



**INSTITUTE OF LINGUISTS EDUCATIONAL
TRUST**

DIPLOMA IN TRANSLATION

Handbook and Advice to Candidates

Effective from
September 2003

INSTITUTE OF LINGUISTS EDUCATIONAL TRUST
Saxon House, 48 Southwark Street
London, SE1 1UN

Tel: 020-7940 3100 Fax: 020-7940 3101
E-mail: info@iol.org.uk
Website: <http://www.iol.org.uk>

Royal Patron: Prince HRH Michael of Kent GCVO
© Institute of Linguists Educational Trust 2003

CONTENTS

PREFACE

INTRODUCTION.....	1
-------------------	---

SECTION I: GENERAL REGULATIONS 2

1. Languages	2
2. Level of Examination	2
3. Recognition and equivalencies.....	3
4. Availability of examinations	3
5. Courses.....	3
6. Examination centres	3
7. Registration	4
8. Fees and refunds and transfers	4
9. Examination materials	4
10. Use of reference materials in the examination	4
11. Use of computers	4
12. Scripts.....	4
13. Candidates with special needs.....	4
14. Publication of results	5
15. Appeals.....	5
16. Past Papers and Chief Examiners' Reports	5
17. Prizes	5
18. Quality Assurance of examination material and results.....	6
19. Membership of the Institute of Linguists	6
20. Further information	6

SECTION II: AIMS AND CHARACTERISTICS 7

1. Examination Content	7
2. Examination Format.....	8
3. Re-sits	8
4. General Principles	8
5. Removal of Annotations	9
6. Introduction of Translators' Notes	9
7. Assessment of Translators' Notes	10
8. Overall Assessment Criteria	10
9. Marksheet	12

SECTION III: ADVICE TO CANDIDATES 13

1. Preparation for the Diploma	13
2. Importance of Translation Theory.....	13
3. Hints and pitfalls in sitting the Diploma	14
4. General comments on Translators' Notes.....	16
5. Examples of Translators' Notes	17
6. Areas of semi-specialised translations	18

SECTION IV: CONCLUSION 20

SECTION V: SUGGESTED READING..... 21

PREFACE

This Handbook launches the latest version of the Diploma in Translation examination. Since its inception in 1989, the Diploma in Translation has continued to meet the need for a high level professional translating qualification. It has been attracting increasing numbers of candidates from all over the world and is fast becoming a qualification of choice for organisations using professional translators.

Henry Pavlovich
Chief Executive and Director
Institute of Linguists

HANDBOOK AND ADVICE TO CANDIDATES

1. INTRODUCTION

The Diploma in Translation is a postgraduate qualification intended for working translators and for those who, having reached a high level of linguistic competence, wish to embark on a career in professional translation. It is available to candidates with a level of linguistic competence at least equivalent to a good Honours degree in languages.

Successful candidates are entitled to use the designation ‘DipTrans IoL’ and may be eligible to apply for Membership or Associate Membership of the Institute.

The Diploma tests the ability of candidates to translate from their source language into the mother tongue to a professional standard, and their awareness of the professional task of the translator. Candidates are required to have an appropriate level of writing skills in their target language. The passages set for translation will be of a standard of difficulty that translators would expect to meet in their daily work. They will not, however, be of a highly technical or specialised nature.

Candidates are emphatically advised that those holding a degree in languages generally require additional experience or training. For information about preparatory courses, please consult the relevant sheets which are available from the Central Registration Department at the Institute. Candidates should note, however, that the Institute exerts no control over any tuition offered by external organisations. Full professional competence is normally achieved only by translators working into their language of habitual use.

Please note that candidates seeking a general test of language competence should not attempt the Diploma in Translation.

This Handbook should be read in conjunction with the Examination Candidate Regulations, a booklet which is available from the Institute of Linguists’ Central Registration Department, or from the website.

The Handbook relating to this examination can be purchased from the Institute’s Printing Suppliers (PWP FS Print & Design) or downloaded from the Institute’s website.

SECTION I: GENERAL REGULATIONS

1. Languages

Candidates should normally present themselves only for translating into their mother tongue (or language of habitual use where this has taken the place of their mother tongue and has reached a comparable standard). This is the *target language*.

Candidates may choose as the *source language* any recognised language of a nation or national group having a culture, literature and expression of thought, to which the syllabus of the examination can be applied and in which they are suitably qualified. Normally either the source or target language should be English, although it is possible to arrange examinations between French, German, Spanish and Italian, subject to a minimum number of candidates and the availability of examiners.

It may occasionally occur that an examination cannot be set for a less common language. In general, a minimum of five candidates is needed for any particular language combination; candidates should contact the Institute in case of any doubt.

2. Level of Examination

The Diploma in Translation tests professional translating skills at a postgraduate level of competence. The examination is open to all. However, candidates are advised to ensure prior to registering, that their level of linguistic attainment in the source language is at least equivalent to a good Honours degree, and that they are familiar with the relevant cultural background.

Candidates are advised to possess at least one of the following:

- 1) A degree in the source language (or a combined degree where that language is examined at final degree level).
- 2) A Pass in an Institute of Linguists' membership qualifying examination or any other qualifications recognised by the Institute (e.g. the Civil Service interpreterships and the Diplomatic Service Language Allowance examinations at higher or advanced level prior to 1992).
- 3) A high level of competence in the source language gained from substantial and consistent use of the language in a professional capacity, or through having studied the particular language to a level that is much higher than an A-level standard of competence.

In all cases, admission to the examination is at the Institute's discretion.

3. Recognition and Equivalencies

The Diploma in Translation is set at postgraduate level. The Diploma was introduced in 1989 as a benchmark of professional standards. By setting those standards, the Diploma gives the translating profession a more formal structure and framework in which to operate. Potential clients of translators can now clearly see who is, and who is not appropriately qualified. It is also recognised in education, industry and professional life. The Diploma in Translation has been used by a number of successful Diplomates for entry into Masters Degree level courses.

