



**Chartered Institute  
of Linguists**

## **Admissions Criteria for Membership of the Chartered Institute of Linguists**

### **Introduction**

CIOL membership is open to all linguists; particularly those who use languages in their daily work such as professional translators and interpreters, as well as individuals who teach, research and study languages or who use them in their daily work and life.

### **Member Grades**

There are seven grades of CIOL membership, which fall into one of two categories:

#### **Professional (with designatory letters)**

- Associate (ACIL)
- Member (MCIL)
- Fellow (FCIL)

#### **Affiliate**

- Career Affiliate
- Student Affiliate
- Study Affiliate
- Affiliate Linguist

CIOL is committed to the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion. We welcome applications from all linguists, whoever they are, wherever they live and work and however they use their languages.

## Professional grades

Achieving professional membership of CIOL demonstrates that you have excellent language skills (see our CIOL Language Level Frameworks, but [typically C1 in the CEFR](#) in either reading and writing and/or speaking and listening) and meet the requirements and standards for good practice in the professional use of your language skills in the context in which you use them.

Professional membership is open to all those who use their language skills in a professional context, whether employed, contract or freelance. This includes translators and interpreters, language teachers, academics and lecturers as well as linguists who work in public services, business, the professions and international organisations.

Admittance to CIOL as an Associate, Member or Fellow is based on:

- Language qualifications in your non-native language
- Your experience and use of your languages in a professional context
- References (where necessary)
- And for Fellowship applicants, your contribution to the languages profession or to other linguists

## Associate member of the Chartered Institute of Linguists – ACIL

To become a CIOL Associate member (ACIL), you will typically hold one or more relevant language qualifications.

Given the applied nature of their qualifications, holders of the Level 7 CIOLQ Diploma in Translation, the Level 6 CIOLQ Certificate in Translation, or the Level 6 CIOLQ Diploma in Public Service Interpreting are directly eligible for Associate membership on achieving their qualification. Holders of master's degrees in Translation and Interpreting as well as bachelor's degrees in Translation or Interpreting are also directly eligible for Associate membership, subject UK equivalence confirmation.

### Directly eligible

- CIOLQ Diploma in Translation (Level 7)
- CIOLQ Certificate in Translation (Level 6)
- CIOLQ Diploma in Public Service Interpreting (Level 6)
- A Master's in Translation and/or Interpreting (Level 7 UK equivalence)
- A BA or higher degree in Translation and/or Interpreting (Level 6 UK equivalence)

### Subject to professional experience

With other language qualifications you will need at least one year's work experience (minimum of 120 days professional practice) using your non-native language skills.

- A BA or higher degree in a second language (Level 6 UK equivalence)
- A joint honours degree which includes a significant language component, e.g. Business and German (Level 6 UK equivalence)

Other certificates and diplomas (at degree and post graduate level) may also be considered based on comparability through [Ofqual](#) or [Ecctis](#).

If you currently hold NRPSI (National Register of Public Service Interpreters) Interim status, you will automatically qualify for ACIL.

As an applicant you will need to provide a CV or LinkedIn profile that demonstrates that you match the

criteria above. If you need to demonstrate work experience, you will need to provide contact details for two referees who can confirm the quality of and your ability to work in your non-native language. Your referees must know you in a professional capacity.

### Special Consideration

If you do not meet the qualifications criteria for Associate above, but you can evidence at least three years' work experience (minimum of 120 days per year) using your language skills to a professional level (as set out in the [CIOL Professional Language Levels Framework](#)) then we can treat your application for Special Consideration.

References will be required to assist with the assessment of your Special Consideration application. If you would like to more information or advice, please feel free to contact the [membership team](#) before completing your application.

*All Associate members can upgrade to full Member once they have obtained the requisite work experience and/or qualifications.*

### **Member of the Chartered Institute of Linguists – MCIL**

To become a full Member (MCIL), you will normally have three or more years of experience using your languages in a professional capacity (averaging 120 days professional practice/use of your languages per year) as well as one or more of the following qualifications:

- A degree or postgraduate qualification in your non-native language or language specialism such as translation or interpreting
- A joint honours degree including at least one language

Other certificates, diplomas at degree and postgraduate level will be considered based on comparability through [Ofqual](#) or [Ecctis](#).

