



# TRANSLATION NETWORKS BOOKLET

**NEW EDITION (2019)**



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## Translation Networks Project

The Translation Networks Project was set out in 2015 to provide T&I students with information concerning the field of translation within the North East and some further out. This year's iteration of the project has focused on bringing an interpreting element into the fold and dispelling rumours and myths to do with it.

The goals of the workshop and trip to RWS Alnwick was to allow students to gain an insight on the everyday running of a translation agency – and the various roles besides translator and/or interpreter that is required for a translation agency to operate smoothly.

The previous version of the project focused on clearing up any concerns, doubts or questions students may have had to do with freelance translation or in-house. This information is all still relevant and can be found within the booklet. This year I have been fortunate enough to meet with various alumni from Newcastle University School of Modern Languages; one, who, after graduating in 2009, currently lives as a translator and interpreter in Germany, and three others who graduated only last year. July 2018 was the first year that we had students graduating from our BA degree title; I managed to chat with three of these graduates to see what they were up to now. As with the previous version, there is a glossary at the end of the booklet with any terms that may be unfamiliar. These are marked with a 1 number in the texts.

When I started this project, I had hoped to add a section about Brexit, its consequences and how it shall affect us – sadly, due to no concrete legislation or procedures set at the time of writing this, this was not possible. However, it is safe to say this; with more and more schools, colleges and even universities closing down their language departments, our skills will be more and more in demand.

I would like to thank the alumni, the agencies and individuals who have agreed to answering these questions and given valuable information, whether from this year or from the last. I would also like to thank Rachel Cross, the previous Project Manager, as without her hard work and effort in establishing the original version, this version could not have happened.

If you have any questions or feedback regarding the booklet, the field trip or the workshop, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me at [r.p.a.budden@newcastle.ac.uk](mailto:r.p.a.budden@newcastle.ac.uk).

Happy reading!

*Rebecca*

# AccuEast

**Address:** AccuEast Ltd, Merchant House, 30 Cloth Market, Newcastle, NE1 1EE

**Website:** <http://www.accueast.com/>

Specialised in translation between English and Chinese, AccuEast is committed to helping organisations overcome language and cultural barriers, enabling them to succeed in this era of globalisation.

## **1. Languages worked with.**

Originally between Simplified Chinese and English. Japanese, Korean, Thai, Arabic and Russian added in 2018.

## **2. Vacancies / Application process**

Unfortunately, there are no vacancies.

## **3. Employees. Freelance or In-House**

We have over 100 translators and interpreters registered with us.

## **4. Qualifications/ Skills needed before applying**

To work with us, a linguist must:

- translate only into their native languages;
- have at least 3 years translating experience, or have professionally translated over 150,000 words;
- have an industry-specific expertise for a particular subject or industry sector;

- provide examples for all the subjects he/she claims to be an expert for;
- provide details of at least 2 references.

#### **4. Job roles besides translators**

Project manager and maybe IT expert in the future.

#### **6. Services offered apart from translation**

Interpreting

#### **7. Specialisations; Legal, medical, etc.?**

Financial, Marketing, Medical, Legal, Science and Technology

#### **8. Internships**

They are offered. But at the moment there is no need.

To view more information, please go to [www.accueast.com](http://www.accueast.com).

# Comtec Translations

**Address:** Second Floor, 93-95 Bedford Street, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, CV32  
5BB

**Website:** [www.comtectranslations.co.uk](http://www.comtectranslations.co.uk)



Over the past 30 years, Comtec have built a strong reputation within the translation industry.

Their size and experience means they are a very capable and safe pair of hands. Small enough that they can be flexible and responsive, yet big enough to meet the demands of their larger multi-national clients.

## **1. Languages worked with.**

We translate from and into 200+ languages.

## **2. Vacancies / Application process**

We don't have any current vacancies. The application process will depend on the role advertised.

## **3. Employees. Freelance or In-House**

We work with principally with freelance translators and have a global network of 4,000 linguists, all of whom have been assessed in order to work with us. We have an in-house team of account managers, project managers and project coordinators who then organise translation and language projects for our clients.

#### **4. Qualifications/ Skills needed before applying.**

To ensure we provide accurate, fluent, well written and effective translations of the highest quality to our clients, we hand-pick expert and professional translators with specialist industry knowledge for each project. All our skilled translators undergo a rigorous assessment process in order to join our global network.

They are initially selected for assessment based on key criteria (Qualifications, Minimum 5 years' experience, Specialist subjects, References) and must complete a sample translation to a high standard. Should they be accepted, they are then incorporated into Comtec's on-going assessment system under which his/her work undergoes continual quality reviews.

All our professional translators work only into their native language and must have a specialist understanding of particular industry sectors and the associated terminology, as well as in-depth cultural knowledge of the target countries.

#### **5. Job roles besides translators**

We also work with freelance interpreters, voice artists, desktop publishers, website developers and copywriters. In-house we have roles for account managers, project managers, project coordinators, finance/administration and marketing/business development.

#### **6. Services offered apart from translation**

In addition to translation, we offer proofreading, interpreting, transcription, website localisation, software localisation, certification, voiceover, subtitling and brand name analysis.

#### **7. Specialisations; Legal, medical, etc.?**

We specialise in a range of industry sectors including creative, marketing, technical, legal and medical.

## **8. Internships**

We offer regular internships at Comtec for native-speaking students or graduates, preferably from France, Germany, Italy or Spain, to support our in-house project managers with carrying out quality checks on translations, recruit new translators and carry out formatting and administration tasks. We have long-standing relationships with universities in each country who advertise our internships to their students.



# Ebiquity Plc

**Address:** Q5 Quorum Business Park, Benton Lane, Newcastle upon Tyne NE12  
8BS

**Website:** [www.ebiquity.com](http://www.ebiquity.com)

Ebiquity is a Marketing Analytics<sup>15</sup> Consultancy which works with clients from all over the world. Although it provides marketing analysis services, it also has its own translation department.