The Diploma enjoys the same level of recognition worldwide, as demonstrated by the fact that candidates sit the examination as far away as Hong Kong and South America, as well as many countries in Europe.

The qualification has been accredited by the UK's Qualifications and Curriculum Authority for entry into the National Framework of Qualifications at level 5.

4. Availability of Examinations

The examination is held in January of each year. Exact examination dates are published in advance and are issued on a separate sheet, available from the Central Registration Department at the Institute.

The Diploma in Translation examination is available on a modular basis whereby candidates have the option of either sitting all three Papers at the first attempt, or of sitting and passing Paper 1, before sitting Papers 2 and 3 at a subsequent session.

5. Courses

Although the Institute of Linguists itself does not run or recommend courses, the Central Registration Department is able to send details about organisations that offer help in preparing for the Diploma in Translation qualification; this information is also available on the Institute's website. Candidates should, however, note that the Institute neither controls, nor accepts responsibility for any tuition offered by external organisations. It should be stressed that candidates are not obliged to attend a formal course leading to the Diploma qualification before sitting the examination.

6. Examination Centres

The examination may be taken at the Institute's examination centre in London, at British Councils or Consulates overseas, or at other registered centres by prior arrangement. The Institute is able to advise on procedure. Candidates will be responsible for making the necessary arrangements and for the payment of any administrative fees charged by the centre they have chosen and must inform the Institute of their chosen examination centre at the time of entry.

Occasionally examination centres may not be able to accommodate candidates if an insufficient number apply to sit there. In which case, the candidates may have to travel quite some distance in order to sit the examination at another Centre.

7. Registration

Registration takes place between 1st May and 31st July each year. Applications must arrive at the Institute no later than the last working day in July. The Institute cannot accept entries after the closing date. Entries must be submitted on the appropriate entry card, obtainable from the Central Registration Department at the Institute.

8. Fees and Refunds and Transfers

The entry fee for the examination must be paid at the time of application. Details of the fees are published on a separate sheet, available from the Central Registration Department.

Candidates whose absence from the examination is caused by personal ill health may have 50% of their entry fee transferred to the next session upon submission of a certificate from a qualified medical practitioner within two weeks of the examination date. In the absence of such proof, candidates are liable to forfeit all the examination fees paid. The transferred examination fee is **non-refundable** if the candidate later decides to withdraw from the examination.

9. Examination Materials

In general, the textual materials used for the examinations will be of a topical nature and of relevance to the social, political, economic and cultural environment of the country where the source language is spoken. Material is drawn from authentic published sources and will have been intended originally for the educated or well-informed lay reader. However, the target readership will usually be designated in the rubric heading each paper. No prescriptive list of publications is provided. The texts will display a certain degree of sophistication but will not be over-specialised in terms of the subject matter.

10. Use of Reference Material in the Examination

Candidates may use dictionaries and other reference works, including their own glossaries. Such material may not be shared with other candidates. It is not necessary to provide a bibliography giving details of reference works used in the examination. The Institute does not recommend any particular titles although a list of suggested reading is included at the end of this Handbook.

11. Use of Computers

Candidates are permitted to use word processors if these do not contain software with translating programmes, and only where the external centre offers WP equipment and facilities. The Institute accepts no responsibility for word processors that malfunction on the day of the examination. The use of laptop computers is not allowed, as it is difficult, if not impossible, to monitor the programmes loaded on them. For the same reason, electronic dictionaries may not be used. For further information, refer to the Candidates' Regulations booklet, which is available from the Central Registration Department.

The use of machine translation programs or access to the Internet is **not** permitted.

No distinction is made by examiners during the marking process between candidates who word-process their scripts and those who handwrite; however, candidates are advised to write legibly and to present their work well.

12. Scripts

Candidates' scripts remain at all times the property of the Institute of Linguists, and are not returned to candidates in any circumstances, nor are copies made available to candidates.

13. Candidates with Special Needs

The Institute of Linguists Educational Trust's policy on examinations is to give equal opportunity to all candidates, and to provide equal access to examinations for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties.

Candidates with special needs must inform the Institute of their requirements at the time of registration for the examinations, specifying what special provisions they might need. All such notifications must be accompanied by:

- supporting evidence, such as a copy of a medical or professional statement;
- a statement from the candidate's examination centre (apart from the Institute's own London Centre) agreeing to the provision of special arrangements.

Further details are given in the chapter "Examination arrangements for students with disabilities" in the Candidate Regulations booklet.

14. Publication of Results

Results Lists, Diplomas and Letters of Credit are despatched in the first instance to examination centres (except the Institute's London centre), about fourteen weeks after the examinations. Under no circumstances will candidates' results be given out over the telephone.

15. Appeals

Candidates who are unsuccessful in any Paper of the examination may select one of the following options:

- a) A re-mark by a different examiner.
- b) An appeal to the Examinations Review Board: Appeals will be allowed only on the basis of procedural irregularities such as problems with the examination centre (e.g. fire alarm) or serious typographical errors in the source text etc.

Candidates who receive a Fail result for one or more papers will be sent details of the re-mark and appeals procedures with their results. See also Candidate Regulations booklet.

16. Past Papers and Chief Examiners' Reports

Past Papers in most language combinations previously examined as well as Chief Examiners' Reports covering major language groups are published after each examination session and are available from: FS Print and Design, telephone: 01992 503821, fax: 01992 584912, e-mail: FS.print@virgin.net. An order form is also available from the Central Registration Department or from the Institute's website.

17. Prizes

The Fred Brandeis Trophy is awarded each year in memory of Mr Fred Brandeis, a longstanding Fellow and friend of the Institute of Linguists, to the best Diploma in Translation candidate translating from English into German.

The Richard Lewis Communications Trophy: A long-established company providing language training to business and industry, Richard Lewis Communications offers an annual trophy to the candidate who produces the best overall performance in any language combination.

