

# Community Language Aide Test

## Fact Sheet

### What is the difference between a community language aide and an interpreter?

A community language aide, or bilingual worker, is someone who uses their language other than English (LOTE) in the course of their work to assist customers or clients.

However, being bilingual does not make someone an interpreter. Interpreters have a specific skill set learnt through formal training and experience which enables them to accurately convey oral messages from one language to another.

Community language aides (CLA) should only provide language assistance when the outcome of the situation has no risk of adverse effects for either the client or the organisation. This might include basic customer service, such as providing directions, making appointments or supporting to fill out a form. They should not convey information that is legally binding or puts either the client or the organisation at risk.

For example, asking a client to sign a consent form may be simple, but the consequences of poor communication are potentially serious, so a professional (NAATI certified) interpreter should be engaged instead.

CLA communicating with clients	Interpreters supporting client communication
One LOTE only	Two languages: English and LOTE
Two-way conversation between the client and the CLA	Conduit between two people
Subject matter is simple & known to staff. Low risk and non-critical.	Complex subjects or documents. May involve legally binding or higher risk situations.



Community language aide



Interpreter

## Overview of the NAATI Community Language Aide test

NAATI's CLA test enables people to demonstrate their basic oral communication skills in a language other than English, and their ability to support clients, students or stakeholders in a two-way conversation.

The CLA test assesses a candidate's ability to communicate in a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters.

The whole test is conducted in the LOTE, using pre-recorded materials and is conducted online.

## Preparing for the test

We have a CLA Knowledge Competency Course available through our NAATI Learn platform. This course is designed to increase your understanding of the role played by bilingual workers in the delivery of language services, and prepare you to sit the CLA test.

Write to our team at [CLAinfo@naati.com.au](mailto:CLAinfo@naati.com.au) to be enrolled in the course.

## How are the CLA tests assessed?

NAATI assesses each test against a marking rubric for competency across four areas: task achievement, coherence and fluency, grammar and vocabulary, and pronunciation. Candidates will be given a band level for each of the four areas, with 1 representing the highest level of performance and level 4 representing the lowest.

## How long are the results valid for?

Results are valid for five years from the date of issue.

## How do I apply?

Apply online! Go to <https://my.naati.com.au/> to create a **myNAATI** account and apply for the Community Language Aide test.

## What is the test like?

The test takes approximately 30 minutes in total and consists of four parts:



### Part One (3 minutes)

#### General questions

Candidates are asked a series of general questions (for example, about hobbies, interests or travel) in the LOTE.



### Part Two, Three and Four (six minutes each)

#### Role-plays

In the role-plays, test candidates play the part of a customer service officer in a public service or business setting, while a NAATI LOTE-speaker plays the part of a LOTE-speaking customer who cannot speak English.

Candidates are presented with a letter or a policy document written in English. Candidates must explain the most important points of the letter or a policy document in LOTE to the LOTE-speaking customer. They will need to demonstrate an ability to convey relevant information and ensure that the customer is aware of all the significant points. Candidates will also be asked 4-6 questions about the letter or policy document which they must answer in the LOTE.



**Interested?**

Check out our website or contact our friendly customer service team today for more information on the CLA test and if it is suitable for you!

Send all enquiries to: [CLAinfo@naati.com.au](mailto:CLAinfo@naati.com.au)



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