

23rd April 2021

Ministry of Justice Update

The most recent questions published by NRPSI to be sent to MPs have been well-received by many Registrants who forwarded them to their own MPs.

Please note below the questions asked by Apsana Begum MP and the answers from HM Courts and Tribunal Service (HMCTS).

Ministry of Justice: Interpreters

Ministry of Justice written question – answered on [19th April 2021](#).

Apsana Begum Labour, Poplar and Limehouse

To ask the [Secretary of State](#) for Justice, whether interpreters which hold (a) [Level 1](#) foundation in public service interpreting, a two-to-four-week course, (b) [Level 2](#) public service interpreting qualifications, (c) [Level 3](#) and Level 4 community service interpreting qualifications, A-level standard, (d) a bachelor's degree in philology but no public service interpreting qualifications and (e) a bachelor's degree in linguistics but no public service interpreting qualifications are accepted on his Department's list of interpreters.

Apsana Begum

To ask the [Secretary of State](#) for Justice, how many and what proportion of interpreters on his Department's list of interpreters engaged by HM Courts and Tribunal Service have a [Level 6](#), Bachelor's degree level, Diploma in Public Service Interpreting (DPSI) or Diploma in Police Interpreting ([DPI](#)).

Apsana Begum

To ask the [Secretary of State](#) for Justice, what steps [HM Courts and Tribunals Service](#) is taking to ensure that interpreters are on his Department's list of interpreters in order to improve the vetting of evidence relating to their experience and qualifications.

Apsana Begum

To ask the [Secretary of State](#) for Justice, if his Department will make an estimate of the number of interpreters on his Department's list of interpreters engaged by HM Courts and Tribunal Service who (a) hold a [Level 6](#) public service qualification and (b) have more than 400 hours' public service interpreting experience that comply with the National Register of Public Service Interpreter's Code of Professional Conduct.

Apsana Begum

To ask the [Secretary of State](#) for Justice, how many and what proportion of interpreters have been referred to The Language Shop for independent assessment; and what proportion of those interpreters have been reinstated since 2019.

Apsana Begum

To ask the [Secretary of State](#) for Justice, how long it takes to complete the justice system training course for interpreters; and which organisation oversees that course.

Chris Philp The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department

The [Ministry of Justice](#) is committed to ensuring the justice system is supported by a suite of high- quality language service contracts, that meet the needs of all those that require them.

The MoJ does not directly employ interpreters. The MoJ commissions the services of suitably qualified interpreters through its contracted service providers, thebigword and Clarion Interpreting.

MoJ accepts individuals who hold (a) [Level 1](#) foundation in public service interpreting, a two-to-four-week course, (b) [Level 2](#) public service interpreting qualifications, (c) [Level 3](#) and Level 4 community service interpreting qualifications, A-level standard, (d) a bachelor's degree in philology but no public service interpreting qualifications and (e) a bachelor's degree in linguistics onto the MoJ Register. They would however only be engaged in work for MoJ if other requirements are also met. These requirements include the hours of experience they have, the complexity of the booking itself and whether the language in question is considered as rare or otherwise.

The contract has a clearly defined list of qualifications, skills, experience and vetting requirements interpreters must meet, which have been designed to meet the needs of the justice system. All interpreters are also required to complete a justice system specific training course before they are permitted to join the MoJ's interpreter register.

The full details of the standards required for our Language Professionals is set out in our contracts, which can be found at the following link:

<https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/975cb99e-fec6-430f-8f31-fd532a907137?p=@=UFQxblRRPT0=NjJNT08>

Currently there are 1073 interpreters across the MoJ register that hold a Diploma in Public Service Interpreting (DPSI) or Diploma in Police Interpreting ([DPI](#)). The number of interpreters listed on the MoJ register fluctuates regularly. The data that has been provided here is accurate to March 2021. Each interpreter has only been counted once irrespective of whether they hold multiple DPSI's/DPI in different languages.

Evidence of public service interpreting is vetted and accredited via references obtained by our Service Provider thebigword. Thebigword contacts each of the referees to validate all of the information that has been provided.

The hours of experience that are required to be evidenced varies according to the complexity levels and the language itself (rare or otherwise) The contract has a clearly defined list of qualifications, skills, experience and vetting requirements that interpreters must meet.

The MoJ does not hold information regarding the number of interpreters that hold a [Level 6](#) public service qualification and (b) have more than 400 hours' public service interpreting experience that comply with the National Register of Public Service Interpreter's Code of Professional Conduct. as there is no requirement to do so within the contract.

Data concerning NRPSI registration is not routinely recorded and is not a requirement of working for the MoJ. The MoJ requires all interpreters to abide by a code of conduct specific to the MoJ. This code of conduct forms part of their contract with the [Service Providers](#) under the language services contract.

Since 1st January 2019, 118 unique language professionals have had either a spot check or an In Person Assessment ([IPA](#)) performed by The Language Shop as the result of a referral, 59 of these passed their spot check/IPA and were not removed from the register. Of the 59 that failed their first assessment 5 of these have successfully completed an In-Person Assessment to enable them to re-join the register.

The Justice Sector programme is facilitated by the [International School](#) of Linguists Ltd and takes approximately 4 hours to complete.