The Schlapps Oliver Shield is presented by Mrs Marjorie Elms FIL in memory of her late father Mr G A Schlapps Oliver, a Fellow of the Institute of Linguists for many years and a generous donor to the Institute's library, to the college which produces the best results for a group entry.

18. Quality Assurance of Examination Material and Results

The Institute carries out routine monitoring and evaluation of its examination formats and examination material. The Institute's external Examinations Review Board meets regularly to review the examinations and appropriate research is commissioned and published. All Institute examiners must meet the qualification requirements and are required to adhere to a Code of Conduct. Reliability of marking is assured through the training and continuous monitoring of examiners. A set of Customer Service Standards can be found on the Institute's website.

The Diploma in Translation examination is subject to the following quality assurance programme:

- Examination Papers are moderated to ensure that the standard of assessment is consistent across all Papers and with the examinations of previous years, that the topics are suitable and relevant and that the texts are of the correct length.
- Examination scripts are marked by independent external markers and moderated to ensure that the assessment criteria are applied fairly and in a standardised way.
- An Awards Meeting where results are discussed, takes place. Chief Examiners and Chief Moderators attend the meeting, with the object of seeing that the standardised assessment schemes and criteria have been applied fairly across the various options and languages.

19. Membership of the Institute of Linguists

Holders of the Diploma in Translation may apply for Membership of the Institute. Details are sent to all successful candidates with their results. The Institute awards three grades of professional membership:

Fellowship is the Institute's highest grade and is reserved for linguists who can demonstrate a significant degree of professional achievement;

Membership requires three years' appropriate experience, in addition to a relevant qualification. One of the three years must be immediately prior to the date of admission.

Associateship is the normal grade for linguists who have not yet gained the professional experience required for membership. Applicants may be recently qualified linguists whose skills in language are useful in their work but are not primary or essential requirements.

There are in addition, two unqualified grades: *Affiliateship* and *Registered Student*.

Members are entitled to join the Institute's societies and benefit from various membership services, including receiving the bi-monthly journal The Linguist. They are also bound by the Institute's code of professional conduct in all their work involving languages. Full details may be obtained on application to the Membership Secretary.

20. Further Information

Further information about the Diploma in Translation and the Institute's other examinations may be obtained from the website: <http://www.iol.org.uk> or directly from our Central Registration Department.

SECTION II:
AIMS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DIPLOMA IN TRANSLATION

1. Examination Content

The examination consists of three Papers, which are as follows:

Paper 1: General translation 3 hours

A text of about 600 words of a demanding but non-specialised nature will be set. Candidates will be required to translate the text to a professional standard of accuracy in their target language.

Paper 2: Semi-specialised translation 2 hours

Three texts of a semi-specialised nature, each of approximately 450 words, will be set within the following broad subject areas:

- (A) Technology
- (B) Business
- (C) Literature

Candidates must choose one of these three texts to translate to a professional standard of accuracy in their target language.

Paper 3: Semi-specialised translation 2 hours

Three texts of a semi-specialised nature, each of approximately 450 words, will be set within the following broad subject areas:

- (D) Science
- (E) Social Science
- (F) Law

Candidates must choose one of these three texts to translate to a professional standard of accuracy in their target language.

Candidates are required to pass all three Papers in order to be awarded the Diploma in Translation. A Distinction may be awarded for outstanding performance in any Paper and Merit may be gained for work of a higher standard than that required for a Pass.

2. Examination Format

YEAR 1	OPTION 1 Sit Papers 1, 2 and 3 - award of Diploma if all Papers passed
YEAR 2 or YEAR 3 or YEAR 4	} } Opportunities to re-sit any failed Papers }
YEAR 5	Last chance to re-sit. All 3 Papers must be passed within five years to qualify for the award of the Diploma. If unsuccessful, start again, re-taking all 3 Papers.

YEAR 1	OPTION 2 Sit Paper 1 (which must be passed before proceeding to Papers 2 & 3)
YEAR 2 or YEAR 3 or YEAR 4 or YEAR 5	Re-take Paper 1, or sit Papers 2 and 3 (if Paper 1 is passed in year 1). <i>(For this Option, every year counts as Year 1 until Paper 1 is passed. Once the candidate is successful in Paper 1, he/she can proceed to Papers 2 and 3, which must be passed within five years to qualify for the award of the Diploma.)</i> Start again, re-taking Paper 1 if unsuccessful.

3. Re-sits

Candidates may re-sit failed Papers in any order, but all Papers must be passed within five years of passing any Paper (for candidates who choose Option 1), or of passing Paper 1 (for candidates who choose Option 2), for the award of the Diploma.

4. General Principles

The Diploma in Translation assesses and rewards basic professional competence in translating from any language into English or from English into any other language. Examinations in other combinations not using English are also possible.

The underlying assessment principle recognises, in practical terms and in the context of the texts set for the examination, what constitutes a professionally acceptable standard of translation. “Professionally acceptable” is generally taken to mean of a standard acceptable for submission to a commercial client. For a translation to be deemed ‘professionally acceptable’, it should be functionally accurate and stylistically appropriate and should faithfully render the style and meaning of the original piece of writing. It should, therefore, have the intended effect on the target audience, as the original did on the source audience.

Candidates need to use analytical language skills and be able to handle specialised and semi-specialised terminology in both the source and target languages. They should bear in mind the differences in the relevant norms of the two languages in question. Where appropriate, they should respect any originality of syntax, vocabulary, etc in the source text and find equivalents for the connotations, the cultural significance of any facets of civilisation (local custom, manners, food, clothing, etc.), natural usage, colloquialisms, phatic language, routine formulations, common metaphors and technical terms in the target text. Candidates are expected to write in their target language at mother tongue level, reaching a high standard of accuracy.

