



**American Translators Association
Certification Exam Education/Experience Eligibility Form**

Name: _____ Membership #: _____

Address: _____
Street City State/Province/Country Zip/Postal Code

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ Email: _____

Please indicate which route you are taking to meet the education/experience prerequisites for the ATA certification exam. Then submit this form, along with all the appropriate documentation, the signed Code of Ethics form, and the \$35 processing fee, to the address below. This fee is non-refundable whether or not your application is approved. All material submitted in a foreign language must be accompanied by a translation in English.

- Translators and interpreters currently accredited or certified by a member association of the Fédération Internationale des Traducteurs:
- Proof of such accreditation or certification.
- Translators and interpreters with an advanced degree or approved T&I degree/certificate.
- Proof of advanced degree (master's, doctorate, or the equivalent professional in any field)
 - Proof of degree/certificate from approved T&I program (must be from the enclosed list approved by the ATA Education and Training Committee.)
- Translators and interpreters:
- Proof of a bachelor's degree *and*
 - Evidence of at least **two years'** work as a translator or interpreter, which may include either of the following:
 - Two letters of reference from clients or supervisors; *or*
 - Copies of records of business activity such as Schedule C tax forms, corporate tax returns, 1099s, invoices, or work orders.
- Translators or interpreters with less than a bachelor's degree:
- Evidence of at least **five years'** work as a translator or interpreter, which may include either of the following:
 - Five letters of reference from clients or supervisors; *or*
 - Copies of records of business activity such as Schedule C tax forms, corporate tax returns, 1099s, invoices, or work orders.

Ethics

Acknowledgment of the ATA Code of Professional Conduct and Business Practices

- I. *As a Translator or Interpreter, a bridge for ideas from one language to another and one culture to another, I commit myself to the highest standards of performance, ethical behavior, and business practices.*
 - A. *I will endeavor to translate or interpret the original message faithfully, to satisfy the needs of the end user(s). I acknowledge that this level of excellence requires:*
 1. *mastery of the target language equivalent to that of an educated native speaker,*
 2. *up-to-date knowledge of the subject material and its terminology in both languages,*
 3. *access to information resources and reference materials, and knowledge of the tools of my profession,*
 4. *continuing efforts to improve, broaden, and deepen my skills and knowledge.*
 - B. *I will be truthful about my qualifications and will not accept any assignments for which I am not fully qualified.*
 - C. *I will safeguard the interests of my clients as my own and divulge no confidential information.*
 - D. *I will notify my clients of any unresolved difficulties. If we cannot resolve a dispute, we will seek arbitration.*
 - E. *I will use a client as a reference only if I am prepared to name a person to attest to the quality of my work.*
 - F. *I will respect and refrain from interfering with or supplanting any business relationship between my client and my client's client.*

- II. *As an employer or contractor of translators and/or interpreters, I will uphold the above standards in my business. I further commit myself to the following practices with translators and interpreters:*
 - A. *I will put my contractual relationship with translators and interpreters in writing and state my expectations prior to work.*
 - B. *I will adhere to agreed terms, payment schedules, and agreed changes, and will not capriciously change job descriptions after work has begun.*
 - C. *I will deal directly with the translator or interpreter about any dispute. If we cannot resolve a dispute, we will seek arbitration.*
 - D. *I will not require translators or interpreters to do unpaid work for the prospect of a paid assignment.*
 - E. *I will not use translators' or interpreters' credentials in bidding or promoting my business without their consent or without the bona fide intention to use their services.*
 - F. *For translations for publication or performance over which I have direct control, I will give translators recognition traditionally given to authors.*

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Rules for Using the Credential

Upon receiving notice of passing the exam, translators may refer to the credential on their résumés, business stationery, cards, websites, and other related materials, provided they specify the language pairs(s) and direction(s), i.e. Spanish into English or Spanish>English.

