



Association of
Translation Companies
DEFINING STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE

Internship & Recruitment Guide

2023

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Introduction to the guide

Two major disruptions have changed UK-based language service companies' recruitment and internship activities for good.

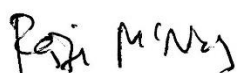
Brexit closed down Erasmus internships, and raised serious barriers to recruiting staff both within and outside the UK. The Covid pandemic sent language service companies' workforce to home offices, creating the need for diverse, multi-location operations. Working from the office, or even in the UK, is no longer a given.

The challenges around internships and recruitment are many. How to continue with an internship programme? How to find and recruit the right multilingual talent in the UK? How to recruit staff abroad, legally and compliantly, without a major administration burden?

The ATC supports its members through industry-specific guidance tailored for language service companies, and through partnering with organisations who provide solutions and services that add tangible value, and who work to lower barriers for international staffing.

The ATC Internship & Recruitment Guide 2023 collates guidance and information on opportunities around hosting interns and recruiting staff in the UK and abroad. It breaks down processes and proposes solutions, and introduces you to the ATC's internship and recruitment partners. The guide gives you the tools you need to build a solid foundation for your internship and recruitment activities, post-Brexit, post-pandemic, in a challenging and continuously changing environment.

Now is the time to consider where, and how, you want to build your workforce of tomorrow. Turn the challenges into opportunities, and solutions into practice. I hope this guide will help you make the right, informed choices for your UK and international recruitment and internships!



Raisa McNab

Chief Executive Officer

Association of Translation Companies

Introduction to recruitment

In the wake of Brexit and the Covid pandemic, UK-based language service companies are looking for ways to address a radically changed recruitment landscape, characterised by a number of challenges.

In the UK, the pool of industry-experienced professionals has shrunk, and access to experienced language services industry candidates is restricted to those with a right to live and work in the UK.

Recruiting staff outside the UK, language service companies are facing country-specific red tape around employment, tax, pensions and insurance. In many countries, there are grey areas around using contractors in full-time roles, with the associated risks, costs, responsibilities and legal implications.

This guide outlines key options for recruitment within and outside the UK for language service companies looking to future-proof their recruitment activities.

Where to find the right candidates?

In a competitive market, the ATC's recruitment partners take the weight off your shoulders, and offer comprehensive, tailored solutions for language service roles from entry-level project coordinator roles to business development managers, and vendor managers to IT directors.

ATC Partner Solution with Adaptive Globalization



Adaptive
GLOBALIZATION

ATC Associate Partner [Adaptive Globalization](#) is the world's leading recruitment agency for language services with offices in London, Berlin, New York, San Diego and Singapore.

Since 2005, Adaptive have built a track record of working with everyone, from independent and boutique language service companies to top LSPs, hiring market-leading talent in translation, localization, translation technology, interpreting, language learning & machine translation.

Get in touch: info@adaptiveglobalization.com

ATC Partner Solution with Talingual



ATC Associate Partner [Talingual](#) is a recruitment company specialising in finding the right candidates with the right language skills.

The Northern Ireland based Talingual's focus is on sourcing, qualifying and preparing candidates who fulfil clients' specific language requirements, for a variety of different roles requiring language skills across the UK, EU and the rest of the world.

Get in touch: hilary@talingual.com

Recruitment into the UK

All UK-based employees must have the right to work in the United Kingdom, and it is the employer's responsibility to check this. When recruiting, check the candidates' right to work with the help of [gov.uk right to work guidance](#).

All international candidates, whether they are students, graduates or experienced professionals, must have a visa that allows them to work, unless they already have pre-settled or settled status or British Citizenship.

Student and Graduate visas

International students studying for a degree in the UK may be eligible to work alongside their studies. Their visa conditions specify what they can and cannot do on a [Student visa](#).

A [Graduate visa](#) gives international graduates permission to stay in the UK for two years after completing a course in the UK. The graduate must convert their Student visa to a Graduate visa to work either as an employee or self-employed.

A company can employ a student or a graduate holding the above visas without having to host them as a sponsor or applying for a Home Office sponsorship licence. Employing someone on a Graduate visa is a great, low-risk way of employing an international candidate for the first two years, before exploring the options around sponsoring them on a Skilled Worker visa.

Information on some of the ATC's university partner's internship programmes and recruitment contacts are added regularly at <https://atc.org.uk/university-partners/>.

Skilled Worker visa

For UK-based companies looking to bring new recruits into the UK, the main immigration route is the [Skilled Worker visa](#).

