
Remote Interpreting Best Practice Checklists

Remote interpreting requires the right setup and an understanding of how to make it work without hitches.

These best practice checklists for clients, language service companies and interpreters help you prepare for a successful telephone or video remote interpreting session.



Association of
Translation Companies
DEFINING STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE

Chartered Institute
of Linguists

The logo for the Chartered Institute of Linguists (CIOL), consisting of the letters 'CIOL' in white on a black square background with a small red square at the bottom right corner.

CIOL



The Chartered Institute of Linguists (CIOL) is the leading professional membership body for people using foreign language skills at work, with 7,000 members worldwide. It is the only organisation that can offer Chartership, a badge of quality and competence. Through CIOL Qualifications, we deliver fully regulated professional language qualifications. See the CIOL website for further information.

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The Association of Translation Companies (ATC) is a professional membership association representing the interests of language service companies in the UK and internationally. The ATC is the leading voice for companies operating in the UK's language services industry. See the ATC website for further information.

<https://atc.org.uk/>

Clients

Technology

<p>Have you selected a technology platform or software with appropriate security for your purposes?</p> <p>Talk to your interpreting services provider and IT department if you need help in deciding which technology or platform is right for you.</p>	
<p>Have you got a robust enough technical infrastructure and Internet connection to support remote interpreting?</p>	
<p>Have you put in place a continuity plan if the quality of the connection is poor?</p> <p>For example, switching from video remote interpreting to telephone interpreting on the fly.</p>	
<p>Have you ensured that all rooms and areas used for remote interpreting have the required connectivity?</p> <p>Use wired connection or WiFi boosters if possible.</p>	
<p>Have you ensured that all rooms and areas used for remote interpreting are private and noise-free?</p> <p>The interpreter must be able to hear clearly what is being said.</p>	
<p>Have you ensured that all equipment used for remote interpreting is available when required, fully charged and installed with the relevant and up to date software? Ensure sufficient time to check audio/video feed and volumes before the meeting commences.</p>	
<p>Have you checked that audio and video setups on the equipment used are sufficient for all parties to hear and see each other?</p> <p>Do not use a speakerphone. Use headphones for best audio quality and confidentiality. The microphone can be selected and volume can be boosted through the remote interpreting platform and operation system. Video feed quality can be lowered to improve latency and connection.</p>	
<p>Have you checked and informed all parties which interpreting mode the platform supports?</p> <p>Check and confirm whether the interpreting is to be carried out simultaneously or consecutively (in turns).</p>	

Clients

Preparation

<p>Have you assessed whether the assignment can be carried out remotely or whether it would be more appropriate to schedule face-to-face?</p> <p>Consider doing a practice run if there are a number of participants.</p>	
<p>How long is the assignment?</p> <p>Calls via video can be more taxing than face to face interpreting. Inform the interpreter if the assignment may take longer.</p>	
<p>Do you have a process in place for tasks such as translation work during the call?</p>	
<p>Have you ensured each participant is able to join via a separate device?</p> <p>Use separate devices where possible for best audio quality. The interpreter must be able to hear and see all parties clearly.</p>	
<p>Do you understand how the chosen platform works and how the interpreter should connect to the assignment?</p> <p>Joining instructions can be provided to the interpreter prior to the remote assignment.</p>	
<p>With video, have you ensured that the background behind you is clean, tidy and professional?</p>	
<p>Have you reserved time for the interpreter be briefed before the start of the assignment before the client joins the meeting?</p> <p>Agree a protocol for the interpreter to use e.g. raising of hands in order to get your attention.</p>	

Clients

Assignment

Don't allow interruptions to the assignment, for example, take calls on another phone, or speak with others.	
Introduce the interpreter and their role, or allow them to introduce themselves and explain their role.	
With video, ensure that the interpreter can see all participants present, and that you are seated in a way that the interpreter can see who is speaking.	
Check that sound quality is good and clear, and that there are no echoes or distractions from other meetings.	
Confirm whether the interpreting is to be carried out simultaneously or consecutively.	
Avoid having people speaking on top of each other. Agree how participants signal whose turn it is to talk. Look up at the camera as much as possible.	
Don't forget to pause for interpreting, if the interpreting is not done simultaneously consecutively.	
Ensure that there are adequate breaks during the assignment. Consider having a short break of 10 minutes every hour, unless there is other downtime during which the interpreter is not required. Ensure that you turn off your audio and video during breaks.	
Pace your speech and bear in mind that there maybe a delay in transmission.	

