



TRANSLATOR HANDBOOK

A GUIDE TO USING THE TRANSLATOR SAMPLE TEST KIT



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USING THIS HANDBOOK AND SAMPLE TEST

It is recommended that you read and understand this handbook and the Manual for Candidates prior to using the sample test. You will then be able to use the sample test to your best advantage.

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NOTE: The information contained in this handbook is correct as at July 2008.

NAATI policies are reviewed periodically. Some changes may occur during the currency of this handbook. Confirmation of particular policies may be obtained from any NAATI office or on the NAATI website: www.naati.com.au

1. GETTING THE MOST OUT OF THE SAMPLE TEST

This sample test kit includes this guide and the sample test script. These will be valuable tools to assist you in preparing for NAATI Paraprofessional or Professional Translator tests. If you use the aids properly you will get a good indication of how a test is conducted and how it feels to be taking the test. Keep in mind that you are the candidate who will sit for the test and in order to pass you need to feel comfortable doing the test.

The kit comprises one sample test for translation into English and one sample test for translation into your Language Other Than English (LOTE) reflecting an actual NAATI accreditation test. There are also extra questions on the Ethics of the Profession which you can use to practise. The kit contains sample answers to the translation passages and for the ethics questions.

The sample script gives you a practical demonstration of an actual test. To use it effectively, the following strategy is suggested:

1. Set up in a quiet room. You will need a desk, good light, a clock, paper, pens, dictionaries and glossaries.

2. When ready, check the clock and allow yourself the set amount of reading time for the test (20 minutes for a Professional level test and 10 minutes for a Paraprofessional level test). **Do not touch your pen during this time.** You should use this period to choose the passages you will translate and the ethics questions you will answer. You may highlight any particular translation problems or words that you may wish to look up in the dictionary. You may place markers in your dictionary at appropriate places.

3. At the end of the reading time, commence translating the first passage. Time yourself so that you will have some time left for checking and correcting.

4. Proceed to translate the second passage keeping in mind the amount of time left. Try to divide the time equally between the two passages. Remember to leave about 30 minutes to answer the ethics questions.

5. Stop writing at the end of the specified time period.

6. Once you have completed the translation of the passages and answered the ethics questions, compare your work with the sample answers provided. In the translations, look for variations between your work and the sample answers. Are there any distortions of meaning, spelling or grammatical errors, unidiomatic usage, variations in word order or different choices of words? Remember that the sample answer is only one solution to the translation, but it is deemed by NAATI to be of a pass standard.

If your translation contains many technical errors and does not read like a natural piece of writing, then there is a good chance that it will not meet the standard required by NAATI for accreditation.

7. Evaluate your strategy and time management. Think about your approach to the translation process. Ask yourself if there might be a better approach. Refer to some of the references in this guide on translation theory and practice for more ideas.

8. You may wish to use the extra practice passages to simulate a further test.

2. IMPROVING YOUR CHANCES OF PASSING

'People are not born translators...they are trained.'

Many candidates fail the NAATI Professional and Paraprofessional Translator tests. The main reasons are that candidates:

1. Do not know either English or their LOTE as well as is required for a strong performance in the test.

2. Frequently do not have the breadth of vocabulary or knowledge of grammar, spelling, punctuation and style required of translators.

3. Have limited knowledge of the theory and practice of translation and little or no experience in the field of translation. The ability to read and write a language is not enough. They must understand the process of translation.

4. Have not sat for a test for a long time and have forgotten how to prepare themselves.

5. Sit the test in the mistaken belief that an oral command of English and the LOTE will carry them through the test

The material in this sample test kit is designed to help candidates prepare for the NAATI test. It should be remembered, however, that these materials are a guide only. Candidates will need to determine any areas where they may need to develop their skills.

Before attempting the test you must critically evaluate your own capabilities and skills.

1. Is my language competency at a high level in both English and my LOTE?

2. Do I understand the translation process?

3. How do I cope with meeting tight deadlines?

4. Have I read and, more importantly, do I understand and can I apply the Code of Ethics of Translators and Interpreters to specific situations?

NAATI standards are high. This is based on the knowledge that clients of translating services expect to have translating carried out with a high degree of accuracy. If candidates pass a NAATI test and gain accreditation, they are expected to perform at the same standard, or better, in the marketplace.

3. PREPARING FOR A TRANSLATION TEST

Building up to the test: The *Manual for Candidates* has important information about the test and its contents. A current edition can be downloaded from the NAATI website at www.naati.com.au

Preparing Yourself:

1. Aim to translate at least two passages a week and only apply for testing once you are confident that you are well prepared for the accreditation test in that language and direction.