There are a number of requirements that a non-UK applicant and their prospective employer must meet, and there are costs associated with employing a worker through this route. Prospective UK employers wishing to recruit workers from outside the UK [must apply for a sponsorship licence](#). Sponsors must undergo stringent checks and renew their licence every four years.

The Skilled Worker Route has a points-based system with a number of tradeable points being awarded to prospective workers based on having a job offer, the skill level of the job, English language skills, salary, education at PhD level, and whether the job has been designated as a shortage occupation.

Skilled workers have the right to bring dependants: spouses, partners and children. In general, dependants have near full access to the UK labour market and can work at any skill level.

How much will it cost?

The costs associated with employing a skilled worker vary depending on the size of the employer and the length of the visa.

The costs associated with sponsoring a worker are two-fold:

- For the worker: [visa application fees and health surcharge fees for access to the NHS](#)
- For the sponsor: [sponsorship licence](#) & [certificate fees](#) and [immigration skills charges](#)

These formal costs exclude costs relating to legal advice which you may wish to access to obtain a sponsorship licence in the first place.

Points and salary thresholds

The Skilled Worker Route comprises a system made up of points linked to mandatory criteria, salary, and the job role.

Each applicant must first score 50 mandatory points from having a job offer from a licenced sponsor at the required national qualifications level 3, and fulfil the English language requirements, which may involve a language test at an approved test centre in the UK or overseas. Further to the 50 mandatory points, each applicant must score a further 20 points to be granted a visa. For typical language industry roles, this is likely to be either through their salary or by being a 'new entrant' to the market.

For translators and interpreters (listed under [SOC code](#) 3412), the relevant minimum salary for the points-based system is £25,600. For project coordinators under SOC code 3539, the relevant minimum salary for the points-based system is £25,600, and the 'going rate' for the profession is £23,300.

In practice, to employ a non-UK translator, interpreter or project coordinator, they must be paid at least £25,000 or be classified as 'New Entrant' and be paid at least £20,480.

New entrants

New entrants to the UK labour market are subject to lower salary thresholds for three years. Migrants will be defined as new entrants if they meet one of the following requirements:

- They are switching from the Student or Graduate route to the Skilled Worker Route;
- They are under the age of 26 on the date of their application; or
- They are working towards recognised professional qualifications or moving directly into postdoctoral positions.

New entrant translators, interpreters and project coordinators are subject to the floor salary rate of £20,480, which is sufficient to earn them the additional 20 points required on top of the mandatory 50. Any new workers not qualifying as a new entrant will be subject to the salary threshold of £25,600.

Any new entrant coming up to the end of their three years of reduced salary requirement must then be able to earn the additional 20 points elsewhere – usually, from a salary of at least £25,600.

ATC Partner Solution with Truth Legal



ATC Associate Partner [Truth Legal Solicitors](#) specialises in helping employers navigate the complexities of applying for a Skilled Worker Sponsor Licence, and supporting them through the visa application process.

Truth Legal has collaborated with the ATC on Brexit and immigration, and understands the specifics of language services industry recruitment. Applying for a Home Office Sponsor Licence to continue to recruit from outside the UK can be daunting, but specialist help from a partner who understands the industry can make all the difference.

Get in touch: help@truthlegal.com

Recruitment outside the UK

Recruitment outside the UK can take different forms.

Many UK-based language service companies have set up an office in another country, and employ staff members through their local legal entity. This is an all-in approach, which brings with it the opportunity of, for example, tendering for EU contracts and employing staff directly – but it's also the heaviest solution if your sole objective is to employ staff in another country.

This guide focuses on hiring staff and contractors, and outlines the immediate pros, cons and risks around different solutions.

Using contractors

An easy way of hiring abroad is simply to contract the work out: the worker sets up as a sole trader, and invoices the company for the work they carry out.

A contractor is not an employee of the company, and they are liable for their own taxes, pension and insurance. This model is, of course, familiar to all language service companies from working with freelance translators and interpreters.

However, going through the contractor route for full-time roles such as project management carries with it a number of risks which the company hiring the contractor should be aware of.

Legislation around full-time roles varies from one country to the next, even within the EU. Some countries have no restrictions around full-time contracting, but others regard a full-time role equivalent to employment, with the associated administrative and legal burdens.

Typically, the issues around full-time contracting are linked to the company's degree of supervision, direction and control on the worker's tasks, and the way their work is carried out. In full-time roles, there are very strong indicators for all three markers: the worker has little freedom to choose how and when they do their work, the company directs and controls most aspects of the work, and the worker is subjected to supervision by the company. The work is also typically carried out with the company's equipment and software.

While each country's legislation is different, you can use the HMRC's employment status checker to get an idea of how UK authorities would see a similar situation. You can access the checker at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-employment-status-for-tax>.