The logo for Ebiquity, featuring the word "ebiquity" in a bold, blue, lowercase sans-serif font.

Data-driven insights

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## **1. Languages worked with.**

54

## **2. Vacancies**

Although there aren't any translation positions available at the moment, they currently have 2 vacant positions within the processing centre<sup>16</sup> for linguists fluent in German and Finnish. However, they are always seeking new talent, so they continually review speculative CVs from candidates who are interested in working for them.

## **3. Application Process**

They normally ask candidates to apply for vacancies on their website, on multiple jobs boards, linkedin and/or designated job agencies where they advertise all their vacant positions. If there are no vacancies, you can still send a speculative enquiry along with a CV to the Recruitment Co-ordinator

lisa.scott@ebiquity.com. After applying, if a candidate has what they are looking for, they will test their language skills in advance. Subject to passing, successful applicants will be retained in their database for future work.

#### **4. In-House or Freelance?**

16 dedicated in house translators plus a variable number of freelance translators, on an ad-hoc basis.

#### **5. Qualifications / Skills required before applying.**

They are happy to consider any candidate fluent in the required language. An essential is that they also have a good command of English. In terms of work history, they look for candidates who have preferably had experience of working in an office environment and who can meet targets.

#### **6. Job roles besides translators.**

They are the processing centre for Ebiquity and therefore they do not carry the traditional roles such as sales, customer service, admin etc. While there is a dedicated translation team within the company, in general, the majority of roles are not translation roles, they are linguist roles, as there are other elements to the role. They also have UK-only Advertising Monitors, where fluency in a language is not required.

#### **7. Specialisation; Legal, marketing, etc.**

Not at the processing centre.

#### **8. Internships**

They aren't looking for language interns.

# Eldon Bureau

**Address:** Suite 7, 3rd Floor Bulman House, Henry St, Newcastle upon Tyne,  
Tyne and Wear NE3 1DQ

**Website:** [www.eldonbureau.com](http://www.eldonbureau.com)

Having been founded in 1965, Eldon Bureau is Tyneside's oldest language provider and is part of the Contract Design Group<sup>1</sup>



## **1. Languages worked with**

They cover 135 languages worldwide between their translator and interpreter pools

## **2. Availability of vacancies/ Application process.**

They contract freelance translators/interpreters when necessary (they either recruit them when the project load requires it or they consider collaboration requests sent by freelance translators/interpreters). To apply, Eldon asks applicants to send a CV via e-mail, which can be found on their website. Upon receiving CV, Eldon Bureau assesses the applicant's suitability and, if they are deemed suitable, sends the registration documents (including their Code of Practice and adherence to Data Protection legislation) to be filled in and returned along with the relevant translation/ interpreting and English language qualifications.

## **3. Amount of employees/ Freelance or In-House.**

Eldon Bureau has a registered database of approximately 600 freelancers.

#### **4. Qualifications / Skills required before applying.**

Eldon assesses the applicants in the following areas:

- Language combinations (the languages you translate from/into)
- Qualifications – a degree or diploma in languages or translation (preferred)
- Previous experience
- Rate charged per 1,000 words
- Flexibility and availability
- How many words they can translate per day (around 2,000 words per day preferably)

#### **5. Other job roles besides translators.**

Interpreters, Translation Project Managers, Proof-readers

#### **6. Services offered aside from Translation**

Interpreting (Community, Court, etc.); Telephone Interpreting; Proofreading<sup>2</sup> & Transcription<sup>3</sup>; Desktop Publishing (DTP)<sup>5</sup>; Transcreation; Website Localisation<sup>7</sup>

#### **7. Specialisations; Legal, medical, etc.?**

Marketing Brochures; Leaflets and Mailshots; Website Localisation; Tourist Information Guides; Patents<sup>8</sup>, Instructions and Service Manuals; Legal Contracts; Technical, Medical & Insurance Documents; Birth, Death & Marriage Certificates; Diplomas and Degree Certificates

## **8. Internships.**

Eldon has accepted interns and work experience students in the past. However, due to recent restructuring and some internal changes, they are not in a position to offer this opportunity at the moment.

# Hogarth

Address: N/A

Website: hogarthww.com

**Hogarth is a marketing implementation agency.**

**We produce advertising and other marketing communications for our clients across all media and all languages. Our production expertise coupled with our powerful workflow and asset management technology delivers quality control and savings for global brand.**



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## **1. Languages worked in.**

Hogarth provides services into +140 languages.

## **2. Vacancies/ Application Process.**

There are multiple vacancies at the moment and on a regular basis. The best way to apply is to keep an eye on the positions advertised in

linkedin:

<https://www.linkedin.com/jobs/search?keywords=Hogarth%20Worldwi>

[de&f C=204445&trk=tyah&trkInfo=clickedVertical%3Asuggestion%2Ccli](https://www.hogarthww.com/jobs/)  
[ckedEntityId%3A204445%2Cidx%3A1-3-](https://www.hogarthww.com/jobs/)  
[3%2CtarId%3A1482931787512%2Ctas%3AHogarth%20Worldwid](https://www.hogarthww.com/jobs/)

Alternatively, it is possible to contact our recruitment team as per link below: <https://www.hogarthww.com/jobs/> or by following us on LinkedIn

### **3. Employees/ Freelance or In-House**

We employ around 200 project managers worldwide to deal with language /media project management.

We do not employ in-house linguist but work with a network of around 900 talents worldwide. Our Talent Management Team are in charge of all the vetting required. They can be contacted on [TalentManagement@hogarthww.com](mailto:TalentManagement@hogarthww.com)

### **4. Qualifications needed before applying.**

Hogarth requires translators to hold a degree in translation as a minimum. Ideally, we prefer working with talent who also have experience in specific fields (marketing, creative writing, cultural insight, etc).

### **5. Job roles besides translators**

Project management, engineering, manager are some of the other roles available to candidates with the right experience/interests.