2. Practise translating materials from a wide variety of subject areas. Try and translate materials from all the following areas:

- Recreation
- Health
- Law
- Social services
- Education
- Finance
- Real estate
- Taxation.

3. Only use the sample test materials as a 'mock' test in the weeks leading up to the exam.

4. Ask native speakers to check your translations whenever possible for naturalness. Have them read your translation and show them the original text. Get them to check for any distortions of meaning as well as naturalness of language.

5. Use the experience you have gained from practice to identify vocabulary areas you need to develop or recurring grammatical errors you need to overcome.

6. Develop your own glossary of terms in both languages by reading articles, newspapers, etc. Whenever you see a likely source of new information or new terminology take a copy and see whether you know the appropriate vocabulary in your other language. If you don't, then seek out sources which can help. If you are lucky enough to find a translation of the original, compare the two passages to ascertain whether you consider the translation to be accurate or not. Look for any distortions in meaning and consider whether the translation flows naturally. Use such examples to develop your own powers of criticism. Remember, however, that everyone has a unique style and you should not criticise the style unless it is unacceptable for the target audience.

7. If you do not already have them, you should acquire copies of the most recent 'standard' dictionaries of English and your LOTE. For Standard English references NAATI suggests the use of the Macquarie Dictionary, Australian Oxford Dictionary and Australian Government Style Guide. For more information on what is/is not acceptable refer to Section 5 of this Guide.

8. Select the aids (eg, dictionaries) you are going to take to the exam and use them when you are practising. If the reference sources you used for practice are not the ones which you intend to use for the test, you are not really working to exam conditions. Aim to use them only sparingly. Do not sit for the test with the intention of being dependent on these resources – they are only aids which may assist you in doing the test.

9. At the test you will be issued with examination booklets. These have ruled double-spaced lines to facilitate marking. Only blue or black pen can be used. It is advisable that when practising for the test you try to adhere to these examination conditions.

10. If you find during practice sessions that you cannot do a draft translation and then a final translation in the time allowed, aim to write one version only. If you need to make a correction cross out any mistakes and neatly write the correction above. Always make sure that all corrections can be clearly read by the markers.

11. Practise not giving alternative translations for any word or phrase (that is, do not give two possible translations) – try to work out a single suitable word or phrase from the context.

12. When translating into your weaker language, be careful of what is known as 'interference' from your stronger language. Interference may be stylistic; for example, some languages favour long complex sentences whereas in English short reader-friendly sentences are more acceptable. Beware also of differences in punctuation and interference in spelling and meaning, especially for words that may look similar in the two languages.

13. Examiners are directed to deduct marks for mistakes in the following areas. When re-reading your translations, check the following:

- too free a translation
- too literal a translation
- spelling
- grammar
- syntax
- punctuation
- failure to finish a passage
- unjustifiable omissions
- mistranslation
- non-idiomatic usage
- insufficient understanding of the ethics of the profession.

The night before the test: Take the night off from preparations and rest. Go to bed early and try to relax.

The day of the test: Organise your time. Do not rush. Plan to arrive at the test venue 15 minutes before your scheduled testing time. If parking could be a problem, take public transport if possible.

If you arrive earlier than 15 minutes prior to your test, distract yourself by taking a walk, having a cup of coffee or window shopping. Above all try to relax. If you arrive at the testing venue too early, you may start to worry and get nervous, so it's best not to arrive too early.

4. ETHICS OF THE PROFESSION AND ANSWERING QUESTIONS

While it is not the function of NAATI to prescribe a code of ethics for the translating and interpreting profession, it is NAATI's responsibility to ensure that candidates for the profession are aware of the issues involved in professional ethics and of the need for practitioners to accept and observe a suitable code of conduct.

The Code of Ethics, developed by the Australian Institute of Translators and Interpreters (AUSIT) in conjunction with NAATI, has now become the most widely used code of ethics in Australia.

The NAATI booklet *Ethics of Translation and Interpreting: A Guide to Professional Conduct in Australia* is intended to assist practitioners in their preparation for the interpreting tests. Copies can be obtained from any NAATI office.

There are eight (8) fundamental principles to the Code of Ethics:

1. Professional Conduct
2. Confidentiality
3. Competence
4. Impartiality
5. Accuracy
6. Employment
7. Professional Development
8. Professional Solidarity.

In answering the questions on the NAATI test, candidates must be able to:

- a) identify the relevant principles/
- b) state what is meant by each principle
- c) explain the actions they would take.

