



Descriptors for Translator Certifications

A **translator** transfers a written message from one language (the source language) into a written message in another language (the target language) for the purpose of communication between a writer and reader who do not share the same language.

NAATI's certification system is designed to evaluate whether an individual is competent to practise as a translator as defined above. It does this by setting minimum standards of performance across a number of areas of competency. Individuals who demonstrate that they meet these standards are awarded NAATI certification. This gives assurance to both the users and the translation service provider that the translator has the necessary competencies to carry out the translation task.

NAATI's system consists of the following two categories:

- **Certified** includes Certified Translator and Certified Advanced Translator. These certifications are typically available between English and a LOTE (Language Other Than English) for which NAATI assesses all significant competencies directly and objectively. Commensurate with the level of certification, translators work with documents from certain typical domains and types.
- **Recognised Practising** is available between English and a LOTE for which NAATI currently does not offer certification testing, e.g. for emerging or low demand languages. NAATI directly assesses Language Competency (English), Intercultural Competency and Ethical Competency, but is only able to indirectly confirm other competencies through evidence of work experience. In the absence of translators with certification for a language, Recognised Practising Translators may be asked to translate documents from the same domains and of the same types as certified translators.

The Descriptors for Translator Certifications outlined below have been developed for the purpose of NAATI Certification. They outline the expected minimum standard of performance translators display across the competencies required for professional practice, while taking into account the characteristics of translators' work environments.

The descriptors assist potential candidates for certification and users of translation services to gain a general understanding of expected translator competencies. The descriptors are not intended to reflect the complexity of the certification system.



Descriptors for Translator Certifications

	Certified Advanced Translator	Certified Translator	Recognised Practising Translator
Transfer Competency	Transfers highly complex, specialised texts from a source language into a target language text that accurately reflects the meaning.	Transfers complex, non-specialised texts from a source language into a target language text that accurately reflects the meaning.	This competency is indirectly confirmed.
Language Competency	Comprehends and produces complex texts in two languages across a variety of text types in specialised domains, appropriately using specialised and complex language including technical expressions and jargon.	Comprehends and produces complex texts in two languages across a variety of text types, appropriately using non-specialised and complex language and commonly and uncommonly used expressions.	Comprehends and produces non-complex texts in English across a variety of text types, appropriately using non-specialised language and commonly used expressions. LOTE proficiency is indirectly confirmed.
Intercultural Competency	Understands in detail how culture and language interact in specialised contexts, identifies all significant and nuanced culturally-specific information in texts, is able to apply this to the translation task and account for its use.	Understands how culture and language interact, identifies significant and nuanced culturally-specific information in texts, and is able to apply this to the translation task.	Understands how culture and language interact, identifies significant culturally-specific information in texts, and is able to apply this to the translation task.
Thematic Competency	Knows about and understands a broad range of complex and specialised contexts, topics and current events. Has a higher-level of knowledge in a specialised domain at the level of experts writing for experts.	Knows about and understands a broad range of common and some specialised complex contexts, topics and current events, including where experts in a domain write for non-expert readers.	This competency is indirectly confirmed.
Ethical Competency	Has full and detailed knowledge and understanding of the relevant code of Ethics, and is able to apply this to situations in translation practice, client interactions and other professional activities.	Has full and detailed knowledge and understanding of the relevant code of Ethics, and is able to apply this to situations in translation practice, client interactions and other professional activities.	Has full and detailed knowledge and understanding of the relevant code of Ethics, and is able to apply this to situations in translation practice, client interactions and other professional activities.
Research Competency	Can use a variety of research tools and methods to search for information, including highly specialist resources in a variety of domains, and is able to extract and manage specialised and complex information from research and apply it to the translation task.	Can use a variety of research tools and methods to search for information, including specialist resources, and is able to extract and manage complex information from research and apply it to the translation task.	This competency is indirectly confirmed.



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	Certified Advanced Translator	Certified Translator	Recognised Practising Translator
Service Provision Competency	Operates in the translation industry and manages interactions with clients and other translators to provide services.	Operates in the translation industry and manages interactions with clients to provide services.	Operates in the translation industry and manages interactions with clients to provide services.
Technological Competency	Knows and is able to use technology required for text production and management, including complex visual material (e.g. graphics), and CAT tools, where available.	Knows and is able to use technology required for text production and management, including moderately complex visual material (e.g. graphics), and CAT tools, where available.	This competency is indirectly confirmed.
Typical Domain and Document Types	All domains and document types a Certified Translator deals with, plus politics (e.g. government submissions), diplomacy (e.g. international agreements), legal (e.g. high court documentation), health (e.g. conference papers), technology and science (e.g. textbooks, scientific works), business (e.g. international business agreements), finance (e.g. academic articles), commerce and economics (e.g. international trade documentation).	Personal documents (e.g. passports, licences, education certificates), government (e.g. brochures, website content), legal (e.g. contracts, wills, court documentation), health (e.g. brochures), technology (e.g. manuals, product information), business (e.g. letters, marketing material), community (e.g. brochures), education (e.g. letters, school policies), tourism (e.g. leaflets, museum publication), finance (e.g. reports, financial statements), consumer affairs (e.g. brochures, product information), insurance (e.g. policies, reports), culture (e.g. magazine articles), science (e.g. reports), commerce and economics (e.g. policy documents).	In the absence of translator certification for a language, Recognised Practising Translators may be asked to translate the same document types as certified translators.