

Which localisation approach should you use?

A practical guide for global L&D teams

Localisation is not one-size-fits-all. Different types of content can be approached in different ways, depending on factors like budget, timelines, and how important that content is to the overall learning experience.

From more AI-led approaches through to fully human input, there's a range of options available. This guide outlines where each tends to fit best, and how they can be used across a programme.

How to use this guide: This guide can help you make clearer, more confident decisions, align stakeholders more easily, and find the right balance between quality, cost and timelines across your learning programmes.

THREE LEVELS OF LOCALISATION

 LEVEL 1: AI-LED Machine translation with automated post-editing (MTAP)	Best suited to: - High-volume, low-risk content - Internal communications - Reference materials - Simple knowledge checks - Supporting learning materials	How it works: - Uses AI to translate quickly at scale - Applies automated post-editing to improve consistency and clarity	Strengths: - Fast and scalable - Cost-efficient - Consistent terminology	Consider: - Tone may feel less natural - Not suitable for high-impact, high-profile learning
 LEVEL 2: MTPE AI-led machine translation with human post-editing	Best suited to: - Most learning content - Onboarding programmes - Product or process training - Soft skills content - Core learning modules	How it works: - AI handles the initial translation - A qualified linguist refines for accuracy, tone, clarity, and instructional effectiveness	Strengths: - Strong balance of quality, speed and cost - Human oversight where it matters - Scalable across programmes	Consider: - Still requires the right level of review - Not ideal for highly sensitive, creative or critical content
 LEVEL 3: HUMAN Fully human translation, no AI	Best suited to: - Compliance and regulatory training - Safety-critical content - Assessed or certified programmes - Brand-sensitive, highly creative or high-visibility content	How it works: - Expert linguists translate from scratch - Focus on precision, nuance and cultural accuracy	Strengths: - Highest level of quality and control - Ensures clarity in high-risk situations - Protects brand and learner outcomes	Consider: - Slower and more resource-intensive - Not always necessary for all content

Key takeaway

Most global learning programmes shouldn't use just one approach. The most effective model is a mix, where:

- MTAP is used for low-risk, high-volume content
- MTPE is used for the majority of learning content
- Human translation is used where precision is critical

👉 If it's helpful to sense-check which level of localisation fits different parts of a programme, we're always happy to take a quick look, especially at the planning stage.