



Oldham Language Shop

Services to Customers¹ - Policy and Procedures

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Oldham Interpretation and Translation Service (OITS) was established in the late 1980's primarily to provide an in-house interpretation/translation service. In-house team of translators/interpreters were providing free service to the council in primary minority community languages of the borough (Bengali, Urdu and Gujarati).

Changing dynamics of the population meant that the council was not fully meeting the need of new arrivals in Oldham and hence a service review was carried out in August 2004. OITS is now called Oldham Language Shop, and has been developed along business principles and has opened up its services to the whole of the Borough on a chargeable basis and has put the service on a , cost effective footing from which it can grow.

- 1.2 OMBC has a diverse community which is one of its strengths. However this strength can only be fully realised if the whole of the Oldham community is encouraged to participate in everyday life. In order to help this process it is important that we communicate with all the community effectively. This means providing comprehensive language services to the non-English speaking/reading community and the disabled people of Oldham.

1.3 Race Relations legislation

Race Relations legislation dictates that individuals have the right not to be discriminated against on racial grounds. Specifically, the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 (RR(A)A) prohibits '*race discrimination in all public functions.*'¹ This new act strengthens the 1976 Act in two major ways:

- It extends protection against discrimination by public authorities
- It places a new, enforceable general duty on public authorities

In order to meet the legal requirements of the RR(A)A (2000) public services are required to make greater use of translation and interpretation services (i.e. face-to-face interpreting, telephone interpreting, document translation etc) in order for members of minority ethnic communities to access services.

- 1.4 Through its Customer Charter, OMBC has already made a firm commitment to provide information to its customers in formats and languages they want and can understand. This is to help ensure that services fulfil this commitment, thereby creating fair and accessible services to everyone, strengthening the trust and support of the diverse communities it serves.
- 1.5 This document is produced to demonstrate how OMBC will provide a support service that will enhance the delivery of OMBC's commitment. Also, on the

¹ www.homeoffice.gov.uk/comrace/race/raceact/index.html

same basis, the newly established Language Shop will provide an excellent service to external public, private and voluntary sector service providers who want to communicate effectively with their non-English speaking customers.

2. Mission Statement

“To improve department/organisation’s communication capability for non-English speaking clients by offering one-stop-shop for languages approach.”

2.1 To support these Mission Oldham Language Shop will offer:

- Expert, impartial advice on how to identify and meet the communication needs;
- Interpretation for face-to-face, telephone and sign language (BSL);
- Braille;
- Translation of printed information into most languages and formats;
- Audio tape/CD (for people who may be blind or unable to read);
- Audio MP3 for use on websites;
- Video/DVD voice over;
- Training (Working with Interpreters and to enhancing interpretation skills etc.);
- Consultancy;
- Assessment of Bilingual Staff.

2.2 Oldham Language Shop believes that to be fair and accessible to all members of the community and organisations, we will have to be aware of their needs and have the understanding of the culture and heritage of the communities they serve. We will also need to be aware of the links between English-language disadvantage and social exclusion and deprivation. (Joseph Rowntree Foundation – Access to services with interpreters).

2.3 It is acknowledged generally that appropriate and relevant language or format provision is central to race equality and an effective equal opportunities strategy.

3. Services

3.1 Oldham Language Shop provides a number of services which at times can become confusing and people who have not used the service before frequently do not know what to do and how to access a service that they require. To enable easier accessibility to service users, an attempt has been made to present information in a table format. All the services can only be booked by either using an online booking form, faxing the booking form to 0161 911 3803 or calling 0161 770 4519

