



**FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE DES TRADUCTEURS**

La voix des associations de traducteurs, d'interprètes et de terminologues à travers le monde

**INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF TRANSLATORS**

The voice of associations of translators, interpreters and terminologists around the world

**FEDERACIÓN INTERNACIONAL DE TRADUCTORES**

La voz de las asociaciones de profesionales de la traducción, interpretación y terminología de todo el mundo

## **FIT Position Paper on Continuing Professional Development (CPD)<sup>1</sup>**

FIT, the voice of associations of translators, terminologists and interpreters around the world, wishes to state its position on Continuing Professional Development (CPD). This paper is aimed not only at the FIT associations and their individual members but also at a wider readership.

### **Significance of CPD**

CPD<sup>2</sup> can be seen as a form of life-long learning after completing one's formal training. Enhancing personal skills and capabilities is indispensable in these times of rapid change. As the adage goes, standing still means moving backwards.

In the field of translation, terminology and interpreting, CPD is generally voluntary, but in some countries it is required by law or by translator accreditation/certification schemes. In various other professions, CPD is more likely to be mandatory.

Standards, such as ISO 17100 on Translation Services, ISO 23155 on Conference Interpreting, ISO 21998 on Healthcare Interpreting, ISO 20228 on Legal Interpreting and ISO 20771 on Legal Translation, draw attention to the need for CPD.

### **Benefits**

As an outward manifestation of professionalism, CPD qualifications clearly offer competitive advantages in the fiercely contested marketplace. They enable translators, terminologists and interpreters to stand out vis-à-vis (potential) clients.

Clients themselves benefit from service providers who are well trained on a continuing basis.

In-house CPD schemes ensure that staff translators keep abreast of changes in their respective industry.

### **Types of CPD**

Nowadays there is an unprecedented spectrum of CPD options, ranging from seminars and webinars to nano or micro degrees or even BA/MA degree courses, whether full or part-time. Webinars in particular, some of them even offered free of charge, make it easier to fit CPD in where time is a scarce resource due to a heavy workload.

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<sup>1</sup> As approved by FIT Council on 29 May 2022

<sup>2</sup> For a definition please go to <https://tinyurl.com/58d5fehz> and <https://www.foreigntongues.co.uk/continuing-professional-development-cpd-translators>



Though online learning is gaining ground, on-site instruction has its advantages and is not likely to disappear. Hybrid or blended learning<sup>3</sup> combines these two worlds.

It seems certain that micro-credentials, e.g. nano or micro degrees, are likely to play an increasingly important role. They are generally offered in shorter or more flexible timespans than traditional courses and tend to be more narrowly focused. Personalised instruction is also gaining ground.

Attendance at workshops or conferences is another form of CPD. Apart from the topics covered by those events, networking with the other participants may prove beneficial and provide new insights. The same applies to research: carrying out one's own research or interacting with researchers and profiting from the findings of their research.

### **Subject-matter**

CPD for translators, terminologists and interpreters naturally covers a broad range of subjects, depending on the respective area of specialisation, whether existing or planned. This CPD focuses not only on traditional topics, such as soft skills, but also on new developments, such as artificial intelligence (AI) in connection with machine translation (MT) or speech-to-speech tools.<sup>4</sup>

Multidisciplinary CPD clearly has advantages as well.

### **Quality of CPD**

In cases where there is no accreditation of CPD providers by professional entities, the CPD offered might be deficient. For example, the content may be outdated or factually incorrect. Potential attendees must therefore be on their guard when choosing CPD events.

### **Role of associations**

CPD is primarily the responsibility of national associations and should be one of their key areas of activity. They should seek to promote CPD through suitable incentives, such as points programmes and publication of acquired CPD points in member profiles on websites accessed by potential clients. The openly displayed CPD portfolio or "learning passport" can prove to be a unique selling point (USP).

According to a survey conducted by the FIT Europe Regional Centre, more than 24% of FIT Europe associations expect members to undertake a certain amount of CPD within a certain timeframe<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> The distinction is explained here: <https://www.leadinglearning.com/hybrid-vs-blended-learning/>

<sup>4</sup> See also the FIT Position Paper on Educating the Next Generation of Translators at <https://www.fit-ift.org/publications/papers/>

<sup>5</sup> See <https://fit-europe-rc.org/en/resources/cpd/>



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Some associations offer CPD free of charge to their members or even beyond; for others it is a source of income needed to help finance other essential activities. In some cases, associations collaborate with universities or other institutions to provide CPD.

### Role of FIT

FIT also has an important role to play in this context. It can provide advice for its members and help ensure that they become aware of and have access to CPD events of other FIT members. In particular, it encourages associations to allow participants from other FIT associations to attend their own events at the same price as they charge their own members. This reciprocity is already being widely implemented.

If so decided, the FIT website could include a space where FIT members can advertise and showcase their CPD, thus establishing a point of reference for CPD at an international level for practitioners, students and universities alike.

FIT can also organise events like webinars, either itself or via its Regional Centres, concentrating above all on events for the benefit of association boards and events that are cross-border and multilingual.

Furthermore, FIT can provide support in cases where CPD is compulsory for recertification. This may generate an increase in the number of CPD events available.

### Final remark

Given the great variety of existing or evolving CPD activities, everyone in our profession should find it easy and feel motivated to make use of them to their own personal advantage. The time and money spent on CPD are certainly well invested.

### Further reading/viewing:

Taebe and Mousavi Razavi, Towards a CPD Framework of Reference for the Translation Profession, Lebende Sprachen, October 2020, <https://tinyurl.com/2p8nthah>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=roVi9l3MKt0>

Royal Statistical Society – Webinar “Continuing Professional Development – how to make it effective”

Aileen Kennedy (2005) Models of Continuing Professional Development: a framework for analysis, Journal of In-service Education, 31:2, 235-250, DOI: 10.1080/13674580500200277

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/13674580500200277?needAccess=true>

Iryna Simkova (2018) The Role of Continuing Professional Development in Translators' and Interpreters' Training. DOI: [https://doi.org/10.31435/rsglobal\\_wos/12062018/5735](https://doi.org/10.31435/rsglobal_wos/12062018/5735)

Gonzalez, E. (2019). Professional development as a vehicle on the road towards professionalism: the AUSIT experience. Intraline, 21.

[http://www.intralinea.org/archive/article/professional\\_development\\_as\\_a\\_vehicle\\_on\\_the\\_road\\_towards\\_professionalism](http://www.intralinea.org/archive/article/professional_development_as_a_vehicle_on_the_road_towards_professionalism)