



United Nations

2017 Competitive Examinations for Language Professionals

English translators/précis-writers, editors, verbatim reporters and copy preparers/proofreaders/production editors

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Basic eligibility requirements for the 2017 language competitive examination (LCE) for English translators/précis-writers, editors, verbatim reporters and copy preparers/proofreaders/production editors

- Have completed at least a first-level university degree (e.g. a Bachelor's degree)
- Be no older than 56
- Have a perfect (native-level) command of English
- Have excellent knowledge of at least two other UN official languages (Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish)

Please read the job opening carefully because requirements vary from one examination to the next.

Application and recruitment process

1. **Fill out your application in [Inspira](#), the UN's online human resources portal.** You can start building your application before the job opening has been posted by putting together the personal history information (education, qualifications, job experience) required for all applications.



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Tips:

- Read the relevant information on careers.un.org (the “[Competitive examinations for language professionals](#)”, “[Creating your job application](#)”, “[Application process](#)” and “[At your interview](#)” sections are particularly useful).
 - Read the relevant information on languagecareers.un.org (in particular the “[Careers](#)” and “[Recruitment](#)” sections).
 - Make sure you give yourself enough time to fill out the personal history information (it will take longer than you think!).
 - Make sure your cover letter is the recommended length and is written in good English.
 - Do not understate your language ability in the table of language knowledge or when answering the yes/no questions at the end of the application.
 - Once the job opening has been posted, go over your application again and tailor it if necessary before submitting it.
2. **Submit your application during the one-month application window.** This is likely to be between mid-January and mid-February. Check careers.un.org regularly or follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#) for updates.
 3. **Prepare for the exam.** See languagecareers.un.org for tips.
 4. **Take part 1 of the exam, which will likely be on 3 April 2017**, provided that you are invited to sit it. You may take the exam from any computer connected to the Internet. The invitation will include instructions.

If successful in part 1, take part 2 of the exam, which will be held a few months later and include at least one proctored test and a competency-based interview. Part 2 will also be conducted remotely.
 5. **Wait for an e-mail confirming whether or not you have been successful.** Successful applicants will be included on a roster of translators/précis-writers,



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editors, verbatim reporters and copy preparers/proofreaders/production editors. When there is a suitable vacancy at one of the UN duty stations, they may be offered a position.

6. **Wait for a job offer.** Please note that placement on a roster does not entail an automatic offer of employment and that openings may not arise for several months or even a few years. You may turn an offer down, but this could affect your chances of receiving future offers.

LCE format

Part 1: Written examination

If you pass the screening process, you will be invited to sit a written examination.

The written examination will be taken online, from any computer connected to the Internet. Candidates may use any electronic or printed resources available to them, but cannot be assisted by another person during the exam.

The exam will comprise three or four papers, which are likely to be:

- Paper 1: Translate a general text from any of the UN official languages into English
- Paper 2: Translate a specialized text (your choice of economic or legal) from a different UN official language into English
- Paper 3: Summarize an English statement (précis-writing task – see languagecareers.un.org for further information on précis-writing)
- Paper 4: Edit an English text for grammatical and stylistic errors



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Part 2: Proctored tests and competency-based interview

If you pass the written exam, you will be invited to part 2 of the LCE, which will take place a few months later. It will most likely include two components.

The first component will be a remote proctored translation paper from one of the official languages, followed by a discussion of the translation. It is not permitted to consult online or print resources during the translation. There may be additional tests.

The second component will be a competency-based interview conducted remotely, via webcam. Candidates are not expected to have in-depth knowledge of the workings of the United Nations system. Information on how to prepare for the interview can be found on careers.un.org.

Useful links

UN Careers website: careers.un.org

- [Search](#) function for LCEs and other job openings
- Detailed information about the [application process](#)
- Tips on preparing for [competency-based interviews](#)
- Updates on the [status of examinations](#)

UN Language Careers website: languagecareers.un.org

- Descriptions of the various [language professions](#) at the UN
- Description of [précis-writing](#)
- Tips on [preparing](#) for the LCE
- Information about [internships](#)



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Social media

We cannot respond to individual queries, but we do read your comments and will post answers to frequently asked questions.

- Twitter: [@UNLanguage](https://twitter.com/UNLanguage)
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/UNLanguageCareers
- LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/UNLanguageCareers

Inspira application and recruitment portal: <https://inspira.un.org>

International Civil Service Commission: <http://icsc.un.org>

Salaries are set by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC). See their website for more information on salaries, allowances and benefits.

Statements

To prepare for the précis-writing part of the exam, where you will be asked to summarize a text (in English) to around one third of its original length, you could try summarizing statements delivered by delegates during UN meetings. To access statements, go to <https://papersmart.unmeetings.org>. Click on the name of a session under “Current meetings”, then click on “Statements”.

UNTERM terminology database: untermportal.un.org