

Editorial

Five years later

It has been five years since interpreters met in Edinburgh for the first time to talk about creating a new professional body for interpreting in Scotland. The Interpreting Academy was born out of these discussions and it has been putting out regular newsletters for over two years now.

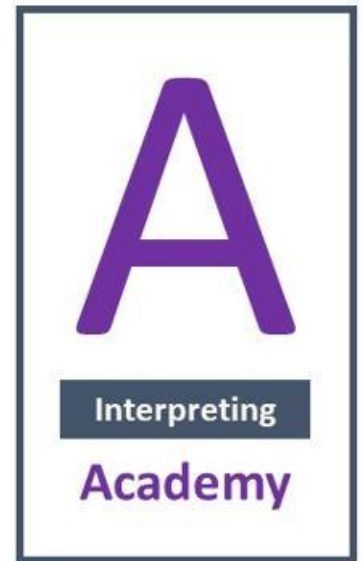
Many meetings have taken place with interpreters and other stakeholders, including the NRPSI. We want to get it right as our interpreting industry is all interconnected.

Now it's time for action. The Academy has designed a detailed and realistic implementation plan to move the *Directory of Qualified Interpreters* forward, with three stages described in this newsletter.

There will be further opportunities to find more details and ask live questions at our social get together in Edinburgh on Saturday 7 of October 2023. It will be a day to celebrate five years of efforts from many interpreters who have been sharing ideas and investing their time on this project.

Alan Kershaw, the NRPSI Chair will be the guest speaker at this event. Alan Kershaw has extensive experience in regulation across different industries and he also features in this newsletter with an article on the three essential pillars to achieve a professional status in any industry. During the event in October, Alan Kershaw will share examples of other industries journeys into professionalisation.

We have received feedback telling us that quarterly newsletters make sense to maintain everyone informed on the progress of the Academy and other industry news. Therefore, you can expect another newsletter in October and there are plans to take better advantage of social media to share and spread relevant information.



How can you help us?

*Please help us spread the message
by sharing this newsletter. Thank you!*



Ricky Mateus

Interpreting Academy Chair

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Public Service Interpreting: Occupation or Profession?

By Alan Kershaw, NRPSI Chair

All serious professions need some form of regulation. What makes for good regulation? What marks out a profession as something more than just an occupation? There are three essential pillars in an effective regulatory structure.



Alan Kershaw, NRPSI Chair

Being a professional

The definition of an occupation focuses on regular activity performed to earn daily bread. Professionals clearly have to do this but there is much more to being a professional than earning money in a specific field.

A profession is an occupation, sometimes a vocation:

- which requires a high degree of knowledge and expertise in a specific field;
- where this knowledge and expertise is continuously expanded; and
- where there is recognised and trusted accreditation of professional practitioners' competencies.

Should it be open to anyone to offer a service even if they are unqualified, under-qualified or have irrelevant qualifications and have no accredited experience? Does service delivery demand that someone is trained, seen to be learning how to carry out the job, and able to demonstrate those things?

As a profession grows in standing and recognition, is there a need to develop new ideas, new learning? Does that suggest that practitioners, having earned their qualifications, should come together in associations, societies and indeed unions, ensuring their standards and rights are upheld?

Once those things have happened, and the profession has created learned organisations which push the boundaries of knowledge, is there a case for their hard-gained experience, hammered in the furnace of regular practice, to be independently accredited? Do they need to own a code of professional conduct which binds them together? Do professionals need to operate in regulated environments adhering to standards, abiding by a code of professional conduct? Or can anybody set up and practise, possibly untrained and certainly unregulated?

