

General Principles

1. Professional conduct

Interpreters and translators shall at all times act in accordance with the standards of conduct and decorum appropriate to the aims of AUSIT, the national professional association of interpreters and translators.

Interpreters and translators should:

- always be polite and courteous, unobtrusive, firm and dignified
- explain their role to clients, encouraging them to speak to each other directly
- allow nothing to prejudice or influence their work, and disclose any possible conflict of interest
- decline gifts and tips (except token gifts customary in some cultures), explaining to clients that accepting them could compromise their professional integrity
- ensure punctuality at all times (and if lateness is unavoidable, advise clients immediately)
- prepare appropriately for assignments and ensure they are completed
- refrain from unprofessional or dishonourable behaviour and refer any unresolved disputes to the AUSIT Executive Committee and accept its decision.

2. Confidentiality

Interpreters and translators shall not disclose information acquired during the course of their assignments.

- Interpreters and translators may only disclose information with the permission of their clients (or if the law requires disclosure).
- If other interpreters or translators are involved in the same assignment and require briefing, this should be done after obtaining the clients' permission, and all are obliged to maintain confidentiality.
- No work should be subcontracted to colleagues without clients' permission.
- Translated documents remain the client's property.

3. Competence

Interpreters and translators shall undertake only work which they are competent to perform in the language areas for which they are "accredited" or "recognised" by NAATI.

- Acceptance of an assignment is a declaration of one's competence and constitutes a contract. If, during an assignment, it becomes clear that the work is beyond the interpreter's or translator's competence, they should inform clients immediately and withdraw.
- Interpreters/translators must clearly specify their NAATI accreditation, level and language direction, if necessary explaining its significance to clients.
- It is the interpreter's responsibility to ensure that working conditions facilitate communication.
- If an interpreter or translator is asked to provide a second opinion or to review alterations to the work of another practitioner, there should be final agreement between all interpreters and translators concerned.

4. Impartiality

Interpreters and translators shall observe impartiality in all professional contracts.

- Professional detachment must be maintained at all times. If interpreters or translators feel their objectivity is threatened, they should withdraw from the assignment.
- Practitioners should not recommend to clients anyone or anything in which they have personal or financial interest. If for some reason they have to do so they must fully disclose such interest - including assignments for relatives or friends, or which affect their employers.

- They should not accept, or should withdraw from, assignments in which impartiality may be risked because of personal beliefs or circumstances.
- Interpreters and translators are not responsible for what clients say or write.
- They should not voice or write an opinion on anything or anyone concerned with an assignment.
- If approached for service by all parties to a legal dispute, an interpreter or translator shall offer to work for the first party making the request and notify all parties concerned.

5. Accuracy

Interpreters and translators shall take all reasonable care to be accurate.

They must:

- relay accurately and completely all that is said by all parties in a meeting - including derogatory or vulgar remarks, non-verbal clues, and anything they know to be untrue
- not alter, add to or omit anything from the assigned work
- acknowledge and promptly rectify any interpreting or translation mistakes. If anything is unclear, interpreters must ask for repetition, rephrasing or explanation. If interpreters have lapses of memory which lead to inadequate interpreting, they should inform the client, ask for a pause and signal when they are ready to continue.
- ensure speech is clearly heard and understood by all present. Where possible (and if agreed to by all parties), interpreters may arrange a short general conversation with clients beforehand to ensure clear understanding by all
- provide full evidence of NAATI accreditation or recognition if requested

6. Employment

Interpreters and translators shall be responsible for the quality of their work, whether employed as freelance practitioners or by interpreting and translation agencies or other employers.

- AUSIT members may set their own rates and conditions in freelance assignments.
- They may not accept for personal gain any fees, favours or commissions from anyone when making any recommendations to clients.
- Interpreters and translators are responsible for services to clients performed by assistants or subcontracted employees. I&T practitioners employed by colleagues must exercise the same diligence in performing their duties.

7. Professional development

Interpreters and translators shall continue to develop their professional knowledge and skills.

- They should constantly review and re-evaluate their work performance.
- They should maintain and enhance their skills by study and experience, and keep up to date with relevant languages and cultures.

8. Professional solidarity

Interpreters and translators shall respect and support their fellow professionals.

They should:

- assist and further the interests of colleagues, refraining from comments injurious to the reputation of a colleague
- promote and enhance the integrity of the profession through trust and mutual respect. Differences of opinion should be expressed with candour and respect - not by denigration -refraining from behaviour considered unprofessional by their peers.