5. The Removal of Annotations in Paper 1

Annotations, where candidates had been required to comment upon problem areas in a source text with the aim of arriving at a solution and justifying the ultimate choice made in the target text, were a compulsory aspect of the Paper 1 examination. In the 2003 session, they became optional apart from for those candidates who wished to try for a Merit or Distinction.

Following the realisation that large numbers of competent candidates were failing because of the quality or quantity of the annotations written, the Institute's Examinations Review Board took the decision that as the key issue in the examination is the demonstration of candidates' ability to translate to the required professional standard, annotations in Paper 1 should be dispensed with and replaced with an aspect of translation that features in a real-life context. This new aspect is the use of TRANSLATORS' NOTES.

6. Introduction of Translators' Notes

In a real life situation, professional translators sometimes have recourse to translators' notes where there is lack of clarity in a text and where it is impossible to consult the author of the text. As the examination replicates professional situations, candidates will henceforth be allowed to use **translators' notes** to provide the target audience with an explanation where it is not possible to integrate the explanation within the body of the text.

Unlike annotations which only featured in Paper 1, the use of translators' notes - a universally accepted conventional way of informing a target audience of issues that may affect the quality or presentation of a translation - will be allowed *in all three papers of the Diploma in Translation*.

Henceforth, therefore, if candidates for any of the Papers of the Diploma in Translation examination – whether Papers 1, 2 or 3 – believe that translators' notes would be helpful to their target audience, then they may provide them on a separate page.

The translators' notes required of candidates are not discursive as the annotations were, but *functional*, and should be used appropriately only where deemed necessary and in line with professional use.

Translators' notes should be used sparingly, and **only** when essential. They should not be used as a vehicle for conjecture or display of knowledge. It must be said that not all translations require translators' notes and that their use can be irritating to the reader because they interrupt the flow of the text. Candidates are therefore advised not to seek out opportunities to provide translators' notes, should the translation submitted not appear to contain any 'noteworthy' issues.

In Section III of this handbook, information is provided about the types of issues that may warrant translators' notes.

7. Assessment of Translators' Notes

As not all translations require translators' notes, the lack of them will not mean automatic penalisation. Translations will be eligible for Pass, Merit or Distinction grades, with or without translators' notes, as long as the candidates apply critical thought and appropriate strategies to how they translate the texts before them.

Any translators' notes used must be concisely and relevantly expressed, and **must** be essential to comprehension. Unlike the annotations, translators' notes will not be marked individually. They will be considered under Aspect of Performance 1, the criterion of comprehension, since the use (or not) of the translators' notes will clearly be with the intention of clarifying a point or other in the source text.

8. The Overall Assessment Criteria

8.1 Criterion Statements

The pass mark for the examination is 60%. Candidates who obtain between 70-79% will be awarded a Merit and candidates whose marks fall between 80-100% will be awarded a Distinction. **A translation can only be awarded Distinction, Merit or Pass if it is professionally acceptable. Any translation which is not professionally usable will be awarded a Fail.**

All three Papers of the examination must be passed for candidates to obtain the full Diploma in Translation. In each Paper, candidates are graded under three different criteria or Aspects of Performance set out below, all of which are of paramount importance. A Pass grade **must** be achieved in all three Aspects in order to pass in any of the Papers of the examination. The Aspects of Performance are:

1. **Comprehension, Accuracy and Register**
2. **Grammar, Cohesion, Coherence and Organisation of work;**
3. **Technical Aspects: punctuation, spelling, accentuation, transfer of names, dates, figures etc.**

Each Aspect of Performance comprises a four-point scale showing the different criteria for the awarding of results. Assessment in each of the Papers of the examination is carried out by matching a candidate's performance to a series of criteria.

8.2 Marking criteria: The statements below describe criteria used under each of the Aspects of Performance.

Aspect of Performance 1: Comprehension, Accuracy and Register - the correct transfer of information and evidence of complete comprehension.

Distinction	The translation shows an excellent command of the subject matter with accurate transfer of information throughout. The choice of language and register are entirely appropriate to the subject matter and to the spirit and intention of the original	40 – 50
-------------	---	---------

Merit	The translation shows a good command of the subject matter although at times there is some under or over translation or a slight lack of clarity. The vocabulary, terminology and idiom chosen are appropriate throughout, though occasionally a more appropriate rendering than that given in the translation may be found. The register chosen is faithful to the register of the source text	35 – 39
-------	---	---------

Pass	The translation shows an adequate command of the subject matter. There are no serious errors or omissions in the transfer of information; and the minor inaccuracies or omissions therein will not give false information to the reader. The vocabulary, terminology, idiom and register chosen are broadly appropriate. Although some infelicity in rendering is evident at times, this does not impair the overall acceptability of the translation.	30 – 34
Fail	The translation shows an inadequate grasp of the informational content. There are a number of inaccuracies, both major and minor, leading to information being conveyed wrongly at several points. There may also be serious omissions. The translation contains a number of clumsy or inappropriate renderings, which impair or distort the message. There may be some incorrect choice of register and terminology, and some idiomatic usage may not correspond to the intention or sense of the original.	0 – 29

Aspect of Performance 2: Grammar, Cohesion, Coherence and Organisation of work

Distinction	The translation reads like a piece originally written in the target language. The sentence structure, grammar linkages and discourse are all entirely appropriate to the target language.	28 – 35
Merit	The translation is well organised, with good sentence structure and overall coherence. While not perfect, it has clearly been written as if it were an original piece of writing in the target language, with appropriate reorganisation of the information contained in the source text where necessary.	24 – 27
Pass	The sentence structure is sound, though it may display some awkwardness, and one or two lapses of grammar.	21 – 23
Fail	The translation does not read like an original piece of writing; it may be stilted and incoherent with little attempt to modify the sentence structure of the original to the target language. There may be over-elaboration and excessive paraphrasing.	0 – 20

Aspect of Performance 3: Technical points relating to spelling, accentuation, punctuation and the transfer of dates, names, figures, etc

Distinction	The spelling, accentuation, punctuation, and transfer of dates, names and figures in the translation are faultless	12 – 15
Merit	There are only minor technical lapses.	10 – 11
Pass	The translation is correct in all major technical elements but there may be one or two lapses of spelling, and a few minor lapses of punctuation	9
Fail	A considerable number of technical faults are present which would render even an otherwise good translation unacceptable in professional terms.	0 – 8

Translations with 5% or more of the source text missing will automatically be awarded a Fail mark.