Candidates are expected to be able to identify the eight (8) principles but are **not** required to memorise the reference numbers for each section as they appear in the NAATI booklet.

The questions in this section are designed to assess whether candidates have a sound understanding of the Code of Ethics and the professional conduct expected of them, and, in particular, how these may impinge on situations in which a translator would typically work.

Some questions to consider:

1. Explain the meaning of a 'conflict of interest'.

2. What would you do if you were offered an assignment which you realised might be highly specialised and beyond your capabilities?

3. As a professional, do you know your limitations? How would you express them to others without feeling, or being made to feel, inadequate?

4. Why is confidentiality important for a translator?

5. What would you do if you were offered an assignment with which you disagreed on moral grounds?

6. If your client is working with you for the first time, what instructions would you give in order that you can work well together?

Before you sit for your test, you will be asked to show your scheduling slip and some form of photo identification with your signature (passport or driver's licence). You will then be given some instructions to read. Read the instructions – you should already be familiar with them, but re-read them to refresh your memory. If you feel slowly. If you are unsure about anything, ask the Testing Officer before the test begins.

The test: Upon entering the testing room, you will be given a short explanation of the testing procedures and rules. If you have any questions, ask.

A prepared candidate is a calm candidate. If you have practised well prior to the exam you have a better chance of passing.

Use the reading time to your best advantage. Skim through the test without parking at the words you don't know and choose the passages you are going to translate. It is more important to choose the passage for which you know the vocabulary and registers best and the passage you feel most comfortable with, rather than making a choice based on the shortness of a passage. Reading time should also be used to choose the ethics questions you are going to do and to start thinking about what you are going to write.

Remember, the reading time is only that – no writing or note-taking is allowed during the reading time. You may, however, highlight parts of the test paper and consult your dictionary, so once you have decided on your passages it is a good idea to look up any words you are unsure about. If there is a word you may need to use often, place a piece of paper on the page in your dictionary for later reference.

When reading time is over and before you begin writing, read the passage again, marking words and phrases which you think may be difficult. Make a few notes and think it all through before you begin writing. Although translators have their own individual methods of working, it is not recommended that you start the first sentence without digesting and understanding the whole passage. This will help you understand isolated words or phrases which you might otherwise find difficult. It also helps to give you an indication of the total register (tone and style) of the passage.

7. As a professional, what preparations would you make prior to commencing an assignment?
8. What actions would you take if you were offered a bribe to suppress some information in a translation? What are the ethical considerations which come into play in this situation?
9. You are a freelance translator and receive a call from a colleague who also works freelance, asking you to do his/her work. What would you do?
10. In your opinion should a translator censor vulgar language used in a document? Explain.

5. TEST FORMATS AND IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Paraprofessional Translator Test

Languages Available:

From 1 January 1995 this test became available in a limited range of languages and currently includes:

Albanian	Bangla	Dinka*	Punjabi	Somali	Tongan
Amharic	Bosnian	Hindi	Pushto	Swahili*	Urdu
Armenian*	Burmese	Nuer*	Samoa	Tamil	
Assyrian	Dari	Oromo*	Sinhalese	Tigrinya	

* Languages expected to be tested for the first time in the latter half of 2008

Time allowed: Two hours plus 10 minutes reading time.

Test Format:

Q1 Translation from English (45 marks)
 Two passages of 120-140 words each in English in different subject areas are given. Candidates are required to select one passage for translation into the Language Other than English (LOTE). The passages will not be complex nor contain specialist subject matter. Neither passage will be drawn from the field of creative literature.

Q2 Translation into English (45 marks)
 Two passages of 120-140 words each in a LOTE in different subject areas are given. Candidates are required to select one passage for translation into English. The passages will not be complex nor contain specialist subject matter. Neither passage will be drawn from the field of creative literature.

Q3 Ethics (2 x 5 = 10 marks)
 There will be three questions in English on the Ethics of the Profession. Candidates are required to select two questions to be answered in either LOTE or English. These questions will not necessarily relate to the subject matter of the translation passages. Each answer should be equivalent to 100-150 English Words.

The use of dictionaries, printed glossaries and thesauri will be permitted; candidates are to supply their own.

Pass mark:

Candidates must obtain a minimum mark of:

- 5/10 for ethics
- 29/45 for each passage
- 63/90 for both passages
- 70/100 overall

At this level, candidates are able to choose the language direction in which they wish to sit. They may choose to sit the test from their LOTE into English, from English into their LOTE, or both ways.

Most individuals are usually stronger in their first language and candidates are encouraged to sit initially from their second language into their first. For most candidates this will be from English into LOTE.

