

# ATA Webinars

Live and  
On-Demand

## Handout



### The Ins and Outs of the ATA Certification Exam (April 28, 2022)

Question	Answer
Do you think candidates with 25+ years of translation experience and a translation degree need to take a practice test?	Taking the practice test is consistently the best way to assess readiness for the ATA exam. Like all exams, the certification exam tests certain skills and knowledge, some of which you might not use in your day-to-day translation practice. By taking the practice test, you can get valuable feedback that either confirms you are ready or gives you extra things to work on. Why risk heading into the actual exam without knowing?
Is it possible to find a language-specific mentor who can help you prepare for the ATA exam?	Many ATA language divisions offer practice groups where translators share feedback to help prepare for the exam. ATA does not have a formal program where certified translators help prepare exam candidates.
Can you share other tips on how to prepare? any reading or resources for everyone? -Thanks!	See <a href="#">here</a> . This page will continue to be updated as more resources become available.
Hi, I failed the ATA in 2019. I took the practice tests (go figure) after the test but it was not useful. The sample in the test was number and punctuation dense unlike the practice passages. So, how should I prepare??	You may consider requesting another practice test if there is one available. Practice groups may be helpful too. Keep in mind the certification exam (as well as the practice test) tests your professional competence as a translator, and the passages are of general subject matter familiar to an educated layperson.
Any tips specifically for translators pursuing bidirectional certification? I am certified for English into Spanish, now tackling Spanish into English as an ESL speaker.	Congratulations on getting your first ATA certification! A good rule of thumb is, are you as ready for the other direction as you were before your last exam? I.e., your experience in translating into this direction, your general language proficiency, results from the practice test, etc.
I have not worked as a translator for many years, but now I work as a community interpreter, does that provides me the experience required for the test at some extent? TY	As a translator and interpreter, I (Tianlu) would say the skills required in becoming certified as a translator and interpreter are quite different. While there is no "experience requirement" per se in order for you to register for the exam, it may be helpful to do a practice

	test to see if you are ready, given your past experience working as a translator.
If you fail a practice test, how would you decide whether to take another practice test or wait?	Candidates who fail the practice test by one point are likelier to pass the real exam than someone who did much poorer. Candidates who did very poorly on the practice test might consider joining a practice group, working with editors to improve their translation skills, and otherwise preparing for another practice test before attempting the actual test.
What stress reduction techniques can people who are taking the exam use?	Exam takers can practice mindfulness techniques, relaxing visualization, medication, controlled breathing, stretching, and various other techniques to relieve stress during the exam. It also helps to arrive early, to avoid rushing, and fully rested.
What should take precedence when it comes to preparation: reading in both languages, studying grammar rules in both languages, practicing translation into target language?	Practicing translation into the target language (usually over several years) is the best way to prepare for the ATA exam. Certification is a mid-career credential, even though some new translators do take and pass the exam successfully. Reading voraciously and mastering target language grammar and mechanics are essential to being a good translator, and so those are also important when it comes to thorough preparation.
Where can I find certification exam study groups?	Check with your language division first. If they don't have one, offer to help start one! Otherwise, you could email your division listserv and ask whether anyone is interested in starting an informal practice group with you.
I am taking the ATA test on June 4th. If I order the practice test, will I get the results before that date?	Probably not. You should allow 6 to 8 weeks to get the results back. However, if you take the online exam, you can wait until the results are back and then schedule the exam anytime you want.
If we registered for an in-person exam but would like to reschedule, can we switch to an online exam?	Yes. Contact <a href="#">headquarters</a> .
It would be very helpful to have style sheets for each language combination, such as the ones used by organizations. It would replicate real-life settings. Thank you for considering this!	This has been discussed, and in fact there is such a thing for foreign-into-English pairs: The <a href="#">Into-English Grading Standards</a> , which may be consulted during the exam in print or PDF form.
Is there already a date for the online exam? Do we still have time to take the practice test and receive feedback before the online exam?	The online exam is on demand: You schedule the time whenever you think you're ready.
If we fail the exam, is there wait period before we can take another test?	You have to wait until the next calendar year to retake the exam in the same language pair.
Is there a possibility to take two tests in two different combinations of languages in one year but at different times?	Yes.

Can we request to see the errors marked in a failed test from 2018? the test has been retired several years ago.	We don't release marked exams unless the candidate requests a review.
The translation is too literal or too free (What are the standards this is measured. Evaluation can be very subjective. So is screening based on how accurate is the translation to the source or is more naturally translated even though it's not exactly meaning by meaning.	See the <a href="#">Chronicle article</a> referred to in the webinar.
I have searched the ATA directory for a Certified Translator in the language pair that I tried to get certified. I found no one. Who did the grading of my practice tests and the actual test in this case?	It sounds like you're working in a pair that was recently established, and so the graders are still the initial people who haven't been able to cycle out yet and get certified themselves.
Can we purchase an old practice test?	Each language pair has up to 3 practice tests available at any time.
How are Internet resources used monitored during the in-person exam? Do we need to show proof of bookmarks lists that do not include disallowed resources?	In-person proctors observe the candidates' screens as they circulate in the room. Online, the proctors can view the candidates' screen at all times, plus the screen is recorded and can be reviewed later.
Do you provide the test for Haitian- Creole also? If not, what can be done to have the test for Haitian- Creole also? What are the steps that I would need to take?	The procedure for starting a new language pair is <a href="#">here</a> .
I heard that ATA still doesn't have test for Vietnamese. Is that correct?	See the previous answer.
You list Linguee as an allow, but they give access to DeepL. Why?	If you access DeepL from Linguee, the URL changes from linguee.com (allowed) to deepl.com (not allowed) and is blocked.
Can printed ProZ and or WordReference forums be used during the exam? I know it seems not very feasible, but just curious. Thank you	Yes. Anything printed is allowed.
Are we allowed to leave the computer/mobile phone camera range during online tests (e.g. for bathroom breaks, etc.)?	Yes.
Does the online exam require use of WordPad as well? No Word?	The online exam is cloud-based, so it runs within the Exam Room site without external apps.
Is there a way to have access just to the Practice Passages and not have them graded?	No.
Do the in-person exams have Wifi access? or are we expected to bring a hotspot to ensure we can access the Internet for the	Internet access is provided.