A copy of the examiners' marksheet follows overleaf:

DIPLOMA IN TRANSLATION: EXAMINERS' MARKSHEET (CONFIDENTIAL – WHEN COMPLETED)

All examiners to complete sections A, B, C and D below (one marksheet per Paper).

SECTION A	Candidate Number : DT / 04 / /		PAPER NO: 1 / 2 / 3 (Circle one)		Source language	Target language		
	PAPER 2 (tick appropriate option)		A : TECHNOLOGY		B : BUSINESS	C : LITERATURE		
	PAPER 3 (tick appropriate option)		D : SCIENCE		E : SOCIAL SCIENCE	F : LAW		
SECTION B	<p>This section must be completed using the Marking Guidelines.</p> <p>Fill in the boxes with the number of marks allocated for each Aspect of Performance, as well as the grade for each aspect.</p>	Aspects of Performance	Candidates must obtain a pass in EACH Aspect of Performance in order to be given a full passing grade.	Criteria		Maximum marks available	Minimum pass mark (60%)	Marks obtained by candidate
		1. Comprehension, Accuracy and Register	How well has the candidate understood the source text and how accurately has the message been conveyed? Are there any serious errors likely to impede comprehension? Have translators' notes, where used, been concisely and relevantly expressed? Are they essential for the target audience's comprehension? Are the choice of language and register entirely appropriate to the subject matter and to the spirit and intention of the original?		50	30		
		2. Grammar, Coherence, Cohesion and Organisation of work	What is the quality of the candidate's writing in the target language? Has the candidate produced a text that is grammatically accurate, coherent, cohesive and well organised?		35	21		
		3. Technical aspects: spelling, punctuation, accentuation, transfer of names, figures, dates, legibility, etc	How has the candidate dealt with technical aspects? Has the candidate produced a text that is correctly spelt, punctuated, paragraphed and legible? Have names, figures and dates been correctly transferred?		15	9		
SECTION C	<p>Regardless of the candidate's final grade, you must give detailed comments on his/her performance, and justify the marks that you have given the translation.</p>	Candidate's Final Grade (circle one)						<u>FINAL MARK</u>
		Fail 0-59	Pass 60-69	Merit 70-79	Distinction 80-100			
SECTION D	Examiner's Name (in capitals):		Examiner's Signature:			Date:		

SECTION III: ADVICE TO CANDIDATES

1. Preparation for the Diploma

Candidates are advised to study the Handbook carefully and make sure that they are fully aware of the demands of the examination. In particular they should ensure that they have sufficient training and/or experience to attempt the examination at a professional level.

Two factors determine how much preparation may be needed in the run-up to this examination. Firstly, what knowledge of relevant subject areas and experience of translating to professional standards candidates may have had beforehand and, secondly, the amount of translating practice with feedback that they are able to receive prior to the examination. In addition to considering whether to join a class specifically leading to the Diploma in Translation, candidates may alternatively be able to join other courses that include elements relevant to its preparation. For example, postgraduate courses in applied linguistics, international trade, or European or other Area Studies with a language may individually provide some of the theory and an introduction to concepts and terminology for some of the topics within the options offered in all three Papers.

It is not possible to lay down any hard and fast rules regarding the extent and period of preparation that candidates require for the examination. What can be said however, is that a high level of language competence in the source language and native speaker or equivalent ability in the written target language are essential. Without these, candidates' chances of success will be limited. It is advisable to consult past examination papers in order to determine the level of the examinations.

2. The Importance of Translation Theory

Whilst priority should be placed on the practice of translation with feedback on the quality of their translations, candidates must develop an awareness of theory in the context of the material that is to be translated and an understanding of how this theory should be applied. Aspects of translation theory which candidates may find helpful in their preparation for the Diploma could include:

- a. an awareness and understanding of the “dynamics of translating”, i.e. a consideration of source text and author, expected readership and the cultural setting of the source and target languages;
- b. an awareness of text typology and types of translation and, in particular, of the differences and uses of semantic as opposed to communicative translation;
- c. aspects and implications of register and style;
- d. the search for translation equivalencies and other translation procedures such as transfer and naturalisation;
- e. some experience in handling concepts and terminology in both languages of the examination;
- f. an awareness of translation problems and possible solutions, such as translators' notes, to specific problems relating to proper names, abbreviations and weights and measures etc;
- g. an awareness of translation theory: candidates are encouraged to read *about* translation (see Suggested Reading).

3. Hints and pitfalls in sitting the Diploma in Translation

The standard of a candidate's work is assessed by breaking down the constituent elements that make up a professionally acceptable translation, *viz.* how the candidate understands the source text (decoding) and renders this into the target language (encoding) in such a way that the text reads as if it had originally been written in the target language.

3.1. Decoding

As comprehension of the source text is crucial to how the text is encoded or translated into the target language, it goes without saying that one cannot accurately translate what one has not understood. The main proof that a candidate has understood the source text is found in the accuracy of the translation, in which information from the source text is correctly transferred to the target text. Accuracy is therefore a crucial element in any translation.

Some causes of lapses in accuracy are caused by:

- inability to grasp the meaning of a whole sentence or paragraph and therefore resorting to literal translations, or
- guessing at the meaning of words instead of consulting a dictionary, or
- problems of comprehension thereby mistranslating individual words, concepts or technical terms, or
- omitting sections of the translation.

