will bene t from better understanding of essential text markers which may help build a picture of the text's overall logic. Thorough pre-reading will create a solid framework for the entire translation.

Overall, pre-translation analysis is aimed at identifying the major 'landmarks' of the source text to ensure the adequacy and accuracy of translation. Candidates need to consider the following questions:

- What is the text type?
- What is the text purpose?
- Which discipline and text speci c conventions are used?
- Are these dif ferent in the target language?

During pre-translation analysis, candidates may also consider whether there are any linguistic features that are not available in the target language or may appear the same but have different associations, connotations, areas of usage or purposes.

Comprehension and related skills (decoding)

Comprehension of the source text is paramount and will have an impact on how the information understood from the source text is encoded into the target text. The main indicator that a candidate has understood the source text is the accuracy of the translation: all information presented in the source text should be correctly transferred into the target text without any additions, omissions or misinterpretations.

It may be helpful to identify some common causes of lapses in accuracy. These could be as a result of the following issues:

- An inability to grasp the overall meaning of the entire sentence or paragraph, and therefore resorting to literal (word-for-word) translation
- Guessing the exact meaning of speci c words or phrases instead of consulting a dictionary
- Issues with comprehension which lead to mistranslation of wor ds, phrases, concepts or technical terms

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- Omission of sections of translation either because they were not understood, there was a lack of attention to details or word or phrases were missed and, as the result, the information was not presented suf ciently accurately in the target language.

To ensure the transfer of **all** information presented in the source text, candidates need to perfect their attention to detail.

There are many useful exercises which candidates may nd on the Internet, however the most useful may be to practise translations and check them against the original to see whether they transferred **all** factual information correctly e.g. numbers, measurements, proper names and the meaning expressed by such words as 'sometimes', 'often', 'may', 'might', or 'already'. These are small but important words which are often overlooked in translations.

To avoid inaccuracies in translation, candidates need to learn how to use monolingual and bilingual dictionaries effectively and this includes cross-checking meanings as well as understanding the text itself. Candidates often underestimate the role of dictionaries in the translation process. In some instances, it is advisable that more than one dictionary is used to verify the correct alternative.

It is vital that candidates treat dictionaries as guides and balance their personal experience with the ability to select an appropriate item for the particular context. Combining attention to detail with the ability to deal creatively with various options in dictionaries is important. Candidates also need to stand back from their translations and ask themselves whether what they have written in the target language conveys all of the information presented in the source text and that all nuances and ideas are presented clearly for the intended readership.

Awareness of culture

Another area which is important in translation is the awareness of cultural differences. Candidates need to update themselves regularly on various issues related to events in the country or countries of their working languages. They should also have a good understanding of the cultural contexts in both source and target language cultures. Cultural knowledge includes values, systems, and how people view the world. Translators need cultural knowledge to grasp the full signi cance or implication of the source text they are translating.

A source text could have references to particular international issues. In this and other cases, understanding the cultural context will help candidates navigate such references. It is also important to understand differences between source and target language cultures and culture-speci c aspects of life: pastimes, customs, socialising and such like.

Candidates are advised to follow current affairs in both languages and pay particular attention to the language being used when describing particular events. New lexical

items appear in languages all the time
to describe new events and phenomena.
Candidates need to be aware of them and
how to describe them in both languages.

Candidates can extend their cultural
knowledge by:

- Living, studying and/or working in both
  source and target languages and cultures
- Regular reading, watching, listening to
  media in both languages, and paying
  attention to linguistic issues associated
  with speci c events
- Attending a variety of cultural events
- Researching culture-speci c events or
  topics which they may not be familiar
  with
- Having a native speaking mentor to
  guide and advise

Candidates should use their analytical language skills to deal with semi-specialised terminology in both source and target languages.

It is also important to note that candidates should avoid the use of informal language, for example: 'doesn't', 'can't', or 'won't' in English, unless this is the style of the source text. It is therefore important that candidates allocate time at the end of each unit for a review of their text, to ensure that it adheres to the norms of the target language and reads appropriately for the intended context and audience.

Tips for refining language and preparing for your assessment

- Set learning goals – short and long term
- Challenge yourself daily
- Learn common vocabulary (approximately 15,000 to 25,000 words) and word families
- Use flash cards for reference and self-checking
- Connect with native speakers
- Stay abreast of the culture of the language
- Practise speaking

- Use a language App
- Visualise words you are reading, learning or speaking to make memory connections
- Test yourself regularly
- Talk to yourself in the other language and think in it as much as possible
- Practice with word games (word of the day; crosswords etc)
- Watch movies with subtitles in your target language

a different language, for example, for a website that has multiple language options or a product that is being distributed outside the country where it was produced.

This job is highly creative as the translator needs to convey not just the words, but be persuasive and clear, and to retain the appropriate tone and brand style for target readers. They may also need to make adjustments for different vocabulary and cultural variations.

Cultural advising

A cultural adviser may work for a government, a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO), the United Nations (UN) and af liates or any organisation that deals with multiple languages when developing policy or planning international strategy. They research and collate relevant documents and sources, and may translate them, create a summary in the local language, or both.

Cultural advisers may offer brie ngs or any other information to organisations sending their colleagues abroad, or those who already work internationally and require advice when conducting negotiations or dealing with other issues. Supporting analysis, diplomacy and cultural sensitivity in publications, texts and reports are all essential skills for organisations globally.

Event coordinators

Translators may work as event coordinators. They plan, organise and promote meetings and events. Companies and organisations with international exposure often require event coordinators to be bilingual so

that they can manage events in different countries, with international guests or international contractors and contributors. Close attention to detail is a must, language skills are essential, and cultural awareness and sociability are distinct advantages too.

Marketing and social media

Social media is key for contemporary marketing practice. Tweets, posts and ads can be instantly viewed around the world, making social media a vital source of revenue and marketing advantage for today's companies as well as a vital part of social, political and cultural life.

Just like a copywriter, the social media analyst must capture the essence of a text and translate it in a way that both retains the clarity and intent of the originting negotia

And finally…
Some encouraging language facts

Learning a second language makes it easier to learn a third or fourth because your brain becomes more efficient at managing volumes of information and sensitivity to sounds.

Having a second, third or fourth language can also help to delay cognitive decline. There is a consistent and growing body of research that finds that bilinguals and multilinguals can stave off symptoms of dementia for longer than their monolingual counterparts.

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There are many resources for reference and revision that may support your studies. As an

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Examples of language specific publications (illustrative)
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- Multilingual Computing: http://www.multilingual.com/ (as e-resource via Library Services).
- C World: http://www.tcworld.info/
- Translation Journal: http://translationjournal.net/journal/