CIOL Qualifications Diploma in Public Service Interpreting
Written Examiner Reports – June 2023

LANGUAGE: Arabic
PATHWAY(S): Law/Health

Overall Performance of Candidates and any Particular Strengths and Weaknesses.

Candidates appear to be better prepared for the exams.
Most candidates seem to lack a sufficient amount of subject related vocabulary in both languages.
A majority of candidates seem to stick to using simple tenses for verbs in both Arabic and English.

Recommendations to Candidates

Candidates are encouraged to review Standard Arabic grammar to be able to give a more accurate translation. For example, the verb forms in Arabic change the meanings of the verb.

Candidates are encouraged to invest more time practicing the exams in their own time. There are past papers available from CIOL for them to practise with under timed conditions,

Candidates are encouraged in using a wider range of grammar and verbs' tenses in Arabic and English. They seem to stick to using simple tenses. This is not adequate for a Level 6 exam.

LANGUAGE: Farsi
PATHWAY(S): Law

Overall Performance of Candidates and any Particular Strengths and Weaknesses.

Recommendations to Candidates

Emphasising the importance of preparation before the written translation exam can never be enough. Preparation before sitting for a translation exam is crucial for several reasons.

Adequate preparation not only enhances candidates' chances of performing well in the exam but also ensures that they can effectively demonstrate their translation skills and knowledge—regular practice by using and going through open-source materials, e.g. A-Level Books [Eng. Law] will enhance the chance of success in the actual exam.

Through practice, candidates can refine their ability to choose accurate and contextually appropriate words, maintain the tone and style of the source text, and handle complex sentence structures.

Searching on the net for general texts about the structure of the Law system of the source language country using various available online dictionaries [FA-En] will assist. E.g., https://dic.b-amooz.com/en/dictionary/w?word=alibi#alibi_noun_1

Going through the translations, the "Casual" approach by the translator was evident in some cases. Some basic errors, including omission of simple words or even an entire non-complex sentence [not due to the complexity of the word/sentence or because of avoiding it], sometimes resulted in a difference between success and failure. So, concentration and paying full attention to the source text is essential for a successful attempt.

Another shortcoming observed during this round was a lack of typing skills, particularly in Farsi, which resulted in too many simple spelling errors and the incompleteness of the task within the time. This issue should be addressed in advance by the candidates who decide to sit for the exam.

Nevertheless, no candidate failed solely due to a lack of typing skills. Therefore, improving typing skills and becoming proficient regarding the "E-sides" of the exam's requirement in a fast-changing era is also essential.

LANGUAGE: Mandarin/Cantonese
PATHWAY(S): Law/Health

Overall Performance of Candidates and any Particular Strengths and Weaknesses.

The overall performance of the candidates this session was very good for the written units.

Most of the candidates had excellent linguistic skills in both languages (English and Cantonese / English and Mandarin), good knowledge of specialist terminologies and cultural awareness.

Recommendations to Candidates

The candidates must ensure they use the formal language for the written units.

Present Perfect Tense instead of Past Simple Tense indicates that the past actions are related to or continue into the present, which was not the intention of the source text.
The importance of grammar cannot be emphasized enough because it helps the reader know what is being communicated and how to respond appropriately.

Most candidates who undertook Law and Health pathways seemed to be familiar with the appropriate style and used the correct register.

It was also pleasing to notice that all candidates had installed the Polish alphabet on their computers and used diacritic marks correctly.

Recommendations to Candidates

As in previous years, it was noticed that the candidates' knowledge of English specialist terminology was more advanced than that of Polish specialist terminology. I suggest therefore, that candidates read and listen to general news and documentaries on TV and/or online to build up a bank of useful terminology.
Remember to study the text carefully and pay particular attention to details on the key issues.

LANGUAGE: Portuguese Brazilian
PATHWAY(S): Law

Overall Performance of Candidates and any Particular Strengths and Weaknesses.

Overall, this cohort did well in the Exams.
Candidates showed knowledge of specialist terminology and kept paraphrasing to a minimum.

You will want to build up a bank of legal terms in both Russian and English that will make it easier for you to find the appropriate equivalents.

Some examples of related words and terms which have different meanings:
- offence and crime
- to blame, to accuse, to charge
- to be charged, to be convicted, to be sentenced
- to be convicted, to go to jail
- police station vs the police
- custody office vs place of confinement
- to ask, to question (in the sense of interrogate), to interview
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The term "Endometrium" is translated as "endometrio" (not "endometria" or "endometrium").
Use of possessives with parts of the body. In Spanish, we do not generally use the possessive pronouns for parts of the body. For instance, "over her chest" "en el pecho" (not "en su pecho").
Avoid the use "test" in English and use the Spanish word "prueba".