To minimise the chances of inaccurate translations, candidates need to make effective use of monolingual and bilingual dictionaries, and this includes counter-checking meanings in other dictionaries as well as understanding the text itself. Candidates frequently do not apply sufficient care when consulting dictionaries. It is advisable that more than one should be used - the first to select the missing word and at least one other to verify that the correct alternative has been selected from the range of possibilities given. Dictionaries should, however, not be quoted as if they were authoritative or even definitive, as opposed to being tentative, approximate and provisional. In other words, although dictionaries play an important role, they must be an aid to the process of translating and not a substitute for thinking.

Many candidates rely more on the capacity of dictionaries to provide contextually appropriate translations than on their own personal resourcefulness. Sometimes lack of care in consulting dictionaries is compounded by lack of attention to detail and many candidates need to learn to stand back from their translations (having firmly closed their dictionaries) and to ask themselves whether what they have written conveys what they want it to, since a literal rendering does not always convey the intended meaning.

Background knowledge and an understanding of the cultural context are qualities vital to the translator and can be acquired over time through extensive reading in both source and target languages. Understanding the cultural context would have helped candidates when faced with reference to "coffee and tea breaks in the office", to realise that in neither German nor French do coffee and tea imply morning and afternoon breaks. The same would apply to candidates who did not realise that the west bank of the Rhine would not be translated as *die Westbank des Rheins*.

A lack of confidence to use anything other than basic decoding skills would produce unimaginative and pedantic translations that convey the letter but not the spirit of the original. Usage plays an important role in encoding. Candidates can generally use a simple test to establish whether or not to use the same metaphor or figure of speech in the translation.

For example, when faced with a metaphor, candidates should grapple with the linguistic and semantic difficulties created by it, rather than try to provide information about the origins of the metaphor. If a particular figure of speech would be unsuitable for use in a piece of one's own writing, it may need to be replaced in the translation unless, of course, it needs to be retained to convey some essential aspect of the original to the reader of the translation. Familiarity with the use of Anglo-American terms in source language texts for example, would help to identify which terms do not need to be translated - indeed, should not be translated - into the target language, but should be retained in the source language.

3.2 Encoding

In order to obtain a pass in the translation examination, the encoding must respect the norms of the target language, *vis à vis* sentence structure, terminology, cohesion of the text and fidelity to the author and his/her intention. Accuracy is a *sine qua non* in any translation. The need for accuracy in a translation at the level of the Diploma examination cannot be underestimated as one major error or omission giving false information could have disastrous repercussions in a real life situation. **If a candidate's script contains just one serious translation error or omission giving false information to the reader, it has not reached the minimum professional standard and the candidate cannot be awarded a Pass.**

All the criteria used for the marking of the examination point to the need for accuracy:

- (i) comprehension and accuracy (appropriateness of rendering with suitable choice of register, vocabulary and idioms),
- (ii) grammar, coherence, cohesion and organisation;
- (iii) technical points relating to grammar, spelling, accentuation, punctuation and the correct transfer of dates, names and figures.

Once the meaning of the source language text has been decoded, the text needs to be encoded accurately. Some of the criteria that affect the accurate encoding of the text are the **rendering of the text, choice of register, vocabulary, terminology and idioms** which must be appropriate to the spirit of the original and must reflect the intention of the source text. In other words, if the source text is 'for the educated lay-person', 'for an interested readership' or 'to appear in the business page of a popular newspaper' or 'in the science supplement of a quality broadsheet' then the translation must reflect who the target audience is.

Candidates sometimes feel that they have to resort to a word-for-word or literal translation, if sections of the work are unclear. Many tend to stick too closely to the original text, ploughing through the source language text, word by word, phrase by phrase and sentence by sentence and looking at each section in isolation. They consequently find solutions for individual words and sections out of context rather than checking whether and how these details fit into the overall meaning and message of the text. The lack of willingness or ability on the part of candidates, to look at the whole first *before* finding the appropriate means of conveying it into the target language, has been more detrimental to overall quality than lack of knowledge or specialised terminology. It would appear therefore, that specialised terminology causes fewer problems than the need for general translation skills, judicious choice of register and idiom.

The aspect of performance that has frequently caused problems for candidates because many cling to source language patterns and sentence structures in their translations is that of **coherence of sentences, text cohesion and organisation of work**. For those translating from German for instance – a language that is renowned for its long and complex sentence structures – adhering to the text patterns can result in particularly tortured English, and in many other languages, including Italian, a literal translation will introduce an "alien" quality.

In general, sticking too closely to source text patterns and translating sentences in isolation not only fails to achieve the equivalent stylistic effect in the translation, but can also result in factual error and confusion for the reader, as with these examples: ‘*faccia a faccia*’ instead of ‘*di persona*’ in Italian and ‘*Gesicht*’ instead of ‘*persönlich*’ in German, for the expression “seeing her face to face”. As can be seen, candidates must learn to produce a text in the target language that would read as if it had originally been written in that language.

Examples abound under **technical details** where grammar, punctuation, accentuation and spelling were not taken into consideration by candidates. Punctuation that follows the pattern of the source text can actually distort the meaning of the target language text. Spelling, too, is sometimes below a professionally acceptable level with examples such as *basicly*, *dissappears*, *rappresentation*, *coragiously*, *extremeció*, *tigeras*, *débarasser*, *hydrolic*; missing accents: *rocio*, *simetrico*, *simetria*; wrongly-placed accents: *piés*, *trás*, *habído*; missing upside-down question marks at the beginning of questions, neologisms: *marché émergeants*, *eritaggio*, to name but a few. Candidates should avoid the use of informal language such as “doesn’t”, “won’t” and “can’t” - unless, of course, this is true to the style of the source text.

4. General comments on translators’ notes

The process of translating is one of decision-making in that a translator makes linguistic and cultural choices all the time. For a given feature of the source text, the translator may be able to draw on a whole repertoire of possible solutions and a variety of alternatives including considerations of style, ambiguities, expression and idiom, cultural and institutional terms, connotations, the functions of source and target texts, and the target audience. It is in considering this target audience that translators’ notes might be useful.