A specific risk in going down the contractor route occurs when a person previously directly employed by the company converts into contracting in the same role.

As a simple risk analysis around full-time contracting, ask yourself the following questions:

- Do the country's authorities regard full-time contracting as an employment relationship?
- Is the worker converting from a full-time in-house role to full-time contracting in the same role?
- Does the worker have other clients for whom they also contract?
- What degree of supervision, direction and control does the company apply to the contractor?
- Has the contractor set up as a legal entity with the appropriate tax, pension and insurance arrangements?
- Is there an appropriate contractor agreement outlining the relationship between the company and the contractor?

Identifying, analysing and mitigating the risks around using contractors is a good starting point to ensuring that no issues crop up later with local authorities. For example, if a contractor's contract resembles a typical contract of employment, they may be classified as an employee in the target country.

Hiring staff directly

Hiring staff directly in another country requires a good understanding of the country's employment legislation. It also often means having to register as an employer in the target country.

Legal requirements, employment law and employee and employer tax, pension and insurance arrangements vary from one country to another. What also varies considerably are the rates and percentages of tax, pension and insurance fees, which come on top of a salary.

Setting up as an employer in another country typically involves registering with relevant authorities and ensuring that solutions for the right employer liabilities and accounting are in place.

It's important to scope out the target country's legal requirements and employment law landscape before you make a decision to hire staff directly in another country. Consider whether you are able to do this yourself, and what support you may need in terms of dealing with local authorities, employer registration and payments, and accounting.

Hiring staff through an intermediary

A no-hassle solution is to employ or contract staff through an intermediary who takes care of the relevant legal and contractual obligations in the target country, and may also assist in recruitment.

These services are often called payrolling. This means that the payroll company employs or contracts the worker directly, and you have a contractual relationship with the payroll company. You retain the freedom to recruit the payroll employees or contractors yourself, determine their salary, and have complete supervision, direction and control over them – but the payroll company takes care of the administration of the employment contract or contract agreement, and the associated costs and registrations.

The benefits of hiring staff through an intermediary are obvious: very little administration and full compliance with local legislation, for peace of mind for both the company and the employee or contractor themselves. There is, of course, always a fee to pay.

The ATC's partners provide comprehensive solutions for employee and contractor payrolling.

ATC Partner Solution with Translation Back Office



ATC Associate Partner [Translation Back Office](#) provides a new breed of managed services: a Project Manager and language service specialist outsourcing service – by a leading global language service company.

Outsourced PM services allow translation companies to better navigate market uncertainties, ongoing pricing pressures, and constant demand for new services. Outsourcing specific roles during out-of-hours and spikes in demand can make a significant difference to growing companies that are not ready to hire full-time employees, especially those based in high-cost markets.

Get in touch: info@translationbackoffice.com

ATC Partner Solution with Adaptive Globalization



ATC Associate Partner [Adaptive Globalization](#) provides a comprehensive and flexible range of contract staffing options.

Adaptive maintains proprietary databases of specialist professionals across core language services roles and geographical locations available for short and long-term assignments, with the flexibility of contracting project-specific freelance workers or building and managing entire out-sourced teams.

Get in touch: info@adaptiveglobalization.com

ATC Partner Solution with Deel



ATC Associate Partner Deel helps businesses tackle the challenges of international contracting and payrolling. Deel's global hiring and payroll services enable you to create locally compliant contracts in seconds, hire full-time employees in minutes, and process payments with just a click.

Deel's solutions include hiring employees and contractors with a transparent monthly fee, legally and compliantly.

Express your interest at: <https://get.deel.com/atc>

Introduction to internships

An internship is a fantastic opportunity for a student or a fresh graduate to experience life inside a language service company. But it's also a real chance for the company to gain extra capacity during busy times or tackle a specific project, and forge relationships with tomorrow's industry professionals.

The benefits of an internship

For the company

- Gain additional capacity for running tasks or a short-term project
- Aid future recruitment and reduce training burden
- Support young professionals in their early career

For the intern

- Experience hands-on the work of a language service company
- Understand the commercial realities of the language services industry
- Be better prepared for future employment within the industry

For the industry & academic world

- Forge links between the language services industry and the academic world, to ensure the education of future professionals is in tune with the evolving needs of the industry
- Improve the calibre of future job-seekers by providing them with an insight into the skills needed to make a successful transition from the academic world to the professional world
- Promote the future of the industry and encourage young graduates to enter careers within the industry

What can interns do?

An internship is an opportunity for a student or a fresh graduate to gain real-life experience in a specific industry, role or company. With support and guidance, interns can be involved in any aspect of your day-to-day business or work on a specific project.

