

# Thinking Ahead?

## Community Interpreter

Produced by  
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Information and Guidance Team  
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# Learner Services

## What does a Community Interpreter do?

**Community interpreting** is a specific type of **interpreting** service which is found more in community-based than organisational situations. Community **interpreters** typically interpret in medical, educational, housing, social security and legal areas.

## Where do they work?

It is a particularly vital service in communities with large numbers of ethnic minorities, enabling those minorities to access services where, due to the language barrier, they would otherwise find it difficult. Situations where such interpreters are necessary are typical include medical, educational, housing, social security and legal areas. Interpreters working from home is also common.

## What skills and personal qualities do they need?

The interpreter shall:

- Have a clear speaking voice
- Have active listening skills and strive to improve them through self-training
- Have an in depth knowledge and understanding of his/her working languages and the required range of language registers
- Have knowledge of subject areas and relevant terminology

## How do I get into Community Interpreter?

**Community Interpreting**, if you have English skills at a good E3 level and above, you could complete Community Interpreting courses

**Public Service Interpreting**, If you have a high level of fluency in English and another language or languages through a bilingual upbringing or living abroad, you could complete the;

- Certificate in Bilingual Skills (CBS) or the
- Diploma in Public Services Interpreting (DIPS)

**Conference and Consecutive interpreting**, you would usually need a degree in languages or in interpreting, followed by a postgraduate course in interpreting. Degrees combining a foreign language and another subject can be acceptable providing they have enough content to allow you to become fluent.

## Where can I study?

### Manchester Adult Education Service (MAES)

- [Community Interpreting Stage 1, E3 \(Open Awards\)](#) This is for ESOL learners and their English level should be at a good E3 level or above
- [Community Interpreting Stage 2, L2 \(Open Awards\)](#) This is for those whose English is above Level 1

**The Manchester College** Tel: 03333 222 444 [www.themanchestercollege.ac.uk](http://www.themanchestercollege.ac.uk)

- Community Interpreting Level 3
- Preparation for Diploma In Public Services – Introductory Course

**Stockport Council's Ethnic Diversity Service** Tel: 0161 477 9000

- Level 3 accredited Certificate in Community Interpreting – A high level of bilingual skills is required. There are no concessions for those even in receipt of benefit.

**The Chartered Institute of Linguists (CIOL)** website has a list of course providers including the Public Service Diplomas and Bilingual Skills Certificate [www.iol.org.uk](http://www.iol.org.uk)

**University of Salford** – Tel: 0161 295 5990 [www.languages.salford.ac.uk](http://www.languages.salford.ac.uk)

- Foundation degree Arabic/English Translation (2 yrs full time)
- BA (Hons) Arabic/English Translation and Interpreting (3 yrs full time)
- BA Hons Modern Languages and Translation and Interpreting Studies

## What are the job prospects for Community Interpreting?

Competition is strong for full-time opportunities. There are some openings in public sector organisations such as the law courts, the police, the immigration service or local councils. Some of these roles are occasional, ad-hoc bookings. Most interpreters are freelance and find work through agencies or by networking and building up contacts. Progression could involve increasing your number of clients and taking on more interesting assignments. (Source: <http://careerpoint-gm.co.uk>)

## Job Vacancies can be found at:

- Capita Translation and Interpreting (Capita TI)
- Civil Service Job Search
- Directorate General for Interpretation
- European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO)
- [Association of Police and Court Interpreters \(APCI\)](#)
- [Association of Welsh Translators and Interpreters](#)
- [Find-A-Linguist](#) - database of the Chartered Institute of Linguists (CIOL)
- [Institute of Translation and Interpreting \(ITI\)](#)
- [National Registers of Communication Professionals Working With Deaf and Deafblind People \(NRCPD\)](#) - for British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters.

## OTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The following organisations/companies are useful to contact if looking for voluntary or paid work as an interpreter.

Please note that some may require applicants to have higher qualifications such as a Diploma or degree in Interpreting. Others may be considered depending on experience and ability.

### **SWISS Interpreting and Translation Service, Talking Heads**

Telephone: North 01144 701 075

Midland 0116 3552207 website: [www.talkingheads.gb.com](http://www.talkingheads.gb.com)

### **DA Languages Ltd** – International Interpreting agency,

Telephone: 0161 928 2533 or email: [info@dalanguages.co.uk](mailto:info@dalanguages.co.uk)

Website: [www.dalanguages.co.uk](http://www.dalanguages.co.uk)

### **M4 Translations** (Translation service part of Manchester City Council),

Telephone: 0161 234 3193 Email: [m-four.translation@manchester.gov.uk](mailto:m-four.translation@manchester.gov.uk)

### **Language Empire** – <http://www.language-empire.net>

Tel: 0330 20 20 270

### **Conference Interpreters UK**

[www.conferenceinterpreters.co.uk](http://www.conferenceinterpreters.co.uk)

### **Chartered Institute of Linguists,**

[www.iol.org.uk](http://www.iol.org.uk) Tel: 0207 940 3100

(Click on 'useful links' then 'language recruitment')

### **Institute of Language and Interpreting,**

[www.iti.org.uk](http://www.iti.org.uk)

### **National Careers Service:** (see Job Profiles)

<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk>

Careers advice, job search, CV's and skills assessment.

Freephone: **0800 100 900**

Website: <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk>

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