Given the very high level of attainment and applied nature of master's level qualifications, holders of the Level 7 CIOLQ Diploma in Translation or a master's qualification (Level 7 UK equivalence) in translation, interpreting or in non-native language or language specialism, the requirement is reduced a minimum of two years' professional experience (averaging 120 days professional practice/use of your languages per year).

If you currently hold NRPSI (National Register of Public Service Interpreters) Full Status you will automatically qualify for MCIL.

If you do not meet the criteria (for example you do not hold the requisite qualification), but you have at least five years' work experience using your foreign language skills in a professional, teaching or academic context, then we may be able to treat your application as a special consideration case. If you would like to more information or advice, please feel free to contact the membership team before completing your application.

### **Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Linguists – FCIL**

Fellowship is CIOL's highest level of professional membership and may be awarded to a member with a high level of linguistic competence and distinguished service to languages, who will then be expected to become a role model and ambassador for CIOL and the language profession.

The purpose of the Fellowship award is to recognise and encourage ongoing service to the profession, languages and other linguists, rather than to confer status or recognise time as a member. A Fellow

embraces languages, leads within the profession, pushes new boundaries in their work and activities and seeks opportunities to share their knowledge and expertise.

### **Advice to Applicants for Fellowship**

To be considered for Fellowship (FCIL), you will normally be a full Member of CIOL (MCIL). In addition, you will have made a sustained and significant contribution to languages and the language profession over-and-above the ordinary performance or professional contribution/output expected as part of your work. This should include a significant contribution to the growth and development of others.

Applicants for Fellowship will normally have a minimum of 10 years' experience in the languages profession as a translator, interpreter, an educator, academic or professional linguist.

- For members, applications to upgrade to Fellowship may be considered by CIOL once a member has completed 12 months' membership at MCIL level.
- For non-members, a successful application for CIOL membership and 12 months at MCIL is required before an application for Fellowship may be considered.

All applications for Fellowship will be considered by the CIOL Membership Committee which meets regularly throughout the year. When considering an award of Fellowship, the Membership Committee will attach particular importance to an applicant's personal statement looking at their career progression, their contributions to the profession and to others and their standing as a linguist.

They will then consider the application, informed by the criteria of ample evidence of a sustained service/contribution to the personal growth and success of others, the wider language profession and/or the promotion of the study and wider use of languages, through one or more of the following endeavours:

- Academic research and publication
- Teaching and scholarship
- Contribution to the Continuous Professional Development (CPD) of others
- Mentoring
- Advocacy
- Supporting the Societies, Divisions and governance Committees of CIOL
- Other contributions clearly demonstrating that the applicant meets the criteria of service to languages and to others

### **Chartership**

Full CIOL Members (MCIL) and Fellows (FCIL) are also normally eligible for chartership. For more information on becoming a Chartered Linguist see the [CIOL website](#).

## **Affiliate Grades**

### **Career Affiliate**

Career Affiliate is open to anyone using their language skills extensively in a professional context, or to language practitioners who do not yet meet the qualifications or experience criteria to be admitted as an Associate.

We normally expect Career Affiliates to be able to evidence spoken language skills of at least B2 in the CEFR in line with our CIOL Language Level Frameworks.

You can apply to become a Career Affiliate if you meet one of the following criteria:

- Hold a language qualification (including a Level 3 Community Interpreting) demonstrating at least B2 level in spoken skills in the CEFR.
- Hold a degree or post-graduate qualification in a language or a joint honours degree which includes a foreign language (inter-disciplinary programmes with a foreign language component).
- Do not hold a degree or post-graduate qualification in a language but have least one year's work experience (an average of 120 days professional practice per year) using your non-native language(s) in work.

As a Career Affiliate applicant, you will need to provide a CV or LinkedIn profile that demonstrates that you match the above criteria along with two referees who can confirm the quality of your work and speaking skills in your non-native language.

### **Student Affiliate**

Applications are welcome from language students worldwide. To join as a Student Affiliate, you will normally be over 18 years of age and enrolled in a Higher Education Institution working towards achieving one of the following:

- a degree in a language
- a joint honours degree which includes a language i.e. interdisciplinary programmes with a language component
- a postgraduate programme in a language or specialism such as translation or interpreting
- a language related vocational or professional qualification

Your course of study will normally be at degree level or higher. However, this grade of membership is also open to linguists in full time study preparing for other language qualifications.