### **6. Services offered apart from translation**

Copy editing; proofreading; subtitles; voice-over scripts; multilingual SEO/SEM; talents management; terminology management; interpreting; transcription

## **7. Specialisations; Legal, medical, etc.?**

Advertising, marketing and media. SEO, cultural insight, terminology management, etc.

## **8. Internships**

Hogarth is constantly welcoming interns. Anyone interested to join us should review the linkedin page or website listed in question 2.



# Language Marketplace

**Address:** Language Marketplace UK, 152 – 160 City Road, London, EC1V 2NX,  
United Kingdom

**Website:** [www.languagemarketplace.co.uk](http://www.languagemarketplace.co.uk)

Although Language Marketplace is a translation company based in London, they employ freelance translators from around the UK.



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## **1. Languages worked with.**

Over 140

## **2. Vacancies / Application process**

Always looking for applicants. To apply enquire via email (which can be found on their website).

## **3. Amount of employees / Freelance or In-House**

Thousands of freelance translators.

## **4. Qualifications / Skills need before applying.**

A languages degree from a major university

## **5. Job roles besides translators.**

Interpreters

## **6. Services offered apart from translation.**

Interpreting; proofreading is integrated into the translation process.

## **7. Specialisations; Legal, medical, etc.?**

Technical manuals and patents; Legal documents; Medical literature; Legal and trade agreements; Business and financial statements; Marketing, advertising and public relations materials; Magazine and newspaper articles

## **8. Internships**

Sometimes. To apply, look on their website to see if they are looking for any.

Otherwise, send them an email.

# Papillon Translations

**Address:** Floor 11, Cale Cross House, 156 Pilgrim Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne and Wear, NE1 6SU

**Website:** <http://www.papillontranslations.com/>

Although the business is managed through their website, Papillon Translations offers work experience to Newcastle University language graduates, allowing them to gain the skills needed for working in the industry.



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## **1. Languages worked with.**

150

## **2. Vacancies / Application process**

Always looking for applicants. You apply through the website; you will then have to register, provide a CV do a short assessment, a proof-reading exercise, and finally become a member.

## **3. Amount of employees / Freelance or In-House**

5700 freelance translators.

#### **4. Qualifications / skills needed before applying.**

Simply tested through assessment.

#### **5. Job roles besides translators**

Team leaders and supervisors.

#### **6. Services offered apart from translation.**

Social media publicist<sup>17</sup>; audio transcription and translation; publishing work (final manuscript translations, proof reading, etc.) interpreting, transcription.

#### **7. Specialisations; Legal, medical, etc.?**

Legal translations; technical and construction translations; computer science translations; financial; medical; website translations.

#### **8. Internships**

They accept internships through Newcastle University

# RWS Language Solutions

**Address:** Lionheart Enterprise Park, Birch Close, Alnwick NE66 2EP

**Website:** <https://www.rws.com/>

RWS Language Solutions (formerly Eclipse Translations) forms part of the RWS Group (one of the world's leading patent, technical and commercial translation companies). The company has received the Queen's Award for Enterprise five times and holds IIP (Investor in People) certification. Its principle locations are situated in Alnwick (Northumberland) and Chalfont St. Peter (Buckinghamshire).



## **1. Languages worked with.**

Over 150 languages.

## **2. Availability of vacancies / Application process**

The company recruits graduates to its Internal Translation team (usually native speakers of English with a university degree in two languages). It also recruits graduates to positions in its Project Management team. To apply, go to the following webpage:

<https://www.rws.com/careers/graduate-opportunities/>

complete the form and upload your CV. RWS Language Solutions offers in-house positions for language graduates to work as multilingual translation checkers, translators, project managers and post-editors.

To get a flavour of what it's like to work at RWS Language Solutions, please see: <https://www.rws.com/who-we-are/working-at-rws/life-at-rws-language-solutions/>

### **3. Amount of Employees/ Freelance or In-House**

Within RWS Language Solutions' offices in the UK, a total of 21 graduates are employed in translation-related roles – 12 at our offices in Alnwick and 9 at the headquarters of RWS in Buckinghamshire. There are over 265 in-house linguists within our RWS Group. We currently have over 4000 freelance translators on our database.

### **4. Qualifications / Skills required before applying.**

For in-house translation and checking positions, an undergraduate degree in languages is essential and a Masters is highly desirable.

### **5. Job roles besides translators.**

Multilingual checkers and post editors (Quality assurance staff<sup>12</sup>); project managers

### **6. Services offered apart from translation**

Full-service solutions incorporating translation, in-country review to typesetting. Interpreting; terminology management, machine translation, process optimisation, business language training.

### **7. Specialisations; Legal, medical, etc.?**

RWS Language Solutions provides translations within a very broad spectrum of specialist disciplines, including legal, financial technical, scientific, medical and marketing translations. We supply translations to major corporate organisations, small and medium-sized enterprises, government departments and executive agencies in the UK and other countries, international institutions and other translation companies around the world.

### **8. Internships**

RWS Alnwick will consider interns if the dates do not conflict with existing programmes.

# Surrey Translation Bureau

**Address:** STB Limited, Victoria House, South Street, Farnham, Surrey, GU9 7QU

**Website:** [www.surreytranslation.co.uk](http://www.surreytranslation.co.uk)



Surrey Translation Bureau  
*Your words, their language*

## **1. Languages worked with.**

We translate over 100 languages.

## **2. Vacancies/ Application Process.**

The best place to find up-to-date news about vacancies and recruitment is on our 'Work with us' page on our website. You can find details about freelancing, internships or if we are hiring for in-house positions here:

<https://www.surreytranslation.co.uk/working-with-us-translation-agency/>

## **3. Employees. Freelance or In-House**

We have 4 in-house translators (3 of whom mainly translate DE>EN and 1 EN>DE). We also have a team of project managers and a sales and accounts team. We work with a network of over 500 freelancers.

## **4. Qualifications needed before applying.**

To register with us as a freelancer, we require a recognised graduate qualification in translation; a recognised graduate qualification in another field plus two years' full-time professional translation experience; or five year's full-time professional translation experience.