Time allowed: Two and a half hours plus 20 minutes reading time for each language direction.

Test format:

Translation from English into LOTE

Section 1: Translation (2 x 45 marks = 90)
 Three passages of approximately 250 words each in English, in different styles and subject areas, are given. Candidates are required to select two passages to be translated into the LOTE. The passages may be drawn from subject areas such as culture, science, technology, health, law, commerce and related fields, all aimed at the non-specialist reader.

Section 2: Ethics (2 x 5 marks = 10)
 There will be three questions in English on the Ethics of the Profession. Candidates are required to select two questions to be answered in either LOTE or English. These questions will not necessarily relate to the subject matter of the translation passages. Each answer should be equivalent to 100-150 English Words

Translation from LOTE into English [EXCEPT CHINESE AND GREEK]

Section 1: Translation (2 x 45 marks = 90)
 Three passages of approximately 250 words each in the LOTE, in different styles and subject areas, are given. Candidates are required to select two passages to be translated into English. The passages may be drawn from subject areas such as culture, science, technology, health, law, commerce and related fields, all aimed at the non-specialist reader.

Section 2: Ethics (2 x 5 marks = 10)
 There will be three questions in English on the Ethics of the Profession. Candidates are required to select two questions to be answered in either LOTE or English. These questions will not necessarily relate to the subject matter of the translation passages. Each answer should be equivalent to 100-150 English Words

Translation from Chinese into English

Section 1: Translation (2 x 45 marks = 90)
 Four passages, two written in Traditional characters and two written in Simplified characters, of approximately 250 words each in different styles and subject areas are given. Candidates are required to translate one Simplified character passage and one Traditional character passage into English. The passages may be drawn from subject areas such as culture, science, technology, health, law, commerce and related fields, all aimed at the non-specialist reader.

- 5/10 for ethics
- 29/45 for each passage
- 63/90 for both passages
- 70/100 overall

Candidates must obtain a minimum mark of:

Pass mark:

The use of dictionaries, printed glossaries and thesauri will be permitted; candidates are to supply their own.

Section 1: Translation (2 x 45 marks = 90)
 Four passages, two Katharevousa passages and two standard Modern Greek passages, of approximately 250 words each in different styles and subject areas are given. Candidates are required to translate one Katharevousa passage and one Modern Greek passage into English. The passages may be drawn from subject areas such as culture, science, technology, health, law, commerce and related fields, all aimed at the non-specialist reader.

Section 2: Ethics (2 x 5 marks = 10)
 There will be three questions in English on the Ethics of the Profession. Candidates are required to select two questions to be answered in either LOTE or English. These questions will not necessarily relate to the subject matter of the translation passages. Each answer should be equivalent to 100-150 English Words

Translation from Greek into English

Section 2: Ethics (2 x 5 marks = 10)
 There will be three questions in English on the Ethics of the Profession. Candidates are required to select two questions to be answered in either LOTE or English. These questions will not necessarily relate to the subject matter of the translation passages. Each answer should be equivalent to 100-150 English Words

6. THE USE OF DICTIONARIES IN TRANSLATION TESTS

The use of published dictionaries, glossaries and/or thesauri is permitted and is encouraged for all NAAATI translation tests. This includes electronically published hand-held versions of dictionaries, glossaries or thesauri, but these must not have facilities that enable electronic translation (phrase or sentence level), or spelling or grammar checks. The use of lap-tops, Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) or other computers is not permitted for Paraprofessional and Professional Translator tests. This means that candidates cannot use electronic dictionaries if they are incorporated within a lap-top, PDA or PC.

Personally-developed materials, including dictionaries, glossaries and thesauri, are not permitted. It should be noted that NAAATI regards the addition of any notes in the margins or on pages of otherwise acceptable dictionaries, glossaries and/or thesauri as personally-developed materials and those are not allowed. NAAATI staff may request a search of electronic and/or paper materials used by candidates in tests at any time in order to establish that no personally-developed materials are available to the candidate. If such materials are found NAAATI may confiscate them and the candidate may be disqualified from sitting the test.

Candidates will be asked to declare on the front cover of their examination answer booklet the type of electronic device(s) they used during their test by the make and model number (eg, electronic dictionaries, glossaries, thesauri).

Candidates are responsible for providing their own dictionaries, glossaries and thesauri that meet NAAATI guidelines as NAAATI does not supply these. No materials can be shared during a test.

Please note that different rules apply for Advanced Translator tests. Please contact the NAAATI National Office if you need information about these.

- ### 7. GENERAL REFERENCES
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