



CITY OF TSHWANE

"we are the same"

TRANSLATION AND EDITING POLICY

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1. INTRODUCTION

This Translation and Editing Policy makes provision for the systematic handling of documents submitted to the Language Services Section of the Municipality for translation and editing in the 11 official languages and in foreign languages requested by clients. The editing and translation service enables all municipal departments to comply with the requirements of the National Language Policy Framework (NLPF), namely to –

- ◆ promote the equitable use of the 11 official languages;
- ◆ facilitate equitable access to government services and information;
- ◆ ensure redress for the previously marginalised official indigenous languages; and
- ◆ promote good language management for efficient public service administration so as to meet client expectations and needs.

The gradual implementation of the NLPF and the multilingual language policy of the Municipality means that the demand for translation from and into the official languages will continue to increase. Also, globalisation has brought about an increase in the demand for translations from and into foreign languages. Such translations improve communication between the City of Tshwane, foreign countries and all Tshwaneans and promote collaboration.

A policy is therefore essential for the management of the translation and editing process and to safeguard the interests of clients and language practitioners alike.

The Municipality will have to establish an efficient document management system to ensure the timely delivery of quality translations.

2. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this document –

"editing" means the correction of the content, style and grammar of a text and "edit" has a corresponding meaning;

"editor" means any person who edits documents;

"in-house" means in or of Language Services, as the case may be;

"language practitioner" means a translator or editor;

"Language Services" means the language unit of the Municipality;

"municipal document" means a document that is or is to be used for official municipal purposes;

"Municipality" means the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality established by Gauteng Provincial Notice 6770 of 1 October 2000;

"panel of external translators and editors" means the panel of individuals and agencies contracted by Language Services to translate and edit municipal documents;

"policy" means the Translation and Editing Policy of the Municipality;

"source language" means the language in which a document is originally written;

"target language" means the language into which a document is or has to be translated;

"translation" means the translation of a text in a source language into a target language, and "translate" has a corresponding meaning; and

"translator" means a person who translates documents from a source language into a target language.

3. PURPOSE

The primary purpose of this Translation and Editing Policy is to ensure a language service of a consistently high standard in order to satisfy clients' expectations and, at the same time, raise the professional image and status of language practitioners.

This policy provides guidelines on –

- ◆ the in-house translation and editing of municipal documents; and
- ◆ the outsourcing of municipal documents for translation and editing.

4. RATIONALE

The policy is aimed at putting in place a framework to regulate editing and translation in the Municipality.

5. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

This policy is based on the guiding principles of the National Language Service of the national Department of Arts and Culture. The guiding principles, adapted for the Municipality, are the following:

- ◆ Competence in a language is different from competence in translation and editing.

- ◆ Language practitioners are generalists first, able to work in a variety of subject fields, but may also be specialists in particular subject fields.
- ◆ A high standard of translation and editing is essential if the sphere of local government is to communicate effectively with the people it serves.
- ◆ The procedure for appointing and using editors and translators on the panel of external translators and editors is subject to the approval of the head of the Municipality's Corporate Services Department.

6. LEGAL CONTEXT

The policy is governed by the following documents and amendments to them:

- ◆ The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (specifically the Bill of Rights and the Founding Provisions)
- ◆ The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (Batho Pele White Paper), 1997
- ◆ The Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000 (Act 2 of 2000)
- ◆ The 2004 draft language policy of the Gauteng Provincial Government
- ◆ The draft language policy of the Municipality, 2006
- ◆ The National Language Policy Framework (NLPF)
- ◆ The South African Languages Bill, 2000

7. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

The policy applies to –

- ◆ all language practitioners employed by the Municipality;
- ◆ all individuals and agencies on the panel of external translators and editors of the Municipality; and
- ◆ all clients who request translation and editing services from Language Services.

8. CLIENTS, DOCUMENTS AND COSTS

Language Services renders a service to a variety of clients and therefore deals with numerous types and categories of municipal documents. Since Language Services does not cater for all the official languages of South Africa, it may outsource municipal documents to the Municipality's panel of external translators and editors.

8.1 Clients

The primary task of Language Services is to facilitate communication between the Municipality and the residents of Tshwane, communication

within the Municipality and communication between Tshwane and other countries. The clients for whom Language Services renders translation and editing services are therefore –

- ◆ the Office of the Executive Mayor of the Municipality;
- ◆ the Office of the Municipal Manager of the Municipality;
- ◆ the Office of the Chief Operating Officer of the Municipality; and
- ◆ all departments of the Municipality.

8.2 Documents accepted for translation and editing

Language Services edits municipal documents in all the official languages of the Municipality and translates documents from and into all the official languages of the Municipality. Municipal documents may also be translated into the other official languages of South Africa on request. Municipal documents in foreign languages are translated into English and, where necessary, English documents are translated into foreign languages.

Only official municipal documents, ie documents intended for official municipal purposes, are accepted for translation and editing by Language Services. These include –

- ◆ by-laws and regulations;
- ◆ strategic policy and procedure documents;
- ◆ newsletters and other municipal publications;
- ◆ brochures, pamphlets, flyers, posters, advertisements;
- ◆ cooperation agreements, international trade agreements, contracts, memoranda of understanding, etc;
- ◆ speeches;
- ◆ correspondence with the public;
- ◆ reports (eg annual reports, service delivery reports, Portfolio Committee reports, Mayoral Committee reports and Council reports);
- ◆ internal training manuals; and
- ◆ manuals intended for the use of the general public.

