

Identifying Gaps in Professional Development Opportunities for Translators and Interpreters in Australia

A report prepared for the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) from the

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Executive Summary

The Translation and Interpreting Studies Programme at Monash University was commissioned by NAATI to identify current gaps in professional development (PD) opportunities for translation and interpreting (T&I) practitioners in Australia.

We conducted an online nationwide survey of practitioners between October-December 2019, aiming to identify: practitioners' current engagement in PD; the factors that guide practitioners when selecting PD activities; their satisfaction levels with existing PD opportunities; the barriers to PD participation, and their opinions on how PD offerings could be improved.

We obtained a sample size of 3,268 respondents with the following profile:

- 68% lived in Victoria and New South Wales, and 87% lived in a capital city
- 86% spoke a LOTE as their first language
- 37% had lived in Australia for over 20 years
- 53.2% had worked as a T/I for less than 10 years
- Nearly 50% worked only as interpreters, 28% worked as both interpreters and translators, and 23% worked only as translators

Summary of key results

PD participation

- 78% of respondents had engaged in PD over the past 24 months.
- Most PD activities undertaken were less than 3 hours and webinars were a popular format.
- PD was provided mainly by AUSIT, as well as educational institutions, LSPs
- New practitioners with less than five years' experience were most likely to find PD useful in developing their skills and knowledge as well as clarifying their understanding of their role.

Barriers and concerns

- Cost was the most frequently mentioned factor in deciding what PD to attend and the most significant barrier to PD participation. Compulsory PD was seen as a burden by many practitioners, due to the significant investment of money and time.
- Nearly 40% of practitioners did not think that there was sufficient suitable PD available: there were calls for more PD across Australia, including in regional areas, more online offerings, and more short sessions after work hours/on weekends.
- Respondents asked for better communication of PD opportunities through a central website.
- Many experienced practitioners identified that existing PD was too basic.
- Respondents who practiced as translators sought more translation-focussed PD.
- Respondents wanted more PD in health and legal topics, as well as interpreter self-care, with curricula being more specialized, skills-focussed, and relevant to current workplace requirements.

Recommendations for NAATI and PD Providers

Recommendations
<p>1. NAATI to develop a regularly updated central platform to communicate available PD courses to practitioners, providing the key information practitioners need to select appropriate PD to attend.</p>
<p>2. NAATI to monitor the types of PD activities that are being claimed in certified T&I's re-certification applications to inform decisions about updating the PD catalogue, and what PD courses to publicise via the central platform.</p>
<p>3. NAATI and PD providers to work actively with industry partners to provide access to bursaries or discounted fees for PD courses.</p>
<p>4. PD providers to consult with NAATI and local industry representatives to identify needs for training on new topics, particularly in health and legal fields.</p>
<p>5. PD providers to consider the development of further training for interpreters and translators in regional areas all across Australia, and training opportunities beyond NSW and VIC.</p>
<p>6. PD providers to review the delivery of their current PD courses to ensure a balance between online, face to face and blended offerings, with the majority of face-to-face sessions run after work hours/weekends.</p>
<p>7. PD providers to ensure that offerings cater for a variety of practitioner levels, and in particular consider developing more advanced, specialised training.</p>
<p>8. PD providers to develop further translation-focussed PD courses.</p>
<p>9. PD providers to review the length of their current PD offerings to consider possible advantages of reducing course durations or developing new short courses.</p>

1. Introduction

The introduction of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) also known as Professional Development (PD) has been a feature to augment the skills set of those practising in a wide variety of professions in Australia. It is a compulsory requirement for practice in some professions, while in others, it is a desirable but not obligatory. In general, PD serves to enable professionals to acquire new skills, insights or knowledge bases or to deepen existing ones and it is a feature of standard-safeguarding for regulatory bodies. In the language services industry within Australia today, PD, together with pre-service training, is regarded as important to ensuring and maintaining high standards of translation and interpreting (T&I) provision. The National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) began implementing compulsory PD in 2007 and PD training is currently provided by a variety of organizations, including T&I associations, educational institutions, language service providers and other commercial entities.

It has now been nearly three years since the introduction of NAATI's new certification system in 2017-18, with over 13,000 practitioners now required to engage in regular PD in order to recertify their credentials every three years. It is therefore an opportune time to survey practitioners' views on the PD currently offered in Australia to determine whether opportunities are sufficient and/or suitable to cater to their needs. Such empirically gained data is essential for providers and funders of PD training to set priorities based on training needs.

We therefore conducted an online nationwide survey to identify current gaps in professional development opportunities for translators and interpreters in Australia from the perspective of practitioners themselves and to provide recommendations to NAATI and PD providers. The survey aimed to identify practitioners' current engagement in PD, the factors that have guided them when selecting PD courses, their satisfaction levels with PD opportunities, barriers to participation, and their opinions as to what will guide them when selecting further PD, including preferred content, modes of delivery, duration of PD courses, and other factors.

1.1 PD requirements for translators and interpreters in Australia

Australia has had a credentialing system for translators and interpreters since 1977. Under the original system, candidates could sit tests to gain accreditation either directly with NAATI or by undertaking a course at an accredited training institution that included a test aligned to NAATI's standard requirements. PD was not compulsory, as there was no requirement to revalidate one's credentials. However, this changed for accreditations gained after 2007, when NAATI implemented a requirement for all practitioners to revalidate their accreditation every three years, and PD was made obligatory for revalidation. Those who obtained accreditation prior to 2007 were able to opt-in to the system, but they were permitted to maintain their accreditation even if they chose not to.

Major changes were made to the accreditation system in 2017-2018 in an effort to raise the quality of T&I services. The groundwork was done by the INT project, commissioned by NAATI and led by Professor Sandra Hale (Hale et al. 2012), the recommendations from which formed the basis of NAATI's new 'certification' system. This places greater emphasis on the education, training, and ongoing professional development of practitioners. It is made up of three components:

- Satisfying the criteria that need to be met to be eligible for certification testing.
- Passing the certification test: a performance-based test of the candidate's translation or interpreting skills.
- Satisfying the recertification requirements: Once awarded certification, it is necessary to meet certain criteria every three years in order to retain it.

Tests were newly designed based on the knowledge, skills and attributes identified as necessary for professional practice, and are now administered solely by NAATI. However, candidates are now required to undertake prior training to be eligible for testing, either through 'endorsed' courses at training institutions (universities, TAFEs, etc.) or through preliminary courses run by NAATI. The levels of certification have also undergone a review of the skills required of each and designations. Since the start of 2019, tests at the level of Provisional Certified Interpreter, Certified Interpreter and Certified

Translators have been conducted for many languages, while testing for two types of specialised interpreting, Certified Specialist Interpreter (Health and Legal) will commence in 2020 for a smaller number of languages. Testing for Certified Conference Interpreter has commenced for a small number of languages, with other languages to follow.

From October 2017, practitioners who worked under the former accreditation system were invited by NAATI to transition (without having to re-sit the test) to the certification scheme. They were given more than two years to make this transition, and the transition period ended on 31 December 2019. This also meant that those practitioners who were not under the revalidation system would now be subject to the requirement to recertify after three years, if they transitioned. Although transition was not compulsory, NAATI made it clear that the accreditation scheme would no longer be supported, and certification would become the industry standard. Although figures are not available yet, it is likely that only a small number of practitioners chose to remain 'accredited' and not 'certified'. As of 31 January 2020, NAATI had awarded 18,844 credentials under the certification system to a total of 13,429 practitioners in 172 languages (NAATI News, February 2020).

The recertification obligation requires translators and interpreters with NAATI credentials to demonstrate that they are maintaining their skills by engaging in a minimum amount of work practice, constantly developing ethical decision-making and professional skills, maintaining their language competence, and contributing positively to the profession. Under the PD requirements, translators and interpreters must complete professional development logbooks, alongside a work practice record, every three years. This is intended to help keep a record of any training that has been completed by practitioners, and also allows NAATI to know that the requirements for recertification by the practitioner have been met. The activities that can be counted towards PD are varied, and NAATI provides a catalogue which informs practitioners what can be included, and how many points are allocated to each activity (PD Catalogue, NAATI website, accessed 21 February 2020). A minimum of 30 points is required for each category over the recertification period. The three PD categories, and some examples of what activities fall under these are as follows:

1. Skills Development and Knowledge (min. 30 points required)
 - 1.1 Completed a formal course unit or module at a tertiary education institution on translating or interpreting or a related field Industry Engagement (including an Ethics sub-section) – 60 points for over 20 hours
 - 1.4 Attended a formal professional development session, workshop, seminar, conference or webinar conducted by a professional body, NAATI, RTO, university department or language service provider – either in translating or interpreting or a related field – 1-4 hours = 10 points, One day = 20 points, 2+ days = 40 points
 - 1.9 Current paid membership of a translating or interpreting professional association or representative body (e.g. AUSIT, ASLIA, WAITI, Professionals Australia, AALITRA or CITAA) – Maximum 10 points per recertification application
2. Industry Engagement (min. 30 points required, including at least one Ethics activity)
 - 2.1 Published an article on a Translating or Interpreting subject matter in a refereed translation, interpreting or linguistics industry journal, book or relevant peer-reviewed journal – 20 points for 2000 words minimum
 - 2.3 Presented a paper at a translating or interpreting or related discipline conference – 20 points for 20 minutes minimum
 - 2.20 Attended a training event (e.g. refresher, workshop, seminar, webinar, etc.) run by a professional body, tertiary institution, NAATI or language service provider specifically concerned with ethics of the profession. This includes completion of online courses.
3. Maintenance of Language (min. 30 points required)
 - 3.1 Completed a formal professional development workshop, course unit or module at a tertiary institution on LOTE, English, Auslan/Deaf studies or linguistics – 60 points for more than 20 hours

3.2 Taught a LOTE unit or course at a tertiary institute or community language school – 20 points for 1 semester or more

3.4 Spent time in a country or region where LOTE is the primary language spoken – 20 points for over 4 weeks

These are only a few examples of activities and events that can be counted as PD. If practitioners undertake activities not specified in the catalogue, they are able to provide a justification for them to be included.

In 2016, NAATI conducted a survey on practitioners' experience of the revalidation system, including PD, to gain feedback and assist in the planning of the new certification system. This survey, which obtained responses from 2883 participants, provided the following key findings relating to PD. Most respondents had completed at least one activity from each of the required three PD categories (ethics; maintenance of language; T&I skills development); however, the number of activities in the ethics category was lower than the other two. Many expressed concerns about the lack of ethics courses, and did not see the relevance of repeating ethics training. Also, while online workshops and webinars were preferred by practitioners, face to face training was the most common activity, followed by visiting a LOTE country. A third of respondents stated that the PD activities were not affordable and a fifth of respondents claimed to have spent over \$1000 on PD activities per revalidation period. Practitioners who belong to T&I-related organizations were found to be more likely to undertake more PD activities in all categories, though some expressed dissatisfaction about the quality of the PD activities, stating that they offered no benefits other than revalidation points.

AUSIT also conducted a survey between 4 November 2015 and 5 February 2016 to gather information on the PD needs of Australian practitioners, aiming to inform the development of their PD program (Gonzalez 2019). The survey was distributed to approximately 2,600 practitioners, and received 793 responses. The key findings of this survey relating to PD revealed that the respondents' interests aligned with their fields of expertise, such as translation skills for translators and note-taking for interpreters. PD courses developing other professional skills were also sought after, such as business skills, website development, and English enhancement. Respondents raised the need for more specialised PD, such as on legal and medical topics, ethics, and CAT tools. Respondents also expressed various views regarding PD, such as the lack of opportunities in smaller states preventing them from completing regular activities, making the recertification requirements harder to meet.