Translators’ notes alert the user of the translation to facts that cannot be integrated into the body of the translation. A translator’s note is *not* an annotation as described in the former syllabus for the Diploma examination. Firstly, annotations applied to Paper 1, the General Paper only; secondly, they were opportunities for candidates to discuss translation challenges, to ‘talk through’ some of the more ‘knotty’ or interesting aspects of the translation process. A translator’s note is not discursive in this sense but *functional*; it is the conventional way of informing the reader or user, of problematic issues, usually unresolved, which may affect the quality (accuracy, readability, coherence etc.) or presentation of the translation provided.

Professional translators are not always able to solve all the translation problems that their clients’ texts may provide. There may, for instance, be some ambiguity in a text, and clarity may be impossible if translators - not least when they are under examination conditions! - are not able to consult the author of their source texts. Under such circumstances the professional translator (or examination candidate) may choose to provide the client (or examiner) with a note indicating the nature of the issue which cannot be resolved *in situ*. As with real life professional translations, any translators’ notes used by candidates must be justifiable, otherwise they will be inappropriate and superfluous to the examination.

If candidates for any of the papers of the examination - Paper 1 (General translation), Paper 2 (one of semi-specialised texts in technology, business or literature) and Paper 3 (one of semi-specialised texts in science, social science or law) - believe that translators’ notes would be *helpful* to the comprehension of their client/examiner, then they may provide such on a separate page from their translations.

The most likely cases of the need for translators' notes in the context of the examination would be linked to problems of untranslatability (lack of direct equivalence) or difficulty in pinpointing the exact meaning of a term/phrase, particularly given that the candidate may only use reference works such as dictionaries and glossaries, and has no access to Internet search tools. Because the candidate is not able to check terms using Google, for example, or consult a language/subject specialist during the examination, s/he will be less able than a professional translator working from home to resolve issues under the first two points in the list below.

When attention does need to be drawn to significant questions of equivalence between a text and its translation, then features such as the following may justify a translator's note:

- ambiguity in the source text (intended or unintended);
- decoding problems through lack of contextualisation;
- unidentifiable items, need for further research;
- important equivalence problems vis-à-vis register and style;
- errors in e.g. typing, formatting;
- errors of fact;
- omissions;
- layout, presentation;
- legibility, quality of reproduction.

In real life, all the above cases may give rise to translators' notes, which often signal problems of interpretation of the source text for one reason or another (ambiguity, unclear formulation, unknown term or reference, typographical errors and so on).

A translator's note could also be used to indicate that further research would be needed to clarify an item in the source text. In a professional situation, it is standard practice to use translators' notes to indicate a problem to the client – a reference that the translator could not trace, as above.

5. Examples of types of translators' notes for the examination

5.1 Abbreviation/acronym not found.

The abbreviation *v.i.a.* (valutazione (di) impatto ambientale) arising in the context of planning or construction, or VIA, may lead to confusion. A sensible translator's note where the acronym is not understood would suggest that in a real life situation the candidate would access the search engine Google using Language Tools, possibly adding the terms *urbanistica* or *costruzione* to narrow down the fields.

5.2 Unclear referent

A gloss or exegesis in the translation could be used to flag up the usage of synonyms where the target audience may not know them, for instance, in Italian the label *L'Avvocato* was always used to refer to the late Gianni Agnelli (Fiat), in much the same way as *Il Cavaliere* refers to Silvio Berlusconi.

5.3 Extra-contextualisation

It may be necessary to provide add extra contextualisation as an explanation for the reader. For example, the word '*banlieues*', in the sentence "*A Marseille, les "banlieues" sont dans la ville*" could be paraphrased thus: "*In Marseille, the poorer areas, normally on the outskirts in other towns, are to be found within the city*"; because in France, the problems associated with inner city areas in England are to be found in areas on the outskirts of large towns and cities. Another solution, if such a paraphrase is felt to lengthen the target text unjustifiably for instance, is to leave the word "*banlieues*" in French, and to add a translator's note which would provide the necessary explanation for the reader.

5.4 Viewpoint

Translators' notes could be used to adapt the translation, when for example, the location, names, forms of address and register change to accommodate the target audience's view point.

5.5 Ambiguity

Where the translator is uncertain of the meaning of a term or phrase, and remains undecided between two possible interpretations, it is best to provide the most likely solution in the translation, and offer the less likely in a translator's note with a caveat.

5.6 Term not found

Where it has not been possible to find the most suitable translation of a specialist term, the candidate could suggest sources and strategies for finding an appropriate translation.

5.7 Clarification

A translator's note could also be used to indicate that further research would be needed to clarify an item in the source text. As has already been said, translators' notes should not be a vehicle for conjecture or display of knowledge and *candidates will not be given "brownie points" for using them unless there is a clear need*, as already outlined.

6. Areas of semi-specialised translations

Paper 2: (A) Technology (B) Business (C) Literature

Paper 3: (D) Science (E) Social Science (F) Law

The six subject area Options - Technology (2A), Business (2B), Literature (2C), Science (3D), Social Science (3E) and Legal (3F) - may be taken in any combination permitted by the Papers. Candidates may therefore choose any one of the following combinations:

- (2A) Technology + (3D) Science
- (2B) Business + (3D) Science
- (2C) Literature + (3D) Science
- (2A) Technology + (3E) Social Science
- (2B) Business + (3E) Social Science
- (2C) Literature + (3E) Social Science
- (2A) Technology + (3F) Law
- (2B) Business + (3F) Law
- (2C) Literature + (3F) Law

Lists of subjects which may be included within the six semi-specialised areas are:

Paper 2(A): Technology Agriculture Architecture Engineering Information Technology Medicine Pharmaceuticals and Pharmacology Plastics and Polymers Telecommunications Textile Technology Transport	Paper 2(B) Business Accounting Banking Commerce Economics Export and Import Trade Finance Insurance Marketing Management	Paper 2(C) Literature Prose Fiction Drama Film scripts Literary Criticism
---	--	--

<p>Paper 3 (D): Science Agriculture Biochemistry Biological Sciences Chemistry Earth Sciences Mathematics Pharmaceutics and Pharmacology Physics</p>	<p>Paper 3 (E): Social Science Anthropology Development Studies Economics Education History Linguistics Philosophy Political Science Psychology Public Administration Religion Sociology</p>	<p>Paper 3 (F): Law Case Studies Civil Law Commercial Law Criminal Law Court Reports Law Reports Legal Journals</p>
---	---	---

Note: These lists are not exhaustive and, as can be seen, some categories overlap.