8.3 Costs

The cost of the translation and editing of municipal documents is borne by Language Services in collaboration with the departments concerned.

9. SERVICE DELIVERY

- 9.1 The provision of translation and editing services by Language Services is in line with the Batho Pele principles. In order to ensure the effective application of these principles, Language Services holds regular consultations with all its partners and clients.

- 9.2 In editing and translating municipal documents, Language Services does not accept responsibility or liability for factual errors in the municipal documents made by the writers/compiler of the documents. Clients are responsible for verifying the accuracy of facts and information contained in municipal documents submitted to Language Services for editing.
- 9.3 Language Services adheres to the strict quality control measures adopted internationally by the language professions and abides by the code of ethics of the South African Translators' Institute. Language Services will comply with the requirements set by the proposed Language Practitioners' Council for South Africa, which will regulate the training of language practitioners and control their accreditation and registration.
- 9.4 The language practitioners of Language Services regularly attend tailor-made translating and editing courses offered by tertiary and other institutions to hone their editing and translating skills.
- 9.5 Chief language practitioners are responsible for ensuring that the language practitioners of Language Services and the editors and translators on the panel of external translators and editors produce work of the required standard and deliver work on time.

10. CONDITIONS OF ACCEPTANCE

- 10.1 Language Services accepts requests for the translation and editing of municipal documents for official purposes only. No requests for translating or editing personal or private documents are considered.
- 10.2 Clients may send their documents to the head of Language Services or to any chief language practitioner or language practitioner of Language Services.
- 10.3 Clients must keep a record of documents submitted to Language Services and should take care not to duplicate requests for translation and editing.
- 10.4 The particulars of a suitable contact person must be provided when submitting documents for translating or editing as the client/sender is not always knowledgeable about the contents of a specific document.
- 10.5 Requests for editing and translation can be made in person, or by post, fax, telephone or e-mail.
- 10.6 All municipal documents intended for translation and editing must be submitted to Language Services in typed format, where possible, preferably electronically (via e-mail or fax or on CD/memory stick). The

municipal document must be in a format accessible to Language Services.

- 10.7 Strategic municipal policies and by-laws must be cleared with and approved by the Legal Services Division before being submitted for editing and translation.
- 10.8 Only the final text intended for publication and circulation may be submitted for editing and translation to prevent a waste of professional time and effort (and a multiplication of costs in the case of outsourcing).
- 10.9 If any of the conditions of acceptance are not complied with, the documents will not be accepted by Language Services and will be returned to the client.

11. PROCEDURE FOR RECEIVING DOCUMENTS

- 11.1 All municipal documents submitted for translation and editing are recorded in the official work register of Language Services.
- 11.2 The language practitioner coordinating the editing and/or translation of a municipal document negotiates a due date with the client.
- 11.3 Where there is a lack of capacity in Language Services and a municipal document needs to be outsourced, the chief language practitioner responsible for outsourcing, or the language practitioner concerned, will outsource the document according to strict internal procedures and in line with the Municipality's procurement policy.
- 11.4 Language Services records the due date negotiated between the client, Language Services and the editor or translator on the panel of external translators and editors, as well as all the details of the request, in the work register for the panel of external translators and editors. The due date will allow time for quality control by Language Services where necessary.

12. ESTIMATED TURNAROUND TIMES

- 12.1 The following production norms can be used as a guideline for municipal documents of a general nature (These production figures apply under optimum conditions.):

Translation

An average of 1 500 to 1 750 words (5 to 5,5 pages of 250 words each) per translator per day

Editing

An average of 3 000 to 3 300 words (10 to 11 pages of 250 words each) per editor per day

12.2 Hourly turnaround times may be calculated as follows:

Service provided	Average time
Editing (general text, without having to consult client and doing research)	½ to ¾ hour per page
Editing (technical text, eg legal, scientific, medical – involving in-depth research)	1 hour per page
Translating (general text, without having to consult client and doing research)	1 hour per page
Translating (technical text, eg legal, scientific, medical – involving in-depth research)	1 to 1¾ hours per page
Proofreading (comparing final text with edited source text)	20 minutes per page

- (Note: 1. One page is equal to 250 words.
 2. Comparative editing by a second language practitioner has not been included in the translation time.
 3. Interruptions have not been taken into account, eg time spent on other urgent work (eg editing press releases or working to newspaper deadlines) or on responding to telephonic and e-mail queries.)

12.3 The factors that influence production time for editing and translation are –

- the nature of the document (technical vs general);
- the level of difficulty of the text;
- the quality of the text;
- the availability of dictionaries and terminology lists;
- the degree of standardisation of terminology, ie consistency of terminology;
- the time spent on quality control and in meetings relating to the translation or editing;
- unrealistic target dates set by clients;
- familiarity with the terminology;
- the experience of the language practitioner;
- the time required for research;
- access to electronic research sources (eg Jutastat and online dictionaries);
- the time spent on contacting clients to solve queries; and
- operational interruptions that cause unforeseen delays.

13. RECORD-KEEPING AND DATABASE OF DOCUMENTS

Language Services will keep records of all municipal documents received and processed for editing and translation for reference purposes. The in-house language practitioners are responsible for maintaining databases of –

- ◆ edited documents and translations in the official languages of the Municipality;
- ◆ documents translated from/into foreign languages; and
- ◆ outsourced documents.

14. AMENDMENT

The policy will be amended by Language Services as and when required, and all stakeholders will be informed of such amendments.