Names of tests, diseases, etc. should be in lower case.
After introductory connectors (A continuación, después,) a comma is needed.
It is suggested there is further revision of accents in Spanish: válvula, máquina, etc.

LANGUAGE: Ukrainian
PATHWAY(S): Health

Overall Performance of Candidates and any Particular Strengths and Weaknesses.

General comments regarding this year's performance:

Overall, the candidates' strengths were apparent in their Ukrainian language skills, particularly in sight translation and English into Ukrainian tasks.

All candidates completed all five units.

Unit 4
The written translation into English involved a GP letter explaining endometriosis.
The common issues among the candidates who did less well were poor grammar, numerous spelling errors, and a lack of terminology knowledge.
For instance, 'intestines' was translated as 'abdomen,' and 'vagina' was translated as 'groin'.

Unit 5
The task in this unit was to translate a leaflet about the Tilt Test from English into Ukrainian.
Candidates who didn't perform as well displayed inaccuracies and demonstrated inadequate knowledge of specialist terminology, Ukrainian grammar, and made numerous spelling errors.

Recommendations to Candidates

1. Work on English grammar:
    Focus on improving your understanding and usage of tenses, conditionals, and complex sentence structures. Develop a solid understanding of grammar in complex sentence structures, including the use of tenses and prepositions.

2. Enhance medical terminology and pronunciation.
    Dedicate time to learning and practicing medical vocabulary, particularly the correct pronunciation of keywords.

3. Allocate more time for improving English language skills.
    Devote sufficient time to strengthening your overall command of the English language. Practice listening, speaking, reading, and writing to enhance fluency and accuracy.

4. Focus on specialist terminology:
    Take extra care to learn the subtle differences between similar words in the medical field.

For example, distinguish between "employer" and "employee," "climbing" and "hiking," "concern" and "anxiety," "dizzy" and "drowsiness," etc.

5. Engage in real-life practice.
    Seek opportunities for practical experience in hospitals, translating official leaflets, or working with specialised media reports available online.

6. Thoroughly prepare for the exam.
    Familiarise yourself with the exam structure and requirements, and ensure thorough preparation and practice. Being a native speaker is not sufficient; thorough preparation is essential for success.

7. Strive for accuracy.
    Aim for high levels of accuracy in your translations. Attention to detail and precise understanding of meaning are crucial in medical contexts.

8. Maintain natural and authentic translations.
    Avoid overly literal translations that do not resemble natural Ukrainian speech.

LANGUAGE: Ukrainian
PATHWAY(S): Law

Overall Performance of Candidates and any Particular Strengths and Weaknesses.
General comments regarding this year's performance:

Overall, the candidates' strengths were apparent in their Ukrainian language skills, particularly in sight translation and English into Ukrainian tasks.

However, weaknesses in English grammar, specialist terminology, accuracy, and spelling were observed, leading to poorer attempts in certain units.

All candidates completed all five units.

Unit 4
The written translation into English involved someone with a witness statement in support of their defence.

The common issues among candidates that did less well were poor grammar, occasional spelling errors, and a lack of terminology knowledge.

For instance, 'a grocery store' was translated as 'a bakery,' and 'before charging' was translated as 'before convictingore6W9(oora)6 (n)10 (g)2 (5i)6 (r)7 ( )]TJ0.004 Tw -25p.004 Tc --]Td0 T2. (g)10 (ar)63.o0.

The candidates demonstrated good knowledge of specialist terminology, Ukrainian grammar, and made only a few occasional spelling errors.

Overall, the candidates' strengths were apparent in their Ukrainian language skills, particularly in sight translation and English into Ukrainian tasks.
However, weaknesses in English grammar, specialist terminology, accuracy, and spelling were observed, leading to failed attempts in certain units.

Recommendations to Candidates
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Recommendations to Candidates

Candidates must use formal language for the DPSI written Units 04 and 05.

Although fully following the text is essential, the candidates should also pay attention to the differences in the order of the words between English and Chinese - especially the conditional tense.

Practising for the exams is essential. As this cohort realised, specialist terminology must be learnt and revised before the exam takes place. Please try to think in advance about the terminology that may be present if you are sitting either a Health or Law pathway exam paper.

