

## Understanding The Key Benefits of Interpreting

[Interpreting](#) refers to the process of converting speech from one language to another, enabling individuals to communicate with each other effectively. Interpreters play a crucial role in bridging [language barriers](#), allowing individuals to understand each other and build relationships. This is particularly important where individuals need to access vital [public services](#) such as [medical and welfare](#), which they would otherwise be unable to utilise due to a language barrier and no interpretation.

With the increasing diversity of our local and UK community, it is more important than ever to understand the key benefits of interpreting.

### What is important in interpreting?

The first and most [important aspect of interpreting is accuracy](#). Interpreters must have a good understanding of the [source language and the target language](#), as well as their respective cultures, to ensure that the meaning of the speech is accurately conveyed. In addition to this, interpreters must have excellent listening and speaking skills, as well as good memory recall, in order to keep up with the pace of the conversation.

Broadly speaking, the three key areas that interpreters need to excel in are language (both languages should be level B2 or above), subject matter (relevant specialism vocabulary), and [interpreting skills](#).

### What are the key benefits of an interpreter?

In this section, we will look at some of the most important benefits of professional, interpreting to service providers and service users:

#### Accuracy

Accuracy is important in interpreting because it is crucial for conveying the intended message of the speaker or writer as faithfully as possible. Interpreters should not attempt to summarise what is said or put it into their own words. Rather, they must strive to provide an accurate rendition of the source language message, including all the nuances and subtleties of meaning, to the target language audience.

Inaccurate interpreting can lead to misunderstandings, miscommunications, and even serious consequences in certain situations, such as legal or medical settings. For example, if an interpreter incorrectly conveys medical information, it can result in incorrect treatment or even harm to the patient, which in extreme examples has even lead to death. Similarly, in legal settings, inaccurate interpretation can result in a misrepresentation of the facts, leading to an unjust outcome.

The benefit to the service providers and service users is that they can fully rely on what is being said by the interpreter as an accurate rendering of what is being said.

## Act ethically

Acting ethically in interpreting means adhering to a set of principles and guidelines that promote professionalism, impartiality, and confidentiality in the interpretation process. Ethical behavior is essential in interpreting to ensure that the interpreter maintains the trust and confidence of all parties involved in the communication, as interpreters often find themselves in highly sensitive situations.

Some key ethical principles for interpreters include:

1. Impartiality
2. Confidentiality
3. Professionalism
4. Cultural sensitivity

In addition to these principles, interpreters must also be aware of potential conflicts of interest, such as personal relationships or financial interests that could affect their impartiality or objectivity. Interpreters must disclose any potential conflicts of interest immediately.

If an interpreter acts ethically, the service providers and users can be confident they are receiving a high-quality, professional and risk free service, meaning they can speak openly and honestly.

## Active participation

Active participation of interpreters can have several advantages in the interpreting process, including:

1. Enhanced accuracy: When interpreters actively participate in the communication process, they will ask clarifying questions and seek

additional information to ensure that they have a complete and accurate understanding of the source language message. Users benefit from a reduced risk of misunderstandings or errors.

2. Improved communication flow: Active interpreters will help to facilitate the flow of communication by providing real-time assistance to speakers or listeners who are new to working with an interpreter. Interpreters can also help to bridge cultural or linguistic gaps, promoting greater understanding and cooperation between parties.
3. Increased trust and confidence: When interpreters actively participate in the communication process, they demonstrate their professionalism, impartiality, and expertise - building trust and confidence among all parties. This can help to establish a positive and productive working relationship, which in turn promotes more effective communication and collaboration.

## Avoid embarrassing misunderstandings

By interpreting effectively and using their language and cultural ability, interpreters allow both parties to speak freely in their own language and convey exactly what they mean. The interpreter's knowledge and expertise then means that the message is conveyed accurately and avoids any misunderstanding, ensuring that individuals get the help that they need.

## Bound by a code of conduct

Interpreters are bound by the interpreter code of conduct, which encompasses the points mentioned under ethical behavior mentioned above. One of the most recognisable codes of conduct is the NRPSI code of conduct, but most Language Service Providers (LSPs) have their own, as do many service providers. Knowing that an interpreter will act professionally, ethically and provide a high-quality service helps to build trust and confidence in the interpreting process which ultimately leads to a more satisfactory outcome.

## Efficient networking

Interpreters can help people network effectively by facilitating communication between parties who speak different languages, allowing them to connect, exchange information, and build relationships more easily. Some of the greatest advances are made when people from two or more cultures collaborate, and accurate interpreting can help to make that happen.

## Feeling of appreciation

People always feel more valued and appreciated when they can communicate effectively, and interpreters allow that to be a reality.

Interpreting allows individuals to feel appreciated and valued, regardless of their language ability, by increasing feelings of inclusion, enhancing understanding, increasing respect and recognition and enabling access to individuals who would otherwise not be able to make use of services and products that can help them in their day to day lives.