1.2 Overview of PD offered in Australia for T&I practitioners

PD for interpreters and translators in Australia is offered through many channels by various T&I associations, tertiary institutions, language service providers, private training organizations, as well as other associated groups which use T&I services such as healthcare providers and legal services. The following is a brief overview of what PD was offered in 2018/2019.

Approximately 50 PD opportunities were offered by AUSIT, covering a wide range of topics including 'Consecutive interpreting and note taking,' 'Interpreting ethics: different ethics for different contexts,' 'Translating in legal settings,' 'Trauma in Interpreting/Translating,' and 'Computer Assisted Translations.' The formats were varied, and included face-to-face workshops, seminars, masterclasses, and multi-day courses, as well as online webinars. AUSIT allows practitioners to purchase past webinars through their website (as of 7/2/20, 28 are available). The locations of the face-to-face PD were mostly spread out evenly between states; however, only one was offered in Northern Territory, and three in Tasmania. The venues also tended to be located in the capital cities of these states. The cost of these PD courses also varied greatly, with some offered free of charge, while others were up to \$180. A PD calendar on the AUSIT website provides an easy way to find relevant courses, and also advertises events provided by other institutions.

ASLIA offered approximately 15 PD opportunities, with some in conjunction with other organizations such as the ATO, Victorian Deaf Education Institute, and Auslan Connections. Their PD courses were mainly in NSW, VIC, QLD and WA. Many workshops were offered both onsite as well as through livestream, allowing remote participation by practitioners. The cost range varied greatly, with some options available free of charge, while some costing over \$500.

Professionals Australia provided various webinars, which were available through their website free of charge for its members. These included, for example, 'Interpreting for Speech Pathologists,' 'Ergonomics for Translators and Interpreters,' 'Humanitarian and Refugee Interpreting.'

WA Institute of Translators and Interpreters (WAITI) offered PD for interpreters and translators in specialized areas, such as aged/palliative care and corrective services.

Educational institutions, such as Monash University, offered PD short courses including ethics, court/legal/health interpreting, translation technology, community interpreting, stress management, family violence interpreting and simultaneous interpreting. The costs of these options ranged from just under \$100 up to \$600. RMIT also offered one or two week courses on topics such as literary translation, translation and security, and translation and technology. These courses cost \$850.

PD is also offered by LSPs (such as VITS, NABS, etc.), including topics such as Introduction to Australian Courts and Tribunals, Ethics and conduct in Courts and Tribunals (Stern and Liu, 2019), online training through Youtube, and a range on webinars available for \$150 to \$350. Health Care Interpreter Service in NSW provides a large number of workshops related to the medical setting (eg. Interpreting in medical consultations, Speech Pathology, Ethical and Professional Decision Making).

Health and legal service providers also offer workshops and online modules that are relevant to their needs. For example, TALS (Transcultural and Language Services) at Northern Health in Victoria provides training sessions for in-house interpreters and translators.

2. Survey Instrument

We developed an online survey through Qualtrics to collect nationwide data from T&I practitioners on their experiences relating to PD opportunities. This was then distributed to practitioners via email by NAATI, AUSIT, ASLIA, various language service providers, and other professional and government associations. The survey was open for six weeks, from 30 October until 11 December 2019.

The survey contained a total of 65 voluntary questions, in a mixture of both open and close-ended formats, which were grouped into four categories: 1) demographic and occupational details; 2) awareness of PD requirements, and motivations to participate in PD; 3) PD participation over the past 24 months; 4) PD opportunities in the future.

In total, 3,591 responses were received, of which 3,268 were classified for data analysis with the remaining responses excluded as these came from people not working as translators and/or interpreters. In our analysis for each question, missing values are not included when deriving percentages. Multiple-choice responses were quantified and short-answer responses were coded according to theme.

3. Data Analysis

3.1 Demographic overview of survey participants

The sample size of 3,268 practitioners represents a significant proportion of the total number of translators and interpreters in Australia. There is no precise data on the number of T/Is currently practising, since some may have obtained credentials but not be working in the field, and conversely some individuals may work as T/Is without NAATI credentials. However, the latest NAATI statistics report a total of 13,429 individuals with NAATI certification credentials (NAATI News, February 2020), providing an indication of workforce size (although this does not include those with only accreditation credentials under the previous system). A sample of 3,268 practitioners is sizeable and is likely to represent approx. 25% of all T&I practitioners in Australia. The sample size compares favourably with surveys conducted by NAATI and AUSIT in 2016 (the NAATI Revalidation Survey obtained 2,883 responses, and the AUSIT PD survey received 793 responses), providing a strong evidence base for our findings.

The following tables provide a demographic overview of the respondents, and the most significant points are summarized under each.

Residence in Australia

How many years have you lived in Australia?	N (%)
Born in Australia	358 (11%)
Less than 1 year	9 (.3%)
1-5 years	371 (11.4%)
6-10 years	525 (16.1%)
11-15 years	504 (15.4%)
16-20 years	302 (9.3%)
More than 20 years	1194 (36.6%)

What State or Territory do you live in?	N (%)
VIC	1253 (38.6%)
NSW	966 (29.6%)
QLD	384 (11.8%)
SA	228 (7%)
WA	208 (6.4%)
TAS	84 (2.6%)
ACT	73 (2.2%)
I currently live overseas	29 (.9%)
NT	25 (.8%)

Do you live in a capital city or regional location?	N (%)
Capital city	2816 (86.8%)
Regional location	429 (13.2%)

Table 1: Residence in Australia

The above data shows that nearly half of the respondents (47.6%) comprised long-term residents in Australia (those who were born here or have lived here for over 20 years). However, there was also a significant proportion of relatively recent migrants (27.8% who have lived in Australia for 10 years or less). Regarding the distribution across Australia, 68.2% lived in the two most populous states of Victoria and New South Wales (38.6% and 29.6% respectively), followed by Queensland (11.8%). This compares with 58% of the general population living in New South Wales and Victoria and 20% in Queensland (ABS data, June 2019). Furthermore, the overwhelming majority of respondents lived in a capital city (86.8%), while 13.2% lived in a regional location.

Languages of respondents

What is your first language/s?	
	N (%)
Top five first languages:	
Chinese	862 (26.5%)
English	448 (13.8%)
Arabic	245 (7.5%)
Vietnamese	175 (5.4%)
Persian/Farsi	168 (5.2%)
What are your other working languages?	
Top five other working languages (first response):	
English	1821 (61%)
Chinese	221 (7.4%)
Auslan	182 (6.1%)
Arabic	75 (2.5%)
Dari	59 (2.0%)
Top five other working languages (second response):	
English	223 (34.5%)
Spanish	40 (6.2%)
French	31 (4.8%)
Dari	28 (4.3%)
German	23 (3.6%)
Respondents with more than 2 other working languages:	199

Table 2: Languages of respondents

In total, there were 135 languages reported by respondents as their first language or other working languages. 86.2% spoke a language other than English as their first language. Chinese was the most common first language (26.5%), with English second (13.8%) and Arabic, Vietnamese and Persian comprising the top five (see Table 2 above). The remaining languages each had 2.5% or less of respondents who spoke them as first languages. It should be noted that 'Chinese' includes respondents who specified Mandarin, Cantonese, or other Chinese language varieties as well as those who only stated 'Chinese' on the survey. Regarding the respondents' other working languages, unsurprisingly the most commonly stated was English (61%), followed by Chinese, Auslan, Arabic and Dari (all less than 10%). There were also 647 respondents who had at least two other working languages, and 199 who had three or more other working languages. The most common second 'other working languages' can be seen in Table 2 above.

NAATI certification/accreditation

Do you have NAATI certification (new system) and/or accreditation (old system) for any of your languages?		N (%)
Certification (new system)		2507 (76.7%)
Accreditation (old system)		632 (19.3%)
Mixture of both		569 (17.4%)
Neither certification or accreditation		131 (4%)
Do you plan on sitting the NAATI test in the future?		
Yes		95 (73.1%)
No		35 (26.9%)
What certification credentials do you currently hold (new system)?		
Certified Conference Interpreter		41 (1.3%)
Certified Interpreter		1135 (34.7%)
Certified Provisional Interpreter		1071 (32.8%)
Recognised Practising Interpreter		176 (5.4%)
Certified Advanced Translator		89 (2.7%)
Certified Translator		1272 (38.9%)
Recognised Practising Translator		83 (2.5%)
Do you plan to apply for a higher level or specialized category of certification in the future?		
Yes - Certified Interpreter		732 (22.4%)
Yes – Certified Specialist Interpreter (Health)		588 (18%)
Yes – Certified Specialist Interpreter (Legal)		411 (12.6%)
Yes – Certified Conference Interpreter		284 (8.7%)
Yes – Certified Advanced Translator		257 (7.9%)
No		855 (26.2%)
What accreditation credentials do you currently hold (old system)?		
Conference Interpreter		33 (1%)
Professional Interpreter		332 (10.2%)
Paraprofessional Interpreter		445 (13.6%)
Recognised Translator		62 (1.9%)
Advanced Translator		30 (.9%)
Professional Translator		476 (14.6%)
Paraprofessional Translator		45 (1.4%)
In the future, do you plan to transition to the certification system for the relevant languages?		
Yes		795 (80.6%)
No		191 (19.4%)

Table 3: NAATI certification/accreditation

The majority of respondents (76.7%) held NAATI certification credentials, but a significant proportion (19.3%) held accreditation credentials that they had not yet transitioned. Since this survey was conducted just before the 31 December 2019 deadline for transition from accreditation to certification, it is likely that some respondents would have since transitioned. Of the 4% of respondents who held neither certification nor accreditation credentials, 73.1% stated that they intended to sit certification tests in the future. Regarding the current certification credentials held by respondents, the three most common were Certified Translator (38.9%), Certified Interpreter (34.7%) and Certified Provisional Interpreter (32.8%). However, at the time this survey was conducted, certification testing had not begun for some languages and testing for Certified Conference Interpreter and Certified Specialist Interpreter (Health and Legal) had also not yet commenced. Therefore, statistics on credentials will change as the new system is fully implemented. 73.8% of respondents stated their intention to apply for a higher level or specialized category of certification in the future.

T&I work details

Do you work as an interpreter or a translator or both?	N (%)
Interpreter	1625 (49.7%)
Translator	738 (22.6%)
Both	905 (27.7%)
(If both) Is the majority of your work in interpreting or translation?	
Interpreting	475 (55.6%)
Translation	162 (18.9%)
About equal	218 (25.5%)
How long have you worked as a translator and/or interpreter?	
Less than 1 year	280 (8.7%)
1-4 years	711 (22.1%)
5-9 years	720 (22.4%)
10-19 years	798 (24.9%)
20+ years	701 (21.8%)
What is your mode of work?	
Freelance	1912 (59.9%)
In-house	310 (9.7%)
Both	968 (30.3%)

Table 4: T&I work details

Almost half the respondents worked only as interpreters (49.7%) while a smaller proportion (22.6%) worked solely as translators. 27.7% of respondents worked as both interpreters and translators, but a majority (55.6%) of these practitioners did more interpreting than translation work.

There was a relatively even spread of experience levels among the respondents, with 53.2% of respondents working as a T/I for less than 10 years, and 46.8% greater than 10 years.

Nearly 60% of respondents worked as freelance practitioners with only 9.7% in in-house positions. While there was a significant proportion (30.3%) who reported working both freelance and in-house, it is possible that some may have interpreted this question as including their non-T&I work.

