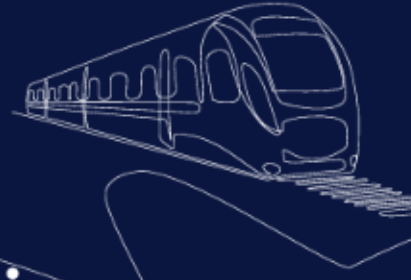


**THE FUTURE OF
FRENCH X
EN ÉCOSSE**

French Forward >>



Workshop 4:

14:00-14:45 and 14:50-15:35

Keeping the Fun in French – across the curriculum

Lara Freeman, Jane Halstead, David Vescio,
Tatiana Messenger

Lara Freeman –
Aberdeen City Council

Le Big Sing
Please open separate
presentation



Lara Freeman

Education Officer,
Aberdeen City Council

Lara Freeman is an Education Support Officer at Aberdeen City Council with responsibility for languages and also a Primary Languages Teacher. Having begun her career as a Secondary Languages Teacher, she now teaches French to younger learners (P1-7) in a city primary school for half the week. As an Education Support Officer with the Aberdeen City Education Team since 2014, Lara works with a range of local and national partners on projects and initiatives to promote and support language learning and teaching in primary and secondary schools. Wanting to offer opportunities for pupils to use their language learning outwith the classroom, she developed a partnership in 2025 between the Big Sing Project and Aberdeen's Twin City of Clermont-Ferrand.

- **Set up a partnership with a school abroad** through [Schools Connect | British Council](#)

Jane Halstead - British Council

Please open separate presentation



Jane Halstead

Education Manager,
British Council Scotland

Jane Halstead is Education Manager for British Council Scotland, with responsibility for a portfolio spanning schools, colleges and higher education. Before joining the British Council in 2024, Jane led a Scotland-based education charity focused on creating opportunities for young people to engage in language learning and global citizenship education.

David Vescio –
University of Stirling

Please open separate presentation



David Vescio is a doctoral student based at the University of Stirling, evaluating Scotland's 1+2 languages policy. As part of his PhD, he is a visiting researcher at SCILT and implemented the interdisciplinary project Francofoot-Calciamo, evaluating the impact of interdisciplinary learning on uptake at senior phase in terms of gender.



David Vescio

Visiting Researcher, SCILT
PhD student, University of Stirling

Tatiana Messenger

– Oldmachar Academy



Tatiana Messenger

Language teacher
Oldmachar Academy

A native French speaker with more than five years of teaching experience, Tatiana is deeply passionate about the French language. Through sharing her culture and personal identity, she hopes to help pupils appreciate the importance and richness of learning French.

French as a driver of social justice?

- 'Understanding the languages “crisis” as an issue of access rather than demand leads to a different conclusion about the future of the discipline. Beginners’ provision [at university] is not peripheral but central. It offers a practical means of expanding the pipeline, diversifying participation, and ensuring that language study does not become an additional marker of educational privilege.'

Modern languages has a future – and it’s all about access

Contraction of modern languages provision is often painted as a response to falling demand. For Ana de Medeiros and Marcela Cazzoli, if you look across the whole education system then HE starts to look like part of the solution

COMMENT | 27/05/26



Image: Shutterstock



Marcela Cazzoli
Marcela Cazzoli is Professor of Spanish and Applied Linguistics at Durham University



Ana de Medeiros
Ana de Medeiros is Director of

The dominant narrative surrounding modern languages in the UK is one of decline. Falling numbers at GCSE, A level and degree level in European languages are widely taken as evidence that students are losing interest in languages, and the contraction of provision across the higher education sector is a direct response to this trend.

From this perspective, the explanation appears straightforward: demand has fallen, and universities are seen as responding to market conditions shaped by student choice.

There is, of course, some truth in this account. Declining enrolments are real, and they place pressure on departments that depend on sustainable recruitment. But

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Q&A – C'est à vous!

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