

ISO Standards Framework for QA in Legal Translation

Translating Europe Workshop: Forum on Quality in Legal Translation

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Introduction to QA & the relevant ISO standards

- The classical approach usually defines QA as the last stage of the process, after quality planning and control, but the general approach to QA within the translation and localisation industry is to describe the entire translation quality management system as QA.
- Hence, from this point of view, I personally define QA as „a model approach that ensures good results if the right combination of human and technical resources is used in a sequence of steps and tasks that constitute a process within a system”.
- Most translation QA guidelines or models define a similar set of elements (input) that are required for a successful result (output), and such best practice can then be used to develop standards.
- ISO TC 37 has already developed several important standards that define the various translation processes, terminology methodologies, key functionalities and related resources (people, tools, terminology, TMs etc.), and hence contribute to translation process management. These standards include: ISO 17100, ISO 704, ISO 12616, ISO 12620, ISO 30042 (TBX), etc.
- The key standards most important for QA in legal translation that I will focus on are ISO 17100 and ISO 20771. ISO TC 37 SC 5, the subcommittee that is most relevant to our industry and this presentation, deals with translation, interpreting and related technology.

ISO Standards for QA in Legal Translation – the framework

Terminology - Methodology, Management & Exchange	Translation service - requirements	Legal and other specialist translation - requirements	QA in translation – models and metrics
ISO 704, ISO 12616, ISO 12620, ISO 30042 (TBX)	ISO 17100	ISO 20771 – work in progress	NWIP – in the pipeline

ISO 17100 *Translation services -- Requirements for translation services*

- ISO 17100:2015 has formally replaced the previous regional standard EN15038:2006. As EN ISO 17100 it supersedes EN 15038:2006. So, the EN 15038 is now gone!
- ISO 17100 provides requirements for the core processes, resources, and other aspects necessary for the delivery of a quality translation service that meets applicable specifications.
- Application of ISO 17100 also provides the means by which a translation service provider (TSP) can demonstrate conformity of specified translation services to ISO 17100 and the capability of its processes and resources to deliver a translation service that will meet applicable specifications.
- Applicable specifications can include those of the client, the TSP itself, as well as any relevant industry codes, best-practice guides, or legislation.
- Exclusions: the use of raw output from machine translation plus post-editing is outside the scope of ISO 17100, and this standard does not apply to interpreting services.
- ISO 17100 was published on 1 May 2015 in the official English, French and German language versions, and the Polish and Spanish versions were published just a few months later.

ISO 17100 *Translation Services*

Defines and sets:

1. the professional competences and qualifications of the human resources involved in the translation process (translator, reviser, reviewer, project manager);
2. the procedures for handling quotations, client documents, contracts, project specifications;
3. project feasibility assessment and the procedures for job assignment;
4. the documented procedures for managing terminology, specifications and other technical and linguistic resources (TM, MT, style-guides, lexicons, reference materials, etc.);
5. the documented procedures for managing all stages of the translation process itself (ideally through some sort of automated work-flow);
6. the quality process that always involves professional revision of all the translated material (source and target content segment by segment comparison and assessment by a reviser who is not the translator – the two pairs of eyes principle), additional review if required and regular feedback;
7. the procedures for additional spot-checks to ensure monitoring of the control system and any additional assurance measures;
8. the procedures for dealing with complaints, reporting and implementing corrective measures;
9. the procedures for ensuring data security and archiving.

ISO 20771 *Legal and specialist translation services* -- Requirements

- ▶ In 2015 ISO TC 37/SC5 started work on the first international translation requirements standard that deals specifically with legal and specialist translation.
- ▶ I am the Project Leader for this ISO standard and co-ordinate the work within ISO TC 37/SC5.

Why do we need ISO 20771?

Because:

- ▶ - there is no single, systemic, standardized approach to legal and specialist translation and no regional or international standards have ever been developed in this area;
- ▶ - there is no standard objective system or best practice for QA in legal translation;
- ▶ - there are no standardized international or regional requirements defining the qualifications and competences of legal translators.
- ▶ Hence, there are no reliable professional benchmarks and certification schemes for legal translators that would be based on any international standard or generally accepted best practice.
- ▶ Therefore, there is great need and demand for such an international standard and the new “ISO 20771 *Legal and other specialist translation services*” requirements standard aims to rectify this situation by addressing all the pertinent issues and challenges currently facing the theory and practice of legal translation.