Work areas (interpreters)

Areas of work for interpreting	Never N (%)	Sometimes N (%)	Often N (%)
Health (n=2402)	101 (4.2%)	463 (19.3%)	1838 (76.5%)
Aged care (n=2090)	446 (21.3%)	962 (46%)	682 (32.6%)
Police (n=2159)	553 (25.6%)	1158 (53.6%)	448 (20.8%)
Court (n=2142)	667 (31.1%)	917 (42.8%)	558 (26.1%)
Other legal (n=2177)	354 (16.3%)	1140 (52.4%)	683 (31.4%)
Social welfare (n=2281)	196 (8.6%)	997 (43.7%)	1088 (47.7%)
Business (n=2008)	591 (29.4%)	1042 (51.9%)	375 (18.7%)
Conferences (n=1911)	1019 (53.3%)	731 (38.3%)	161 (8.4%)
Education (n=2225)	282 (12.7%)	1146 (51.5%)	797 (35.8%)
Tourism (n=1860)	1151 (61.9%)	590 (31.7%)	119 (6.4%)

Table 5: Work areas (interpreters)

Work areas (translators)

Areas of work for interpreting	Never N (%)	Sometimes N (%)	Often N (%)
Scientific and technical (n=1304)	391 (30%)	739 (56.7%)	174 (13.3%)
Medical (n=1416)	277 (19.6%)	746 (52.7%)	393 (27.8%)
Legal (n=1425)	232 (16.3%)	751 (52.7%)	442 (31%)
Business and financial (n=1375)	254 (18.5%)	751 (54.6%)	370 (26.9%)
Social welfare (n=1355)	366 (27%)	730 (53.9%)	259 (19.1%)
Official documents (n=1462)	126 (8.6%)	480 (32.8%)	856 (58.5%)
Marketing (n=1313)	401 (30.5%)	656 (50%)	256 (19.5%)
Localization (n=1216)	639 (52.5%)	470 (38.7%)	107 (8.8%)
Audiovisual (n=1243)	646 (52%)	508 (40.9%)	89 (7.2%)
Literary (n=1243)	701 (56.4%)	460 (37%)	82 (6.6%)

Table 6: Work areas (translators)

Practitioners were asked to select the areas they work in and the approximate frequency for each. Table 5 shows that for interpreters, health (76.5%), social welfare (47.7%) and education (35.8%) had the highest proportions of respondents who worked in those areas 'often', but police (53.6%), other legal (53.4%) and business (51.9%) also had high proportions of interpreters who worked in those areas 'sometimes'.

Table 6 shows the work areas for translators. Fields with the highest percentages of 'often' responses are official documents (58.5%), legal (31%) and medical (27.8%). The latter two areas also had high 'sometimes' scores (52.7% each), as did business and financial (54.6%), social welfare (53.9%) and marketing (50%).

3.2 Motivation and benefits sought from PD

The benefits respondents seek from participation in T&I PD were rated on a scale of 0 (not important at all) to 4 (very important). Since all means were above 2, it is clear that on average, respondents attached some importance to all of these potential benefits. The top four responses were:

- Gain PD points for NAATI recertification (3.52)
- Update my skills/knowledge in an area I already work in (3.34)
- Engage in ongoing learning, as this is important in life (3.29)
- Learn new skills/knowledge about areas I don't already work in (3.23)

Those rated least important were:

- Fulfill the requirements of my employer/agency (2.73), and
- Make myself more employable/improve my CV (2.85)

These results indicate that while obtaining points for recertification may be the primary motivating factor to participate in PD, practitioners hope and expect that PD activities will enable them to develop their knowledge and skills and thereby improve their practice. The next set of questions asked respondents about their experience of PD over the past 24 months to determine the types and modes of PD they have been accessing and gain their feedback.

3.3 Experience of PD over the past 24 months

Respondents were first asked whether they had done any T/I PD over the past 24 months. It was noted that for the purpose of this survey, 'PD' referred to short courses/workshops/seminars (online or face-to-face) attended for PD purposes. Other activities were excluded even if they counted towards the recertification requirements (e.g. trips overseas for the purpose of language maintenance or networking events). A total of 2,441 respondents (78.3%) reported having engaged in PD over the past 24 months, while 676 (21.7%) had not. The large proportion of respondents who had not participated in PD is in part due to the timing; many practitioners who previously held accreditation credentials would have only recently transitioned to certification, and some may not yet have transitioned. Some of them would have held credentials from before 2007 and therefore would not have been required to do PD in the preceding 24 months (unless they had opted into the revalidation system). For those practitioners who have now transitioned to certification, PD will of course become compulsory.

We examined whether participation in PD was related to the respondents' place of residence, and practitioner type (see Table 7). Overall there was a significant difference in the rates of participation across the states and territories. Observation of the frequencies indicated that respondents from Queensland and Victoria had the highest rates whereas the lowest participation rates were found in ACT and Tasmania. There was a strong association between practitioner type and participation in PD, with only 63.5% of translators having undertaken PD, compared to 82.9% of interpreters and 82% of respondents who worked as both interpreters and translators. This needs to be considered in conjunction with translators' opinions about the availability of translation-specific PD discussed later.

Participation in T&I PD over the past 24 months

Participation by State/Territory	Yes N (%)	No N (%)
VIC	963 (80.7%)	231 (19.3%)
NSW	709 (76.3%)	220 (23.7%)
QLD	298 (81.6%)	67 (18.4%)
WA	157 (79.3%)	41 (20.7%)
SA	167 (77.3%)	49 (22.7%)
NT	18 (75%)	6 (25%)
ACT	40 (60.6%)	26 (39.4%)
TAS	55 (69.6%)	24 (30.4%)
Living overseas	20 (69%)	9 (31%)
X ² (8)=25.975, p<0.005		
Participation by practitioner type		
Interpreter	1286 (82.9%)	266 (17.1%)
Translator	440 (63.5%)	253 (36.5%)
Both		
X ² (8)=115.490, p<0.001		

Table 7: Participation in T&I PD over the past 24 months

Of those who had participated in PD over the past 24 months, the majority (1207 respondents (55%)) reported that they had undertaken 1-5 PD activities. The second highest proportion (636 (29%)) had completed 6-10 PD activities over the two years. There was a surprisingly high number (176 (8%)) who reported having done more than 20 PD activities, but it is likely that many of these respondents misinterpreted the question as referring to PD hours or points. There were no significant differences in the number of PD activities attended across states or regional/city locations.

Participation in T&I PD over the past 24 months

	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21+
No. of PD activities by practitioner type					
Interpreter	593 (50.6%)	343 (29.2%)	61 (5.2%)	52 (4.4%)	124 (10.6%)
Translator	261 (65.9%)	94 (23.7%)	15 (3.8%)	6 (1.5%)	20 (5.1%)
Both	359 (56.1%)	202 (31.6%)	23 (3.6%)	21 (3.3%)	35 (5.5%)
X ² (8)=47.228, p<0.001					

Table 8: No. of PD activities undertaken over past 24 months

Compared to translators, higher proportions of interpreters/both had undertaken more than 5 PD activities in the past 24 months.

Respondents were asked about the topics of the PD activities they had undertaken over the past 24 months (selecting as many as relevant from the following list). Percentages are of the total sample size of 3268.

PD topics

	N (%)
Ethics	1420 (43.5%)
Health	1136 (34.8%)
Mental health	730 (22.3%)
Police and legal	644 (19.7%)
Family violence	585 (17.9%)
Court	524 (16%)
Introduction to the profession	513 (15.7%)
Telephone/video interpreting	462 (14.1%)
Chuchotage	437 (13.4%)
Social welfare	431 (13.2%)
Stress management	426 (13%)
Interpreting in emotionally charged settings	399 (12.2%)
Education	344 (10.5%)
Introduction to community interpreting	325 (9.9%)
Translation technology	322 (9.9%)
Theory	321 (9.8%)
Note-taking	262 (8%)
Business	250 (7.6%)
Aged care	249 (7.6%)
Setting up a freelance business	222 (6.8%)
Simultaneous interpreting in booths	134 (4.1%)
Sight translation	133 (4.1%)
Scientific/technical translation	90 (2.8%)
Revising/editing translations	89 (2.7%)
Audiovisual translation	78 (2.4%)
Localization	73 (2.2%)
Other	293 (9%)

Table 9: PD topics

Since NAATI requires certified practitioners to complete ethics-related PD as a separate category for recertification, it is unsurprising that ethics was the most common topic selected. The other topics with high numbers of participants (health, mental health, police and legal) reflect the most frequent work areas for interpreters (see Table 5), but the numbers are also likely indicative of availability of PD courses on these topics. It is notable that not many respondents had undertaken PD on skills-based topics (notetaking, simultaneous interpreting in booths, sight translation), with the exception of chuchotage. The latter exception would be due to the fact that NAATI required accredited practitioners transitioning to Certified Interpreter to provide evidence of work practice, PD or training in chuchotage. This data about what PD topics were actually undertaken needs to be considered in light of the

following questions about preferred PD topics and respondents' feedback in the open-ended responses.

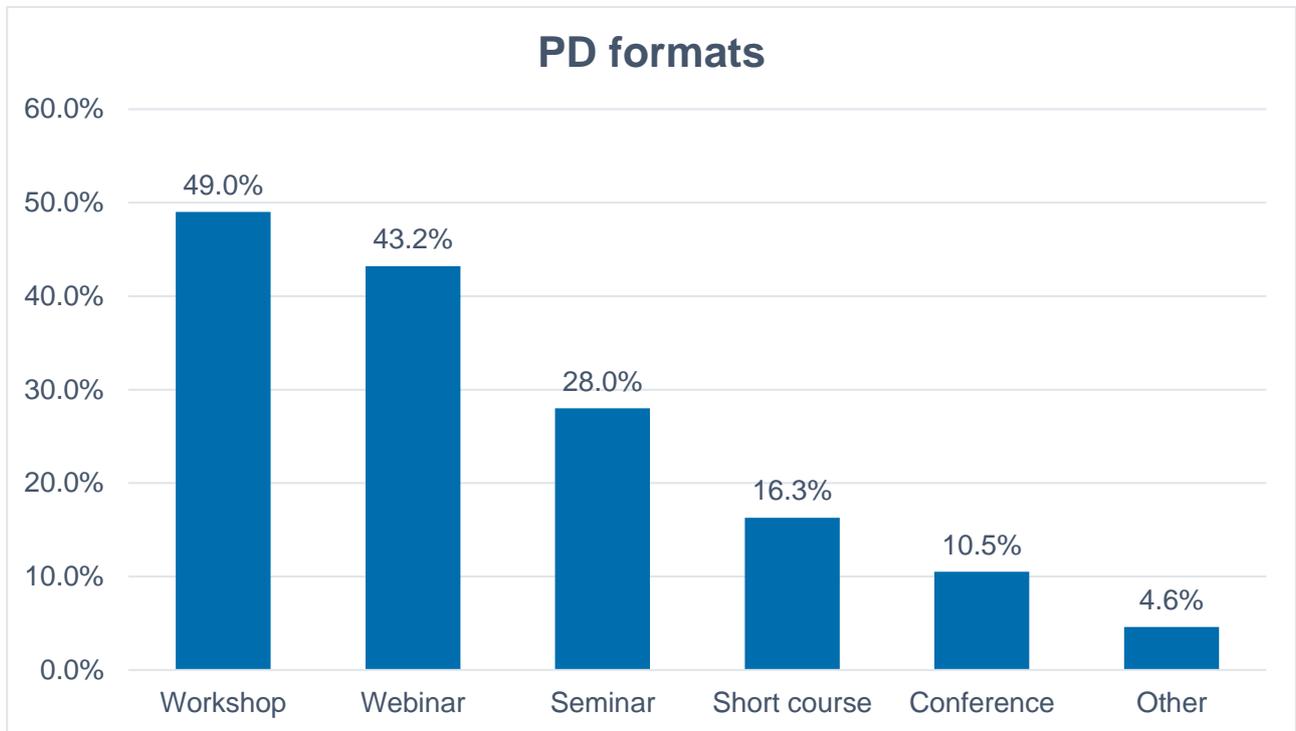


Figure 1: Variety of formats of PD engaged in by respondents

Fig. 1 shows the formats of PD activities respondents had undertaken over the past 24 months. Face-to-face workshops and seminars were still popular formats, although a significant proportion of respondents (43.2%) had participated in webinars. Webinars offer the convenience of remote access, but also have the disadvantage of not allowing direct interaction with the presenter and other participants. The mode of PD respondents accessed over the past 24 months can also be compared with the data about their preferred mode of PD (see Fig. 11 below).