Follow up

Debrief the interpreter at the end of the assignment, and agree on timings and methods for any follow up activities.	
Report to the Language Service Provider on any issues with the assignment, technical or otherwise and any follow up activities agreed with the interpreter.	

Language Service Companies

Technology

Research and inform interpreters about various technology platforms and their applications.	
Set up tests, practice and connectivity with various technology platforms.	
Provide interpreters with a list of technical requirements for the platforms they will be using.	
Set up and inform the client and interpreter about alternative channels for carrying out the assignment if communication on the chosen platform breaks (e.g. alternative platform / phone number)	

Preparation

<p>Make sure you are aware which platform the client is using.</p> <p>Ensure that contractual agreements cover any potential issues with connectivity and sound quality with the platform or participants.</p>	
Ensure that the client is aware of best practice remote interpreting setups, including the use of separate devices for each participant and headsets for best sound quality.	
Ensure that the chosen interpreter has access and knows how to use the client's preferred platform.	
<p>Brief interpreter regarding the various functions of the preferred platform.</p> <p>Where possible, arrange a practice run on the platform.</p>	
Remind interpreters to adhere to the Code of Conduct in exactly the same manner as they would for a face-to-face assignment.	
Brief the interpreter on the content and duration of the assignment.	
Remind the interpreter to agree with the client on timings and methods for any follow up activities.	

Assignment

Take action on any technical issues reported by the Interpreter or Client and/or provide an alternative interpreter if required.	
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Follow-up

Follow-up with the Interpreter and Client where required, as per agreed feedback process.	
Take action on any follow-up activities agreed with the Client.	

Interpreters

Technology

<p>Have you checked that you have a strong enough Internet connection to carry out the assignment?</p> <p>Use connection via a cable rather than WiFi where possible. Move close to the router or use WiFi booster if possible.</p>	
<p>Have you put in place a contingency plan if there are any issues with your Internet connection?</p> <p>Ensure you have access to a backup connection or provider. For example, a strong 5G/4G mobile connection. Tethering is possible with strong password protection in place.</p>	
<p>If you are using a WiFi connection, have you ensured that the WiFi network is private and protected?</p> <p>The use of public WiFi networks and hotspots is not appropriate.</p>	
<p>Does your device have a camera for video calls?</p> <p>Check that you have allowed pop-ups to allow the device to access your camera.</p>	
<p>Do you have a headset for audio?</p> <p>Do not use a speakerphone. Use a professional headset for best audio quality and confidentiality. The microphone can be selected and volume can be boosted through the remote interpreting platform and operation system.</p> <p>If necessary, in agreement with the client, video feed quality can be lowered to improve latency and connection.</p>	

Preparation

<p>Have you checked that all equipment is working and has the right software installed?</p> <p>Check for software updates regularly.</p>	
<p>Do you understand how the chosen platform works and how you should be connecting to the assignment?</p>	
<p>Is the environment private and noise and distraction free?</p> <p>No virtual background to be used. Be aware that the Client might ask you to show your surroundings for data protection purposes.</p>	
<p>With video, have you ensured that the background behind you is clean, tidy and professional?</p>	
<p>Have you dressed appropriately, ensure that there are no logos visible?</p>	

Interpreters

Assignment

Adhere to your Code of Conduct in exactly the same manner as you would for a face-to-face meeting.	
Don't allow interruptions to the assignment, for example, take calls on another phone, or speak with others.	
Introduce yourself and your role, or allow the client to do so. Remind all parties that you will interpret everything that is said during the assignment.	
With video, ensure that you can see all parties present, and that all parties are seated in a way that you can see and hear who is speaking.	
<p>Check that sound quality is good and clear, and that there are no echoes or distractions from other meetings.</p> <p>Microphone can be selected and volume can be boosted through the remote interpreting platform and operation system.</p>	
Agree with the client on how you should communicate if you need to pause for any reason, such as clarification, sentence too long, etc.	
<p>Agree with the Client that there are adequate breaks to the assignment.</p> <p>Please ensure that you turn off your audio and video during your break.</p>	
Remote interpreting assignments must not be audio or video recorded.	
Report any technical issues immediately to the Language Service Company so that they can give support or provide an alternative interpreter.	

Follow-up

Where relevant, hand over or destroy all notes and documents created during the assignment.	
Only keep information for as long as you need to in order to complete your job.	
Inform the Language Service Company if there were any issues (including technical).	
Advise the Language Service Company of any follow-up activities agreed with the Client.	