The three essential pillars

After a lifetime in professional regulation I believe professionalism is founded on three pillars, forming a solid tripod which, when they work together, provide a base from which all can operate securely:

- 1. Associations, societies and unions** which act on members' behalf - protecting rights, dealing with members' interests, including working conditions and remuneration commensurate with their qualifications and experience. The Association of Police and Court Interpreters (APCI), the Society of Official Metropolitan Interpreters (SOMI) and the Association of Interpreters and Translators (AIT) are three examples in the professional world of public service interpreting.
- 2. Learned institutes**, such as the Chartered Institute of Linguists (CIOL) or the Institute of Translation and Interpreting (ITI), providing thought leadership and stimulating agreed standards for qualifications under the auspices of the National Occupation Standards (NOS) where individuals can be assessed; encouraging the development of training organisations and academies (such as the Interpreting Academy and DPSI Online) where professional learning is designated to ensure effective preparation for examinations and assessments. Of note, the NOS for Interpreting, which underpin the qualifications taken by professional interpreters, comprise a suite of nine standards based on what an individual needs to do, know and understand in order to carry out the interpreting function.

- 3. An independent regulator** – in this case, the National Register of Public Service Interpreters (NRPSI), ensuring standards are maintained by all registered professionals. This regulator is a trusted and reliable guarantor for the competence and conduct of Registrants. Central to its purpose are to:
- protect the public
 - nurture trust and confidence in the profession,
 - deliver independent accreditation of the quality of the service offered by professional Registrants
 - set professional standards that must be achieved
 - ensure these are maintained and enhanced
 - raise the standards, and so the standing, of the profession of public service interpreting.

In public service interpreting, are you just doing a job, or are you acting, in the fullest sense, as a professional?

Alan Kershaw, NRPSI Chair

Alan's career has been in professional standards setting and regulation. After graduating in Classics from Cambridge University, Alan joined the Civil Service as a graduate trainee, working in a succession of posts in conservation, planning, local government and housing, before moving into regulation with the General Medical Council in 1983.

In addition to chairing NRPSI, Alan currently chairs the Architects Registration Board and has recently been appointed to chair the Legal Services Board, which oversees the bodies which regulate the legal professions. He has held non-executive and advisory positions with a wide range of bodies in the key professional sectors: legal, healthcare, finance, science and the built environment. He has also chaired accreditation panels visiting schools of professional education. He was involved in the initial establishment of the NRPSI and has served on its Board since 2021.

Implementation Plan

A realistic plan for the Directory of Interpreters to go live

A gradual process

We had five years of conversations and we are now moving into the implementation stage. This is a large undertaking and we will need to keep it simple in order to make real progress towards our goals. The implementation plan includes three separate stages. There will be indicative deadlines to be shared internally with volunteers managing and collaborating on the tasks involved. We will allow flexibility and avoid putting pressure on the volunteers by not setting public deadlines.



1. Code of Conduct Workshop

Anyone working as an interpreter may have signed many codes of professional conduct but that does not mean they have fully understood what is actually expected of them. The Academy is designing a workshop which will offer the possibility for interpreters to explore in more detail the [code of professional conduct](#) used by the [National Register](#). The Academy is using the same code of conduct as this will contribute to move towards a standardised set of principles for professional conduct for the industry. This workshop will be an essential pre-requisite before anyone becomes a member of the Interpreting Academy. More details will be available soon.

2. Membership Registration

The set-up of the registration process requires a great deal of work, which is currently underway. As soon as the registration to the Interpreting Academy is open, any qualified interpreter based in Scotland can apply for membership after attending the Code of Professional Conduct Workshop. A full list of membership benefits will be made available once the membership registration is ready to go live.

3. Directory Website

Once the new directory website (www.qualifiedinterpreters.org) is ready and the Academy has reached 100 registered members, the **Directory of Qualified Interpreters** will go live. This directory only makes sense if we have a large number of interpreters signing up as members. The Academy is deliberately trying to keep membership fees as affordable as possible to avoid annual fees preventing qualified interpreters based in Scotland from joining the directory.