Respondents identified the organizations that had provided the PD participated in over the past 24 months as follows.

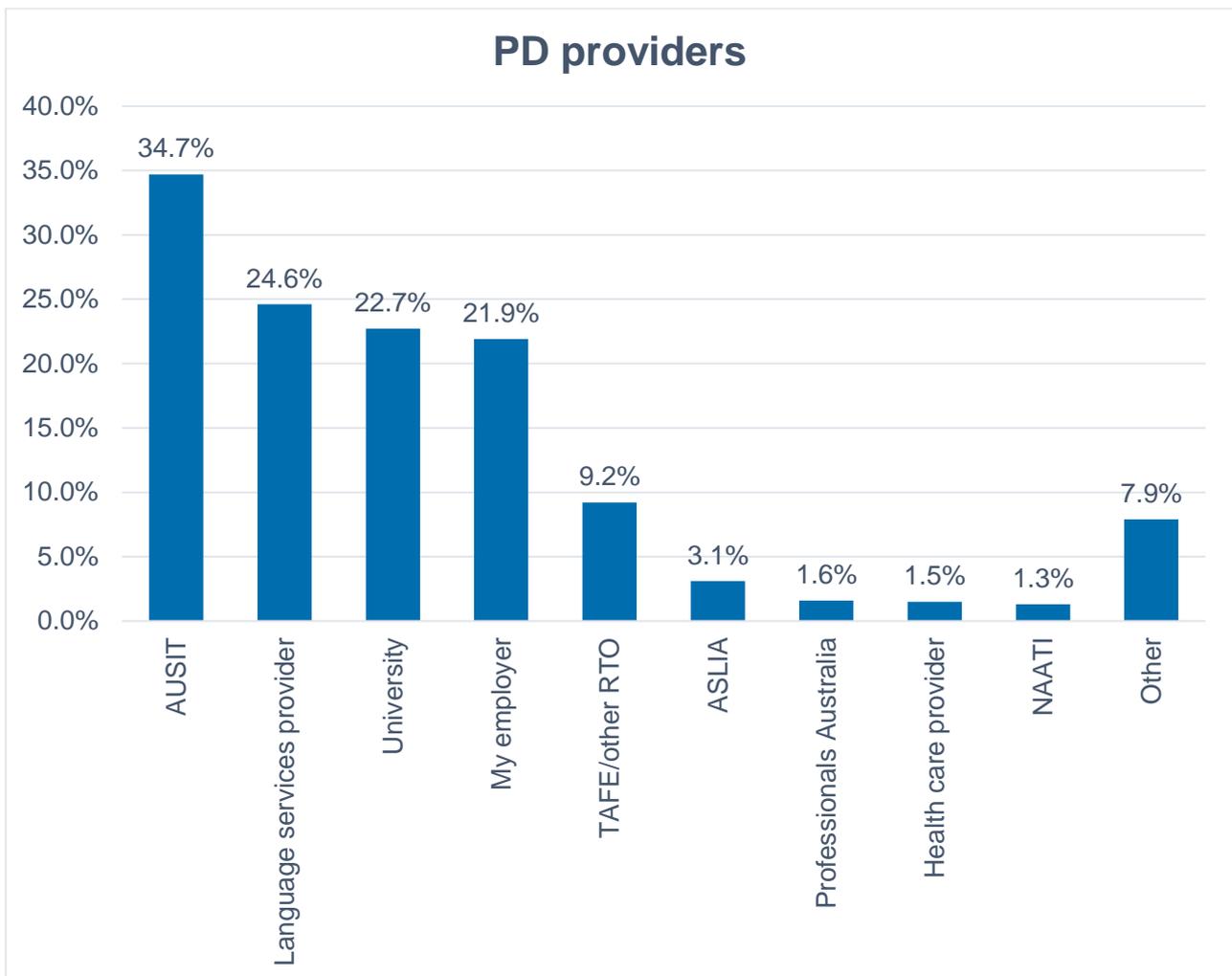


Figure 2: PD providers

It is clear from the above that the largest providers of PD for translators and interpreters were AUSIT, language services providers and universities. 'Other' providers included T&I organisations such as CITAA (30), WAITI (20) as well as government agencies such as Legal Aid, NDIS, ATO, etc. (85 responses in total).

Respondents were then asked about the number of PD activities they had completed that were the following durations. Fig. 3 shows the percentages of respondents who had completed at least one PD activity in each duration category.

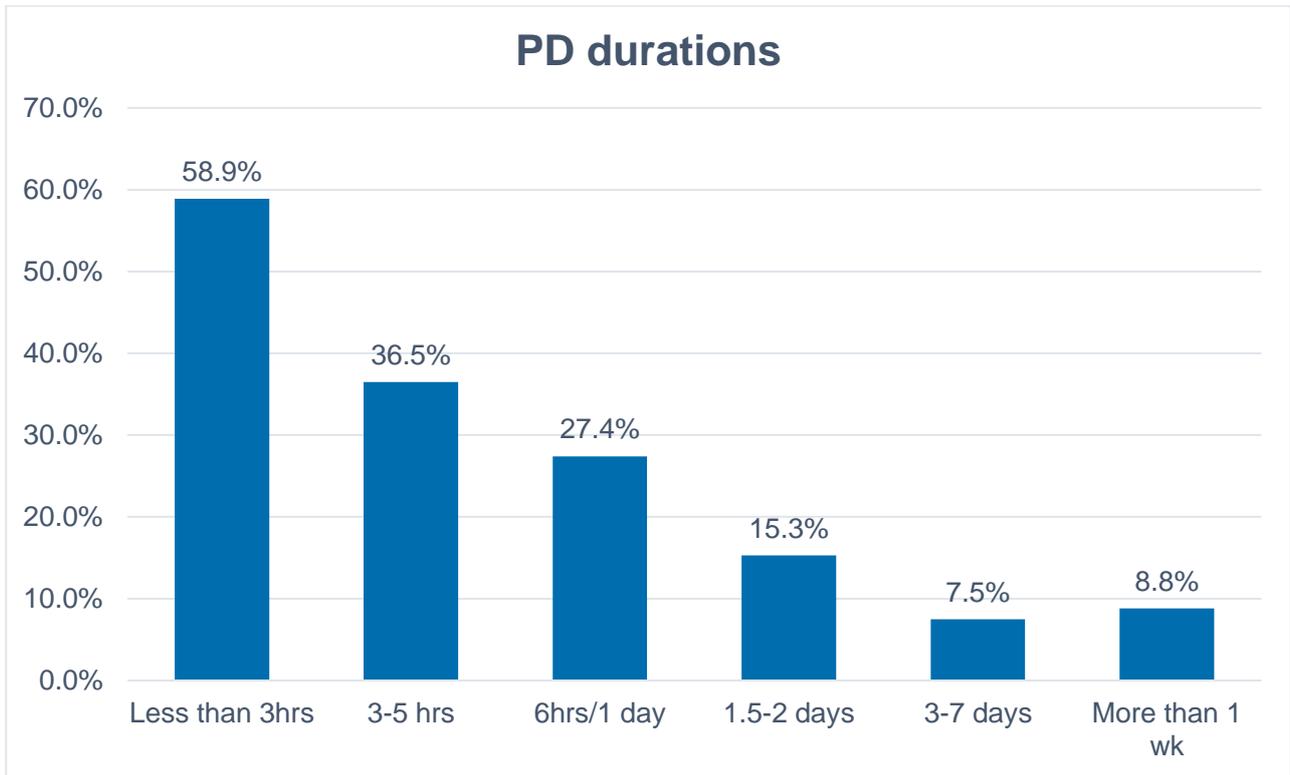


Figure 3: PD durations

It is evident that the shorter courses had the highest participation rates, especially those under 3 hours. Furthermore, the majority of respondents who participated in courses that were less than 3 hours, participated in 3 or more such courses (61.3%). While there appears to be some appetite for PD courses that are 1 day or longer, respondents were more likely to have only done one course in such a category. For example, 50.8% of participants in 1 day courses only participated in one such course. This was the case for 56.7% of participants in 1.5-2 day courses, 66.9% of participants in 3-7 day courses, and 66.1% of participants in courses lasting more than one week.

Respondents were then asked about the number of PD activities they had completed that were the following cost ranges. Fig. 4 shows the percentages of respondents who had completed at least one PD activity in each category.

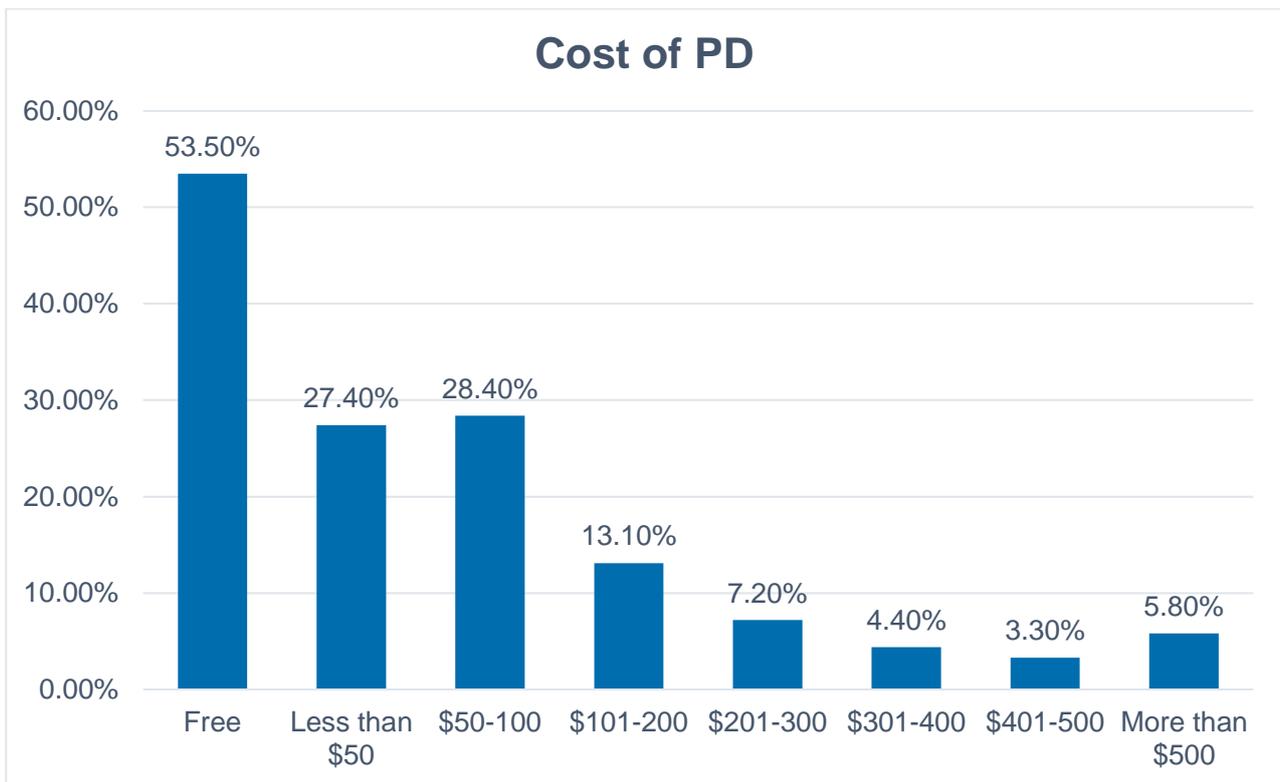


Figure 4: Cost of PD

Unsurprisingly, free PD activities were the most popular, and those costing \$100 or less also had high rates of participation. A reasonable number of respondents (428) were prepared to pay up to \$200 for a PD activity, but fewer respondents undertook more expensive activities. It is likely that those who did participate in the more expensive courses would have done so because they were of longer duration and attracted more PD points.

