

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE

3-4 December 2019

Languages:

The essential part of international education

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Language and intercultural education

- Languages as a tool to explore cultures but also as an integral part of culture
- The notions of “global graduates” and “citizens of the world” in an increasingly globalised and multicultural world
- EU Multilingualism Policy and [“Council Recommendation on a comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages”](#)
- “Language teaching and learning has a special place in European education, and spending time abroad to learn should become the rule, not the exception” (Tibor Navracsis, European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, at the European Education Summit 2019)

The 'language crisis' in the UK

- Devolved education system
- Declining uptake ([British Council Language Trends 2019](#))
- Higher education: knock-on effect on university departments, HE institutions trying to find creative solutions
- Internationalisation = a key part of many UK universities' strategies



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Press release

Tough new exams discouraging pupils in England from learning languages, say teachers

- British Council Language Trends Survey 2019 finds concern that difficulty of exams contributing to declining numbers of pupils in England taking languages at GCSE and A-level;
- Primary and secondary schools see reduction in international activities, with just one quarter of state secondaries offering pupil exchanges;
- Brexit threatens to widen divisions between pupils from different socio-economic backgrounds;
- Disadvantaged pupils even less likely to study languages than three years ago.

This session:

1. New approaches to UK language degrees: joint honours, ab initio, employability
2. The role of University Language Centres
3. Cross-sector collaborations

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UK background in Higher Education study

Languages HE Enrolments	Total UK	Other EU	Non-EU	Total Non-UK	Total
2014/2015	91,575	6,985	12,770	19,755	111,340
2017/2018	84,260	7,025	12,255	19,280	103,545
	-8%	0,6%	-4%	-2,4%	-7%

- **Specialist language degrees:** single or joint honours
 - Focus on language acquisition, history, literature and culture of TL country
 - Separate language-focused

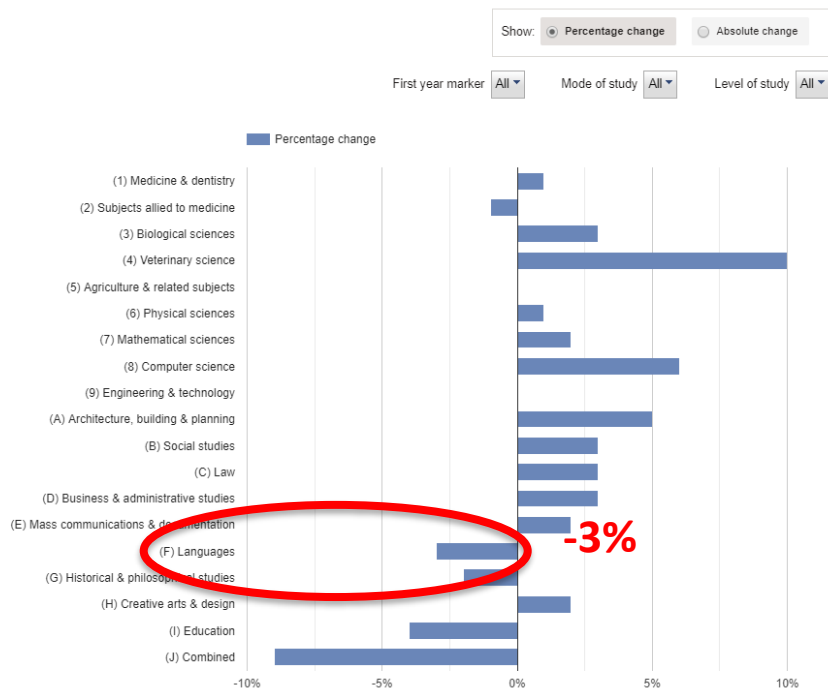
courses, eg. Language for Business purposes

- **Minority of mixed joint honours**
 - Linguistics, History of Art, History, other Humanities subjects
 - Less common combinations with STEM subjects
- **New trend:** Languages and Management
- Growth of **Languages and other subjects**

(Source: HESA)

Diversification of offer

HE student enrolment subject area changes between 2016/17 and 2017/18



- **Major/minor system, flexibility**
 - *Ab initio* courses
 - Modified entry requirements to accommodate non-specialists
- BA Modern Languages / BA in Liberal Arts (**multiple languages**)
- MLang: UG + PG
- Move away from 'conventional' language degrees; add focus on **employability and global graduate**

(Source: HESA)

Importance in gaining current job of... (DLHE)

	Type of qual obt in 2012/13	All subjects (incl STEM)	Subject studied	All subjects (incl STEM)	Class or grade obtained	All subjects (incl STEM)	Evidence of skills and comp	All subjects (incl STEM)	Relevant work exp from prev empl	All subjects (incl STEM)
Formal requirement	29.1%	35.3%	16.3%	32%	10%	13.2%	32%	35.1%	22.3%	21%
Important	25.4%	28.0%	22.1%	28%	28.2%	29.9%	47.9%	46.6%	46.9%	45.2%
Not very important but helped	25%	21.2%	32.5%	22.6%	31.58%	29.2%	12.1%	10.8%	18.3%	17.6%
Not important	20.4%	15.5%	29.1%	17.4%	30.1%	27.8%	8.1%	7.6%	12.5%	9.5%