3.2 Please refer to following table :

SERVICE	GUIDELINES	NOTICE REQUIRED	OLDHAM LANGUAGE SHOP OREQUIREMENT	QUOTE	TIME SCALE
3.2.1 Interpretation Face-to-face	Using friends, colleagues, members of the family and children as interpreters must be avoided as this may have legal implications upon the officer. The services of accredited bilingual staff must only be used to carry out basic communication at the reception. All interviews, home visits must be carried out by approved interpreter through Oldham Language Shop.	Planning for an interview is good practice (See Code of Good Practice). Allow sufficient time to book an interpreter. There is a two tear service available for Council Departments. In emergency cases or someone turning up at a reception desk can be dealt with through telephone interpretation Service.	Have correct details ready for the person you will interview, the name, gender, language, time, date, venue and brief description of the case that you are dealing with. Where appropriate, have information available for Invoicing or a Cost Code.	An approximate quote can be made available on request.	Oldham Language Shop will meet customer's reasonable deadlines on all occasions. Confirmation of availability of an interpreter will only be undertaken on request. If an interpreter match is not found Oldham Language Shop will confirm at first available instance.
3.2.2 Interpretation telephone	For Internal customers only - Must only be used in exceptional cases where a very basic message needs to be put across. Services of telephone interpreting to be accessed using unique departmental code available from Oldham Language Shop. Enquiries needing more than 15 minutes of interpretation should be dealt with by face-to-face interpreting through Oldham Language Shop.	Can be requested in emergency cases or setting up of an appointment.	Have correct details ready for the operator. You will be asked for your unique access code, dept name and user code which is available from Oldham Language Shop. Information about the person you will interview, their name, gender, language, time, date, venue and brief description of the case that you are dealing with may also be useful.		
3.2.3 Interpretation Sign Language	The most important thing to remember when communicating with a deaf person is to ask them what their preferred method of communication is. A simple checklist to bear in mind is : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the person communicate in BSL or 	When booking a BSL interpreter allow at least one week before the meeting.	Written details would be required, such as time, place, length of assignment. Also background details of the subject matter, how many people will be attending, requirement of the deaf person and what will take place i.e. video,		Oldham Language Shop will try to meet customer's reasonable deadlines only if at least one week notice has been given. Confirmation of availability of an interpreter will be provided (in writing if requested). If an

	<p>do they lip read.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have they got any useful hearing via hearing aid? • Would they prefer to communicate on paper in the form of notes? • Once the method is established only then move on to the next step. 		<p>role-play, workshop etc. This information is vital for the BSL interpreter to prepare for the assignment.</p>		<p>interpreter match is not found Oldham Language Shop will confirm at first available instance.</p>
3.2.4 Braille	<p>Braille can make all kinds of documents accessible to blind people</p>	<p>Internal staff please contact Oldham Language Shop.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information must be on CD/floppy/ email in word format. 	<p>An approximate quote can be made available on request. All organisations and particularly solicitors firm will have to put the request in writing.</p>	<p>Oldham Language Shop will try to meet customer's reasonable deadlines.</p>
3.2.5 Translation	<p>All leaflets, posters, documents going out to the community must carry a box on the front to say this document is available in the relevant language. The translation should only be made available on request.</p>	<p>It is always best to consider the different communities you would need to target for your project (See Languages is Oldham). Seek advice from Oldham Language Shop as early as possible. Allow reasonable time (at least a week) for your translations of under 500 words to be ready.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English Text for translation must be typed in Plain English. • Clear layout instructions. • Text may be provided as hard copy (post, fax or hand delivered), on a floppy disc, CD or as an Email. 	<p>All translations will be charged for and a quote will be provided for all work undertaken. For external organisations written confirmation to</p>	<p>Oldham Language Shop will meet customer's reasonable deadlines on all occasions. Up to 250 words – 3 to 4 days Over 250 words – time scale to be negotiated. Translation will be provided in a PDF format or other related formats.</p>