Regarding PD points, 78.4% of respondents said that all their PD activities counted towards their PD points, 19% reported that some did, while only 2.6% stated that none of the PD they had completed counted for recertification points.

Overall usefulness of PD



Figure 5: Overall usefulness of PD

Figure 5 shows means for the usefulness of PD activities participated in over the past 24 months in achieving each of the stated objectives (similar to the benefits sought from PD). Usefulness was rated on a scale of 0 (not useful at all) to 4 (Extremely useful). The usefulness of PD was rated highest for ‘it enabled me to gain PD points for NAATI recertification’ (3.48). This was followed by ‘it helped me update my skills/knowledge in an area I already work in’ (2.97). Similar values were obtained for ‘it helped me learn new skills/knowledge about areas I don’t already work in’ (2.82), ‘it helped me better understand my role and responsibilities as a T/I practitioner’ (2.79), and ‘it enabled me to meet and interact with other interpreter/translator colleagues’ (2.78).

Exploring this data with reference to years of experience as a T/I, there was a tendency for new practitioners (with less than 5 years of experience) to regard PD activities as more useful than practitioners with more experience (especially those with more than 20 years’ experience). There were significant differences between the groups ($p < .05$), with the former group finding PD more useful than the latter group regarding: ‘it helped me learn new skills/knowledge about areas I don’t already work in’, ‘it helped me better understand my role and responsibilities as a T/I practitioner’, ‘it helped make me more employable/improved my CV’ and ‘it enabled me to learn about and communicate with clients and users of services so that I can be a better practitioner’. These tendencies indicate that the PD activities currently available may be more appropriate for new/less experienced practitioners than those with significant experience. As one respondent commented:

‘As a relatively new interpreter/translator, I found most PDs interesting, informative and very helpful for the work I do. Some PDs’ duration can be slightly longer to cover more detailed information. I personally feel that 4-5 hours is a good duration for PD including some time for interpreters to socialize.’

Respondents were then invited to comment generally on their PD activities over the past 24 months, providing feedback on what was most/least useful, format, duration, providers, cost, etc. A total of 1322 respondents (40.5% of the sample) provided comments and these were coded into categories, grouping similar comments together while still allowing the nuances to be shown. In terms of positive feedback, 690 respondents (52.2% of those who provided comments) indicated that the PD they had participated in was beneficial/informative/valuable, and broadened their knowledge. One hundred and four respondents (7.9%) said that PD activities with a focus on practical aspects of the profession were particularly useful, 98 respondents (7.4%) said that PD provided good opportunities to network, and 136 respondents (10.3%) stated that the online options were helpful. Thirty-eight respondents (2.9%) thought that the PD on ethics was useful.

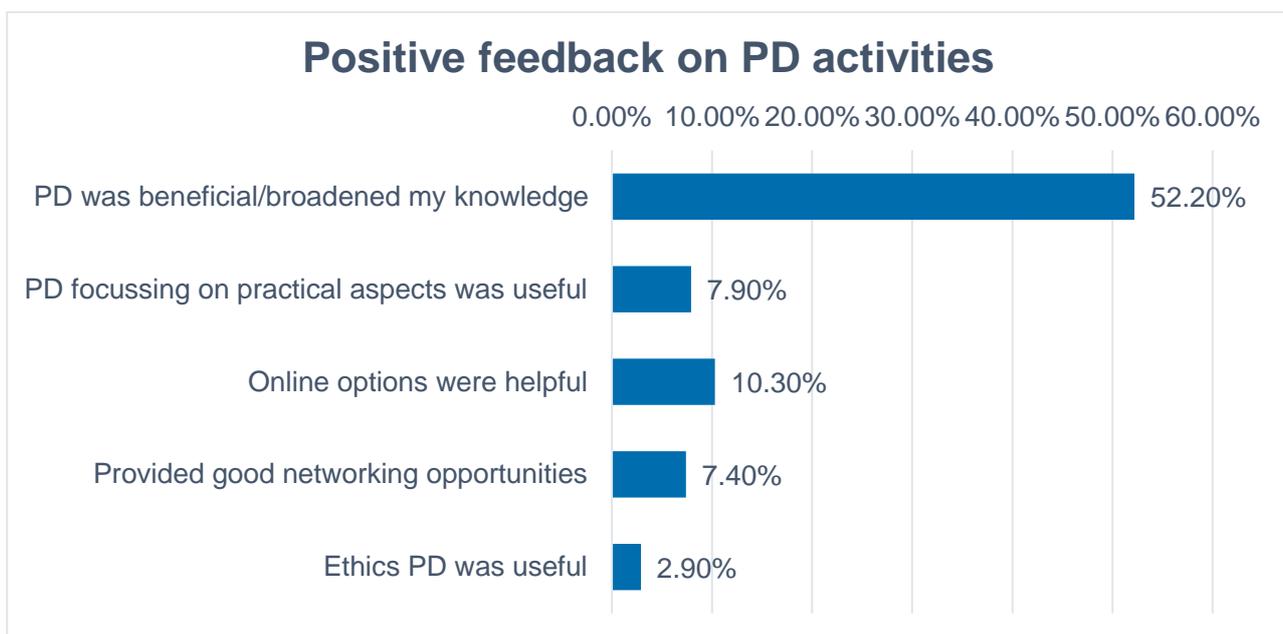


Figure 6: Positive feedback on PD activities

However, there was also a large quantity of negative feedback provided in these comments. The most frequent complaint regarded cost, with 284 respondents (21.5%) saying that PD was too expensive, it was not worth the cost when considering the wages from T&I, or that it was a waste of money. A further 46 respondents (3.5%) said that PD should be free or employers/agencies should cover the cost. As one practitioner stated:

‘Cost of PD is very important for me. I specifically look for free or low cost events as my income from translation is minimal these days but I don’t want to lose my certification’.

One hundred and forty-three respondents (10.8%) stated that they only did PD for the points or that it was a waste of time/not useful. Sixty-seven respondents (5.1%) reported that not enough PD options were available, and a further 81 (6.1%) said that there was not enough variety of topics or too much repetition of the same topics. In a similar vein, 30 respondents (2.3%) commented that the PD content was too general, 28 (2.1%) said it was too theoretical/not practical enough, and 26 (2%) said it was not relevant to current practice. Twenty-two respondents (1.7%) thought that there was not enough language-specific PD available. Nineteen respondents (1.4%) commented that there was not enough translation-focussed PD. Sixty-five respondents (4.9%) said that the level of PD was too basic (this compares with only 2 respondents who commented that it was too advanced). Forty-one (3.1%) respondents said that there were not enough experienced/specialized presenters at the PD sessions or that the delivery/organization was disappointing. The following comment by a practitioner encapsulates some of these points:

‘Workshops should be designed to enable the participants to practice the skill they want to improve instead of listening to the instructor how she or he had gained the skills, what she/he had been doing during their life as an interpreter/translator etc. I am not interested in learning what a long practising interpreter had been doing 10 or 20 years ago, I am more interested about what is relevant today’.

Thirty-three respondents (2.5%) identified that there were not enough online courses available and 37 (2.8%) said that there was not enough PD after work hours/on weekends. Thirty-five (2.6%) thought that shorter PD was better, compared with 27 (2%) who remarked that the longer PD was better.

Negative feedback on PD activities

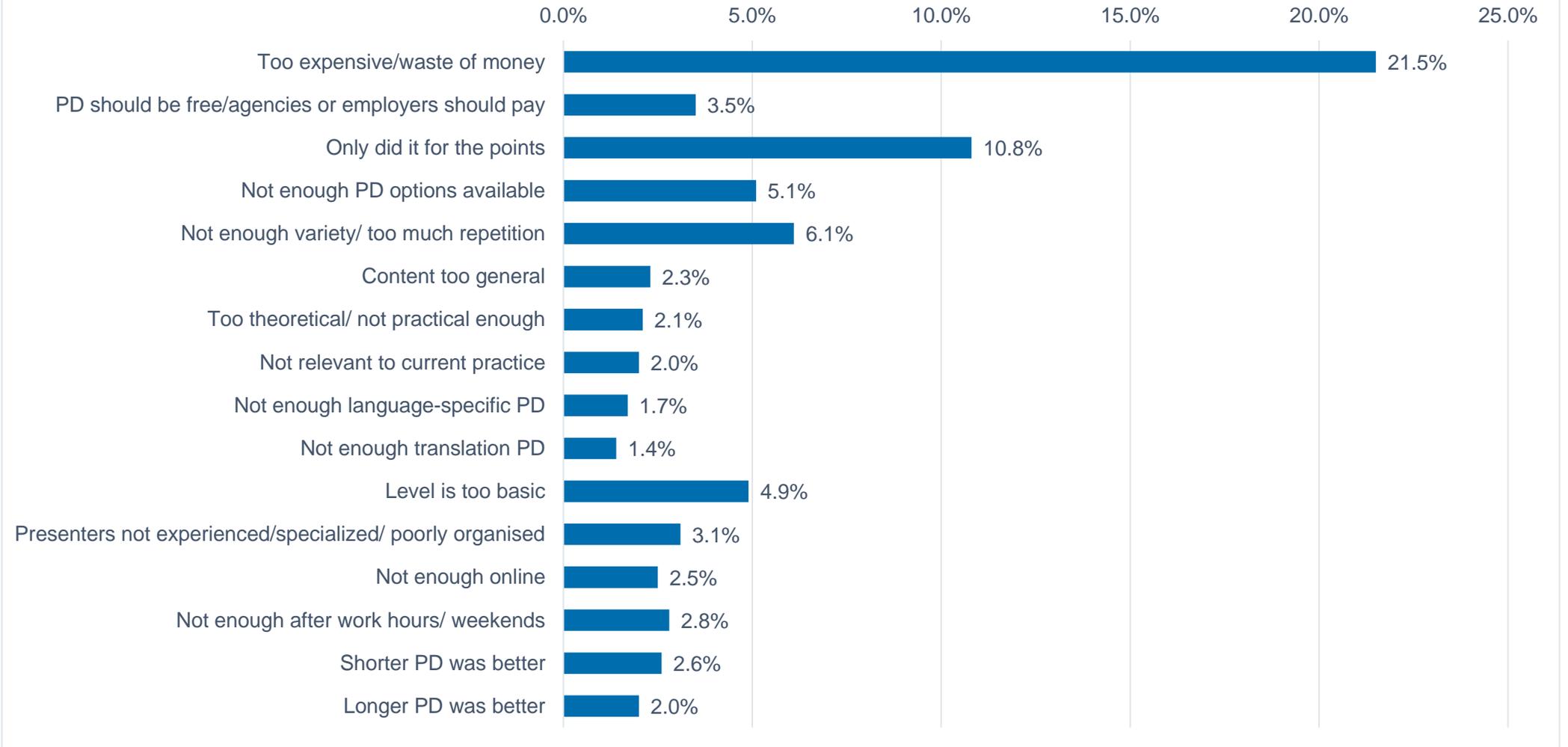


Figure 7: Negative feedback on PD activities

The next question asked about the importance of a series of factors in deciding which PD activities to attend over the past 24 months. Importance was rated on a scale of 0 (not important at all) to 4 (very important). Fig. 8 shows the means for these responses. The factor with the highest rating was 'cost' (3.44), followed by 'when the PD was offered (time of day/weekend/weekday) (3.41), 'updating my skills/knowledge in an area I already work in' (3.40), 'no. of PD points for NAATI recertification' (3.39), 'location/ease of access' (3.36) and 'no. of hours/duration' (3.22).

