



# ISO TS 6253: A New Milestone in Training for Community Interpreting

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The interpreting profession has undergone significant advancements in recent years, with the introduction of numerous standards aimed at improving service quality, ethical practices, and professional development. One of the most recent contributions is [ISO/TS 6253:2024, Requirements and Recommendations for Training Programmes in Community Interpreting](#), a technical specification spearheaded by Angela Sasso under the stewardship of Working Group 4 (WG4) of the ISO Technical Committee 37, Subcommittee 5 ([ISO/TC 37/SC 5](#)).

This project addresses a critical gap in the interpreting industry: the lack of standardised, accessible training programmes tailored for interpreters working in community and public sector settings. Below, we explore the objectives, scope, framework, and unique approach of ISO/TS 6253.

## Objectives and Scope of ISO/TS 6253:2024

ISO TS 6253 was developed to support interpreters in achieving the competencies outlined in earlier interpreting standards, such as ISO 13611 for community interpreting. The project serves as a framework for designing, developing, and implementing training programmes across various contexts, including healthcare, law enforcement, and general public service interpreting.

While community interpreting is the primary focus, the standard applies broadly to both signed and spoken language interpretation. It identifies essential competencies for interpreters and educators, including the introduction of language and interpreting tutors, a novel concept within ISO standards.

## Why this Standard was Needed

The motivation behind ISO TS 6253 was rooted in the recognition of a pressing need for specialised training opportunities. Many interpreters working in community settings face unique challenges, such as:

- **bidirectional and dialogic nature:** unlike other interpreting settings, community interpreters often manage two-way communication
- **multiple parties:** in scenarios like immigration or financial assistance, interpreters may navigate conversations involving several stakeholders
- **limited preparation:** interpreters are frequently provided with little to no preparatory materials



Existing tertiary education programmes often fail to address these nuances, leaving significant gaps in the skills and competencies interpreters require. ISO TS 6253 aims to bridge these gaps, offering a robust framework to enhance professional readiness and performance.

## **Key Features of ISO TS 6253**

### **1. Framework for training programmes**

The document outlines core elements for creating effective training programmes, including

- identification of essential competencies for interpreters in community settings;
- clear qualifications and expectations for educators, including language and interpreting tutors; and
- suggested formats and processes for programme design and delivery, allowing regional flexibility.

### **2. Competency focus**

The standard builds on the competencies defined in ISO 13611, emphasising practical, bidirectional, and context-specific skills. This includes interpersonal communication, cultural competence, and ethical considerations tailored to community interpreting.

### **3. Descriptive, not prescriptive**

Acknowledging global diversity in resources, awareness, and practices, ISO TS 6253 avoids a one-size-fits-all approach. Instead, it provides descriptive guidance, empowering communities and regions to adapt the framework to their unique needs.

## **Future Directions and Feedback**

While ISO TS 6253 is currently a technical specification, there are plans to evolve it into a full standard. This progression will depend on feedback from stakeholders, practitioners, and educators. The aim is to refine and expand the document, ensuring its relevance and applicability across diverse global contexts.

## **Raising the Bar in Interpreter Training**

ISO TS 6253:2024 is a critical step forward in professionalising community interpreting. By setting clear requirements and recommendations for training programmes, it paves the way for better-prepared interpreters, improved service quality, and enhanced public trust.

Are you ready to align your organisation with the latest interpreting standards? Stay at the forefront of industry standards by joining the next EUATC ISO/TC 37/SC5 webinar in February 2025 to deepen your understanding of ISO developments and learn how you can play a role in shaping the future of language services. Join to the [EUATC mailing list](#) to stay updated with all the communications:



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