

If interpreting is a career that appeals to you, you might be wondering how you can begin your journey into the profession. Fortunately, there are many different options available to you depending on your prior qualifications, competency and abilities.

As you move through education, you will study for the likes of GCSEs, A Levels and then you might progress to university where you study for a degree in your chosen subject. However, if you have decided that [interpreting](#) is for you, you might want to move into the industry as soon as possible. This is where it is important to make the right decisions based on the qualifications that are available to you.

With this in mind, you might have found that there are many different courses and levels available but it is the different levels that can often confuse you. You might be wondering what the levels mean and how they compare with standard qualifications that you can achieve in a standard university setting such as A Levels and degrees.

The reality is if you want to move into a career in community interpreting you have to take the right steps and that could begin with a Level 3 Certificate in Community Interpreting. The certification is regulated by Ofqual and it is recognised nationally and considered to be an entry-level standard for interpreting as a paid public service that covers a range of specialisms such as:

- [Mental Health](#)
- Health
- Welfare Benefits
- [Social Services](#)
- Housing
- Education
- Housing
- Immigration

The course is ideal for bilingual and multilingual people who speak English and another language fluently and already have existing experience in interpreting. This experience can come in many different forms and can also come in the form of voluntary work while you might have already finished suitable preparatory training.

The Level 3 Certificate is an exam-only qualification and the aim of the course is for you to demonstrate that you have the competence as an interpreter. Therefore, the course will not necessarily focus on learning new skills or improving your knowledge. As a result, before taking the exam, it is highly recommended that training, preparation, revision and experience are obtained and undertaken.

Understanding the Level 3 Certificate in Community Interpreting

For anyone looking to move into community interpreting, the Level 3 Certificate in Community Interpreting is designed as an introductory course to the industry. Therefore, students will then have the ability to undertake further studies as a way of enhancing their studies in the subject. The course makes it possible for individuals to begin pursuing their chosen career.

The Level 3 Certificate in Community Interpreting does not have any formal exit and it is accredited. What makes it so appealing is the way in which it can fit around your lifestyle and schedule. The Level 3 Certificate in Community Interpreting will involve the submission of coursework as well as an exam. It is also supported by learned and highly qualified tutors ensuring students can access the support they require.

What Format Does the Exam Take?

The [exam](#) is taken in the individual's chosen language combination and it places a focus on qualification specialisms such as mental health. Therefore, it entails both interpreting consecutively to and from English in a public service context, and a sight translation from English in a public service context.

Exam Preparation

When studying for a [Level 3 Certificate in Community Interpreting](#), revision should include working on vocabulary and terminology that might relate to public service specialism. Along with this, it also involves learning about industry standards which might include the National Register of Public Service Interpreters Code of Conduct as well as what the expectation of

the role might be. Therefore, you should look to practice with friends or family.

Now we have covered what the certification entails, let's look at how the certificate compares with other qualifications.

What Does the Level 3 Certificate Mean?

So, you might still be wondering what the [Level 3 Certificate in Community Interpreting](#) means and how it matches up with other qualifications. The certification is given a reference number so that it is possible to see where it sits on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). This standardised scale makes it possible to identify those other qualifications and how they compare with each other. This will then make it possible to determine how difficult or challenging each level and certificate is.

The NQF makes it possible for students to compare qualifications, giving them insight into what the course entails in terms of difficulty.

The Different Levels

So, now we can delve into the meaning behind each certificate level and how they equate to other qualifications.

Level 3 - This level covers a wide range of skills and knowledge as well as detailed knowledge in several areas. As a result, Level 3 will give individuals the potential to gain or apply a range of knowledge and skills as well as their understanding at a higher level. It is considered appropriate if you plan to apply for university, work independently or train others in your field of work. When it comes to the equivalent qualifications, this level equates to AS and A Levels as well as Access to Higher Education Diploma.

Level 4 - At this level, individuals will have advanced knowledge and skills and are aimed at technical roles that might contain supervisory or line management elements. The course will involve the analysis of high-level information and specialist learning. When we consider equivalent qualifications, this is on the same level as NVQs, HNCs and BTEC Professional diplomas.

Level 5 - When people obtain this level certificate, they will have the responsibility of making complex decisions and will provide managerial experience. Individuals will be able to enhance their depth of learning and

knowledge in interpreting which is ideal for those who are looking to move into a role that is of a higher grade. In terms of equivalent qualifications, this is the same as HNDs, NVQs, Foundation Degrees, Diploma of Higher Education and BTEC Professional diplomas.

Level 6 - This level is designed for senior and professional roles where individuals move away from gaining knowledge via study but instead, use their original research to find solutions and solve problems. Therefore, they will have to demonstrate a high level of knowledge in interpreting. The certificate is the equivalent of Bachelor's degrees, Professional Graduate Certificate in Education, Graduate diplomas, BTEC Advanced Professional diplomas.

Level 7 - This provides individuals with the ability to use their original research in order to handle and manage unpredictable situations such as those found in interpreting. They will possess a complex level of knowledge, making it possible for them to deal with complicated situations. This is the equivalent of Master's Degrees and BTEC Advanced Professional diplomas

Level 8 - For those who study at level 8, they are considered to be experts in their field and they will be able to extend their existing knowledge. This is the equivalent of Doctoral degrees and Specialist Awards.

Is it Possible to Get Into University With a Level 3 Certificate?

As the certificate is the equivalent to A Levels, then yes, it is possible to get into university. However, it is advised that you check with universities to determine their entry requirements and whether the qualifications that you plan to obtain are accepted. Each year, over 100,000 students with Level 3 certificates apply to universities in the UK. However, the natural progression into university is usually achieved following the completion of a Level 4 or 5 certificate, although some universities will accept Level 3 students.