Factors guiding choice of PD activities

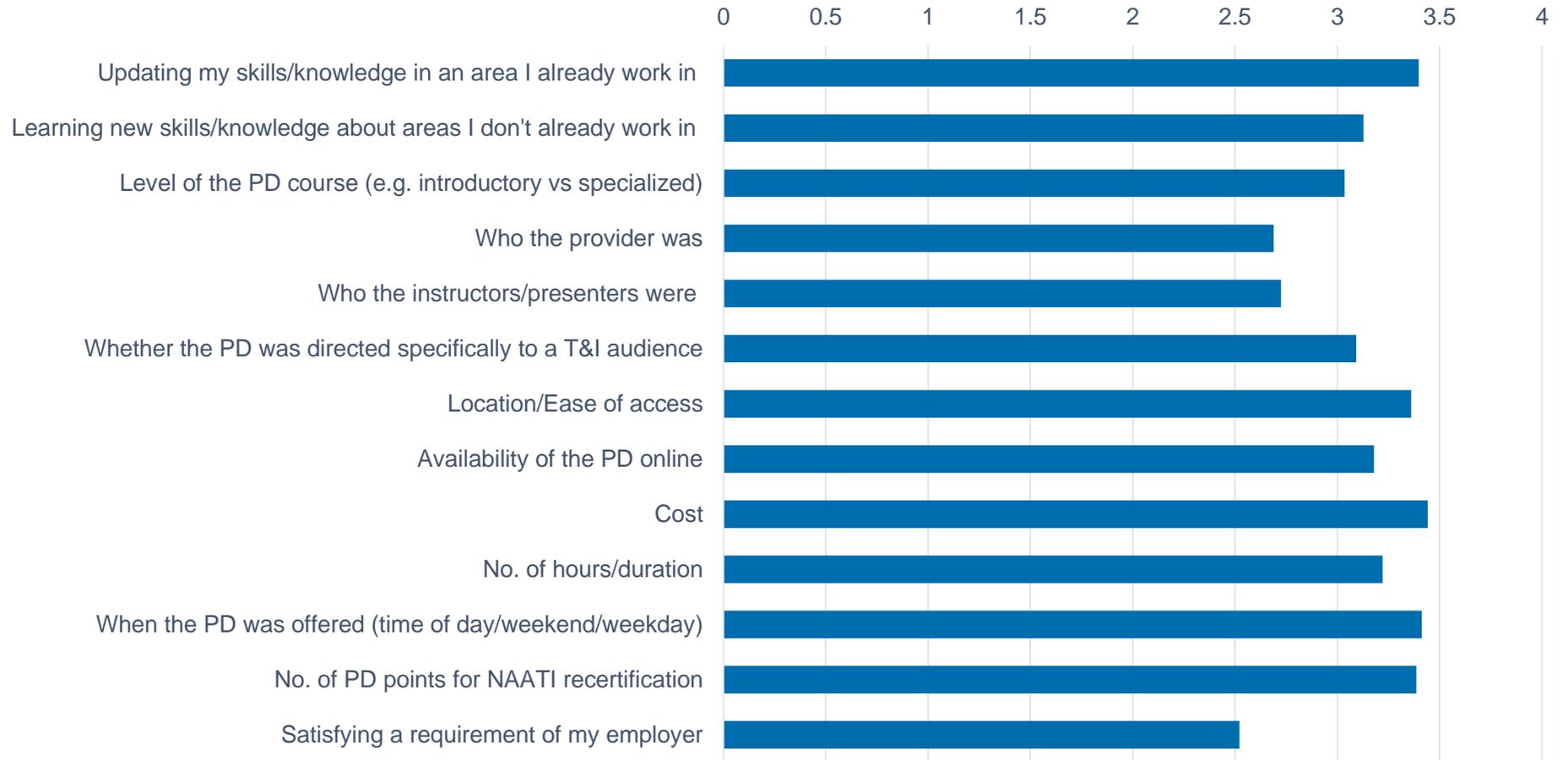


Figure 8: Factors guiding choice of PD activities

3.4 Barriers to PD participation

Respondents were then asked whether they believed that there had been enough suitable translation/interpreting PD opportunities available to them over the past 24 months.

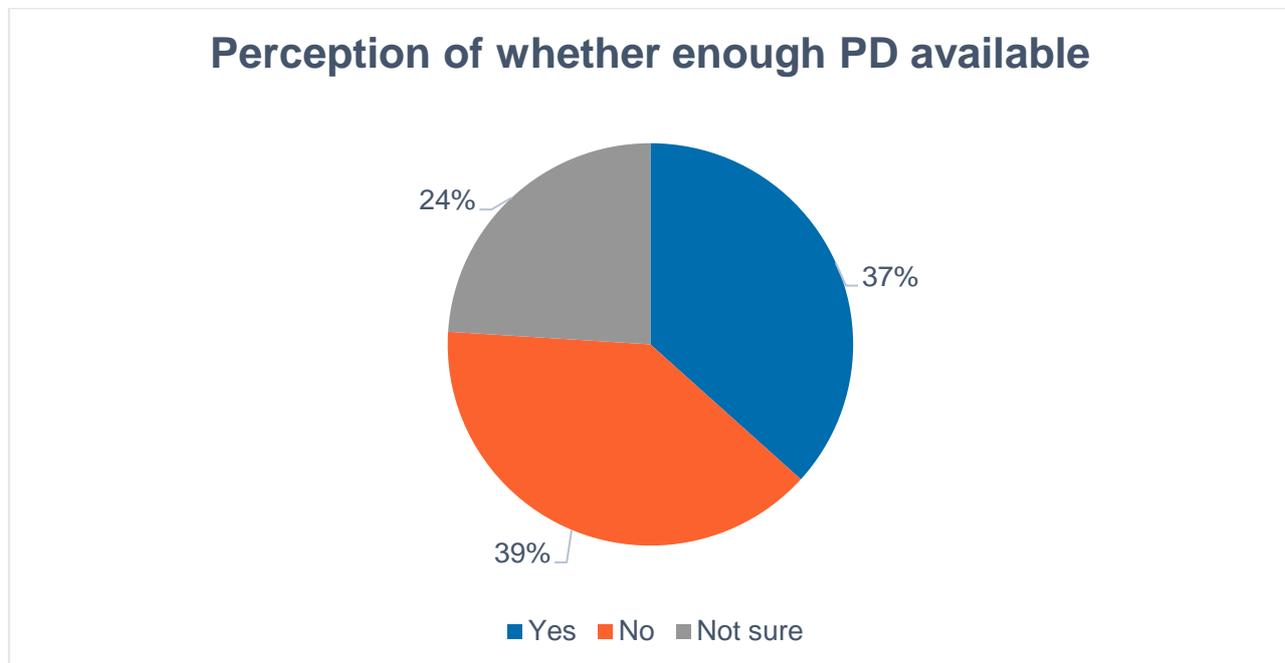


Figure 9: Perception of whether enough PD available

Only 36.7% of the 2258 respondents who answered this question thought that there were enough suitable PD opportunities available, while 39.3% did not and a further 24% were unsure. These figures certainly indicate scope for improvement in the amount and suitability of PD offerings, as well as potential issues with the communication/advertising of PD activities.

We examined whether these perceptions were related to the respondents' state of residence and practitioner type. Overall there were significant differences in the perceptions depending on these variables. Observation of the frequencies indicated that respondents from New South Wales and Victoria had greater proportions of respondents who believed there was enough suitable PD available than the other states and territories. The highest proportions of dissatisfaction with opportunities available were found in Australian Capital Territory, South Australia, Tasmania and Queensland. There was a strong association between practitioner type and perception of PD opportunities available, with 44.9% of translators reporting that there were not enough PD opportunities, compared to 37.8% of interpreters and 38.6% of respondents who worked as both interpreters and translators. This statistic also reflects the poorer participation rates in PD among translators compared to interpreters/both discussed above.

Perception of whether enough PD available by state/territory and practitioner type

	Yes N (%)	No N (%)	Not sure N (%)
Perception by State/Territory			
VIC	333 (37.2%)	336 (37.5%)	227 (25.3%)
NSW	276 (42.3%)	232 (35.5%)	145 (22.2%)
QLD	99 (35.1%)	125 (44.3%)	58 (20.6%)
WA	43 (30.1%)	61 (42.7%)	39 (27.3%)
SA	48 (31.2%)	71 (46.1%)	35 (22.7%)
NT	5 (35.7%)	5 (35.7%)	4 (28.6%)
ACT	8 (21.1%)	20 (52.6%)	10 (26.3%)
TAS	12 (25%)	22 (45.8%)	14 (29.2%)
Living overseas	3 (17.6%)	9 (52.9%)	5 (29.4%)
X ² (16)=29.571, p<0.05			
Perception by practitioner type			
Interpreter	473 (39.8%)	449 (37.8%)	266 (22.4%)
Translator	116 (28%)	186 (44.9%)	112 (27.1%)
Both	240 (36.6%)	253 (38.6%)	163 (24.8%)
X ² (4)=18.837, p<0.005			

Table 10: Perception of whether enough PD available by state/territory and practitioner type

Respondents were then asked the extent to which the following barriers prevented them or may prevent them from undertaking PD. Extent was rated on a scale of 0 (not at all) to 4 (very much).

Fig. 10 shows the means for the extent to which these barriers prevented PD participation.

The barrier with the highest rating was 'cost' (3.13), followed by 'not available at a convenient time' (3.05), 'too far away/hard to get to' (2.95), 'lack of time to attend PD' (2.90), 'lack of PD opportunities available' (2.78), and 'topics not relevant to my needs/work areas' (2.56). The factors least likely to be seen as barriers were 'I'm not motivated enough to attend' (1.36), 'the level of PD is too advanced for me' (1.39) and 'I don't see the benefit of attending PD' (1.40).

