



Improvements to NAATI Testing (INT) Project

2016 End of Year Update

The end of the year has arrived and NAATI has made significant progress on the work necessary to implement the new certification scheme in 2018.

2016 has seen progress across a number of key areas including:

- the publication and validation of the Translator and Interpreter KSAs (Knowledge, Skills and Attributes).
- Endorsement and publication of the new certification model.
- Publication of draft descriptors for the credentials awarded under the new model.

Each of these documents are the result of significant work and effort by NAATI staff in collaboration with translating and interpreting experts, practitioners and academics.

Since mid-2016, NAATI has been working with a broad group of experts (the working groups) on important aspects of the certification scheme design. Consideration has been given to the pre-requisites – how individuals can show their eligibility to sit the certification test -, the new certification test formats and the new rubric marking system. In addition, NAATI has also developed its thinking about how the new scheme will interact with translating and interpreting training and qualifications.

A. Certification Scheme Design

In November NAATI published the [Certification model](#) endorsed by NAATI's Board. However, still under consideration is the nomenclature that will be used for each credential in the new system. NAATI engaged a market research company to consider the perspectives of stakeholders about the most appropriate names for the credentials. NAATI will receive a report and recommendations from this work before the end of 2016 and will consider this work before finalising the nomenclature in February 2017.

In addition to the certification model NAATI has developed a set of descriptors for the [Translator](#) and [Interpreter](#) certifications to be awarded. These descriptors will form the basis of published information for stakeholders about the nature of the certifications awarded. The descriptors do not attempt to reflect the underlying complexity of the system, but present the information in a meaningful and practical way for users of the certification system.



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Each of these documents together with the [Translator KSA](#) and [Interpreter KSA](#) papers have helped inform the certification scheme design which will comprise three components:

1. Pre-requisites: these are the criteria that an applicant for a credential has to meet in order to be eligible for the certification test.
2. Certification testing: this is a performance based test of an individual's translation or interpreting. Candidates who are successful in this test will be awarded certification.
3. Recertification requirements: once awarded a credential an individual is required to meet certain criteria in order to retain it. Periodically the credentialed individual will need to submit information to show they are meeting these requirements. If the individual cannot meet these requirements the credential will expire.

NAATI is proposing a certification scheme design which takes into account a number of important factors – the range of languages and situations which the scheme has to cover, the importance of training and education in translating and/or interpreting and the reality of the environment in which the scheme operates. The [Certification Scheme Design – Summary](#) provides details of the different pathways proposed for individuals to be eligible for certification testing, a summary of the proposed certification test formats and recertification requirements.

i. Pre-requisite Pathways

NAATI has identified a number of appropriate pathways in order to be eligible for certification testing. In all cases these individuals are required to prove language, ethical and intercultural competencies. For many pathways these competencies will have been demonstrated through the completion of a translating or interpreting qualification.

However, for other pathways NAATI will require applicants to successfully complete an assessment of language, ethical and intercultural competencies before certification testing can be undertaken (in addition to the NAATI Credentialing Training Modules). For individuals who have not completed a NAATI endorsed translating or interpreting qualification NAATI will require this in order to be considered eligible for certification testing. This screening testing will occur in three stages:

- Stage One: Completion of the NAATI Credentialing Training Modules or equivalent. Each of these will cover important basic knowledge translators and interpreters should have and will be approximately 40 hours in length.



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- Stage Two: Language competency – initially NAATI will focus on English proficiency testing but will consider options for introducing LOTE proficiency testing as well
- Stage Three: Ethical and Intercultural competency – it is proposed that these are assessed in a single test of 2 to 3 hours in length (depending on the number of question involved). The test will be based on short-answer questions.

