

Authority Code of Conduct

In this Code of Conduct, “Commissioning Body” refers to an organisation receiving services from Language Professionals under the Ministry of Justice language services contracts.

1. Professional Competence

All Language Professionals must:

- 1.1 At all times cooperate with the Authority Quality Assurance process through participation in the Mystery Shopping Assessment, Spot Check Assessment and In Person Assessment processes.
- 1.2 Only accept bookings/assignments for languages in which they can demonstrate that they have the required level of competency and refuse any work beyond their level of competency, either linguistically or due to a lack of specialised knowledge.
- 1.3 Be fluent in and demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the written and spoken form of both languages; including regional dialects, colloquialisms, idiomatic expressions and technical terms.
- 1.4 Maintain language and other relevant professional linguist skills in order to discharge services to the required standard.
- 1.5 Be familiar with any cultural backgrounds relevant to the assignment.
- 1.6 Understand the relevant procedures and protocols of the justice system as required for the relevant Commissioning Body.
- 1.7 Not delegate any work to third parties nor accept any delegated work.

Points 1.8 to 1.15 below only apply to Language Professionals when they are required to attend a location to deliver language services as specified by a Commissioning Body.

- 1.8 Be able to verify their identity on request by the Commissioning Body at any point during their Booking, through the use of valid and up to date photo identification badge which they must have with them when they attend any assignment.
- 1.9 Ensure they arrive at the venue in readiness to commence interpreting at the time requested to by informing a member of staff of their arrival so the time can be recorded accurately.
- 1.10 Ensure they arrive at the venue with the official timesheet.
- 1.11 Ensure all timesheets are approved by the appropriate member of the Commissioning Body before leaving the venue.
- 1.12 Remain for the entire duration of the assignment until released by the Commissioning Body.
- 1.13 Dress appropriately for all assignments undertaken. Those whose appearance could be considered inappropriate are liable to be removed from the assignment.
- 1.14 Take an oath or give an affirmation before the assignment begins if directed to do so.

1.15 In the case of Language Professionals providing interpretation services comply with the specific requirements for face to face and remote interpretation set out in section 3 below.

1.16 In the case of Language Professionals providing translation and transcription services, comply with the specific requirements for the services set out in section 2 below.

2. Translation and Transcription Services – Written Interpretation

Language Professionals must also:

2.1 Translate all documents and transcribe recordings, taking reasonable action to ensure effective communication and clear understanding between the parties.

2.2 Inform the Commissioning Body where difficulties are encountered with dialect, technical terms or lack of relevant background knowledge which may impair their ability to carry out the assignment. If these issues cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the Commissioning Body the Language Professional shall withdraw from the assignment.

3. Face to Face and Remote Interpretation – Verbal Interpretation

Language Professionals must also:

3.1 Interpret impartially between the various parties, taking reasonable action to ensure effective communication and clear understanding.

3.2 Convey the exact meaning of what has been said by each party, without making changes or omissions to the content; intervening only to prevent potential misunderstandings. In exceptional circumstances a summary (which must not distort in any way the meaning of what has been said) may be given if requested by the Commissioning Body.

3.3 Inform the Commissioning Body where difficulties are encountered with dialect, technical terms or lack of relevant background knowledge which may impair their ability to carry out the assignment. If these issues cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the Commissioning Body the Language Professional shall withdraw from the assignment.

3.4 Not give legal or other advice or express opinions to any of the parties that exceed their role and duties as Language Professionals.

3.5 Request that the relevant parties provide an environment that is conducive to deliver interpretation; such as ensuring that all parties can be heard clearly etc. The Language Professional must inform the relevant parties if the environment appears unsuitable for the purpose.

4. Ethics

All Language Professionals must:

4.1 At all times act with integrity, maintain high standards and conduct themselves in an ethical and professional manner.

4.2 Carry out assignments in an impartial manner and disclose any personal interest, such as financial or business related, in order that the Commissioning Body can assess if this constitutes a potential conflict of interest as soon as they become aware

of it. If the Commissioning Body considers the conflict to be unacceptable the Language Professional shall be asked to withdraw from the assignment.

- 4.3 Not accept any gift or reward that could be construed as an incentive to act against their professional obligations.
- 4.4 Immediately notify the Commissioning Body of any prior relationship with any party to proceedings in a particular assignment.
- 4.5 Immediately notify the Commissioning Body of any previous involvement with a particular assignment.
- 4.6 Disclose to the Commissioning Body if they have had any involvement in previous assignments with the same client.
- 4.7 Disclose to the Commissioning Body any criminal record or other information which may make them unsuitable for a particular assignment. At the discretion of the Commissioning Body, individuals with a criminal record may be precluded from receiving particular assignments.
- 4.8 Not discriminate between parties (to their advantage or disadvantage) either directly or indirectly and act impartially at all times and not act in any way that might result in prejudice or preference on grounds of religion or belief, race, politics, gender, gender reassignment, age, sexual orientation or disability other than as obliged to in order to faithfully translate, interpret or otherwise transfer meaning.
- 4.9 Respond within the required timescale to any allegations of misconduct or departure from the Authority Code of Conduct.

5. Confidentiality

All Language Professionals must:

- 5.1 Treat all material provided in the course of an assignment as confidential and unless disclosure is required by law, ensure no information is communicated to any third party without the express permission of the Commissioning Body.
- 5.2 Ensure that material is used only for the purpose authorised by the Commissioning Body.
- 5.3 Ensure that all material is returned to the Commissioning Body at the conclusion of an assignment.
- 5.4 Comply with all relevant data protection legislation including the Data Protection Act 1998.
- 5.5 Not use any of the information obtained during the course of an assignment for any purpose other than that as authorised.
- 5.6 Secure safely any document, recordings or media provided during the course of an assignment, ensuring that it is not copied and is returned at the end of the assignment. Documents are for the eyes of the Language Professional and authorised staff only, and must not be seen by or shared with anyone else.