## **5. Job roles besides translators.**

Sales and marketing roles, project manager, project coordinator, resource manager, resource coordinator

## **6. Services offered apart from translation**

DTP (desktop publishing), Notarisation and legalisation, localisation, terminology management, glossary and termbase creation, translation memory creation, transcreation, transcription, and copywriting.

## **7. Specialisation; Legal, medical, etc.?**

We are a generalist agency, so we translate a bit of everything. We have experience translating specialist texts in fields such as medical, legal, technical and automotive, marketing, financial, animal science, EU, the environment and sustainability.

## **8. Internships**

Yes, we accept interns throughout the year. Internships can last anywhere between 2 weeks to 3 months and can focus on translation, project management and sales, or a combination of these 3 roles. Have a look at the website for internship opportunities.



# Interviews

## Meet the Interpreter

When I undertook this project, I wanted to find out what the current translation field meant to us as Newcastle University, and I wanted to find out more about life as an interpreter. I decided to ask Megan, who graduated from Newcastle in 2009 and currently works in Germany, about her career. These are her answers.

What languages do you interpret to and from?

I interpret mostly between German and English. I also interpret between Dutch and German, but those jobs are unfortunately few and far between.

Did you receive any training for interpreting or did you learn on the job?

When I was at Newcastle, we had one module in interpreting in final year, which gave me a taste of what interpreting is like. I also completed another interpreting module during my postgraduate studies in Belgium. When I first signed up with the interpreting agency I work closely with here in Germany, I was given some vocabulary lists and old translations of judicial documents, plus a few tips from the boss (she is an interpreter herself). I also attended a couple of court hearings in which an interpreter was present to get a feel for how it works, given that this was set to be my main field of work. Other than that, everything I have learnt has been learnt on the job - from vocabulary to techniques to understanding the German legal/court system.

What kind of interpreting do you do? Which topics do you interpret?

I work predominantly as a court and police interpreter. The topics covered in these areas are extremely varied: violations of the Narcotics Act, theft, fraud and money laundering among other things. I translate for suspects, perpetrators, victims and witnesses, which is extremely interesting as I am able to experience legal proceedings from a range of perspectives. I also interpret at the local psychiatric facility, which, while not as immediately stressful as a court hearing, poses its own challenges. Finally, I am a listed interpreter for the Federal Office of Migration and Refugees. Beyond these

areas, I occasionally get more random jobs which provide a bit of "light relief" from the courts/the police. Just a couple of examples include a two day training session for electricians at an industrial dairy, a day-long mental health conference and a week of accompanying a group of civil and commercial judges from Georgia, Albania and Jordan during a visit to my city and the surrounding area.

If possible, I tend to interpret simultaneously, particularly in court. This generally speeds up proceedings and the judges/lawyers/public prosecutors are always pleased when they don't have to stop every other sentence to wait for the interpreter. There are some situations in which consecutive interpreting is more practical, such as a witness hearing, as this generally takes a simple question-and-answer form. Whatever the situation, I always have a notepad with me to write down any dates, amounts, addresses, ages etc that come up, as these are the things which, for me, are more difficult to remember.

What is a "sworn-in" translator/interpreter? How did you go about it? Is it easier to get work when you're a sworn in translator?

I can only speak for Germany on this point, but I imagine that it is very similar in other countries. Being a sworn translator and interpreter means that you have passed an official exam set by the state and as such is seen by many as a sign of quality. I personally do not believe I'm any better qualified than friends who work as translators in big companies or anything - they just have no need to be sworn in for their work. It also means that you have officially acknowledged and accepted the duties and responsibilities of the job, as well as the risks it presents, and no longer need to be sworn in at the beginning of every court hearing (a legal requirement in Germany). To become a sworn interpreter/translator, I had to attend a seminar on German legal language and complete an oral and written examination at the end. In addition, I had to provide proof of my native language level, gather a range of documents from the court and the town hall, and (bafflingly) provide a handwritten CV in the form of a letter (i.e. not just a handwritten version of a typical CV). Of course, I had to pay for the privilege too!

As to whether it's easier to get work, in some ways it is. All sworn interpreters and translators are entered into a database which is accessible online and one of the first hits when you try and find a sworn translator or interpreter. However, I would say that personal contacts are equally

important - building up a network of fellow translators/interpreters and just spreading the word in whatever way possible that you're a translator/interpreter.

Do you have a portfolio career (ie do you have other tricks up your sleeve besides interpreting)? What is the work load like?

Well, I am also a translator and that certainly keeps me busy, too. When I first moved back to Germany after my postgrad, I was working mainly as an English teacher for adults. I enjoyed it a lot and so still do a little bit of teaching on the side, albeit very informally and mainly for friends. The workload is totally manageable now, although at the beginning of the year I had to stop lessons with some students because my schedule was getting too packed and I felt like I wasn't providing them a good service. Furthermore, I have a part-time job in the interpreting agency from which I get the majority of my work. It's not a lot of hours but it means that I have a guaranteed minimum amount arriving in my bank account every month!

What are the more enjoyable aspects of interpreting for you?

I really love the fact that it's so varied. As cliché as it sounds, no day is the same. There are days when I'm interpreting for 5+ hours and days when I can stay at home just translating - for me, it's the perfect mix. I'm a sociable person so having a lot of contact with others is extremely important - that need is very much satisfied by the interpreting, and the diversity of

people I come into contact with is awesome. I learn so, so much through my work and the people I come across, not only from a purely professional perspective but on a more cultural and social level, too. Given that the majority of people I interpret for are from sub-Saharan Africa, it's encouraged me to learn more about that part of the world to try and understand the situations they are coming from, which I believe is hugely important for my work. I also have a really valuable insight into the way the German legal system works, which in turn enables me to understand certain aspects of the social system and politics of the country I've chosen as my home.