Accuracy of Information Provided

ATA reserves the right to verify the information provided and request additional information as needed. If a discrepancy arises, ATA will ask the candidate for a written explanation. If no written explanation is provided or the explanation is found to be unsatisfactory, ATA reserves the right to ban the candidate from re-applying



American Translators Association Certification Exam Education/Experience Requirement

Frequently Asked Questions

- Q:** *If I am currently certified by ATA, do I need to provide proof of my education and experience before I can take the test in another language pair?*
- A:** No, if your ATA membership and certification are current, you do not need to provide this additional documentation and the verification fee is waived.
- Q:** *I didn't think that there were any requirements to take the ATA certification examination, aside from ATA membership and the exam fee. When did this requirement start?*
- A:** The ATA Board and the Certification Committee have been studying ways to strengthen the certification credential for several years. In the spring of 2001 they approved a plan to establish eligibility requirements related to education and experience. In March of 2003 they implemented the requirements, to begin with the first exam sittings in 2004.
- Q:** *Why are these requirements necessary?*
- A:** The ATA exam is intended for experienced translators with a high level of education, but our previous policies made the test available to all. That mismatch was not fair to candidates. Appropriate education and experience requirements establish a realistic expectation about the level of the examination.
- Q:** *How early will I need to submit these documents?*
- A:** Organizing and verifying these documents will take longer than our current process. You should submit everything at least four weeks prior to an exam sitting.
- Q:** *Can I send in individual pieces of the required information as I gather them?*
- A:** No, a candidate must organize all required materials and submit them with the exam registration. Incomplete documentation will be returned.
- Q:** *Why must the proof of education and experience be translated into English?*
- A:** ATA does not employ translators or have translators on staff. In order for us to verify your information in a timely manner, all material must be in English or the original documents must be accompanied by an English translation.
- Q:** *I have a master's degree, but it is not in a translation- or interpretation-related field. Does it count?*
- A:** If you have a master's degree, a doctorate or other equivalent professional degree, you are eligible to take the exam. The advanced degree need not be in translating or interpreting.
- Q:** *What constitutes a year of experience?*
- A:** A year of experience is defined as a full year of full-time work or the equivalent in part-time work.
- Q:** *Is there a fee for processing eligibility documentation?*
- A:** Yes, there is a nonrefundable \$35 verification fee.

Q: *What is the actual process?*

A: Candidates submit their membership application (if needed), their exam registration form, the nonrefundable \$35 verification fee and the exam fee at the same time. The membership will be processed but the exam registration fee will be held in “pending” and not processed or deposited until the candidate meets the prerequisites fully. If the candidate fails to meet these standards, the exam fee will be returned, but the verification fee will not.

Q: *Can I establish eligibility now and take the exam at a later date?*

A: Yes, you can submit your documentation with the verification fee early, but you must include a letter stating those intentions. Your submission, if verified, will be saved on our database for five years.

Q: *If my eligibility is verified but I fail the examination, will I have to resubmit the documentation before taking the examination again?*

A: No, we will keep the information you submitted for verification on file.

Q: *If I was once certified but I let it lapse with my membership, do I need to meet these requirements?*

A: ATA certification is valid as long as membership is maintained and continuing education requirements are met. If you let your membership lapse for more than three years, you will need to apply for Active Membership Review and then have your certification restored. If your membership lapsed for less than three years, you just need to rejoin ATA in order to have your certification restored.

Q: *If I have been approved for Active or Corresponding membership through Membership Review, does that mean I am eligible to take the examination?*

A: No, the documentation and requirements for Active Membership Review differ from the prerequisites to take the examination.

Q: *Where can I find this list of approved T&I programs?*

A: The most up-to-date list will be on the ATA website.

Q: *What if my T&I program is not on the approved list?*

A: We have compiled as complete a list of approved T&I programs as possible. However, we recognize that new programs will be developed over time while other programs will be discontinued. Any program not currently on the list would have to be reviewed and approved by ATA’s Education and Training Committee. Please understand that this work is done by volunteers and takes time. You must plan ahead and allow at least four weeks when applying for approval of a program.

To request the addition of a T&I program to the ATA-approved list, you must submit the following information:

- Name of program
- Address for institution offering program
- Contact person for the program
- Phone number for contact person
- Email address for contact person

Thank you for your interest. If you have any questions or comments, please contact ATA Headquarters by phone: (703) 683-6100, fax: (703) 683-6122, or email: ata@atanet.org.