(Source: HESA) <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/publications/long-destinations-2012-13/employment>

The global graduate

- World-ready graduate
- Multi-skilled graduate
- Integration of work plac. in degree study
- Work plac. Abroad
- Practical skills

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Language Centre: towards a definition

- united under umbrella of AULC (70+ HEIs)
- often has a physical space, in which language learning resources are available
- usually run the institution-wide languages programmes
- languages courses for non-specialists

One size does not fit all

- they range in size and complexity from a resource centre with a specialist library of materials and expert advice, to a large department with foreign and English language teaching and facilities for independent learning
- separate vs joined teaching of specialists and non-specialists
- accredited vs non-accredited
- contracts vs hourly paid
- number of languages and levels

Role of LCs

- Language Centres are well positioned to be major contributors to both internationalisation and employability, two prominent drivers in most universities' strategic plans

www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Documents/International/Uk-Strategy-for-outward-student-mobility-2017-2020.pdf

go international

Universities UK International

VISION

The UK Strategy for Outward Student Mobility aims to double the percentage of UK-domiciled, full-time, first degree students* who undertake international placements as part of their higher education programmes from 6.6% in 2014 to 13.2% in 2020. This will create a new generation of global graduates, and a higher education culture in which international opportunities are an aspiration for all students.

**ie, graduates who had a mobility period during their undergraduate studies*

By increasing the proportion of students benefiting from international experience

To implement the Strategy, Universities UK International will work with the UK

Who takes Language Centre courses: example Nottingham

Total number of Language Centre students	1,927
Number of Arts students	614
Number of Non-Arts students	1,313

- I'm xxxxxx, currently a final year student studying Nutrition and Food Science. After my exchange at Korea University in my second year, I've realised the importance of the use of language for international communication. That's the reason I took Japanese at Beginner's Level as one of my third year modules. With the help and guidance of our Japanese tutor, my learning progress was smooth and quick. It definitely helps in terms of broadening my career options after graduation. With the Japanese food market expanding worldwide, knowing the basics of Japanese can be an extra skill for many industries.
- Taking a language at university has provided a completely different angle and set of skills to my main degree. It has really complimented the degree and enhanced my all round confidence, just through speaking a foreign language. I would definitely feel confident to go abroad and be able to speak the language to natives which is extremely rewarding. The style of lessons ensure they are always engaging and really fun. Studying an inter faculty language has also provided a basis to meet many new people from many different areas of the university with whom I've become great friends! (xxxxxxxxx, Maths, final year)

Challenges

1. Timetabling
2. Awareness amongst students
3. Willingness to open curricula

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Background

- ‘Language crisis’ in the UK
- Situation in primary and secondary sector has knock-on effect on HE and vice versa – cross-sector collaboration paramount
- Calls for a national language policy

How can sectors collaborate?

- Collaboration between higher education and secondary education
- Collaboration between secondary and primary education
- Collaboration between higher and primary education

Example 1: ‘Our languages’

- “‘Our languages’: exploring cross-sector collaborations in language education”
- Funded by AHRC Open World Research Initiative OWRI
“Language Acts and Worldmaking”
- PIs: Dr Elena Polisca & Sascha Stollhans
- 28 September 2019 at LU
- Talks, roundtable discussions

and working groups (curriculum, policy, implementation)

Example 2: Linguistics in MFL (@InMFL)

Context

Addressing the decline in Modern Foreign Language (MFL) study in FE and HE

Current A-level syllabi make a distinction between language skills and content, the latter referring to literature, film, history and culture.

This differs from many university courses in which linguistic content is fundamental, as reflected in past and current Research Excellent Framework (REF) entries.

Linguistics has the potential to appeal to different kinds of students given its scientific approach.

Aims

We aim to get linguistic content options added to MFL A-level syllabi.

By doing this, we hope to:

- (i) attract new kinds of students to the study of languages at A-level and beyond;
- (ii) bridge the content/skills gap in MFL A-level syllabi, in line with the HE context;
- (iii) enhance the linguistic skills of A-level linguists by raising their metalinguistic and sociolinguistic awareness.

http://www.cantab.net/users/jrkasstan/MFL/APPG_Handout11102018.pdf

Example 3: student mentoring projects



[Learn more about MFL](#)



The Welsh Government funded MFL mentoring project supports and encourages the learning of modern foreign languages at secondary level in Wales via in-classroom mentoring and e-mentoring.

We place undergraduate and postgraduate students in secondary schools to increase learners aspirations for higher education, and provide both face-to-face and online mentoring to improve engagement with modern foreign languages, with the aim of increasing the number of students opting to study languages at GCSE Level, and beyond.

A partnership between Cardiff, Bangor, Swansea and Aberystwyth Universities our project is a flagship model promoting partnerships across education levels to promote a common cause.

MFL Mentoring is funded by the Welsh Government under its Global Futures Strategy 2015-2020.

<https://mflmentoring.co.uk/>

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