		Further advice can be sought from Oldham Language Shop. Translation request must be made using online request form/fax.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language and background of the person/ community must be confirmed. 	proceed must be provided with Purchase Order number, or an invoice address.	
3.2.6 Audio Tape	Where it has been established that the customer/client/ patient cannot read due to a Disability or is unable to read English or any other language it is always advisable to provide relevant information in audio format.	To have the English information read on an audio tape/CD contact Oldham Language Shop . To have another language tape/CD made refer to the translation section above. Time will be required to have the translation done and extra time of at least 2 days to read it onto a tape/CD.	Clear layout instructions (if required) should be given. Text may be provided as hard copy (post, fax or hand deliver), on a floppy disc, CD, or as an Email attachment. Language, Background of the person/community targeted. Source Language must be typed in <i>Plain English</i> .	A quote will be provided for all work undertaken. For a new service/ organisation a written confirmation to proceed must be provided with Purchase Order number, Cost Code or an invoice address.	Oldham Language Shop will meet customer's reasonable deadlines on all occasions. Up to 250 words - 5 to 6 days (including reading on the tape) Over 250 words - negotiate time scale. <i>A tape or a CD will be available depending on requirement.</i>
3.2.7 Audio MP3	Information in audio format available in different languages to use it on your website.	As above	As above	As above	As above. Created MP3's will be available on a CD or Email.
3.2.8 Voice over Video/ DVD	Where an organisation requires its promotional video/DVD to have a voice over in another language.	Allow time to have the script translated and for the reader/actor to get familiar with the script.	As above	As above	As above
3.2.9 Training	<i>For officers</i> 'Working with Interpreters' – Understanding each others role and doing own job effectively and efficiently. Setting up a 'Good Practice Guidelines' <i>For interpreters</i> Understanding 'Code of Ethics' and providing	Negotiable	Venue and other training facilities to be provided by customer	Provided in all cases with relevant details	Negotiable

	'Guidelines for Interpreters'.				
3.2.10 Consultancy	Where organisations require expert advice and information on languages in Oldham area. Understanding the cultural, regional background of communities residing in the area. How to provide a service to non-English speakers and where to disseminate information.	Negotiable	Any relevant papers available on the research project in hand.	Provided in all cases with relevant details	Negotiable
3.2.11 Language Assessments	<p>1. Language Assessment under Bilingual Skills Remuneration Policy is undertaken by receiving a nomination from the line manager of a bilingual staff member.</p> <p>2. New Recruitment of Bilingual Staff where language assessment is required</p>	<p>After receiving a nomination form, contact will be made to relevant nominee to arrange for an assessment. This should be done within 4 weeks.</p> <p>At the point of short-listing must notify the date of interview, languages required to be assessed.</p>	<p>Nominated staff must have sufficient level of spoken English and one other community language, preferably to an A level standard and above. Also must meet the relevant criteria in the Policy.</p> <p>Provide list of candidates with preferred language, date and time.</p>	<p>Available on request</p> <p>Available on request</p>	Will make all efforts to arrange the assessment as soon as it is practicably possible. The assessment will be oral only and will take around 20 to 30 minutes.

3.3 Cancellation of Interpreters – If you have booked an interpreter and then for what ever reason you need to cancel the assignment the following procedure and charges shall apply.

- a. When you call back to cancel an assignment 48 hours prior to the assignment, then no further action will be taken and no charges shall apply.
- b. If there is less than 48 hour gap between your call and the time of assignment a minimum charge of £40.00 shall be made.
- c. If the interpreter has made the journey to the place of assignment and the client/patient or the relevant practitioner/officer has not turned up and no interpretation has taken place then a minimum charge of £40.00.
- d. If a booking was made for a specific length of time and it had to be cancelled within the 48 hours. Then a charge shall be made based at £40.00 per hour (eg 3 hour booking would be charged at £40 x 3 hours = £120.00).

3.3 Out of Hours Service – Currently bookings are only taken during office hours. OMBC will be developing Out of Hours service at a later stage.

4 Quality and Standard

4.1 Why must bookings go to the Oldham Language Shop?

Oldham Oldham Language Shop can now offer a better service. The main benefits for staff are:

- 4.1.1 Being a corporate language resource having officers with highest professional qualifications, Oldham Language Shop acts as a quality controller and monitoring body within the council with regards to language provision. There is now one contact point for all bookings - the Oldham Language Shop. To maintain consistency in language provision, the departments will be required to follow the approved policy and procedures set by Oldham Language Shop.
- 4.1.2 Maintaining a quality and standards control for all OMBC services is a paramount priority. To make sure that the printed material and oral and signed communication is provided by professionals in a clear, concise, well presented way, and in plain language, OMBC will use monitoring groups of proof-readers and assessors of sign and oral communication. Regular analysis will be made of the quality of services through service users by questionnaires and undertaking short and concise surveys. Complaints and customer feed back will be used to improve service provision.

