

Becoming a Chartered Linguist – registration criteria

The Chartered Linguist register is held by CIOL in the public interest. Chartered Linguists must be able to demonstrate competence as a practising linguist, based on a combination of qualifications, experience, current professional practice, and a commitment to maintaining skills and knowledge through CPD (Continuing Professional Development).

Enhanced Professional Recognition

A Chartered professional is a person who has gained a certain level of skill or competence in a particular field of work, which has been recognised by the award of a formal credential by a relevant professional organisation. Chartered status is considered a mark of professional competency, and is awarded mainly by chartered professional bodies and learned societies.¹

Chartership is recognised worldwide as the gold standard for practitioners, whatever their profession. It is publicly understood as a badge of quality and competence. Chartership provides assurance to users of language services, inspiring confidence with employers, clients and fellow language practitioners. It confirms commitment to CPD and denotes that as a Chartered Linguist, a practitioner is committed to maintaining high professional standards, continually developing professional language skills and specialist knowledge. Chartership demonstrates commitment to improving standards and to professionalising the language industry.

Who can apply for CIOL chartership?

Chartership is available to all full-paying CIOL members (and applicant members) in the following grades:

- CIOL full Member – MCIL
- CIOL Fellow – FCIL

Chartership is not available to CIOL members (or linguists from other qualifying organisations) who are on a concessionary rate or in a retired grade of membership who, by definition, are not in current and/or frequent professional practice. Chartership is not available to honorary members.

¹ Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chartered_\(professional\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chartered_(professional))

Other qualifying organisations

Applications for chartership are also welcome from members and fellows (or equivalent) of other qualifying organisations, currently the Institute of Translation and Interpreting (ITI) and the International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC).

Fees

Chartership (assessment and registration) is free for CIOL members (and applicant members). A non-refundable assessment fee (£50.00) and an annual registration fee (£99.00) is payable by non-CIOL members from other qualifying organisations (to cover assessment and administration costs).

Designations

Chartered Linguists are entitled to use the designation 'Chartered Linguist' and/or the post-nominals 'CL' to further highlight their professionalism. CLs may also indicate specialisation(s) as follows:

- CL (Translator)
- CL (Interpreter)
- CL (Education)
- CL (Language Specialist)

Chartered Linguists will be listed on the public CL register on the CIOL website and will be issued with a digital practising certificate which will be valid from the point of registration until 31 August each year, when they will be invited to re-register. For CIOL members this will form part of the annual invitation to renew their membership, sent out in July.

Registration criteria

All full Members and Fellows of CIOL (and other qualifying organisations) should, as a matter of principle, be eligible for chartership on the basis that the following criteria are met:

Professional practice

Applicants will have been in current professional practice for at least the last five years, working (as a minimum) 120 days each year in one (or more) of the following specialisations:

- Translation
- Interpreting

- Foreign language teaching and/or coordination or management of foreign languages at secondary level, or in university language departments or language centres
- Teaching translation / interpreting
- Sustained, frequent use of foreign languages at a high level in business, industry, the professions (e.g. law, engineering, accountancy) or government
- Translation/interpreting project management or equivalent in other areas of language services

Applicants working in more than one of the above specialisations must normally undertake at least 40 days' practice per year in each specialism.

Qualifications

Applicants will hold a relevant language qualification to honours degree level or above. In order to use one (or more) of the following designations:

- CL (Interpreter): applicants will normally, hold a specialist qualification in interpreting such as the Diploma in Public Service Interpreting (DPSI) or an MA or MSc (or equivalent) in interpreting
- CL (Translator): applicants will normally hold a specialist qualification in translation, such as the IoLET Diploma in Translation (DipTrans) or an MA or MSc (or equivalent) in translation
- CL (Education): applicants will normally hold a professional qualification, at first or higher degree level or equivalent, in teaching or another relevant field
- CL (Language specialist): applicants will be able to evidence attainment of a high professional level in their specific area of work in business, the professions (e.g. law, accountancy, engineering) or government demonstrated through membership of a relevant professional body and /or degree-level or other appropriate professional qualification in their area of expertise

CPD (Continuing Professional Development)

Applicants will be committed to CPD and will:

- have a record of relevant CPD activities covering the last two years (normally a minimum of 30 hours in total)
- be continuing with professional development activities in order to maintain chartership, and have a 12-month forward plan, based on their reflection on past CPD activities

Registration process

All current CIOL members applying for chartership must apply online. At this stage **no physical evidence** will be required unless selected for audit – see Auditing Process below.

