



**SATI**

SOUTH AFRICAN  
TRANSLATORS' INSTITUTE

# South African Translators' Institute

Accreditation examination in General Translation

# Prerequisites for the general translation examination

To qualify for application for this examination, the following prerequisites are required:

- SATI membership of at least three months (student members do not qualify)
- Paid up SATI membership fee

# Prerequisites for the general translation examination (continued)

- A post-secondary language practice qualification plus evidence of at least three years' language practice work in the relevant discipline (with professional references)  
*or*
- Evidence of at least five years' language practice work in the relevant discipline (with professional references)  
*or*
- Current SATI accreditation  
*or*
- Membership of/or current accreditation by a FIT member association accepted by the SATI Council

# Optional SATI practice test in general translation

- If candidates feel unsure about their translation standard, they can first write an optional practice test in translation before proceeding to the actual examination in translation.
- Writing and passing the optional practice test in translation is not a prerequisite to qualify for the actual translation examination.

# The idea behind the practice test

- This is a short practice test in translation to give you an idea of what the eventual accreditation examination in translation would be like.
- Writing the test is not compulsory. It is recommended, though, as it will give candidates an idea of whether they are likely to pass the accreditation examination.
- Note that passing the test is not a guarantee that the examination will be passed.

# Difference between the practice test and the examination

- The practice test consists of one compulsory text and the examination consists of at least six texts from which the candidate may choose four texts to translate.
- The practice test must be done within a three-month window period. The test is marked by one examiner and the examination by two examiners who works independently and anonymously.
- Candidates who wrote the optional practice test in translation will receive the marked test paper back, as well as a report. However, they will not be able to communicate with the examiner directly. All communication is done through the SATI Accreditation Office.
- Candidates who wrote the translation examination will receive a complete report from the SATI Accreditation Office.

# An unsuccessful result in the practice test

The following waiting periods apply before the candidate could apply for either another practice test or for the accreditation examination in translation:

- No major errors and up to 15 minor errors: 3 months
- No major errors and 15+ minor errors: 6 months
- One or more major errors and up to ten minor errors: 6 months
- One or more major errors and ten minor errors: 8 months

# Preparation for the examination

- The SATI examination in general translation is designed for candidates who are already experts and seasoned translators and would like to add SATI accreditation to their qualifications.
- SATI does not train translators and we do not offer preparation material to prospective candidates.



# Examination venue and date

- A suitable examination date and time is agreed upon.
- On this pre-set day and time, the candidate will receive the examination documents in electronic format via email with a password protected entrance.
- The candidate should complete and return the examination within 24 hours.
- Candidates will complete a Solemn Statement declaring that the translation is their own work.
- If any examination conditions are not complied with, the examination will be declared null and void, the examination fee will be forfeited and the candidate will have to wait 12 months before he/she may apply to write the examination again.

# The examination format

- The examination paper in translation is provided to you electronically.
- There are between six and eight texts.
- Text 1 is a general text – an opinion piece, magazine article or similar. This text is compulsory and must be translated.
- The candidate chooses three more texts to translate, from a selection of different topics such as: business/finance/economics, law, science/medicine, sport or environment/geography.

# Tips for writing the examination

The following directives are advised when writing this examination:

- Read through all the texts before deciding which to translate.
- Read the instructions carefully.
- Analyse the text for tone, style, emphasis, context, context, etc.
- Candidates should plan time carefully to spend enough time on each text.
- Translate in the same style and register as the source text.

# Tips for writing the examination (continued)

- Use double spacing and font size 12 in Calibri or Times New Roman.
- Use a spellchecker.
- If translating into English, always use English (UK).
- Proofread carefully for typos, extra spacing and other odd formatting.
- Double-check that no sentences or important segments of information have been omitted.

# Recommended sources

The following are allowed and recommended when writing the examination in translation:

- A spellchecker for the target language.
- Any dictionaries, glossaries, wordlists, reports, grammar guides, thesaurus and books on language.
- Internet resources.

# Assessment

- An examination paper in general translation is marked by two examiners.
- The examiners do not have contact with each other and the candidate remains anonymous.
- These examiners are professional, experienced and accredited translators.
- The final result is approved by the SATI Council.

# Assessment (continued)

The following are considered major errors in the translation examination:

- **Gross mistranslation** – where the meaning is lost completely
- **Omission** of vital information
- **Insertion** of information
- Including **alternate translations** (instead of making a choice)
- **Failure in target language grammar** (e.g. concord, tense, conjugation, prepositions, idiom)

# Assessment (continued)

The following are considered minor errors in the translation examination:

- **Mistranslation** – where the meaning is distorted slightly
- **Omission** of less important information
- **Inelegant target language grammar** (e.g. word order, spelling, punctuation)



# Assessment (continued)

The following points are also considered:

- The target text must stand as a text in its own right.
- The target text must read like an original.
- The equivalent pass mark (e.g. in an academic examination) would be around 90% (in other words, almost perfect).

# Assessment (continued)

The following number of errors will result in a fail in the translation examination:

- Two or more major errors overall  
*or*
- Twenty or more minor errors overall  
*or*
- One major error plus sever minor errors in one question  
*or*
- Ten or more minor errors in one question

# Assessment (continued)

## Using annotations:

- Candidates are allowed to make use of annotations (footnotes) in the examination, to explain to the examiner that a particularly difficult decision that was made.
- Annotations should be used sparingly.

# Report to the candidate

- Marking of the examination paper in translation can take up to six weeks.
- Candidates will receive a report with a selection of examiners' comments.

***Note:***

- Not all errors will be listed in the report.
- Candidates will not see their marked scripts.

# Accreditation certification

- Successful candidates will receive an accreditation certificate.
- Successful candidates' names will appear in SATI's list of accredited members.
- Successful candidates may use their accreditation status in communication with clients, i.e. in an email signature.

# Unsuccessful examination result

- If a candidate fails, it means that he/she was not able to produce work of the required standard for accreditation in translation on the day of the translation examination.
- The candidate should read the comments carefully and follow the advice given.
- An unsuccessful candidate may reapply to write the accreditation examination in translation after one year.

# An unsuccessful examination result (continued)

The following waiting periods will apply for rewriting a practice test or accreditation examination in translation:

- No major errors and up to 15 minor errors: 3 months
- No major errors and 15+ minor errors: 6 months
- One or more major errors and up to ten minor errors: 6 months
- One or more major errors and ten minor errors: 8 months

# Appeal process

An appeal process is available.

- A candidate who wants to lodge an appeal should submit an application form and proof of payment within 8 weeks after having received the result.
- The original examination script will be marked by a third examiner and his/her report will be the final result.
- Once the final result is made available, no further correspondence will be entertained.
- If the 'Fail' result is overturned, the candidate will be refunded for the appeal and will be considered accredited in translation.



# Duration of accreditation

Accreditation remains valid as long as an accredited translator remains a member of SATI. Please note:

- Accreditation lapses when membership lapses.
- If a candidate subsequently wishes to become re-accredited, he/she will have to apply to the Accreditation Committee to review their case. This committee will decide whether the person could retain their accreditation status or if the person should pass the examination again.



For any further  
information

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