5 What to expect from Oldham Language Shop

- 5.1 As a customer you want to access a service from Oldham Language Shop as efficiently as possible. In the same way we want to provide such a service that fulfills your needs and you achieve a satisfied outcome. The process can be split into 3 main areas :

- *Initial contact*- to book a service or answer a query by phone, fax or online booking form;
- *Use of service contact*- when a service of an interpreter is being used;
- *Post contact*- when you want to complement the service or you have a query about invoicing or you need to complain.

5.2 During an *initial contact* you can expect our internal staff to:

- treat you fairly, courteously and sensitively, regardless of who you are;
- answer your telephone call promptly, tell you who we are, and who you are speaking to;
- listen to you, take full information from you and take responsibility for trying to help you while booking your required service or dealing with the query that you may have;
- provide you with details of information in relation to your booking, Job Reference Number, interpreters name or what will the process be in dealing with your interpretation/translation/other work;
- make you aware if your call can not be dealt with, what we will do, for example, someone else will call you back if we can deal with your query; and
- let you know if we can not deal with your query to make it clear to you or provide you with an alternative.

5.3 During the *use of service contact* you can expect:

- The *Interpreter* to be at the place of Interpretation 5 to 10 minutes before the appointment;
- The interpreter to do introductions, be courteous, professional, smart, confident and able to communicate effectively and fluently between the two languages;
- The interpreter to do his/her work truly and faithfully, without omission or addition, disclose any difficulties, not to act as an advocate and respect confidentiality ;
- The Interpreter to act according to set guidelines, for full details see 'Guidelines for Interpreters', see Appendix Three;
- *Translation work* to be carried out by experienced, qualified and professional translators in plain language;
- The layout and design to be the same as the English version unless stated;
- Any changes to be made while your work is being undertaken or after work is finished;
- The final translation work to be in electronic format and to your requirement.
- The same treatment as above with *All other services* as stated in 3.2
- Your realistic deadlines to be met on time.

5.4 Once you have made use of our service:-

- and you are satisfied with the service, then you or your organisation should expect to receive an invoice or internal charge within 30 days;

- you can make request to use the same (service of interpreter/or others) again;
- you can provide us with any feed back that you feel is complimentary or any dissatisfaction that you may have had by filling in an Evaluation Form, see Appendix Four;
- if you are not satisfied with the way we have provided a service or the way an interpreters has behaved then please let us know or make a complaint.

6 Complaints Procedure

- 6.1 Service users wishing to complain should initially approach the Oldham Language Shop on 0161 770 4519.
- 6.2 Should your complaint not be satisfactorily resolved using this method, you will be directed to OMBC's Corporate Complaints procedure.

7 What Oldham Language Shop expects from its cutomers

- 7.1 As with any business transaction, both parties have to work in a positive and cohesive manner in order to achieve set objectives. If Oldham Language Shop is striving to provide a complete, productive and efficient service we would expect similar from our customers.
- 7.2 We would expect our customers in contacting us or working with interpreters or other Oldham Language Shop staff to behave in the same manner as mentioned in 5.2. Please also refer to 'A Guide to Good Practice – Working with Interpreters', Appendix Five. This should help you to make an effective use of an Interpreter's service.
- 7.3 Most of the work that we will provide will meet your realistic deadlines, however it would be helpful if you allow yourself a reasonable time for any of the services you require from us. For example if you are working on a project and you know from the outset that you will need to make use of Oldham Language Shop then it's best to consult with the Oldham Language Shop Service Mananger right from the start. Also check 3.2 Service section tables for relevant information on notice required.
- 7.4 When you have made use of an Oldham Language Shop service please ensure that you have kept a record, particulary, in relation to making use of an interpreter's service that you have checked the acuracy of interpretation time and that you have signed Interpreter's Claim Form.
- 7.5 Please also make sure that you provide relevant information as stated in 3.2 Service section tables.