Going live

Academy Implementation Plan

Phases	Phase 1 NRPSI Code of Professional Conduct Workshop	Phase 2 Membership Registration	Phase 3 Directory of Qualified Interpreters
Description	Open to all interpreters , this online training will offer a deeper understanding of the NRPSI Code of Conduct.	Initially, only opened to qualified interpreters based in Scotland. Interpreters need a recognised interpreting qualification, which could be either Level 6 or above to apply. The Academy follows the NRPSI criteria to define a qualified interpreter.	Online Directory of Qualified interpreters who are members of the Academy. Contact details and relevant information will be available online, so that interpreters can be contacted by both direct clients and agencies whilst promoting their services and qualifications.
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Academy is developing this workshop following NRPSI input. First workshop planned to go live by Autumn 2023. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete design processes: registration process, terms and conditions, complaints procedure, etc. Create a Welcome Pack for new members. 	Two essential requirements before it goes live: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Directory website needs to be ready Academy registrations need to reach 100 members
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowing well the code of conduct for interpreters is essential for professional development and to guarantee a quality standard of delivery. This applies to all interpreters. This workshop is a pre-requisite to join the Academy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business and marketing training (<i>available only to Academy members</i>) including how to design a LinkedIn profile, design terms of business, etc. Networking opportunities and community events Full membership benefits will be available later 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online presence - public exposure to potential direct clients and confirming qualifications for public organisation Accessibility - it would allow agencies both local and abroad to use the directory as a main source of available and qualified interpreters
Prices	£20* <i>Two hours' online workshop</i>	£30* <i>Annual Membership</i>	£60* <i>Annual Membership</i>

*Prices are per person and for 2023. Terms and conditions apply. Annual membership fees will go from £30 to £60 when the directory goes live. If the directory goes live after you have paid £30, you only pay £60 when you renew your annual membership.

Code of Professional Conduct Workshops

The foundation of any profession

Any profession needs a code of professional conduct and our [National Regulator](#) developed one almost 30 years ago. The Academy is following that code and it is developing a workshop to offer interpreters an opportunity to explore its content and meaning in more depth.

Workshop Details

Title	NRPSI Code of Professional Conduct Workshop
Who is it for?	All interpreters are welcome
Pre-course	Before the workshop there will be some pre-course work so that you can maximise your learning during your live workshop.
Delivery	Zoom
Duration	2 hours
Certificate	A certificate will be issued for this course
Price	£20 <i>per delegate for 2023</i>
When	The first sessions are being planned for Autumn 2023. More details on how to book will be available in the next Academy Newsletter and on social media.

Acknowledgments

The Academy Newsletter is run by volunteers and receives articles from the industry, which are also put together on a volunteer basis. We would like to thank the NRPSI Chair Alan Kershaw for his contribution to this newsletter. As always, this newsletter would have not been possible without the help from [Adriana Uribe](#) (DPSI, CL, MCIL, MSc). We would like to extend our thanks to all interpreters who have contributed with ideas and their time to the development of the Interpreting Academy and the *Directory of Qualified Interpreters*. We are currently forming working groups to work on the directory project and this help is essential for moving forward at a reasonable pace.

Save the date

Saturday, 7 October 2023

Time to have some fun!

It has been a long time since we had a large social gathering of interpreters in Scotland. It is time to have another large social event.

All interpreters are welcome

This event will have a Q&A session on the *Directory of Qualified Interpreters*, therefore bookings will give priority to qualified interpreters based in Scotland. After that, the registration will be opened to any interpreter who would like to attend. Bookings will be made on a first come, first served basis.



Edinburgh Napier University

Events programme

This event will take place at Edinburgh Napier University on Saturday 7th October. After registration in the morning, there will be a short presentation and a Q&A on the *Directory of Qualified Interpreters*. There will be plenty of time for social gathering, with an opportunity for interpreters to catch-up with each other. Alan Kershaw, the NRPSI Chair, will close the event with a presentation on regulation across different professions. Further details on the events will be shared as soon as they are finalised.

Social Media

This event will be posted on social media including [News for Scottish Interpreters](#), the Interpreting Academy and the private Facebook group as well as on LinkedIn pages which are open to all interpreters in the UK. The links to those pages can be found by clicking the symbols below.

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