

How to use interpreting services



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How to use interpreting services - English

Interpreters are trained professionals in specific languages who can ensure communication between you and our caseworkers is as clear as possible.



This is particularly important when you are providing details about why you are claiming asylum. Interpreting helps minimise confusion or misinterpretation. We strongly discourage the use of friends or family for interpreting because they are not trained language communicators. Therefore they may not have the skills to clearly express exactly what you are saying, which may result in misunderstandings.

We will arrange an interpreter for you if we think communication between you and our staff is not understood or working effectively. If you require a particular dialect please tell us and we will try and arrange for this need to be met.

You should not be asked for payment by an interpreter and should report this immediately if it occurs.

Rights and responsibilities

The interpreter provided must be able to speak and understand your preferred language. Providing an interpreter that speaks your preferred language may sometimes be difficult to arrange; however, you have the right to an interpreter that is:

- Impartial – does not try and influence what you say or misinterpret
- Competent – as much as possible, translates word-for-word and does not change the meaning of what you are telling them
- Professional – respects you as an individual, including your privacy and does not breach confidentiality or disclose information you told them to outside sources
- Non – discriminatory – behaves in a way that does not discriminate against you on the basis of your nationality, ethnicity, beliefs (religious or political) , gender, sexual orientation, age or health issues

If you prefer, you can ask for a male or female interpreter. We will do our best to accommodate your request; we may provide an interpreter in person or via the telephone.

Conflicts of interest

If your interpreter has interpreted for another organisation for you or knows you from your community and has acted as your mentor or friend, then this should be identified to our caseworker by both the interpreter and you.

If you cannot attend your appointment

We are a charity with limited funds. If you are late or miss your appointment and we have booked an interpreter, we still have to pay.

If you continue to miss appointments and do not cancel them, we may be unable to offer an interpreting service to you.

If you cannot come to your appointment, phone us on **0800 085 6087** to cancel (calls are free from landlines, not from mobiles).

How to make a complaint or suggestion

An interpreter provides assistance with communication. Interpreters are not advisers; it is illegal for them to provide immigration or asylum advice.

If you are not happy with the service your interpreter provides, or would like to make a suggestion, you must let your caseworker or one of our staff at Scottish Refugee Council know immediately.

If your complaint cannot be resolved, you may wish to make a formal complaint by completing our complaint form available from our office or website:

http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/assets/0000/0183/Complaint_leaflet_English_March_2010.pdf

or contact us via our website: <http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/contact>

Your completed complaint form should be returned to our office.

Your suggestions are also welcome and may be submitted to our suggestion box located in our office.

If you feel you have received poor advice or an inadequate service, you can also complain to the Office of the Immigration Commissioner (OISC): <http://www.oisc.gov.uk/>