For applicant Members and Fellows, applying for chartership will be part of the membership admission process.

Applicants from other qualifying organisations should contact the CIOL membership team for an application pack and details of how to apply including evidence required.

CIOL members applying for chartership will be asked to confirm the following, on the basis that they may be selected for audit (see Auditing Process below):

- a. I have read the Chartered Linguist admission criteria and I confirm that to the best of my knowledge I meet the criteria in full
- b. I am currently a practising linguist and have been in professional practice for the last five years (not less than 120 days per year) and I work in one or more of the following specialisations:
 - Translation
 - Interpreting
 - Teaching and / or lecturing
 - Using language skills in business, commerce, industry, the professions (e.g. law, accountancy, engineering etc.) or government
- c. I have undertaken relevant CPD, over the last two years and will continue to do so during the next 12 months in order to maintain my registration
- d. I wish to use one or more of the following designations: (please tick all that apply)
 - CL (Translator)
 - CL (Interpreter)
 - CL (Education)
 - CL (Language Specialist)
- e. If selected for audit, I will submit evidence to CIOL, in the format requested, within the stipulated timeframe, to prove that I meet the eligibility criteria
- f. I consent to my details being published in the public register of Chartered Linguists on the CIOL website
- g. I confirm my understanding and continued consent to abide by the CIOL's Code of Professional Conduct
- h. I confirm that I have made CIOL aware of the following and I understand that my chartership may be affected depending on the nature of the complaint, the type of sanction (as applicable) and when the complaint was upheld:

- disciplinary procedures which may be outstanding
 - disciplinary complaints which have been made against me and upheld
- i. I confirm that I have no unspent criminal conviction(s), as defined under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- j. I agree to notify CIOL should my circumstances change and understand that this may affect my current and ongoing registration

Auditing process

CIOL will randomly select for audit, a percentage of all registrations (from CIOL members) received each month. In addition, new CL applicants who select more than two designations will be automatically audited. If selected, CLs will be required to provide, within 60 days, the following evidence in order to maintain registration as a Chartered Linguist:

- An up-to-date CV giving details of professional experience
- Evidence of current professional practice
- Evidence of CPD activities, including the number of hours spent, over the previous two years, plus a reflective statement of 500 to 1,000 words on CPD undertaken plus a forward plan, based on their reflection on previous CPD activities

CIOL will provide additional guidance on the evidence needed including format and how this should be submitted. Evidence supplied will initially be assessed by the CIOL membership team. Should the evidence submitted not meet the criteria the membership team will provide feedback. At this point, registration may be provisionally suspended until we have resolved the issues. Cases that cannot be resolved will be referred to the Institute's Chartered Linguist Registration Board for a final decision.

Should evidence not be supplied within the stipulated timeframe then chartership will automatically be suspended, unless the CL has contacted the membership team to discuss an extension.

Reapplying

Unsuccessful applicants will be eligible to reapply following a break of 12 months and on submission of the requisite evidence to support registration.

CLs whose registration is revoked will be treated on a case-by-case basis.

Renewing chartership

CIOL members who are chartered will automatically retain their chartership on:

- Renewal of their CIOL membership
- Confirmation that the criteria for registration continue to be met; this will be obtained through a series of declarations
- Agreement to provide evidence if selected for audit

Appeals

Unsuccessful applicants and Chartered Linguists called for audit who subsequently have their registration revoked, will have the right to appeal under the current arrangements.