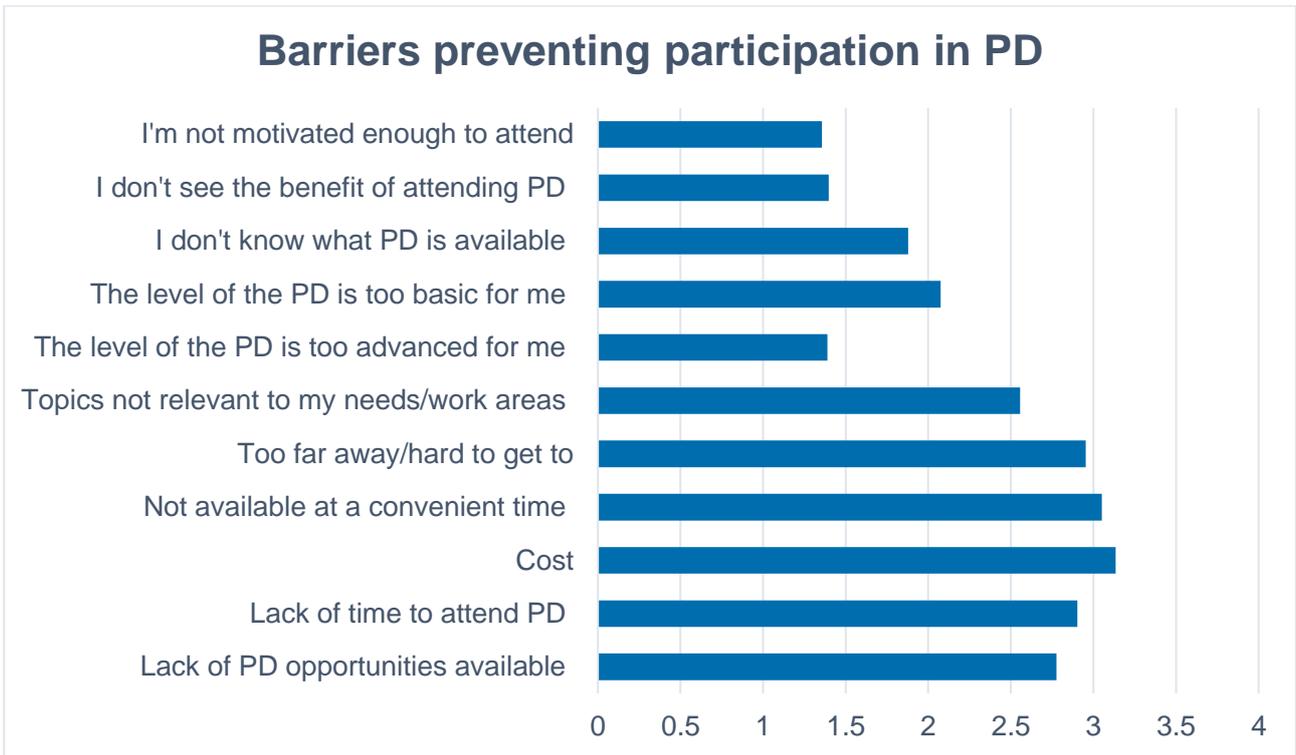


Figure 10: Barriers preventing participation in PD

3.5 Preferred content, modes, duration, times of PD

Respondents were asked about the fields/content areas in which they would like more interpreting PD opportunities. Frequencies are provided in the following table in descending order. Percentages are out of the total number of respondents who were interpreters or both translators and interpreters (2,530).

Preferred PD fields/content (interpreters)

In what fields/content areas would you like more interpreting PD?	N (%)
Health	1505 (59.5%)
Police and legal	1373 (54.3%)
Mental health	1286 (50.8%)
Court	1251 (49.4%)
Social welfare	975 (38.5%)
Interpreting in emotionally charged settings	913 (36.1%)
Ethics of interpreting	863 (34.1%)
Education	807 (31.9%)
Aged care	804 (31.8%)
Business	641 (25.3%)
Setting up/maintaining a freelance business	633 (25%)
Introduction to the profession	233 (9.2%)

Table 11: Preferred PD fields/content (interpreters)

The fact that health and legal fields feature prominently in the most preferred content areas is to be expected, as these are also common work areas for practitioners (see Table 5 above), and they are also the two specializations in the new certification system. Mental health and court interpreting in particular require specific expertise that is best gained through training and PD. Health and legal topics have indeed been the most common PD activities attended over the past 24 months (see Table 9), and respondents evidently wanted a continued focus on these topics.

Preferred PD skills (interpreters)

What interpreting skills do you think interpreting PD should focus on?	N (%)
Memory retention	1411 (55.8%)
Language enhancement	1121 (44.3%)
Personal stress management/addressing secondary or vicarious trauma	1015 (40.1%)
Note-taking	987 (39%)
Telephone/video interpreting	960 (37.9%)
Simultaneous interpreting in booths	945 (37.4%)
Presentation/public speaking	921 (36.4%)
Interactional dynamics management for interpreters	829 (32.8%)
Chuchotage	756 (29.9%)
Sight translation	633 (25%)

Table 12: Preferred PD skills (interpreters)

It appears that there is a strong demand for more skills-focussed PD to develop capacity in memory retention, note-taking, etc. Since language maintenance is one of the required PD categories for recertification, it is unsurprising that many practitioners would like PD focused on enhancing their working languages. For those with English as a second language, this may include advanced English courses. This data indicates a potential need for more PD targeting practical skills development, and not just content knowledge.

The statistics indicate that many interpreters are concerned about self-care, dealing with stress and the traumatic experiences of interpreting in emotionally charged or distressing settings. Approximately 40% of respondents wanted more PD in these areas.

Respondents were also asked about translation fields and skills in which they would like more PD. Frequencies are provided in the following table in descending order. Percentages are out of the total number of respondents who were translators or both translators and interpreters (1,643).

Preferred PD fields/content (translators)

In what fields/content areas would you like more translation PD?	N (%)
Legal	913 (55.6%)
Medical	781 (47.5%)
Business/financial	651 (39.6%)
Scientific/technical	621 (37.8%)
Setting up/maintaining a freelance business	500 (30.4%)
Marketing	498 (30.3%)
Ethics for translators	450 (27.4%)
Localization	415 (25.3%)
Literary	405 (24.7%)
Audiovisual	391 (23.8%)
Introduction to the profession	165 (10%)

Table 13: Preferred PD fields/content (translators)

Legal and medical fields were also key areas in which translators would like more PD, also reflecting common work areas. Along with the specialized fields of translation, ethics for translators and setting up/maintaining a freelance business were also areas in which many translators would like more PD.

Preferred PD skills (translators)

What translation skills do you think PD should focus on?	N (%)
Using translation technology	1096 (66.7%)
Revising and editing translations	944 (57.5%)
Post-editing machine translations	725 (44.1%)
Project management	595 (36.2%)

Table 14: Preferred PD skills (translators)

Using translation technology and revising/editing translations were the most in demand for skills-based PD, followed by post-editing machine translations, indicating the increasing volume of work of this nature.

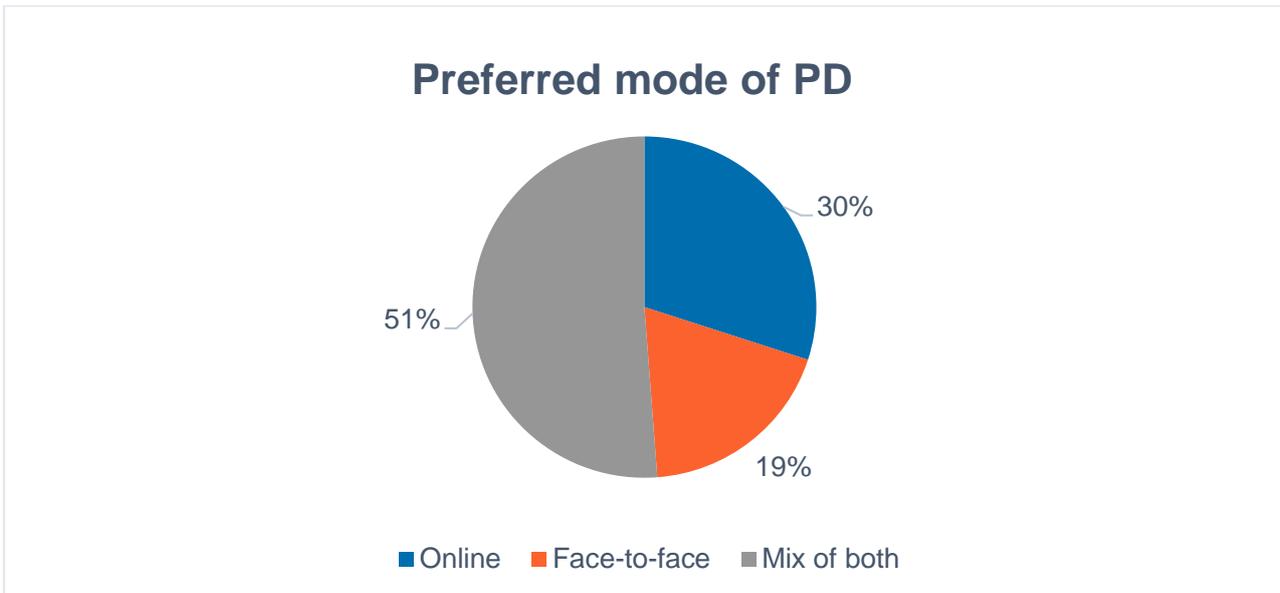


Figure 11: Preferred mode of PD activities

Respondents were then asked about their preferred mode of PD activities. The majority (51.2%) preferred a mix of both online and face-to-face PD activities, followed by 30% who preferred online activities such as webinars. A relatively small minority (18.8%) preferred face-to-face PD. The popularity of online PD reflects its convenience and flexibility of access (can be viewed anywhere, and depending on the format, may be accessed at any time that is convenient) and possibly the fact that it is often cheaper than face-to-face sessions, especially when time and travel is taken into consideration. Preference for online training was apparent from the 2016 NAATI Revalidation Survey as well (see p.18). However, it is noteworthy that in what can be an isolating profession, many respondents also valued the interaction that comes with face-to-face activities.

Regarding preferred duration of PD activities, for sessions lasting 1 day or less, the majority of respondents preferred sessions less than 3 hours (52.1%), followed by 3-5 hours (35%) and 6 hours/full day (13%).

A percentage of 44.1 of respondents said they would consider attending PD activities that were longer than one day, while 55.9% said they would not. Of those who said they would attend PD courses that were longer than one day, 1140 said they would consider attending courses that were 1.5-3 days, 103 said 4-7 days, and 42 said they may attend courses that were longer than a week.

This data shows a strong preference for short, targeted PD sessions rather than lengthier courses. Sessions that are less than a day in duration are obviously easier to fit around work, family and other commitments. This is even more the case for sessions under 3 hours, which may be attended during the evening.

When asked preferences regarding when PD should be held, 'on the weekend' was the most popular (1,758) followed by 'in the evening' (1,364).

3.6 Suggestions for improvement

The final question in the survey was a general open-ended question that asked: In what other ways do you think PD opportunities for translators and interpreters in Australia could be improved from the current situation?

There were a total of 1,240 responses to this question (37.9% of the sample). These were coded and the following table sets out the main responses, grouped in themes. Percentages are of the total 1,240 responses to this question.

Main suggestions for improvement

	N (%)
Cost	
PD should be cheaper	234 (18.9%)
PD should be free	101 (8.1%)
PD costs should be borne by employers/agencies	15 (1.2%)
Availability and accessibility of PD	
There should be more PD opportunities/better availability	159 (12.8%)
There should be more online courses	292 (23.5%)
There should be more in regional/remote areas	94 (7.6%)
There should be a better spread of PD across states	86 (6.9%)
PD should be offered at more convenient times	59 (4.8%)
There should be more PD on weekends or after work hours	88 (7.1%)
A variety of durations of PD activities should be available	20 (1.6%)
Reforms to the PD requirements	
The PD system should be changed	75 (6%)
Reduce PD requirements	12 (1%)
Have different requirements for full and part time T/Is	6 (0.5%)
Have different requirements depending on T/I qualification	6 (0.5%)
Have different requirements for different lengths of experience	7 (0.6%)
Give more PD points to more advanced courses	6 (0.5%)
Review PD categories	10 (0.8%)
Get rid of specific category for Ethics	3 (0.2%)
Abolish the recertification requirement altogether	12 (1%)
Notification of PD opportunities	
Need better communication/advertisement of PD sessions	80 (6.5%)
PD should be advertised using a standard template	17 (1.4%)
PD should be communicated via a central platform	31 (2.5%)
PD topics	
There should be more specialized/relevant topics	122 (9.8%)
There should be more practical, interactive training	73 (5.9%)
There should be more language-related PD	44 (3.5%)
There should be more translation-focussed PD	31 (2.5%)
There should be more up-to-date/new courses	34 (2.7%)
There should be more repeats of the popular courses	14 (1.1%)
There should be more advanced PD	30 (2.4%)
There should be more PD that helps obtain higher credentials	8 (0.6%)

PD providers and trainers

There should be more diverse providers	22 (1.8%)
There should be more PD provided by service users	14 (1.1%)
There should be more PD provided by LSPs	11 (0.9%)
PD sessions should be developed in collaboration with service users	21 (1.7%)
There should be more specialized/experienced trainers	48 (3.7%)

Table 15: Main suggestions for improvement

Again, there were a large number of suggestions relating to the cost of PD. Two hundred and thirty-four respondents (18.9%) said that PD should be cheaper, while a further 101 (8.1%) said that it should be free and 15 (1.2%) said that costs should be borne by agencies/employers.

