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Guidance

Guidance for interpreters

Updated 18 August 2015

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1. Interpreters

We engage, assess and train interpreters, and are responsible for them.

1.1 What hours do interpreters work?

The work UK Visas and Immigration, Border Force and Immigration Enforcement provides for interpreters is very much demand led and can vary considerably.

There is no minimum or maximum requirement in terms of hours. We therefore welcome applications from those who may only be free to interpret at specific times such as evenings or weekends, as well as those who are available at any time. Clearly, as many airports and ports work 24 hours a day, we are in constant need of interpreting services.

1.2 What type of work are interpreters required to do?

The majority of interpreting work is face-to-face interpreting. This may be in either arrival interviews or casework interviews where an individual has been booked in advance. In both cases you will be required to provide simultaneous interpreting. Telephone interpreting is also occasionally required.

1.3 Where do you use interpreters?

We use interpreters at many regional locations across the United Kingdom, as well as the major ports and airports such as Heathrow, Gatwick and Dover. The public enquiry offices are also major users of interpreters.

1.4 Why do you use interpreters?

Passengers arrive in the United Kingdom from many different countries. The vast majority of overseas nationals are able to communicate satisfactorily with immigration officers but in some cases, where communication proves impossible, the immigration officer will call on the services of an interpreter.

1.5 Are interpreters employees of UK Visas and Immigration, Border Force and Immigration?

No. All interpreters work on a freelance basis, taking engagements for UK Visas and Immigration, Border Force and Immigration Enforcement in their own time. All interpreters are self-employed and inclusion on our lists does not offer any guarantee as to receiving work or continued inclusion. Therefore there is no formal commitment or contract.

1.6 Are there any restrictions on who can apply?

You are only eligible to apply if you:

- have been resident in the UK for the last 3 years
- are a British or EU citizen or have indefinite leave to remain in the UK
- speak English and another language fluently.

You must also:

- be a full member of the National Register of Public Services Interpreters (NRPSI), or
- hold a Diploma in Public Services Interpreting (DPSI) (Law) or a letter of Credit in all oral components (Law), or
- have been assessed by the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal (AIT) (formerly the Immigration Appellate Authority), or
- have been assessed by the Metropolitan Police.

2. Existing interpreters

UK Visas and Immigration is responsible for maintaining your details on the database. If you do not tell us your details and we cannot contact you, you may lose work.

2.1 Personal details

If any of your personal details (such as your address or phone number) change, you should complete a form to notify the unit. The unit will only accept these changes in writing.

- Change of details form (PDF 69KB)
(https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/269804/changeofdetailsform.pdf).

2.2 Bank details

New interpreters must provide bank details when they are first registered on the panel. If these details change, you must complete a change of details form and submit electronically to CIU to notify the unit of the change and ensure payments are made to the correct account.

2.3 Security clearance

All interpreters registered on the panel will need to be security cleared. To assist in this process CIU will obtain some information on your application which is then transferred to the departmental security unit (DSU), who will contact applicants electronically to complete an online vetting form. There are strict deadlines in place for each stage of the process and failure to respond in time may result in your application being terminated.

2.4 References

You can request a standard reference from the unit. However, this will not specify the number of hours worked.

2.5 Monitoring

Interviewing officers are issued with Central Interpreters Unit monitoring forms, which they are asked to complete if they have any comments on the interpreter used in an assignment (because the interpreter performed particularly well or badly, for example). These are not completed for every interview.

Interviews may also be monitored for training and security purposes.

2.6 I would like to notify UK Visas and Immigration of some changes to my personal or bank details. Who do I contact?

To change or update your personal or bank details you will need to contact us by using the change of details form (PDF 69KB) (https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/269804/changeofdetailsform.pdf) in order for us to amend the database.

3. Fees for interpreters

You should always make a note of the officer who booked your assignment. If you have any booking or payment inquiries, you should contact the office that booked you. The central interpreters unit does not deal with payments.

The following are the current fees we pay for interpreting services:

3.1 Monday to Friday

First hour: £48 then:

- 8.01am to 6pm: £16 per hour
- 6.01pm to 8am: £20 per hour

3.2 Saturday

First hour: £72 then £26 per hour

3.3 Sundays and bank holidays

First hour: £72 then: £32 per hour

Minimum payment is for three hours. (You will only receive one minimum payment and one first hour enhanced payment in any 24 hour period.)

Telephone interpreting rates:

£10 for every 30 minutes 8.01am to 11.59pm

£20 for every 30 minutes midnight to 8am

3.4 Travel expenses

Car: more than 50 miles (one way): 23.8p a mile (for each mile in excess of 50 miles).

Actual car parking costs in all cases if most economical route has been taken to the office (to a maximum of £13 if short-stay car parking).

There are exceptions to the maximum car parking fee, for example airport car parking when air transport is a requirement.

We do not reimburse travel costs for interpreters whose travel from home to work and back falls within zones 1 to 6, as the cost of a return journey using an oyster card will be under £13.00 each day.

(Interpreters are paid an enhanced first hour each day to cover the costs of any additional expenses

incurred during your booking.)

Public transport: actual fare refunded in full if:

- tickets or receipts are provided; and
- most economical route taken; and
- fare (or season ticket if advanced bookings made in same period mean this is more cost effective) over £13.

Taxi fares will only be reimbursed on travel when staying overnight (one way only from railway station to hotel). Local managers must authorise any other taxi costs. Actual fare paid if:

- receipt provided (showing cost, date and journey details)
- pre-authorized by booking unit.

3.5 Subsistence

Overnight subsistence: £26 per night.

Hotel stay: £65 maximum per night (original receipt obtained on date of departure to be submitted).

3.6 Travel time

First three hours (each way) of travelling time to be covered by interpreter. Any excess hours paid at pro rata rates.

4. Prospective interpreters

The interpreter operations unit is now looking to increase its number of interpreters and central interpreters unit is happy to consider any applicants who meet the requirements.

Assessment will be made as to whether the language(s) or dialect(s) are in demand in the region in which the applicant resides. In the case of rare and difficult languages, CIU will also consider those willing to travel to assignments.

Only those in demand will be recruited immediately. If the language or dialect you speak is not considered to be in demand at the time of application your contact details will be kept and if the situation alters you will be contacted to find out if you still have an interest in registering with us.

4.1 What hours do interpreters work?

The work UK Visas and Immigration, Border Force and Immigration Enforcement provides for interpreters is very much demand led and can vary considerably.

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4.2 What type of work are interpreters required to do?

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- be a full member of the National Register of Public Services Interpreters (NRPSI), or
- hold a Diploma in Public Services Interpreting (DPSI) (Law) or a letter of Credit in all oral components (Law), or
- have been assessed by the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal (AIT) (formerly the Immigration Appellate Authority), or
- have been assessed by the Metropolitan Police

If you meet the above requirements and want to apply please email us at ciu@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk or telephone 0151 213 2128.