

## CTTIC CERTIFICATION EXAMINATION

### DO'S AND DON'TS FOR THE CERTIFICATION EXAMINATION

#### DO

Take the exam— You can't pass unless you do!

Prepare! Prepare! Prepare! Practice translating under examination conditions—within the 3-hour time limit, using the dictionaries and reference books you would take to the exam and, if possible, without preparing a complete draft, which can take precious minutes to copy at the end. Make drafts only of tricky passages.

RELAX on the day of the exam.

Remember the two important steps most often neglected in the translation process:

- a) Read and assimilate the original text;
- b) Check your translation very carefully. You should keep at least 10 minutes for this review.

Write legibly and neatly and use the pen provided. Remember that the markers must examine many papers and, what's more, must work from photocopies. Draw a vertical line on the left of each sheet, leaving a margin of one or two centimeters (the right margin is already printed). This makes photocopying easier.

Try to manage your time well.

Be careful of omissions. Translate everything, right to the last word.

#### DON'T

- Offer a choice of terms or phrases in brackets.
- Add footnotes explaining your translation.
- Leave out the title or any other words.
- Adapt the text excessively. In trying to demonstrate your skill in paraphrasing (because the content is limited perhaps, or through lack of background knowledge), you may well alter the tone and meaning to such an extent that the marker can no longer consider the translation faithful.
- Use contractions (e.g. it's, can't, we'll).
- Leave before the time is up. Perhaps for you, the first thought that pops into your head is the best, but when you have translated some 400 words in less than two hours, the time you have left will be better spent rereading and revising and in the final touch-up.
- Be mortified if you fail. Your mark is not an evaluation of you as a translator. It is an evaluation of your translation of a given text at a given time. Many factors affect your particular exam result. Health, anxiety, fatigue, subject matter, to name a few. And no one will know you've failed unless you talk about it.

#### CAVEAT!

*If you are primarily a language services manager or a reviser, your translation skills may very well be a little rusty!*