

Sheraton Grand Hotel and Spa and Holy Rood High School



SCILT's Business Language Champions programme helps schools and businesses to build exciting and sustainable partnerships that equip young people with the international communication and employability skills they need for their future careers.

Background

Holy Rood High School is a large, six year denominational school situated on the edge of Holy Rood Park, against the backdrop of Arthur's Seat. It serves communities in the east side of the City of Edinburgh. The school values promote high standards and achievement and pupils are encouraged to be all they can be in every sphere of school activity. The school roll is approximately 1043.

Learners study French and Italian during the broad general education. In addition, the school offers Higher French and Higher Italian as well as Advanced Higher in both languages.

For more information about the school, visit the [Holy Rood High School website](#).

Aims

The project with The Sheraton Grand Hotel and Spa gives the young people in S4 a real and engaging context for their learning and provides them with an insight into the world of work. It shows them how learning a language can enhance their career prospects as well as develop their skills for learning, life and work. The partnership highlights how important languages can be in the hospitality industry and demonstrates the contribution of this industry to the local Edinburgh economy.

Partners

SCILT and the Modern Languages Department at Holy Rood High School worked in partnership with the staff at the Sheraton Grand Hotel and Spa in Edinburgh city centre.

Sheraton Grand Hotel and Spa

The Sheraton Grand Hotel and Spa is a five- star hotel located in Edinburgh city centre, overlooking Edinburgh Castle. The hotel attracts tourists from various countries and they do not always speak English well. Linking with the hotel demonstrated the value of language skills in the hospitality industry.

More information on the hotel is available from the [Sheraton Grand Hotel and Spa website](#).

Project

The partners worked together to devise a project. The project aimed to enhance teaching and learning in the S4 curriculum for pupils who were studying Italian and working towards the “Build your own employability skills” unit. This is part of the Modern Languages for Life and Work award.

Pupils visited the Sheraton Grand Hotel and Spa in order to get a better understanding of why and to what extent languages are used in the hospitality industry and how they can enhance employment prospects. They heard from a wide range of staff including human resources, housekeeping and front of house who spoke about their experiences working for the Sheraton worldwide and how this global experience has opened up their world and enriched their lives.



This was followed by a tour of the hotel and a presentation on employability skills. Pupils were encouraged to think about what would make them attractive to a potential employer and what qualities an employer might look for. They were then offered guidance on how to go about preparing a CV and how to present themselves for an interview.



The presentation highlighted the value of learning languages for the world of work. It emphasised that languages help you to communicate with people from other countries, and that the skills you develop when learning a language can be used in a wide range of jobs and industries. The presentation emphasised the importance of having the right attitude towards work by being positive, resilient and willing to learn. It also underlined the value of demonstrating good communication skills when dealing with other people, especially in the customer services industry.

Pupils responded very positively and were extremely enthusiastic about the visit to the Sheraton Grand Hotel and Spa:

“We learned that having knowledge of another language is very desirable in the hospitality industry, regardless of what area you want to work in. Hearing this from people who actually worked there and listening to their experiences of travelling and learning new languages made us realise that it really would be a good idea to take our study of Italian even more seriously!” (S4 pupil, Holy Rood High School)

Information Brochure

To conclude the project the young people created a brochure in Italian, providing information on tourist attractions in Edinburgh. The brochures were judged by senior management from the hotel, including a native Italian speaker. The winning group returned to the hotel to be presented with a prize from the hotel’s senior managers.

The four winning brochures can be downloaded as PDF files through the links below:

- [Benvenuti a Edimburgo](#)
- [Da Visitare a Edimburgo](#)
- [Edimburgo](#)
- [15 posti migliori da visitare a Edimburgo](#)

Impact

Learners enjoyed the experience. They were engaged in the different activities offered and the project made the contexts they were studying much more engaging and relevant:

“Our visit certainly opened our eyes to the fact that knowing another language really can improve your chances of employability.” (S4 pupil, Holy Rood High School)

Staff thought the project was a great opportunity for the learners to see the relevance of learning Italian and that it really had highlighted how beneficial knowledge of another language can be at all levels in the world of work. They agreed that pupils appreciated their language learning opportunities more now, and that the project had been very worthwhile.

Next steps

The staff at Holy Rood High School would like to continue to promote languages to learners in this way and are looking forward to continuing and developing this link.

The staff at the Sheraton Grand Hotel and Spa also benefited from the project and are keen to continue working with the school. The Learning, Development and Human Resources Executive explained that working with local organisations, such as Holy Rood High School and SCILT, to inspire young people to consider learning languages, and use them to gain a rewarding career in hospitality, ties in with one of the Sheraton core values, “Inspiration”.

They want on to explain that the relationship with the school demonstrates the hotel’s commitment to the community, and they were delighted to be able to provide the young people with an overview of the career opportunities that a second language can provide. Involving associates from various departments, who speak at least two languages, and supporting work on the information brochures has been a really positive experience for staff at the Sheraton Grand Hotel and Spa.