

# CERTIFICATION

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## PURPOSE

The intent of this document is to provide an overview with key facts about the STIBC certification process, to address the questions and concerns that candidates have raised in the past few years, and to encourage fence-sitters to jump off and take the standardized national certification examination.

## THE BENEFITS OF CERTIFICATION

Being a “Certified” Translator and/or Interpreter has many advantages:

### National Professional Mobility

All of the provincial bodies across Canada (STIBC, ATIA, ATIS, ATIM, ATIO, OTTIAQ, CTINB and ATINS) have signed a mutual recognition agreement whereby Certified Members of one province can be “recognized” by all other provinces. Certified Members can **move to another province and practice without having to undergo another certification process**. As well, Certified Members of one province can **belong to other provincial bodies, thus increasing their potential customer base**.

### Professional Recognition

The Certified Translator (C.T.), Certified Conference Interpreter (C.C.I.), Certified Court Interpreter (C.CRT.I.), Certified Medical Interpreter (C.M.I.), Certified Community Interpreter (C.COM.I.) and Certified Terminologist (C.TERM.) designations are **true marks of professionalism which instill public trust**.

### Increased Referrals

The Society responds to thousands of public enquiries every year and refers clients to its members free of charge. As a matter of practice and policy, **preference is normally given to Certified Members**.

### “Official” Document Translation

Many government agencies and some corporations **accept only the translations produced by certified translators**. Being a certified translator can thus **increase your scope of work**.

### Higher Service Fees

















In certain settings, Certified Translators and Interpreters **can command higher fees** (e.g. Court Services Branch).

### Career Future-Proofing

As competition intensifies and with the continued professionalization of both translation and interpreting, you can **future-proof your career** by getting certified.

## PATHS TO OBTAINING CERTIFICATION WITH STIBC

The paths available to becoming certified with STIBC depend on the designation being sought, as outlined in the table below:

Designation	Examination	On Dossier	Mutual Recognition	Comments
Certified Translator (C.T.)				Examinations are available for almost 50 languages*
Certified Court Interpreter (C.CRT.I.)				Examinations are available for 6 languages*
Certified Medical Interpreter (C.M.I.)				Examinations are available for 10 languages*
Certified Community Interpreter (C.COM.I.)				Examinations are available for 10 languages*
Certified Conference Interpreter (C.C.I.)				No examination is available at present
Certified Terminologist (C.TERM.)				No examination is available at present

\* More language combinations are being added every year.

### Examination

More than 150 STIBC candidates sit the national examination every year, with an average pass rate of 26%. This pass rate is in line with ATA's pass rate and those of the other provinces. **Certification through the standardized national examination is the preferred path for all provincial bodies.**

### On Dossier

The on dossier certification process is reserved for very experienced translators/interpreters who have an extensive background in translating and/or interpreting (many books/large documents translated, over several hundred thousand words, over several thousand hours of interpretation), and/or in whose language no certification examination is offered. The process is very transparent and takes about three months once the dossier is complete. Due to the rigorous nature of the process, **ONLY two or three candidates are certified through this path every year.**

### Mutual Provincial Recognition

Annually, only a **small number of candidates** move to British Columbia from other provinces or join STIBC while still remaining residents of their respective province.

## AMERICAN TRANSLATORS ASSOCIATION (ATA)/STIBC COMPARISON

In the September/October 2016 issue of the *ATA Chronicle*, ATA’s Certification Committee informed its members of five important changes in ATA’s Certification exam procedures/process, that will take effect in 2017. The following table compares ATA’s Certification exam procedures/process (as proposed) with STIBC’s Certification:

Topic	ATA	STIBC
Exam Texts	Changing from one generic and one specialized text to two generic texts.	Will continue with the current format of one generic and one specialized text.
Eligibility Requirements	Removing education/experience requirements to take the exams. Now just have to be an ATA member and agree to its code of ethics.	Will continue with the current education/experience requirements to take the exams. Those without proper training and/or experience normally do not do well on the exams. STIBC’s eligibility requirements will become more aligned with ATA’s over time.
Practice Tests	Will start to offer translation practice tests.	Translation practice tests have been in place for several years already.
Preparation Workshops	Will start to increase availability of preparatory workshops.	Exam preparation day has been a STIBC tradition for years and is supplemented by language-specific workshops throughout the year. The new mentoring program is also designed to help candidates in that regard.
Computerized Exam Option	Option to take exam using own laptop, electronic dictionaries and WordPad/TextEdit at select locations.	This option is not available to candidates at present, but CTTIC and the provincial associations/societies are investigating the feasibility of offering this option in the near future (1-2 years).