## Full understanding

Interpreting helps to facilitate full understanding by providing individuals who speak different languages with a way to communicate effectively and accurately. Interpreters promote understanding through:

1. Language proficiency: allowing them to accurately convey the intended message from one language to another.
2. Cultural knowledge: helping them to understand and convey the meaning and nuance of the message accurately, and overcome cultural difficulties.
3. Clarification: ensuring that the interpreter themselves fully understands the intended message, makes sure all parties have a clear understanding of the message being conveyed.
4. Avoidance of misunderstandings: Interpreters avoid misunderstandings by ensuring that the intended message is conveyed accurately and comprehensively, reducing the risk of confusion or misinterpretation.

## Maintain confidentiality

Confidentiality is an essential aspect of interpreting that provides several benefits and is a must for the sensitive situations that interpreters find themselves in daily - for instance conveying medical information.

Maintaining confidentiality helps to protect the privacy and dignity of the individuals involved in the communication process, which promotes trust, comfort, safety, and respect. Interpreters who maintain confidentiality demonstrate their commitment to protecting the personal information of the service users and providers, building trust and confidence in their professionalism and expertise.

In some contexts, such as healthcare or legal settings, confidentiality is required by law, and interpreters who comply with these legal requirements help to protect the legal rights of the individuals they are working with..

## Rapid Access

[Interpreting](#) can be accessed via the telephone or by video at a moment's notice, meaning interpreters provide rapid access to individuals who are non-English speakers, ensuring that communication barriers are quickly overcome. Interpreters help to build bridges between communities, reducing the risk of misunderstandings and allowing users to gain full access to essential services.

Interpreting situations where rapid access is needed include:

- [medical emergencies where interpreters help](#) to ensure that patients receive prompt and accurate medical attention
- [social services](#), ensuring that individuals have access to the support and assistance they need, in a timely and efficient manner
- [crime scenes](#) when police need immediate information to assess situations or to find out important information
- immigration, where it is not always known in advance what interpreters will be needed to help individuals entering the country or seeking asylum
- any appointment when it was not known an interpreter would be needed, and rescheduling may be an expensive or inconvenient option

## Reach more people

As mentioned, Interpreting enables public services to reach more people, regardless of their language ability. Even if a service user speaks the same language as a service provider, if it is not their 'preferred' language they may still prefer to communicate in their 'preferred' language so that they can be confident that their understanding is correct, particularly when dealing with complex matters such as medical or welfare.

Interpreting allows services to be accessed fairly by everyone, regardless of language or background.

## Understanding cultural nuances

Interpreters have a deep understanding of the cultural nuances of different languages and cultures, enabling them to facilitate communication and ensure that messages are conveyed accurately.

Cultural nuances can be the cause of some of the greatest misunderstandings in communication, so having an expert in both or all cultures involved helps to enhance understanding, which in turn helps service providers and users to maximise what they get from an interaction.

## Training and up-skilling

Interpreters must undergo training and up-skilling in order to maintain their professional standards, with many interpreters not able to work without passing a relevant interpreting qualification. [Professional interpreters](#) will continually develop their skills, by attending workshops and conferences, reading books and articles, and participating in ongoing training programs to ensure that they are providing a high-quality service and that they stay abreast of any changes within the industries where they work. Knowing the individuals are properly trained. This helps service users and providers to have confidence that the interpreting process and ensures that individuals receive a professional and accurate service.

## Benefits of being an Interpreter

Interpreting can be a deeply personal and unique decision, motivated by a range of factors. Here are some common reasons for becoming an interpreter:

### To aid communication

Interpreting helps individuals from diverse backgrounds and languages communicate effectively, bridging language barriers to facilitate breakthroughs in science, medicine, and technology. Interpreters also enable access to public services for those in dire need.

### To help people

Interpreting enables individuals to access public services, often those in need, such as families seeking housing, individuals seeking medical

assistance, or children seeking education. Interpreters make a difference in people's lives every day.

## Self development

Interpreting involves facilitating conversations in real-time, often in high-pressure situations, and requires confidence and knowledge. Interpreting provides an opportunity to challenge oneself and succeed in new and unfamiliar situations.

## Variety and interest

Interpreting offers a great deal of variety even within the specialised areas. No two interpreting sessions are the same, and interpreters engage with a range of people, conversations, and vocabulary.

## Job opportunities

Interpreting can make an excellent career choice, with opportunities in public services, businesses, and governments. Higher qualifications can lead to more opportunities, and interpreters can work remotely from home with flexible working hours.

## To achieve a goal

Some interpreters become involved in the profession to achieve a specific goal, such as interpreting for the European Parliament or at sporting events. Obtaining qualifications and gaining experience are often the first steps towards reaching these goals.

For those just starting out as interpreters, one of [Learn Q's Level 3 Certificate course and exam bundles](#) are a great way to become qualified and start an interpreting career. Alternatively, the book '[How to become a Public Service Interpreter](#)' at just £25 is a cost effective way to learn about interpreting skills, techniques and specialisms.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the benefits of interpreting are numerous and wide-ranging for the interpreters themselves and the people who use their services. Interpreters play a crucial role in bridging language barriers, allowing individuals to understand each other, access vital help and services and build relationships. Interpreting enables individuals to communicate

effectively, avoid misunderstandings, and reach a wider audience. Interpreting is a valuable skill to have, both for individuals and for the wider community, and one that can lead to a rewarding and fulfilling career.