Finally, I would say that interpreting is by far the most rewarding job I have ever done. I know I'm not reinventing the wheel and that, in the grand

scheme of things, my contribution to the world is small, but I do feel that my job is useful and by doing it, I'm helping to solve the issue at hand. That's definitely a cool feeling!

Are there any myths about interpreting that you would like to dispel?

Hmmm. I can't say that it isn't stressful because there are times when the pressure is really on. Having said that, I think people are a little overdramatic when describing quite how stressful it is. I imagine it's a very different situation when interpreting in a booth at a huge conference in the EU parliament or something like that, but the fairly small-scale interpreting I do is nowhere near the same level. At the end of the day, it's in everyone's interests for the translation to be correct, so if you as an interpreter feel like things are going too fast or something is unclear, there is absolutely no shame in speaking up and asking for clarification. Just being aware that this is absolutely ok reduces the stress level immediately.

I think there is also a myth that to be an interpreter you have to master at least 5 or 6 languages, otherwise you can forget it. That's not true at all. Within huge institutions like the EU, NATO, the UN etc. this may be the case, but on a local level, if an order is placed for an English interpreter, the contractor doesn't generally give two figs if I can speak anything else. If you have your sights set on the lofty heights of international bodies, then I think you have to expect the standards to be insanely high, but on a smaller scale, it's enough to have one or two languages - better to be excellent at those one or two than be a jack of all trades but master of none.

Is it necessary to live abroad to be a translator/interpreter- or is it just an added bonus?

In my personal case, I believe I have way more opportunities abroad than I would have in the UK. Obviously the main advantage to living abroad is being in constant contact with the foreign language. That is really invaluable. In terms of work, as far as I know, the system of court interpreting in the UK is very different and the simple fact is that there are a lot of English speakers here in Germany that don't speak German, whereas there are fewer Germans in the UK who don't speak English.

Translation is a different matter - that can be done from anywhere and there is no huge disadvantage to not living abroad. I know plenty of translators who live all over the place and have no problems with their work.

One thing perhaps worth mentioning is that it's wise to think carefully about where you want to live/where you would be likely to get the most work abroad. I live in a fairly small city (250,000 inhabitants) in the north of Germany and there is not a great deal of competition for work because there are very few native English interpreters. If I were to live somewhere like Hamburg, Berlin, Frankfurt or Cologne, I imagine there would be a lot more competition and it could be that I wouldn't have anywhere near the amount of work I do now. Of course it's an attractive prospect, living in a big, dynamic city, but I have found it much easier to settle in a small city: there is more work (depending on the city, of course) and it's much easier to meet people, not to mention the lower living costs.

Living abroad is definitely a lot of fun and has huge benefits if you work directly with languages. Nevertheless, I do sometimes miss a decent cup of tea when my teabag supply runs out - German black tea just isn't up to the job!

## Meet the Alumni

The BA Modern Languages, Translation and Interpreting degree at Newcastle University is still relatively new. I decided to ask 3 people, Myles, Dawn and Robin, who graduated from Newcastle in the summer of 2018 as to their experience in the 'real world'.

What languages did you study at university?

**M:** I studied German and Spanish. I took beginners Spanish in first year.

**D:** I did French and German, both from A-level.

**R:** I did Spanish from A-level and Chinese from scratch.

How did you find your jobs?

**M:** SDL Trados came to do a recruitment talk at Newcastle in June 2018 - I didn't know it was for SDL, I thought it was just a careers talk. It seemed like a perfect opportunity for me because it was based in Sheffield, where I'm from, and it was a translation company. They didn't expect you to have a lot of practical experience, so you were taught a lot on the job. I applied for them, went through the applicant process and managed to get the job.

**D:** At the university, there is an enterprise challenge that they host every year with another company or recruiter and that's where I found out about P&G. I then went on to go to an open day, applied for the company and I got through.

**R:** I simply applied for mine online. Every year, Hogarth hire a few graduates from different degrees, including postgraduates, and I went to an open day which was like a group interview and we met loads of people who worked there. I then got a call back for a second interview, had a phone interview after that and I got it from there.

What does your work consist of?

**M:** I'm a translator intern; I work with German language clients in the automotive team including Porsche, Hans Turck and Audi. I do a variety of activities such as translating texts, reviewing other translations of the team, conversions between different 'flavours' of English (like US English into UK English), as well as transcribing and subtitling videos.

**D:** I am in the Accounts Receivable team, where we are in charge of collecting the cash from our customers. I'm currently in the claims pillar, so this means that if a customer (e.g. Tesco) claim that they 100 packs of Pampers but they only received 80, then we need to then look into the claim and see if it is valid or not. As we also manage the French, Belgium and Netherlands account here in Newcastle, I use my French every day to communicate with our French speaking customers and the French team, who are based in Paris.

**R:** My job title is Transcreation Account Executive. Transcreation is basically an area of translation for advertising. We receive the master copy from a marketing company (in English) and they can fall into three different types of advertisements: print, TV or digital (social media). I have to analyse them and then send them off to different translators. We normally work with

between 12 and 22 different languages. Obviously, with my experience, I usually work with Spanish and Chinese, but you can technically do it for all languages. Then we send them off to the translators and it is then sent back and we go through this process of proof-editing and proofreading. Then we link them back and we send them onto production who work for the same company that I am in. I don't actually translate in my job but I have to proofread translations; with Spanish I can do that myself without having to ask questions. Everyone on my team has a background in languages and I'm actually the second English person on my team. There's about 15 of us and I'm the youngest. I had an advantage with the T&I degree as I had a background in translation whereas most other people had to go through a master's degree in translation first so that means I graduated before they did.

So what do you enjoy about your jobs?

**M:** I'd say the most exciting thing is the variety of things that I get to do in a given day. There's no typical day as a translator intern, whether it's a translation or a conversion, you don't know what it's going to be. There is also a variety of different text types that I could work with. Our teams are divided by clients, not by the text type, so even though it's all automotive, I might be working on a car manual, or a press release for their new car or anything really so it's quite exciting to be working on different things throughout the day.