For example, a translation or applied languages student could get involved in translation and other linguistic work, project management, or day-to-day work or a discreet project within marketing, sales, vendor management or quality management.

Equally, you may wish to host an intern studying international business or marketing, for example.

The shape and structure of an internship

Timing and duration

Internships can be offered at any time of the year, and are either done in the intern's own time during term breaks or after their studies finish, or as an internship placement which forms part of their degree.

Internships can vary in duration from a few weeks to a number of months depending on the company's needs, the intern's own preference, or the degree course's internship placement

module. An internship of 3-6 months, for example, provides the intern a good opportunity to get into the full flow of the work and expectations of the environment, and the company a meaningful return for the time they spend training and supporting the intern.

Remuneration and contracts

Remuneration and contractual elements for internships depend on whether the internship forms part of the intern's degree or not.

Internship *is not* part of the intern's degree

If the internship is not part of the intern's degree, and the intern carries out meaningful work on behalf of your business, they are classified as a 'worker' and must be employed with a formal contract in the same way as any employee, remunerated by at least the National Minimum Wage. The intern's contract can be a fixed-term employment contract limited to the duration of the internship, for example.

See more information about interns' employment rights and pay in the UK [here](#).

Internship *is* part of the intern's degree

If the internship forms part of the intern's degree studies, the intern will not be employed by you, but the intern's university may ask you to complete a learning agreement for the intern, and to assign specific tasks and a named supervisor for them. They may also ask you to provide post-internship feedback.

Interns who carry out an internship as part of their degree are not classified as a worker or employee, and they do not legally need to be paid the National Minimum Wage provided that the duration of the internship is less than 12 months. However, the intern's university will be able to specify whether the internship should be fully unpaid, or whether they recommend the intern be paid or receive other financial support such as travel or accommodation.

Other types of support

Consider other types of financial support offered to an intern carefully, for example, travel or accommodation costs. These may be construed as benefits in kind, and change an unpaid intern's status to 'worker' entitled to National Minimum Wage. See more information about intern statuses [here](#).

Recruitment of interns

Prospective interns may approach you directly to enquire about internship opportunities. You may also want to promote internships on your website or social media, or get in touch with UK or overseas universities to enquire about internships with their students.

It's always a good idea to consider your internship needs in advance, so you know exactly what you can offer.

UK-based interns

In the UK, some post-graduate MA courses for translation or applied languages offer an optional internship module to students. These are typically unpaid and often very short in duration. These short internships can be a great way to meet and connect with graduating students, and give them an introduction to life and work in a language service company. Some UK-based student interns seek internships outside of term time or after their studies.

Information on some of the ATC's university partner's internship programmes and recruitment contacts are added regularly at <https://atc.org.uk/university-partners/>.

If you are seeking interns with a specific language requirement, check which UK universities offer degree programmes for that language combination. UCAS is a central organisation that lists all UK degree programmes, see <https://wwwucas.com/>. Often, the first point of contact is the university's Careers Service.

Bringing interns into the UK from abroad

In the EU, many universities have longer MA degree courses which often include an internship module of 3-6 months during term time.

In the past, many UK companies have hosted Erasmus+ interns from EU countries. Post-Brexit, students and new graduates looking to do an internship with a UK company, in the UK, must apply for a sponsored Government Authorised Exchange (GAE) Visa, with sponsorship provided by an approved scheme, rather than an individual company (as is the case with employment sponsorship).

To find an intern from the EU, you could start by searching [here](#) for a list of member universities within the European Masters in Translation (EMT) network. The EMT is a network of MA programmes in translation to improve the quality of training and to help young graduates to integrate smoothly in the translation job market.

ATC Partner Solution



ATC Associate Partner [BUNAC](#) is a leading internship facilitator, providing internship visas through the UK Government's Authorised Exchange Visa programme. BUNAC acts as the visa sponsor and takes care of all administration relating to the internship.

BUNAC sponsors students and graduates for an internship of up to 6-12 months in the UK. Prospective interns of all nationalities can apply, with BUNAC providing support and guidance with the process of obtaining the visa sponsorship and visa to both the intern and the company hosting them.

Get in touch: partners@bunac.org

Application process

If you are actively recruiting interns, prepare an internship specification or a job advert that outlines the specifics of the internship at your business: duration, role, salary and qualification/experience/skills requirements in the same way as you would advertise and recruit for a permanent role.

Have a recruitment process that includes a CV, application form, possible test (with feedback) and an interview, to give you a clear idea of the prospective intern's skills and whether they would be a good match for your company. This will also provide the prospective intern with a good experience and preparation for future job applications.