allowed resources (e.g., Wordreference.com)?	
Will we need to install anything on to our laptop during the exam? (I want to use my work laptop, since that's the device/keyboard I do all my translation on, but there are restrictions from IT so I can't install any programs—I already have WordPad on the laptop.)	For in-person, there are no modifications to the candidate's computer. For online, they must install a specific Chrome extension, allow screen sharing, and a few other temporary changes.
Can someone elaborate on the difference between "merely slight effect on understanding/use/content" and "marked difference in meaning, but effect limited in scope" as indicated on the Flowchart for Error Point Decisions? Additionally, after receiving the grading for the practice test, is there anyone we can talk to regarding specifics on our test or is that the end of the line?	A discussion of the distinctions among point assignments in the Flowchart goes beyond the scope of a simple Q&A.
For the Arabic test, is the test only in MSA? Is it possible to get certified in dialects as well?	It's only MSA. We don't have the resources to test in dialects.
Can we take the practice test twice?	The number of times you take it is limited only by the number of practice test passages available.
My question is: can I access to the websites as a result of Google searches?	Only if the site you're directed to is on the allow list.
If I use a PDF reference material on my laptop, am I allowed to use the Search & Find function on the PDF?	Yes.
Where should the second camera be for the online exam?	The second camera is a mobile device of the candidate that is placed somewhere to allow the proctor a full view of the candidate's workspace.
Are there any advantages to taking the test in person vs. online?	It's personal preference about the environment in which you test best.
How do the proctors monitor an online exam?	The remote proctor can see the candidate's screen at all times through remote screenshare, and they also have views from a front and rear camera, as well as audio.
How long does it typically take for the exam results to be returned?	Allow up to 8 weeks. It's usually sooner, but it could be that long in periods of peak demand.
Can you talk about maintaining ATA certification? Does it expire without taking approved CE courses?	Information about the continuing education requirement is <a href="#">here</a> .
Do you have any chapter in India?	ATA doesn't have chapters in other countries.
WordReference is on the allow list, but it says no forums—does that mean we can't post on the forum, or that we are not allowed to check past forum posts?	You're not allowed to use the forum function at all. The term query function is all that should be used at WordReference.

If you get certified in multiple languages, does continued development cover all the certifications, or do you need to do development for each pair?	There is a single continuing education requirement that covers all the certifications.
Some people are wondering about the relationship between certification and maintaining their ATA membership.	If ATA membership lapses, so does certification.
Can I include bilingual and monolingual dictionaries in my bookmarked resources on my laptop?	Yes.
Do the graders have to be Certified Translator? If yes, say someone takes the exam in English to another language, are the graders active translators in this particular language?	Graders are certified in the language pair in which they grade, except in the case of initial graders in a newly established group.
Does the ATA website provide a description of the technical conditions (use of programs / equipment , procedural protocols, etc.) for the in-home test so prospective candidates know what to expect and how to set up?	That information is provided to candidates when they register.
How many years of professional experience is necessary in general based on past statistics?	We don't collect statistics about candidates' experience level.
How do you generate a pdf from a WordPad file? By printing it into a pdf?	This is addressed in the information provided to candidates. Directions are also readily available online.
Will the price for the online certification test be the same as in-person seating?	The price for both formats of the exam is \$525 in 2022.
Why do graders have to forgo becoming certified themselves? Why are they not certified themselves as graders?	This was a reference to the initial graders in a newly established language pair. The initial graders can't already be certified, because they're the first graders.
How long does it take for the results of the practice test to come out?	Allow 6 to 8 weeks.
Are food and drink allowed during the exam?	Drink is allowed, but not food, because chewing may distract other candidates. At home exams are different and you may have food and drink since you will not disturb others.
Is there any information available about accommodations for extended time during the exam? Or for other accommodations	You must request accommodations 45 days before your exam. Your accommodation request must come from your doctor and be specific. For more time, for example, you need to indicate if you need time and a half or double time.
Do any of you have any information on whether ATA plans - someday - to have interpreter certification in standard languages? ;) thanks.	Not aware of any initiative, but people in the Interpreting Division would know more about this.

<p>Is there a deadline as to how long you have to take the online cert test from the time of purchase?</p>	<p>Once you register, you have 30 days to schedule your online exam. The last day to take an exam in 2022 is September 12 for everyone (except for the conference exam).</p>
<p>So the online (remote) test will be year-round then?</p>	<p>No. All exams run from April to September with the exception of the exam at the conference in October. From October to December the last exams are graded and from January to April new exams are written and reviews and appeals are graded. Practice tests are year round.</p>
<p>Can we use the alt codes to add accent marks in Spanish when taking the test online?</p>	<p>No. You should use a dedicated Spanish keyboard via your operating system.</p>