**D:** I like how I'm learning a lot of new skills in finance and being able to combine my language skills with it is also a bonus. I'm able to work in business but I get to use my languages as well.

**R:** Mine comes from the variety of things I do. It's quite exciting working for such like a well-known company because we get to do really interesting campaigns. Rolex is the official sponsor of the Oscars, so for one of the upcoming campaigns we get to make some films for the Oscars that have really famous people in such as James Cameron. We help with like the subtitling of these films, and then over the year there's lots of different interesting campaigns so there's a lot of variety going on.

How well do you think your degree prepared you for your job?

**M:** Naturally, a degree in translation and interpreting helps a lot for working in translation. This particular degree was amazing as it was very focused on the service and the business behind the translation, so when we translated, we always had the idea of ‘what is the purpose of the translation? Who is the audience? What does the client want from this?’. That is really the focus when working in translation. When you produce a text, you have to think who is this for? and is this reaching the audience in the best way possible?

**D:** Obviously I’m not doing direct translation but there’s a lot of skills that I was able to transfer to my job from university, such as time management and prioritising tasks. What I would say is that in translation you have to be really accurate and precise, and in finance you do as well because you’re looking at a lot of numbers and one digit could be missing that changes the amount you are sending to the customer, or are receiving, so you have to pay attention to that. I am currently registered as a freelance translator, but I haven’t had any work as of yet. So I am still actively looking to set up my own freelance translation business later.

**R:** I would say the background from doing T&I helps me to understand exactly what translators need from me as an account executive when I contact them. I understand the questions they ask and the problems they have with translation because I have a background in it from my degree. The business side of the degree helped because I went into my interview with an idea of how freelance translators work and how you could work with them as an agency and that definitely helped.

Do you think that your language degree has supplied you with relevant skills (besides knowing other languages)?

**M:** There is a lot more you learn from languages than just linguistic skills. Yes, we learn how to speak these languages and we practise them in our seminars, but we learn so much more throughout the modules we do at university. The attention to detail, being able to organise yourself, prioritise work. There’s a lot more that you learn than just a language.

**D:** For us at P&G, we really emphasise the fact that it’s easier to teach a language student finance or business than a business student a language. The fact that we have this language skill really puts us in a great position. You have a lot of adaptable skills when you learn a language



anyway so you can find it easier to adapt to new environments and contexts.

**R:** Some people view a language degree as quite vocational I would say that it is partly vocational, but you do learn a lot of general skills that you can use later on in life, not even just for work, just generally, like organisation. I think people view a language degree as a path to only teaching and translation, but there's so much more out there that's not strictly connected to doing languages.

Do you have any tips for our current students?

**M:** Be very proactive from as early on as possible, don't leave it until the very end of your final year to start looking for jobs and just apply for as many jobs as possible. This also gives you experience with interviews and applications. Also, consider multiple different avenues; just because you do T&I, it does not mean you have to be a translator. People can work in industries outside of translation and localisation.

**D:** Make full use of the career service because they are really useful and if you want to just have a session to practise interview questions, or if you want your CV or cover letter checked, you can literally just pop in and use the facilities they have there. They're really helpful.

**R:** Pick up any opportunities you can get even if they don't seem that relevant. When I was in Shanghai, I had a job doing voice overs in English. That was an interesting experience to talk about in my interview even if it wasn't directly relevant but it's always good to have something that you do on the side that sets you apart from everyone else.

## Meet the Freelancers

*When this project was first created, the emphasis was on finding out more about Freelance translation. Therefore, a small questionnaire was sent to 4 freelancers (Marie, Lloyd, Phillipe and Natalie) to see how their worlds can vary. Sound interesting?*

*Read on to find out what they said!*

*This entry has not been updated.*

### 1. How long have you been working as a Freelance Translator?

**M:** Five years.

**N:** Around 10 years

**P:** Nearly 10 years

**L:** 2 ½ years (since July 2014) but I worked in-house for 3 years before that.

### 2. Which languages do you work with?

**M:** French and German into English.

**N:** Czech / English

**P:** English to French (My native tongue) but also French to English

**L:** French, German, Spanish and Dutch into English. I also offer Catalan but there is little demand (I've had two small requests since starting up). For the past six months, Dutch has been my most requested language (making up around 70% of my work), followed by German.

**3. Do you have any specific areas that you enjoy working in most?  
Law, literature, advertising etc...**

**M:** My specialist fields are business, marketing and law and I undertake regular CPD to maintain my knowledge and skills in these areas.

**N:** Medicine, Law and Technology.

Unfortunately, if you want to earn money, you take what work comes! I hold the Dip Trans in Law and Business, so I have done a lot of translations in those fields. However, I have enjoyed much more translating for tourism or websites, newsletters etc. From time to time, I get to do medical translations and, although very challenging, I really enjoy those!

**L:** I work primarily in business, legal and technical fields. Having trained as an in-house translator for a commercial translation company, I had to work on whatever texts came in from the clients. You soon come to realise which fields you are better at and which you like the most (if you're lucky, these will be the same!). I also worked on a lot of marketing and maritime documents when working in-house, but there are some specialist fields, such as medical and financial, that I know nothing about and wouldn't touch with a barge pole. I am now starting to specialise more, as any good translator should. As my career progresses, I will continue to specialise even further, as business, legal and technical are rather broad fields themselves.

**4. What did you do before you started working as a Freelance Translator?**

**M:** I started my business after I graduated from university. Prior to that, I worked in a call centre for several years while studying, which is very

customer-facing and allows you to use several of the same skills you learn as an interpreting student.

**N:** Martial Arts Instructor and a part time Freelance Translator.

**P:** I had already been working for 2 years as an interpreter. Before that I was owner/manager of various non-language related businesses.

**L:** Nothing! I went straight into an in-house role after graduating with my BA in Modern Languages, not even a translation qualification as the company I worked for didn't require this and preferred to train translators themselves.