It's good practice to have a learning agreement with clearly defined objectives and expectations for both parties: include what training, supervision and feedback you will provide and share this during the recruitment process.

Practical considerations

In-office or remote?

Traditionally, internships have taken place in the office, to provide the intern with sufficient support, training and supervision. However, nothing stops you from offering a remote internship, either in-country, or in the intern's home country.

For any remote internships, ensure that you have considered how support, training and supervision will be carried out remotely, and how you will incorporate the intern into the daily life of your business. Ensure that the intern has a safe and secure working environment which complies with your security setup.

Typical internship: translation

For hands-on translation or linguistic internships, ensure the work is of a suitable nature for someone with the intern's level of experience, knowledge and level of education.

A student or recent graduate may have some translation experience from their course, but the volume of translations completed is likely to be limited, the deadlines they worked to may have been generous, and the text types and domains they covered may be general, or only within one domain. This means they may not be equipped to tackle all project types, and the volume they can translate in a day will be less than a more experienced linguist. They may have little or no experience of using translation software.

Any work you deem suitable and appropriate should be fully and carefully checked by a competent, experienced linguist who has ample time to ensure they review and edit the work up to a full client-ready professional standard, as would be delivered by any experienced and qualified translator. Remember to consider any client or ISO certification requirements for linguist qualifications.

Typical internship: project management

For project management internships, ensure the work you ask the intern to complete is of an appropriate level for someone of their experience and skills within the workplace.

Students or recent graduates may have no client-facing customer service experience, and may have little experience of multitasking, working to tight deadlines, dealing with difficult situations or commercial pressures. Plan in advance what sort of tasks you'll ask them to perform, and how they will be supported and monitored.

Training

Think about what training the intern will require in the same way as you would for any new employee. For linguistic roles, test the intern's skills first with translation or revision tests, and provide them with feedback so they have a fair expectation of where their skills lie before the internship starts, and an opportunity to brush up on certain areas before they begin, if the tests reveal a gap in their knowledge of a certain part of grammar, for example.

Feedback and mentoring

Think about who will support them within each role or function they will be involved in and what sort of supervision and feedback will be needed. Ensure someone is appointed to provide them a helping hand and mentoring on a regular basis.

Plan regular reviews of their work and review meetings with the interns, to ensure both parties are finding the internship is progressing as planned.

If the internship is very short, and they are mainly observing colleagues and performing peripheral tasks, ensure the intern understand where their tasks fit within the larger scheme of the production cycle, so they see how they are meaningful within the bigger picture.

Post-internship

Review the internship with the intern and their mentors or supervisors. Check if the intern met the objectives set out in the learning agreement, and review how things may need to be adjusted for future internships, either in terms of training, expectations, tasks, supervision or output.

Follow-up with the university, ask them to share any feedback they receive from the student, and ask if the internship met their needs, and if they'd be happy to collaborate and build on the relationship in future. Maybe they'd welcome you to contribute to their course, giving some lectures on the commercial expectations of the industry, to help students know what to expect and bridge the gap between the academic and professional world.

Getting the small print right

The ATC's partner and member benefits provide guidance, support and solutions tailored for language service companies.

Insurance cover

Having an international workforce brings with it a lot of opportunities, but also challenges around compliance. One of the key areas around mitigating risks is ensuring that your operations are covered correctly in all the locations you operate.

Check whether your Professional Indemnity Insurance covers your employees, contractors and suppliers, wherever they are.

Check that your insurance cover also includes an appropriate level of protection for cyber threats internationally. The ATC's insurance partners are seeing an increasing number of cyber events, and given the often highly confidential nature of language services operations, having inadequately protected staff could create a target for villains.

ATC Partner Solution with UKGlobal Insurance Brokers



ATC Associate Partner [UKGlobal](#) provides professional, independent advice tailored for language service companies.

UKGlobal's technically precise approach to creating an insurance programme combined with strategic procurement of insurance enables you to put in place a more appropriate insurance programme that's truly tailored for your business, at a reduced cost – from cyber to professional indemnity, and legal expenses to employer's liability.

Get in touch: paul.cook@ukglobalgroup.co.uk

HR, legal, tax, health and safety

DAS Businesslaw gives you access to templates and allows you to create ready-to-sign contracts, agreements and letters – developed by solicitors and tailored by you using DAS' smart document builders. You can also buy legal documents from the site, ranging from simple debt recovery letters to employment contracts.

The service also provides useful tools, articles and information on matters such as new legislation, employment issues, property law and taxation all regularly updated by legal experts.

Visit <http://www.dasbusinesslaw.co.uk> and register using the voucher code DAS472301 and ATC Policy Number TS5/6695190.