### **Study Affiliate**

Study Affiliate is designed to welcome those people studying for a CIOL Qualifications (CIOLQ) professional qualification in translation or interpreting as below:

- CIOLQ Diploma in Translation (Level 7)
- CIOLQ Certificate in Translation (Level 6)
- CIOLQ Diploma in Public Service Interpreting (Level 6)

To join as a Study Affiliate, you should be actively studying for a CIOLQ exam. If you achieve the full CIOLQ qualification you will be eligible to join as an Associate member (ACIL).

## Affiliate Linguist

Affiliate Linguist is for lovers of languages and for everyone who considers themselves a linguist in their work or lives. Affiliate Linguists come from all backgrounds, including people who:

- Studied languages at university
- Use or have used languages in their daily work
- Have lived in other countries and used languages working internationally
- Are studying for a language qualification - via a formal course or through self-study
- Are developing or maintaining their languages - this could be via Apps and online courses, self study or formal classes

Joining as an Affiliate Linguist not only helps CIOL to support and promote languages and linguists all over the world, it also helps you as a language lover to stay connected with the world of languages.

*Please note Affiliate members do not have AGM voting rights and are not entitled to use CIOL designatory 'letters' after their name.*

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## General notes

1. The conditions for admission are laid down in the Rules, which are agreed at the CIOL Annual General Meeting. Any changes to the Rules will be published on [www.ciol.org.uk](http://www.ciol.org.uk).
2. Applications for admission should be made online. If this is not possible, or for additional support, please contact the membership team on +44 (0)20 7940 3100.
3. All applications (with the exception of Student Affiliate, Study Affiliate and Affiliate Linguist) must be accompanied by an assessment fee which is non-refundable.
4. The Membership team will process your membership application within 5 working days.
5. Special consideration cases and all fellowship applications are automatically referred to the CIOL's Membership Committee which meets regularly throughout the year.
6. CIOL reserves the right to offer you a grade of membership that may be higher or lower than the grade applied for based on your application.
7. Non-UK awarded qualifications will be considered on based on comparability to UK awarded qualifications.
8. CIOL will treat all applications equally, fairly and with impartiality. Please refer to the full Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy available from <https://www.ciol.org.uk/equality-diversity-and-inclusion> for further information.
9. CIOL's decision is final. For information on appeals see <https://www.ciol.org.uk/membership-appeals>

## Other Terms and Conditions of Membership

1. You will be admitted into Membership under the conditions for admission as laid down in the Rules, which are agreed at the CIOL Annual General Meeting. Any changes to the Rules will be published on [www.ciol.org.uk](http://www.ciol.org.uk).

2. The term of membership for Student Affiliates is determined by the length of the course being studied.
3. Applications for membership are accepted at any time of the year. Membership is on a rolling 12- month basis from the date your application is confirmed and on receipt of:
  - a. The required information
  - b. The specified membership subscription fee
  - c. Satisfactory references where needed
4. By joining CIOL you agree to observe the provisions of the Charter and By-laws, the Rules and the Code of Professional Conduct and other such regulations as may be made from time to time. The code is available at [www.ciol.org.uk/code](http://www.ciol.org.uk/code).
5. You agree to provide CIOL with a personal email address and to receiving emails and other communications in relation to your CIOL membership. You will be given the opportunity to manage your own mailing preferences and to select which information you wish to receive from us via your online My CIOL account page.
6. You also agree to your personal data being held by the CIOL. For full details on how we will use and protect your personal data please read CIOL's Privacy Notice available from [www.ciol.org.uk/privacy](http://www.ciol.org.uk/privacy)
7. For the Professional Grades you also agree to be listed in the CIOL register of members and the related Member Check facility, which will be accessible to the general public, via [www.ciol.org.uk/check](http://www.ciol.org.uk/check). In addition, if you are awarded chartership, you further agree to be listed as a Chartered Linguist on the Member Check facility. If you do not want to be listed in the Member Check Facility, please contact the membership team by email at [membershipteam@ciol.org.uk](mailto:membershipteam@ciol.org.uk).
8. As professional member, you can add and update your profiles via My CIOL including Find-a-Linguist where appropriate. If you have a listing or listings in the Find-a-Linguist Directory CIOL will not be liable to you in respect of any losses or potential losses arising from the Directory or your listing being off-line or inaccurate.
9. CIOL reserves the right to add/delete and amend benefits and services. Membership fees will not be refunded either fully or partially if a benefit or service is amended or removed.
10. Assessment and membership fees are non-refundable.