## **5. How did you get into the profession?**

**M:** I've spoken foreign languages from the age of four, so it was a natural progression for me to ultimately study languages, interpreting and translation at university. In my case, I didn't switch to a career in translation from another profession; I got my qualifications and went straight into self-employment.

**N:** I have studied languages since the age of five.

**P:** I was looking for a career change and I had never had an opportunity to use the fact that I was bilingual before, so I decided to become an interpreter. Having qualified as a Community Interpreter, I decided to take the (Level 6) Diploma in Public Service Interpreting, which includes a translation exam. This qualified me as a translator and a natural progression was to sit the (Level 7) Diploma in Translation (Dip Trans) exam.

**L:** In fourth year, I became interested in translation while taking the translation modules as part of my course. I did some research into what I needed to do to make a career in translation. I sought some pro bono opportunities in translation to get some experience and worked with the

Welsh National Opera's resident translator to translate about two-dozen 19th century poems from German into English. That was one heck of a challenge, but fantastic experience for my CV. A few months before graduating, I applied speculatively to companies employing in-house translators (which are few and far between). I was asked to go for an interview at one of them, in which they mentioned they were impressed not just by the poem translations themselves but by the initiative I took as well. After a couple of translation tests, I was offered the job. I learned everything there: how to translate (every single text I worked on was revised by a senior translator and feedback provided) and how the market works (by working closely with project managers). After just under two years as an in-house translator, I was promoted to senior translator, co-managing a team of ten or so in-house translators.

## **6. What attracted you to Freelance work?**

I wasn't initially attracted to freelance work in particular; most of the industry works freelance, so I always took it as a given that I would have to become self-employed at some point. With a few years' hindsight, I can safely say that there is little more satisfying than running your own business, as you can look at every success as the fruit of your own hard work and creativity. It's also comforting to realise that your income always stable, because you can't lose your job; if times change, you need only change with them to maintain your livelihood.

**N:** Being my own boss and being able to choose what type of work to accept.

**P:** I had already been self-employed for 20 years, so freelance work was the natural path to follow.

**L:** I loved working in-house, but it does have its limitations. While I do recommend working in-house for a few years in order to gain some practical experience of how the profession works, there can be little opportunity for training and progression, salaries tend to be poor and you might not have much say in the kind of work you take on.

Starting up your own translation business offers more flexibility in determining your working hours, which fields you work in and what kind of clients you work with. And of course you tend to earn much more than working in-house if you're good at what you do and have the skills to run a business.

It does of course come with much more serious responsibilities. Firstly, you alone are responsible towards your clients – the buck stops with you. You're also responsible for your own professional development and keeping your skills up to date, for finding clients and business development, for maintaining professional memberships and indemnity insurance, essentially all the aspects of running a business

## **7. What qualifications do you need to be a Freelance Translator?**

**M:** Although there's no legal requirement for you to be qualified in the

UK (in other countries translators/interpreters have a protected status), the industry is beginning to change. I'd therefore recommend that you obtain a masters-level qualification, either through a university or the Chartered Institute of Linguists, which offers an equivalent diploma for career hoppers. This will help to mark you out as a professional from day one and will equip you with important skills that will underpin the rest of your career.

**N:** There are many people out there working as translators that are

“only” bilingual, but I do believe that a degree level education makes a lot better translator.

**P:** In terms of qualifications, if you want to produce top quality work, a Dip trans or Ma in Translation is essential, but, over and above that, a translator must be able to write well in both languages!

**L:** A qualification does not a translator make. There are qualifications that help prepare you to become a translator and degree programmes in translation these days (in the UK, at least) also cover a lot of the practical aspects of the running a translation business, something that had historically been neglected. But essentially a career as a translator is self-made and I find you’ll learn more on the job than from any qualification. That’s why it’s important to have practical experience before going freelance.

If you choose not to do a BA or MA in translation but want to gain a qualification further down the line, there is the prestigious Diploma in Translation provided by the Chartered Institute of Linguists, consisting of three translation papers (one general and two specialist). But take head, this is not a course. It is a set of exams aimed at experienced translators and there is a notoriously low percentage of those who pass, so prepare well!

Furthermore, if you choose to join the Institute of Translation and Interpreting (ITI), the UK’s professional association for translators and interpreters, which is something I highly recommend, you can apply to become qualified member after three years of full-time experience, for which you need to pass an assessment.

## **8. What is the work load like? Is it flexible?**

**M:** While freelance work is more flexible in some ways than employment, there are constraints too. I generally work 9-5, as this reflects the business hours of my clients; they need me to be there when they are. However, I don't have a commute and I do have the flexibility to break up my day. For example, I can go to the gym during the day or take an afternoon off if need be and make up the time later on. This sounds idyllic – and it certainly can be! – but I also work very hard to keep the business running and to ensure that I have enough savings to cover sick/holiday leave, which I don't automatically get as a freelancer. There's a famous quote from Lori Greiner (an investor on Shark Tank): "Entrepreneurs are the only people who will work 80 hours a week to avoid working 40 hours a week". I don't think she's wrong! You don't have to work 80 hours a week – and you certainly won't translate/interpret for that many hours – but you will put in *a lot* of hours doing marketing, admin and more, especially at the start of your career. Generally, the flexibility and control you gain later in your career will be worth the initial hard slog.

**N:** I can be extremely busy and then there are periods of time where things are not as hectic, it can be hard to predict.

**P:** To an extent, it depends on how 'in demand' your language is, but the amount of work you get 'comes and goes', so you tend to take what you can when you can... usually, the deadlines are totally unrealistic: clients and agencies have no idea how much work is involved in producing a good translation. The advent of 'machine translation' has got everyone thinking that translators are machines! We are not and machines are not translators either!

**L:** It depends on how good you are! If you're a skilled translator who has invested time and effort into starting up their business and has proactively developed clients, your inbox should be bursting at the seams. If you're not a skilled translator, if you neglect your training and development and if you expect clients to come to you, this is a recipe for disaster.