NAATI in conjunction with the University of Melbourne's Language Testing Research Centre has invested resources in considering the appropriate levels of language proficiency (English and LOTE) and tests that might enable assessment of these. The [Determining and Monitoring the Language Proficiency Standards of Applicants Seeking NAATI Accreditation Report](#) has been published in December 2016 and decisions will be made in relation to its recommendations in 2017.

ii. New Certification Test Formats

Since mid-2016, several working groups have been considering the formats for the certification tests. These tests will be a key requirement for all individuals wanting to gain certification under the new system. Unlike the current accreditation system, to certification will require the candidate to sit a certification test. There will be some significant changes including:

- A. Translator certification tests will involve translation (source text into target language) and revision tasks. Revision tasks will require the translator to provide a justification for the revisions made to the translation.
- B. Translator certification tests will be able to be completed on a computer. NAATI intends to use a Bring-your-own-device (BYOD) approach where candidates can use their own computers with the test running on a secure operating system controlled by NAATI.
- C. Interpreter certification tests will involve live interaction with role players for those modes of interpreting where this interaction is part of the normal interpreting process. This will include dialogue interpreting tasks in both the simultaneous and consecutive modes. There will also be scenarios based on both telephone and face-to-face interpreting.

For more detailed information about the proposed certification test formats please refer to [Certification Scheme Design – Summary](#) . Please note that the presented certification test formats are expected to apply to the majority of languages, but in some cases adjustments will be required, e.g. for signed languages.



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3. New system for marking certification tests

NAATI will move to a rubric-based marking system with the transition to the new test formats and is in the process of developing a rubric for each of the certification test tasks. A rubric is a descriptive marking scheme to determine the level of performance a candidate displays in a certification test. A rubric is presented as a matrix that provides scaled levels of performance (or bands) for each assessment criteria.

The bands describe the different levels of attainment for each criteria of performance and, in combination, are used to determine whether the candidate has been successful or unsuccessful in the test. NAATI expects to pilot the use of the rubrics to assess performance in test conditions in mid-2017.

4. Recertification

Recertification will be the process by which individuals will demonstrate work practice, professional development and ethical conduct to maintain a NAATI credential on an ongoing basis. It is the equivalent of revalidation under the current system albeit with one major change from the current accreditation process - in September NAATI's Board reinforced previous messages from NAATI by endorsing recertification as a universal requirement for all individuals holding a credential under the new system.

In September NAATI conducted a Revalidation survey – the primary purpose of this survey was to obtain feedback from practitioners about the current revalidation system. This information will help inform the design of recertification.

NAATI published a [summary](#) based on the demographic information in the survey in October. NAATI has now completed a more detailed analysis of the survey data – looking particularly at issues that have most impact on the design of the recertification process. The report on this analysis work is available [here](#). The information in this report will be considered in more detail before finalising the recertification process in 2017.

One of the areas that NAATI is most interested in, an area we believe is vital for the ongoing regard for translating and interpreting as a profession, is the ethical behaviour of practitioners in the industry. NAATI is focused on ensuring that there are strengthened provisions in the recertification process to ensure ethical and professional behaviour



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B. NAATI approved course system

On Friday 11 November 2016 NAATI held a meeting with representatives from all NAATI-approved courses to discuss the impacts of moving to a new certification system with our approved course providers.

At this meeting NAATI reinforced the important role that translating and interpreting education will play in the certification system and confirmed that a form of the approved course system will continue. While new arrangements will be put in place and there may be a change in terminology to “NAATI endorsed institutions” NAATI is strongly committed to ensuring that Higher Education (HE) and Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualifications continue to play an important role and provide a formal pathway to be eligible for certification testing.

There will be one significant change to any endorsed course system from 2018: Institutions will not set and mark certification assessments for their own students. NAATI will assume control of all test material and marking.

Transition arrangements will be put in place for students who are currently enrolled in a NAATI approved course or will enrol in a course prior to January 2018 when the certification system will be introduced. More details for institutions about both the transition and endorsed course requirements will be published early in 2017.

C. Transition arrangements

With work to finalise the certification scheme design nearing completion, NAATI will be able to turn its attention to the transition arrangements that will need to be put in place. These arrangements will set out how an individual with accreditation or recognition under the current system will gain a certification under the new system. NAATI wants to make this process as simple and efficient as possible but NAATI is also committed to making sure that any process maintains the integrity of the certifications awarded. More detailed information will be published on this in 2017 but it is likely that any transition will be based on evidence of ongoing and current work practice and will provide pathways for those who are part of the current revalidation system and those who are not.

If you have any questions in relation to any of this information please email INTproject@NAATI.com.au