It is important to note that the categories above are semi-specialised and that a pass in, for example, the Law or Technology Paper does not confer Legal Translator or Technical Translator status.

Many professional translators specialise in a relatively narrow field represented by one of the individual subjects listed above, or even a subdivision of one of these subjects. However, such specialisation often only occurs after a translator has become established in the profession. The Diploma in Translation is a qualification indicating basic professional competence as a translator for which a wider range of competence, albeit at a less specialised level, must be demonstrated.

SECTION IV: **CONCLUSION**

Candidates for this examination are expected to read widely and keep abreast with current affairs so that they are not daunted by unfamiliar historical or cultural references. This leads to the question of consulting reference material. **Effective reference material** is vital. In addition to bilingual dictionaries, bilingual and monolingual reference materials will be needed and it may also be helpful to have lists of acronyms and abbreviations and glossaries drawn from newspapers in both languages - useful, for example, in checking the spelling of proper names in the translation.

Candidates should ensure that prior to the examination, they have established precisely where in the reference material selected specific information can be found - for example, where in a dictionary lists of geographical names in translation or weights and measures are given.

A word about **time management**: The time available for each of the three Papers should be used in such a way that there is time enough at the end to **check through** the translation. Candidates are advised to bear the following aspects in mind during the final check:

- i) To ensure that the overall impression when reading the translation is that of a text originally written in the target language, not translated into it. Having completed the translation, the translator should stand back from it and take an overall view.
- ii) To pick up minor inaccuracies and omissions, check on the correct transfer of names, acronyms, dates and figures, punctuation and spelling and, where such is appropriate, ensure that weights and measures are properly converted from imperial to decimal measures or vice versa, or check that the decimal point between the thousands and hundreds is replaced with either a comma or a space.
- iii) To apply common sense, so as to spot errors of organisation, contradictions in a given context and meaningless statements.
- iv) On a point of presentation, candidates should never give alternatives, thereby leaving the final choice to the examiner, as this reveals the translator's uncertainty and has no place in professional translations.

Time management is vital both for Diploma in Translation candidates - there is a penalty for incomplete scripts - and for professional translators who must be able to use their time efficiently. Lack of preparedness for the demands of the examination, unfamiliarity with the subject matter, spending too much time searching through dictionaries, producing drafts and then copying them out are some possible reasons for candidates running out of time during the examination. The final check of the work done is absolutely crucial. Only when this final check has been done should the title of the text, if required, be translated. By that time, the translator will have been looking at the text, struggling with it and delving into its meaning for long enough to have sufficient insight to create a title that conveys the meaning of the original and meets the requirements of the translation.

SECTION V: SUGGESTED READING

PUBLICATIONS OF THE INSTITUTE OF LINGUISTS

Chief Examiners' Reports

Comments from examiners on candidate performance in the Diploma in Translation examination are published annually for the following language combinations: French, German, Italian or Spanish to English, and from English into these languages. The reports are also available for English into Chinese, Greek or Portuguese (to order, refer to page 5).

The Linguist

The journal of the Institute of Linguists regularly publishes articles on translation. For information about subscribing to *The Linguist* or purchasing back issues, contact the Subscriptions Department at the Institute.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS (not available for purchase through the Institute)

This Handbook does not prescribe publications on translation, but as any reading which assists candidates to reflect on the issues and processes involved in translating is helpful, a sample from an ever-increasing range of publications on translation theory and practice is given below.

Eurojargon – a dictionary of acronyms., abbreviations and sobriquets. 6th edition. Anne Ramsay [ed] (Fitzroy Dearborn 2000)

In Other words - A Course book on Translation. Mona Baker (Routledge 1992)

La Traduction Raisonnée: Collection Pédagogie de la Traduction. J. Delisle (Les Presses de l'Université d'Ottawa 1993)

Thinking French Translation. A Course in Translation Method: French to English. Sándor Hervey, Ian Higgins (Routledge 1992)

Thinking German Translation. A Course in Translation Method: German to English. Sándor Hervey, Ian Higgins, Michael Loughridge (Routledge 1995)

Thinking Italian Translation. A Course in Translation Method: Italian to English. Stella Cragie, P. Gambarotta (Routledge 2000)

Thinking Spanish Translation. A Course in Translation Method: Spanish to English. Sándor Hervey, Ian Higgins, Louise M. Haywood (Routledge 1995)

Il Salvalingua, by Valeria della Valle e Giuseppe Patota, Sperling & Kupfer Editori, ISBN 88-200-2079-3

Italiano senza errori by Marta Torriani, ISBN: 88-410-0667-6

Il manuale di stile by Roberto Lesina, Zanichelli Editore, ISBN: 88-08-06172-8

Culture Bumps - an empirical approach to the translation of allusions. Ritva Leppihalme (Multilingual Matters 1997)

A Textbook of Translation. Peter Newmark (Prentice Hall 1988)

Paragraphs on Translation/More Paragraphs on Translation. Peter Newmark (Multilingual Matters 1993/1998)

Becoming a Translator. An Accelerated Course. Douglas Robinson (Routledge 1997)

A Practical Guide for Translators. Geoffrey Samuelson-Brown (Multilingual Matters 1998)