Once established, there can be a great degree of flexibility. It depends on the kind of clients you work with and what deadlines they request for the projects they send you. If you work with large agencies, you're unlikely to be their only choice of translator for a given job, so if the project doesn't suit you, you can turn it down without problem. But with these kinds of agencies, you're not likely to be able to charge a high rate. On the other hand, with smaller 'boutique' or specialist agencies and with direct clients, which you can typically charge a higher rate to, you might be one of a very select group of translators (if not the only translator) of choice for a job and there is more pressure to be able to take the job on. You can still say no, but potentially to the detriment of your relationship with that client. It's a good idea to network and find a reliable and skilled translation partner who can take on such jobs when you can't/don't want to, subject to that client's permission.

But generally, you're free to determine your working hours. But even great translators can go through dry spells, where there just isn't enough work coming in as you'd like, so it's important to plan for such periods. Use such time constructively and spend it on professional and business development.

## **9. Would you recommend freelance work to our students?**

**M:** As long as you're prepared to work hard, especially in the first few years, you can make freelancing a success. However, I would recommend either working in-house or building expertise in another field (e.g. by working in a marketing agency) for a while – or at least part-time – before making the switch to full-time self-employment, as this gives you valuable business knowledge that will help you to be a better translator/interpreter for your clients. It can also help you to develop a specialist field, which is becoming increasingly important nowadays.

**N:** I honestly think it isn't for everyone, some people like the certainty of a regular income and working in a more structured environment. I absolutely love being a freelancer and wouldn't ever want to become an employee.

**P:** It very much depends on your life circumstances and, as I said above, the popularity of your language. It takes a while to get established and recognised and in the meantime, you have to eat and pay bills...

Personally, I prefer the freedom it gives me.

**L:** I love running my own translation business – notice that I prefer to use this term than 'freelancer' in order to stress the significance of the business aspects and the high level of professionalism required. I like being my own boss, I like the close relationships I have with my clients and being their single point of contact. I like being able to determine the direction my career takes.

It's not for everyone though. You need to have business acumen in order to succeed. Flexibility, communication and customer service are all crucial skills to run a successful translation business. It's also important to have a sense of responsibility and accountability, as only you are responsible for the success or failure of your translation business.

## **10. What skills would you say are most important for a Freelance Translator to have?**

**Business skills.** You will be a businessperson first and a translator second. Lots of people think they can be the exception to the rule, but if you start a freelance business you're an entrepreneur, so you have to know how to think like one. If you go freelance, your

business needs to make money on a sustainable basis.

**Time management.** You will have to juggle lots of different projects sometimes and won't have a manager making sure you stay on task. Good time management is also a great way to increase your income without increasing your workload; it's far

better to work little for good money than lots for bad money.

**Adaptability.** All business owners need to be adaptable, but this will especially apply in the post-Brexit landscape. Smaller businesses are able to be more agile than larger ones, so you should take full advantage of this as a freelancer to be a success. Constantly learning new things and adapting to the latest technologies will also help you stay ahead of the curve and

provide a better service more efficiently.

**Great communication and networking skills:** clients like dealing with good communicators. You need to be able to respond to their requests promptly, unambiguously and with the required level of detail. Equally, I can't stress the importance of having a strong and reliable network, comprising contacts who you can turn to as a potential client, as a potential subcontractor or a potential source of information (in case of doubt over a linguistic issue, for example). It's easy to network online these days with platforms such as LinkedIn, Twitter and even Facebook, but what's still important is getting out there and meeting people in person at professional events. There are several international commercial translation conferences that take place every year. The two I recommend the most are ITI and Elia Together.

**Outstanding translation skills:** you need to be getting near enough top marks in translation assignments while studying. And once you graduate, the learning doesn't stop. Translators need to invest 30-40 hours in professional development every year to

keep their skills up to scratch and learn new skills.

**Patience  
Intelligence  
Logical thinking  
Competiveness  
Self- discipline**

**If you would like any more information, feel free to contact our  
freelancers directly:**

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# Glossary

<b>1. Contract Design Group</b>	More information at: <a href="http://www.contractdesign.co.uk">www.contractdesign.co.uk</a>
<b>2. Proofreading</b>	Re-reading a text to spot any typos or mistakes. Normally done by someone other than the writer of the text.
<b>3. Transcription</b>	The transcribing (ie: writing out) of a live or recorded audio script.
<b>4. Corporate and Private Language Tuition</b>	Providing language lessons to a company or Client
<b>5. Desktop Publishing (DTP)</b>	High quality printing of documents and files
<b>6. Typesetting</b>	Designing illustrations, font, etc. so that a document can be digitalised and printed. Used to make each document look unique.
<b>7. Website localisation</b>	Adapting a website so that it will fit with the target culture and language
<b>8. Patent</b>	A license which allows you to sell or distribute an invention
<b>9. Institute of Translation and Interpreting</b>	The UK's only dedicated association for both interpreters and translators. Thousands of professionals receive work and support thanks to it. For more info: <a href="http://www.iti.org.uk/">www.iti.org.uk/</a>
<b>10. Association of Translation Companies</b>	Similar to ITI, the ATC provides support and work to translation companies around the world. For more info: <a href="http://www.atc.org.uk/">www.atc.org.uk/</a>
<b>11. Translation rates</b>	How much a translator charges. Whether it be per hour, word, page, etc.
<b>12. Quality assurance staff</b>	Staff who make sure that a service or product meets the specified requirements. Think of it as

	proofreading a document to make sure nothing is wrong with it.
<b>13. Technical advisors</b>	Experts on a specific field who are hired to provide information regarding it.
<b>14. Language audit</b>	An examination of a document, report, etc. to make sure there is nothing wrong with it. Similar to proofreading.
<b>15. Marketing Analytics</b>	Marketing analytics is the practice of measuring, managing and analysing marketing performance to maximize its effectiveness and optimise return on investment
<b>16. Processing Centre</b>	An office where information is compiled into a Database
<b>17. Social Media Publicist</b>	Someone who updates social media in different Languages