LANGUAGE: French
PATHWAY(S): Law/Health

Overall Performance of Candidates and any Particular Strengths and Weaknesses.

There were very different performances from the candidates this session, ranging from very good to not acceptable at this level of qualification.

While it is obviously important that all the elements from the original passage are translated in full, the candidates should also read through their translation and try and see how it is received through the eyes of

The weaker points were grammar and a lack of specialist terminology. Most of the candidates struggled with jargon and specialist terminology.

Recommendations to Candidates

I would advise candidates to familiarise themselves with specialist terminology/jargon by reading topical magazines/ journals containing legal literature and to focus more intently during the exam.

Candidates can also make use of examination past papers to get an idea of the nature of the examination papers insofar as the topics likely to arise, and the legal terminology they might encounter in the exam.

There were also some grammatical mistakes made by many of the candidates, so it is extremely important for all candidates to strengthen their grammar/syntax structure and not to confuse the three main verb tenses: past, present, and future.

In English, each of these tenses can take four main aspects: simple, perfect, continuous (also known as progressive), and perfect continuous. Candidates need to understand and use these iflvand.ote ana(6.(at

Some candidates used the wrong tenses – present tenses were used instead of past tenses. Present Perfect Tense was sometimes used instead of Past Simple Tense which could make the reader think that the decision had not been made yet, which was not the intention of the source text.

In a few cases, mistakes were made with capitalisation in the letter. We do not write words like 'you' with a capital 'Y' in the middle of a sentence. This type of capitalisation is not correct English usage.

The text to translate from English into Polish was an extract from a letter to a person to clarify their licence conditions.

In previous reports candidates have been asked to install the Polish alphabet on their laptops. Unfortunately, there are still scripts being submitted without Polish diacritical signs, the result of which constitutes spelling mistakes, which is unacceptable at this qualification level of translation.

It is paramount that the translated text is clear, coherent and looks professional. The lack of the Polish alphabet makes the text more difficult to follow and correctly understand.

Recommendations to Candidates

Please make sure that you have a good knowledge of English grammar, especially tenses.

Ensure you practise with past exam papers and have someone, if possible, who is fluent in either or both languages read through it for you.

I recommend again that candidates download the Polish alphabet to their laptops.

I also recommend that candidates read good quality writing in their target language in order to expand their range of specialist terminology. Knowing the grammar rules in different languages is very important. Languages use punctuation differently, so translators should be familiar with the correct punctuation usage in both the source language and the target language.

LANGUAGE: Romanian
PATHWAY(S): Law

Overall Performance of Candidates and any Particular Strengths and Weaknesses.

The candidates' overall performance in translating from English into Romanian was of a much higher standard than those translating from Romanian into English. In particular there was a better command of specialist vocabulary and syntactic structures.

In the translation from Romanian into English, the candidates rendered some specific terminology using relatively approximate paraphrasing e.g. 'a care order or procedure' instead of 'care proceedings;' 'placement centre' for 'foster care'; however, none of the texts expressed 'kinship evaluation' appropriately.

One of the recurrent grammatical problems, within both units of the written exams, was in the inappropriate use of the past tense vs present perfect, which in Romanian are expressed by the same verbal form.

Recommendations to Candidates

Candidates should remember that to be a good translator you should be knowledgeable in both languages. If you are very fluent in one and only manage to 'get by' in the other, that does not make

you a good translator. You should have a good background knowledge of your subject in both languages.

Candidates should know that being a native speaker is not enough to also be a good translator. Translating takes a lot of hard work. Word-by-word translation most often fails to render the meaning of the original correctly.

It is essential for candidates to re-read what they have written in its entirety, to see if it makes sense in the context of the situation being described. This applies to spelling, spacing (it is, essentially, a writing exam) and the use of diacritical signs in Romanian, which are sometimes left out as if they were optional.

Regarding the strengths and weaknesses observed, candidates should be reminded that making good use of dictionaries is not enough if it is not then followed with the correct, coherent and grammatically adequate application of the language.

LANGUAGE: Spanish
PATHWAY(S): Law/Health

Overall Performance of Candidates and any Particular Strengths and Weaknesses.
There was an excellent command of both the English and Spanish languages from most of the candidates. Different reformulations have been observed to conform with the syntax of the target language, for example: changes in verb tenses (from present tense in English to Spanish subjunctive), or changes from active into passive structures.

All information was also conveyed from the source text without omissions, distortions, or misinterpretations. The use of specialist terminology was excellent, especially within the Health pathway ("gotas microscópicas," "smear test").