Language Policy

Introduction and general principles

iPET Network intends to support languages other than English and Welsh as fully as possible but is not in a position to do so immediately. In principle, the company will respond flexibly to any proposals for language support. In England and Northern Ireland all assessments will take place in English.

The company policy is that the English version of the handbook, the assessment criteria and the supporting documentation in English define any awards made that are recognised by the UK Regulators. As sufficient demand is built in a non-native English speaking or bilingual region, to justify implementing the full quality assurance procedures applied to Training Providers in England, all the necessary language support will be provided and the Regulator will be contacted in order to obtain permission to issue approved certificates in the target language.

The materials enable them to be freely translated by anyone. This lowers the barrier to take up which is a fundamental aim of iPET Network. However, certificates approved by the Regulator will be only made available to Training Providers where the full quality assurance procedures can be implemented and where the translation is verified to be equivalent to the English version in defining student outcomes. iPET Network will co-operate fully with any individual or group wanting to support translation into a particular language in addition to any languages where there is sufficient demand for iPET Network to fully support the language centrally. There are so many possible languages to deal with that it is not reasonably possible to deal with all of them before there is at least some proven demand, but the strategy makes the practical take up of a wide range of languages over the next few years much more likely. By making it possible for minority language groups to do their own translations we increase the flexibility and lower the barrier to any particular minority language that wants to take part since it is perfectly viable for an individual to do the necessary translations should they be motivated to do so.

Communicating bi-lingually with Training Providers

iPET Network will only accept Training Providers that are prepared to communicate in English until such time as it is economically viable to employ translators. This will be determined by demand for particular languages from the Training Provider. In the interim we will work pro-actively with any Training Provider or prospective Training Provider on including a particular language. To start with this might be a joint project in translation with communication in English. The project would involve trials using certificates that do not carry the logos of the Regulator building to a position where it is possible to employ a person bilingual in English and the target language to act as the trained agent of iPET Network and to be responsible for quality assurance in that region. This would provide the region where the supported language is in operation with an IQA.

In the cases of Welsh and Irish, where there is demand from Training Providers where these languages are spoken, we will implement the same procedures for translation seeking Regulatory approval for these language versions when the quality assurance can be assured.

Translating the criteria, handbook and supporting documentation

Any translations of the criteria and handbook will be carried out by a native speaker of the target language who has a good command of English and is technologically capable. This will ensure that the translations expect a consistent and comparable demand on students. For approved certificates to be issued in a language other than English, there must be at least a good translation of the website, the handbook and the policy statements banked with the Regulator into the target language. iPET Network will make all the documents available to any language community that wishes to do it's own translation.

iPET Network is willing to get independent verification that the translation is a fair reflection of the definitive English versions. In addition, there must be sufficient density of demand to enable the quality assurance procedures to be put in place and, in practice, that is likely to be a greater limiting factor than the language itself. Plain English documents that are finalised as suitable for banking by the Regulator will have already been read by several people which may include non-native speakers of English and with varying technical knowledge. The final versions will be edited by a qualified technical writer who is trained in making technical documents accessible to non-technical people.

The use of the Welsh language

Please refer to our 'Welsh Policy Statement'

The use of the Irish language

iPET Network intends to support languages other than English as fully as possible. In the specific cases of using the Irish language, the intention is to provide full language translations as soon as there is evidence of demand from Training Providers where Irish is in use. The speed of getting the translation work done will depend to an extent on the economics of carrying out the work. iPET Network will co-operate fully with any individual or group wanting to support translation into Irish in keeping with its wider languages policy irrespective of whether there is specific demand in any registered Training Provider. This enables the Irish language versions of the qualification to be supported before there is any demand in any of the Training Providers to justify the costs to the iPET Network. Under such circumstances, having such translations available could encourage Training Providers to participate in Irish that would not otherwise have done so and this will then generate the income to enable iPET Network to take over maintenance of these language versions of the certification.

Sign language

English, Welsh and Irish sign language can be used as a reasonable adjustment for Candidates that have appropriate professional support as long as the Training Provider can demonstrate that the assessment can be conveyed accurately in this manner.

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	1	
13/01/2022	2	Annual policy review
29/11/2023	3	Updated wording to be more concise and to meet our bilingual qualifications