Regarding availability and accessibility of PD, 159 respondents (12.8%) said that there should be more PD opportunities/better availability, and this should also be considered in light of suggestions for more online courses (292 respondents, 23.5%). Comments such as “for economic and financial reasons I definitely prefer the online distance learning mode to face-to-face workshops which are deemed to be costly and time-consuming” were common. Respondents also wanted more PD in regional/remote areas (94 respondents, 7.6%), and more PD in different states (apart from Victoria and New South Wales) (86 respondents, 6.9%). Offering PD at more convenient times was mentioned by 59 respondents (4.8%), and a further 88 respondents (7.1%) asked for more PD on weekends or after work hours. Twenty respondents (1.6%) suggested that a variety of durations of PD activities should be available.

A significant number of respondents (131, 10.6%) called for reform to the PD recertification requirements themselves. Among these, apart from 12 respondents who said that the recertification requirement as a whole should be abolished, other ways in which the PD system could be changed were suggested (reduce the requirements, prescribe different requirements for full-time versus part-time practitioners, prescribe different requirements for practitioners with different qualifications/different lengths of experience, give more points to more advanced PD activities, review the PD categories, don't give ethics a specific point allocation). For example, one respondent suggested:

‘Exempt the practitioners with 20 or more years experience and those who have high qualifications from the need of compulsory PD and from the requirement of recertification... Change the requirements for all part time practitioners who have already transitioned to less hours of PD and a partial fee for recertification.’

The need for more effective notification/advertising of PD opportunities was mentioned by 128 respondents (10.3%). Of these, 48 respondents suggested that PD activities be communicated to practitioners via a central platform such as the NAATI website using a standard template, for example in the form of a nationwide PD calendar, specifying the category and points awarded for each.

Regarding PD topics, 122 respondents (9.8%) called for more specialized or relevant topics, 73 respondents (5.9%) wanted more practical/interactive training, 44 respondents (3.5%) suggested more language-related sessions, 31 respondents (2.5%) asked for more translation-focussed PD, and 34 respondents (2.7%) asked for more up-to-date/new courses. Business skills and technological skills were also suggested as topics which could be given more attention. Fourteen respondents (1.1%) suggested that there be more repeats of the popular PD courses. Regarding the level of the content, 30 respondents (2.4%) wanted more advanced PD, while only 6 wanted more introductory PD. Eight respondents (0.6%) called for more PD that would help with obtaining higher certification credentials. One respondent stated:

‘At the moment, we are starting to recycle topics locally and, for me, it is starting to get boring, as I have done a lot over the last 10 years. As an organiser though, I understand that it is not easy to keep inventing something new and we are constantly having new people entering the profession, who need basic stuff. Catering for the experienced is much harder in a state with limited resources, yet I notice that the number of people who feel like I do is growing. We are

"growing up" and want something more advanced and interesting. The PD organisers need some inspirational guidance.'

Regarding PD providers, 22 respondents (1.8%) suggested that there should be more diverse providers of PD. Fourteen respondents (1.1%) said that there should be more PD provided by sectors that use T&I services, and 11 (0.9%) said that more should be offered by LSPs. Twenty-one respondents (1.7%) said that PD activities should be developed in collaboration with service users, and 48 (3.9%) called for more specialized/experienced trainers.

4. Conclusions

This wealth of data enables us to draw conclusions about the areas of work of T&I practitioners in Australia, their current participation in PD, the gaps in PD opportunities and barriers to engagement with PD. We can also identify a range of concerns with the current PD/recertification system, and it is evident that practitioners have strong opinions about where improvements should lie.

The professional profile of respondents can be summarized as follows. Respondents were concentrated in metropolitan areas and predominantly in Victoria and New South Wales. Eighty-six percent spoke a LOTE as their first language, but nearly half had lived in Australia for over 20 years. Most interpreters worked in community interpreting fields, particularly health, social welfare, education, police and legal domains. At the time of the survey, 77% had already obtained certification credentials under NAATI's new system introduced in 2017-2018. Half the respondents practised only as interpreters, 28% worked as both interpreters and translators, and 23% worked only as translators.

PD participation

The nature of the profession in Australia as identified above has many implications for PD participation and attitudes towards PD. Practitioners who were least likely to participate in PD, or who had a low level of participation were more likely to be translators only and live in lesser populous states and territories.

Although ethics, health and legal fields accounted for a large number of the PD courses undertaken, there was an even spread of participants across a range of PD topics available. An increasingly large proportion of practitioners (over 40%) had accessed PD online via webinars, although face-to-face sessions remained popular. The majority of PD activities undertaken were less than 3 hours in duration, but significant percentages of respondents also completed PD activities that were between 3-5 hours or even 1 day in length. PD activities engaged in were most commonly provided by professional associations such as AUSIT, as well as by universities and TAFEs, and LSPs/employers. Free or subsidized PD courses were unsurprisingly the most popular, with only small numbers of practitioners willing to undertake courses that cost \$300 or more.

Positive feedback

Ideally, practitioners wanted to be able to improve their skills and knowledge through participation in PD, but their feedback about the availability of such PD was mixed. It is encouraging that there were many respondents (slightly over half of those who left comments to the open-ended question) who gave positive feedback about their PD experiences, saying that they had been beneficial to their work. Those PD activities described as most useful PD were those with online options, practice- or situationally-based courses, and those that enabled networking. In particular, new practitioners with less than five years' experience were most likely to find PD useful in developing their skills and knowledge across a range of fields, as well as extending their understanding of the role of the interpreter and translator, and relations with others.

Barriers and concerns

1. Cost

As was also apparent from the NAATI and AUSIT surveys in 2016, cost remains the most frequently mentioned factor in deciding what PD to attend and the most significant barrier to PD participation. It was mentioned more than any other aspect in the open-ended comments. In particular, PD was seen as expensive in relation to income earned from T&I, which is particularly the case for the majority of practitioners who work casually and part-time. It was also mentioned that spending large amounts of money on PD does not translate into more work or better pay, so it is difficult to see PD as value for money. The availability of funded courses or bursaries to attend PD is therefore often decisive, and while such funding is sometimes offered (by the government, LSPs, NAATI, AUSIT, etc.) more could be done in this regard by both public and private sector organizations.

2. Availability and accessibility

Nearly 40% of practitioners did not think that there was sufficient suitable PD available for them, and this percentage was higher for respondents in states other than Victoria and New South Wales, suggesting the need for more offerings outside these two states as well as making PD more accessible in regional areas. The fact that PD courses were too far away was a significant barrier for some, leading to strong calls for more online courses. The need to balance other work, family and study commitments meant that respondents generally wanted more PD after work hours and/or on weekends. There was also a clear preference for short PD activities (e.g. less than 3 hours). Increasing online offerings would remove many of these obstacles to participation: it is generally cheaper, caters for practitioners from less well-resourced states as well as regional and remote areas, and it can be accessed flexibly. While it does not enable the face-to-face contact and networking that is an important motivator for some practitioners who may feel isolated in their work environments, there are still opportunities for interactivity on online platforms. Of course, face-to-face workshops will remain important, particularly those involving practical interpreting exercises that may be more difficult to perform online, and the majority of respondents preferred a mix of both online and face-to-face PD. Related to perceptions of availability, many respondents commented on the need for a central communication platform with details about when and where PD was available. While AUSIT may be effective in notifying its members of PD, in order to reach the significant proportion of non-members, this kind of nationwide, regularly updated PD calendar could be communicated via the NAATI website.

3. Level of PD

The more experienced practitioners tended to be the least satisfied with current PD offerings. While some of those with over 20 years experience evidently resented the fact that they now have to recertify and do compulsory PD, many experienced practitioners also identified that the level of PD available was too basic and the topics were not relevant to their needs. Gonzalez (2019) also notes the diversity of training needs and the difficulties this causes for PD providers. On the one hand, recently arrived migrants and refugees from new and emerging language communities frequently do not have the opportunity to take up tertiary training courses, but nevertheless need to be trained and certified at a basic level to provide much needed services. On the other hand, experienced practitioners, especially those who have already completed tertiary-level T&I training, will only benefit from advanced, specialized PD courses. Evidently, all groups need to be catered for if the PD system is to be inclusive and responsive to needs. It is unfortunate that there are significant numbers of practitioners who fail to see the benefit of PD, apart from obtaining points for recertification. Hence, PD providers need to think creatively to come up with a suite of courses that are relevant for different groups within a diverse profession.

4. PD offerings for translation compared to interpreting

Compared to interpreters, respondents who only practiced as translators reported being less likely to participate in PD, less likely to find suitable opportunities available, and less likely to regard PD as useful to their work. More translation-focussed PD is clearly needed, particularly in specialized

translation fields (legal, medical, financial, etc.), translation and technology, ethics for translators and PD on running a successful translation business.

5. PD topics and providers

Regarding PD topics, respondents were keen to have more PD in their prominent work areas (mainly in health and legal fields for interpreters), and also sessions devoted to self-care (stress management, dealing with trauma). Respondents also saw skills-focussed PD as directly relevant to their practice, whether it be memory retention skills or enhancing their working languages. Many comments related to current PD being too general, not enough variety or specialization, and not practical/interactive enough or relevant to current workplace requirements. There was also feedback showing dissatisfaction with the organization or delivery of some courses and the quality of presenters, and calls for greater collaboration with users of T&I services (e.g. legal and healthcare organizations), which would help to ensure relevance. Further qualitative research into different stakeholders' views about the learning outcomes, content and pedagogy of PD courses and how well they align with industry needs would be useful to assist PD providers in designing the best possible courses.

6. PD requirements

A significant number of participants used the open-ended responses to express grievances about the compulsory nature of PD, for example that it is unfairly onerous (in terms of money and time) for part-time practitioners, or that it is unnecessary for more experienced/qualified practitioners. There was also some criticism of the requirement to complete PD in certain categories, in particular ethics. If the purpose of requiring ongoing ethics PD is for practitioners to update their knowledge about situations posing ethical dilemmas and to be able to respond to new challenges (such as those posed by technological developments), then the content of such PD courses certainly needs to remain novel and up-to-date in order to meet these objectives.

This survey, with 3,268 participants, is the largest-scale survey of Australian T&I practitioners' engagement in and attitudes towards PD. The data it has produced will enable NAATI and PD providers to take stock of the situation since the introduction of the new certification system and implement improvements based on the feedback. This report has highlighted positive views about current PD offerings, but has also identified areas of concern regarding the cost, content, accessibility and quality of PD. Our recommendations are proposed to achieve more inclusive, needs-based PD provision. This will help to ensure proactive engagement by practitioners and improve the overall quality of T&I services in Australia.

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6. List of Abbreviations

AALITRA	The Australian Association for Literary Translation
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ASLIA	Australian Sign Language Interpreters' Association
ATO	Australian Taxation Office
AUSIT	Australian Institute of Interpreters & Translators
CAT	Computer-assisted translation
CITAA	Chinese Interpreters and Translators Association of Australia
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
LOTE	Languages Other Than English
LSP	Language Service Provider
NAATI	National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters
NABS	National Auslan Interpreter Booking Service
NDIS	National Disability Insurance Scheme
PD	Professional Development
RMIT	Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology
RTO	Registered Training Organisation
T&I	Translation and interpreting
TAFE	Technical and further education institution
TALS	Transcultural and Language Services
WAITI	WA Institute of Translators and Interpreters

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