Aim and Scope of the ISO 20771 standard

- The ISO 20771 international standard shall provide the minimum requirements for the qualifications, competence, core processes, resources, training and other aspects necessary for the delivery of a quality legal or other specialist translation service that meets applicable specifications.
- The ISO 20771 standard shall define the competences and qualifications of legal and other specialist translators, revisers and reviewers in the context of the process used for legal and specialist translation, and it shall address the specific professional and QA challenges in this area.
- The ISO 20771 can therefore become the professional benchmark for future regional and international certification schemes for legal translators.
- The ISO 20771 standard is intended for implementation by both individual translators and corporate TSPs who meet all the requirements and follow the process specified in the standard.
- The use of raw output from machine translation plus post-editing is outside the scope of the ISO 20771, and the standard does not apply to interpreting services.



ISO 20771 Standard - Contents

Introduction & Scope

Terms and definitions

Competences and qualifications of a legal or other specialist translator, reviser, reviewer

Legal and specialist translation process



ISO 20771 Terms and definitions are organised as follows:

- Concepts related to translation and translation services
- Concepts related to translation workflow and technology
- Concepts related to language and content
- Concepts related to the people (HR) involved in translation services
- Concepts related to control of the translation service process

Competences required of a legal or other specialist translator – ISO 20771 working proposal

- ▶ Translation competence
- ▶ Linguistic and textual competence in the source language and the target language
- ▶ Domain competence
- ▶ Competence in research, information acquisition and processing
- ▶ Technical competence

Qualifications of a legal or other specialist translator – extract from the ISO 20771 working proposal

- ▶ a recognized degree in law or another specialist field (...) and at least three years full-time professional experience in translating;
- ▶ a recognized degree in translation, language studies or an equivalent degree and a post-graduate degree in law or another specialist field relevant to the domain (...)
- ▶ a recognized degree in any field and a state qualification as a certified legal or specialist translator on the basis of relevant national regulations;
- ▶ a recognized degree in any field from an institution of higher education and a recognized professional qualification as a certified legal or specialist translator and three year's relevant full-time professional experience
- ▶ a recognized degree in any field and five years' relevant full-time professional experience



Professional competences required of reviser of legal and specialist translation

- ISO 20771 working proposal

- Translation or revision competence
- Linguistic and textual competence in the source language and the target language
- Domain competence
- Competence in research, information acquisition and processing
- Cultural competence
- Technical competence

Qualifications of a reviser of legal or other specialist translation – ISO 20771 working proposal

- a recognized degree in translation, language studies or an equivalent degree
- a recognized degree in any other field from an institution of higher education and documented two years full-time professional experience in translating and revising;
- documented five years full-time professional experience in translating and revising.

Some of the ISO 20771 PM & QA requirements

The TSP is responsible for:

- ▶ Terminology and domain related research work
- ▶ All contacts and dealings with the client, including agreements, NDA etc.
- ▶ Management of all client, project and domain related resources
- ▶ Pre-production, production and post-production tasks
- ▶ Checking of the translation and final verification of all project details before its final and timely delivery to the client
- ▶ Project management
- ▶ Technical support
- ▶ Ensuring that all projects have their specifications and any related resources assigned to them
- ▶ Ensuring that all project related queries are answered, and all the members of the project team are provided with all the relevant project information in a timely manner
- ▶ Engaging the services of professional revisers, reviewers, project managers etc. who meet the standard competence and qualifications requirements.

Some other requirements defined and set by the ISO 20771 standard include:

- At least 5% of the translator's time should be dedicated to continuous professional development and specialization studies - including documented proof of attending a professional domain related translation training event or obtaining other relevant translation qualification at least once a year.
- Signing off on each translation assignment and record keeping
- Security and confidentiality assurance
- Feedback and final steps
- Handling of complaints and corrective action

ISO 17100 & ISO 20771 Translation Standards

– Compatibility and Focus Analysis

	General translation service requirements	Legal and other specialist translation service requirements
Corporate TSP Focus	ISO17100	
Individual Translator Focus		ISO 20771

CONCLUSIONS

From the industry 'big-picture' standards perspective, the ISO 17100 and ISO 20771 are intended as complementary standards. These two standards and the „QA in translation – models and metrics” standard (currently in the ISO pipeline), which I shall also be leading, should complete the whole QA standardization cycle for professional quality translation services.



Thank you

Any questions?

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The logo for MAart translations features a stylized 'M' in red and black, followed by 'Aart' in black, with 'agency' in a smaller font above 'Aart' and 'translations' below it.