## RECENT IMPROVEMENTS

CTTIC has made several key improvements to its standardized national certification examination in the past few years that are worth noting. The main goals were to increase transparency and to improve the candidates' learning experience.

### Markers' Training

Several face-to-face workshops and webinars were conducted to train the markers. A video was also produced for the continuing training of current and future markers.

### More Transparent and Congruent Feedback

Markers are required to submit a single marked copy. In addition, they have to justify all deductions and provide examples of acceptable translation/interpretation through a characterization sheet.

### Improved Oversight

The CTTIC exam process is now managed by more experienced staff, which has resulted in fewer complaints from candidates and a **50% reduction in the number of appeals**.

### More Training for Candidates

In recent years, STIBC has partnered with and/or encouraged local educational institutions to offer courses and programs and thus provide better training for translators and interpreters. The Society also introduced "Language-specific Workshops" and provided other preparatory opportunities for its members (exam prep. day, practice exams). The impact of these initiatives can be seen in the increased pass rate for the written examinations.

### Impact on Pass Rate

With the increase in language-specific workshops and other educational/training opportunities provided by STIBC and other institutions, as well as the improvements made by CTTIC, we have seen an increase in both the percentage and actual number of candidates who pass the written examinations.

Exam Type	2016 (2014)		Total
	Pass	Pass Rate	
Translation	28 (was 16)	21% (was 18%)	134 (88)
Court Interpretation (written)	8 (was 3)	62% (was 27%)	13 (11)
Court Interpretation (oral)	4 (was 2)	44% (remained the same)	9 (4)
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>156</b>

The Society will work with local institutions and other partners to ensure that educational/training opportunities are available for the oral component of the certification examinations, which is currently an area of concern.

**NOTE: Candidates are passing the exams in language combinations where no one had passed for several years (Farsi to English, Chinese to English, and Arabic to English).**

## TRANSLATION EXAMINATION

### Overview

The duration of the examination is three hours, during which time two texts of about 200 words each must be translated.

The examinee is given one compulsory general text of approximately 200 words and a choice between two somewhat specialized texts of about 200 words each. Candidates may bring and consult any print reference works they wish, but may not share these works with other candidates. (For languages other than English, the word count is based on the equivalent text in English.)

Candidates who wish to do so may take two examinations in different language combinations, one in the morning and the other in the afternoon.

Please note that no electronic devices, including computers, cell phones and tablets are allowed at the exam.

### Languages Offered

The translation examination is offered into and from English for almost 50 languages:

Albanian	German	Romanian
Amharic	Greek	Russian
Arabic	Hebrew	Serbian
Armenian	Hindi	Slovak
Bengali	Hungarian	Slovene
Bulgarian	Indonesian	Somali
Chinese (Simplified)	Italian	Spanish
Chinese (traditional)	Japanese	Swahili
Croatian	Korean	Swedish
Czech	Macedonian	Tagalog
Danish	Malay	Tamil
Dari	Mongolian	Thai
Dutch	Norwegian	Turkish
Farsi	Polish	Ukrainian
Finnish	Portuguese	Urdu
French	Punjabi	Vietnamese



# COURT INTERPRETING EXAM

## Overview

The written component of the court interpreting certification examination is held each year in April or May, on the same day as the translation examination. The duration of the examination is three hours and is comprised of the following parts:

Part 1: Knowledge of the Law and Court Procedures

Part 2: Professional Interpreters' Practice and Ethics

Part 3: Translation of Legal Terminology into the Language of Specialization and of a text on a Legal Theme into English

The oral component of this examination is offered several months after the results of the written examination are delivered. The duration of the examination is three hours and is comprised of the following parts:

Part 1: Sight Translation into Language of Specialization

Part 2: Consecutive Interpretation dialogue

Part 3: Simultaneous Interpretation

## Languages Offered

For the May 2017 examination the following languages will be offered (other languages will be added based on future demand):

- Spanish
- Korean
- Punjabi
- Farsi
- Mandarin
- Cantonese
- Japanese

## MEDICAL INTERPRETING EXAM

### Overview

The written component of the medical interpreting certification examination will be offered each year in April or May, on the same day as the translation examination. The duration of the examination is three hours and is comprised of the following parts:

Part 1: Professional Interpreters' Practice and Ethics

Part 2: Translation of Medical Terminology into the Language of Specialization and of a text on a Medical Theme into English

The oral component of this examination is offered several months after the results of the written examination are delivered. The duration of the examination is three hours and is comprised of the following parts:

Part 1: Sight Translation into Language of Specialization

Part 2: Consecutive Interpretation dialogue

### Languages Offered

For the May 2017 examination the following languages will be offered (other languages will be added based on future demand):

- French
- Spanish
- Korean
- Punjabi
- Farsi
- Mandarin
- Cantonese
- Portuguese
- Arabic
- Japanese

# COMMUNITY INTERPRETING EXAM

## Overview

The written component of the community interpreting certification examination will be offered each year in April or May, on the same day as the translation examination. The duration of the examination is three hours and is comprised of the following parts:

Part 1: Professional Practice

Part 2: Ethics

Part 3: Translation of a text on a Community Services theme/topic into English

The oral component of this exam is offered several months after the results of the written exams have been delivered. The duration of the examination is three hours and is comprised of the following parts:

Part 1: Sight Translation into Language of Specialization

Part 2: Consecutive Interpretation dialogue

## Languages Offered

For the May 2017 examination the following languages will be offered (other languages will be added based on future demand):

- French
- Spanish
- Korean
- Punjabi
- Farsi
- Mandarin
- Cantonese
- Portuguese
- Arabic
- Japanese

## FREQUENTLY-ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

### 1. Are the markers biased?

This is the question candidates ask most frequently. The concern expressed is that markers will fail candidates on purpose to avoid creating new competition, especially if the markers are from the same province. There are several safeguards in place to mitigate this perceived problem:

- A) The markers are vetted when they are used to mark provincial entrance and practice exams.
- B) The identities of the candidates are not known to the markers.
- C) The performance of each marker is reviewed annually.
- D) Each marker must justify all points deducted and provide one agreed-upon characterization sheet in collaboration with a co-marker.
- E) All exam markings are reviewed by the exam coordinator.
- F) Markers from other countries are used when warranted.
- G) Above all, the markers are chosen based on their professionalism.

### 2. Am I being certified by CTTIC?

The short answer is NO. STIBC utilizes the standardized national exam created by CTTIC to test its candidates, but “certification” is the purview and legal responsibility of STIBC.

### 3. How many times a year are the certification examinations offered?

For now the certification exams are offered once a year (usually in April/May for the written exams and at a later date for the oral exams).

### 4. What do I do if exams for my language combination are not offered?

You can request that STIBC encourages CTTIC to add your particular language combination or if you qualify, you can apply for certification using the on dossier process.

### 5. What if I disagree with the results?

First of all, we highly encourage candidates to review the feedback from the markers. Some candidates have wanted to appeal without taking the time to review valuable feedback from the markers. In accordance with CTTIC regulations, any candidate who fails the examination may appeal the result within one month of being notified of the results. A fee is payable for such appeals and will be refunded if the appeal is successful. The appeal decision is final.

### 6. Why does it take so long after the interpretation written exam to offer the oral component of the exam?

There are two main reasons why the oral exams are scheduled months after the written exams:

- A) The exams can be scheduled only after the results of the written exams are known (i.e. there is no need to plan for a Korean oral exam if no one has passed the Korean written exam).
- B) As the oral exam is quite difficult, candidates have expressed the desire to practice for several months in preparation for the oral exams.

## 7. Where can I get more detailed information about certification?

Please visit the “Certification” tab on the STIBC website. And, you can also call the STIBC office for assistance and guidance.

The screenshot shows the STIBC website interface. The browser's address bar displays 'www.stibc.org'. The website header includes the STIBC logo, the text 'Society of Translators and Interpreters of British Columbia', and social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. A search bar is located in the top right corner. The main navigation menu is highlighted in blue, with the 'Certification' tab selected and a dropdown menu open. The dropdown menu lists the following items: 'Certification Roadmap', 'Criteria for Certification', 'Certification Practice Exam', 'Translation FAQ', 'Interpretation FAQ', 'CTIC Translation Exam Sample Tests - English', 'On Dossier Evaluation', and 'CTIC Markers' Training'. Below the navigation menu, there are several content blocks: 'Find a Member' with a magnifying glass icon, 'STIBC's Mission Statement' with a paragraph of text, and two promotional banners for SFU (加拿大溫哥華西門菲沙大學) and UBC (University of British Columbia) Continuing Studies. On the right side, there are sections for 'WHAT'S NEW' and 'EVENTS', each with a list of recent news items and upcoming events. At the bottom, there are buttons for 'Become a Sponsor', 'Post a Job', 'TRANSLetter', and 'Workshops'. The Windows taskbar is visible at the very bottom of the image.