





THE FUTURE OF FRENCH ~~X~~ *EN ÉCOSSE*



French Forward 



For all teachers of French
at primary, secondary and
tertiary level



Monday 22 June 2026 King's College Historic Campus Quad
University of Aberdeen



ASMCF



9:45	Registration and coffee	
Welcome: 10:00	<p>Michelle McLeod, <i>Head of the School of Language, Literature, Music and Visual Culture (LLMVC)</i>, Fransiska Louwagie, <i>Senior Lecturer</i>, Nadia Kiwan, <i>Professor</i>, and Clémence O'Connor, <i>Lecturer, Department of French and Francophone Studies, University of Aberdeen</i></p> <p>Stéphane Pailler, <i>Consul général de France à Édimbourg et Glasgow et Directeur de l'Institut français d'Ecosse</i></p>	
<p>Keynote panel 10:15</p> <p>A roundtable focused on French in Scotland across the different levels of language teaching (primary, secondary and higher education)</p>	<p>Fiona Barclay, <i>Professor of French and Associate Dean (Internationalisation), University of Stirling; Chair of University Council For Languages Scotland</i></p> <p>Charles Forsdick, <i>Professor in French, University of Cambridge; British Academy Lead Fellow for Languages</i></p> <p>Lisa Hanna, <i>Senior Education Officer for Languages, Education Scotland; Depute Director of SCILT; Teaching Fellow at the University of Strathclyde</i></p> <p>JohnPaul Cassidy, <i>HM Inspectorate of Education</i></p> <p>Laurence Findlay, <i>Director of Education and Children's Services in Aberdeenshire Council; President of the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland</i></p> <p>Lara Freeman, <i>Education Support Officer with a remit in Languages and Primary School Teacher, Aberdeen City Council</i></p> <p>A Principal Teacher of Languages, Aberdeen City Council</p>	
Workshops 11:40	Employability - Advocating for French Language skills	French Language ambassadors - Sharing and shaping language learning
13:15 LUNCH	Le marché - networking and stalls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institut français d'Écosse • Alliance française de Glasgow • Franco-Scottish Society, Aberdeen branch • French Film Festival Learning Programme • CLÉ International • Tania Czajka Creative Puppetry • Aberlangs • Écoles FLAM • Teachers of French in Scotland (ToFiS) • LinguaTour
Workshops 14:00	Promoting the use of French in the classroom (FLE)	Keeping the Fun in French across the curriculum
Presentation 15:50	Languages and Coding	
16:20	Closing session	Followed by networking reception until 17:30

Workshop information - sessions will run twice to allow everyone to attend each one

Morning workshops (11:40-12:25 and 12:30-13:15)	
Workshop 1	<p><u>Employability - Advocating for French Language skills, busting AI and Brexit myths</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnerships between schools and organisations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Danestone primary school's employability project with Subsea – Leanne Duncan (Depute Headteacher, Seaton Primary School) o When an interdisciplinary project in French with local skincare company Oui Oui Caudalie achieved the Scottish Languages Employability Award – Laura Morris (Depute Headteacher, Turriff Academy) • Perspectives from stakeholders across sectors where French language skills, international experience and intercultural competence strengthen employability: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Journalism – Lauren Cameron (The Inverness Courier) o Tourism – Katie Rogen (Absolute Escapes) o International executive education – Fiona Williamson (ESCP Business School)
Workshop 2	<p><u>French Language ambassadors - sharing and shaping language learning.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Led by SCILT conference organiser Sheena Bell, Professional development officer. • Engaging P6 pupils in a 'Celebration of Languages' day held at their future academy, with input from the University of Aberdeen: Liegha Laing (Head of Languages Faculty, Meldrum Academy). • How student Language Ambassadors (S1 to S6) create a positive culture for French in the school community and beyond: Judith McKerrecher, Curriculum Leader for Modern Languages & International Education, Craigmount High School, Edinburgh). • Inspiring high schoolers on their French journey: Stephanie Macintosh and Harrison Stuart (University of Aberdeen graduates and experienced French Language Ambassadors)





Workshop information - sessions will run twice to allow everyone to attend each one

Afternoon workshops (14:00-14:45- and 14:50-15:35)	
Workshop 3	<p><u>FLE and promoting the use of French in the classroom</u></p> <p>Philippe Liria of CLÉ International will introduce (in English) what FLE is and how it might be relevant to different levels of French teaching and learning in a Scottish context, before letting participants experience FLE to provide practical take-aways for the classroom.</p>
Workshop 4	<p><u>Keeping the Fun in French – across the curriculum</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building intercultural exchange with Aberdeen’s twin city Clermont Ferrand through Aberdeen’s ‘Big Sing’ for primary children and families – Lara Freeman (Education Officer with a remit in Languages, Aberdeen City Council) • When students from five schools presented in French at an international Paris conference on Oceans – Jane Halstead (British Council Scotland) • Francofoot: Making French come to life while addressing gender imbalance through sport – David Vescio (Ph.D candidate, University of Stirling) • Prize-winning success stories aren’t just for the highest-attaining schools – Tatiana Messenger (Oldmachar Academy)

Marketplace exhibitors

- Institut français d'Écosse
- Alliance française de Glasgow
- Franco-Scottish Society, Aberdeen branch
- French Film Festival Learning Programme
- CLÉ International
- Tania Czajka Creative Puppetry
- Aberlangs
- Écoles FLAM
- Teachers of French in Scotland (ToFiS)
- LinguaTour





University of Aberdeen conference hosts



Fransiska Louwagie

Senior Lecturer in French and Francophone Studies,
School of Language, Literature, Music and Visual
Culture (LLMVC),
University of Aberdeen

Dr Fransiska Louwagie is a Senior Lecturer in French and Francophone Studies. Her research combines literary studies with a range of interdisciplinary perspectives. In particular, she has worked on survivor narratives and the representation of the Holocaust in contemporary Francophone fiction and comics. She also works on other contexts, such as Rwanda and South Africa, and has undertaken various research collaborations in the field of drama and the visual arts.

Nadia Kiwan is Professor of Francophone Postcolonial Studies at the University of Aberdeen, and founding Director of the Centre for Multilingual Research. Nadia's interdisciplinary research interests focus on critical migration studies and decolonial socio-cultural movements and thought.



Nadia Kiwan

Professor of Francophone Postcolonial Studies,
School of Language, Literature, Music and Visual
Culture (LLMVC),
University of Aberdeen



Clémence O'Connor

Lecturer in French and Francophone Studies,
School of Language, Literature, Music and Visual Culture (LLMVC),
University of Aberdeen

Dr Clémence O'Connor is a Lecturer in French and Francophone Studies at the University of Aberdeen. She has published interdisciplinary research on multilingualism and multiculturalism in contemporary French poetry. Her research interests also lie in the showing the value of insights from other languages and cultures in the response to global challenges.



Panel members

Fiona Barclay is Professor of French and Associate Dean (Internationalisation) at the University of Stirling, and Chair of the University Council for Languages Scotland. She sits on the Advisory Group for SCILT, Scotland's National Centre for Languages and currently holds a £1.5m AHRC grant for a comparative study of cultures of language-learning in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and Ireland.



Fiona Barclay

Professor of French and Associate Dean (Internationalisation), University of Stirling; Chair of University Council for Languages Scotland



Charles Forsdick

Professor in French, University of Cambridge; British Academy Lead Fellow for Languages

Charles Forsdick is Drapers Professor of French at the University of Cambridge. He is a specialist in the area of Francophone postcolonial studies, with particular interest in the French-speaking Caribbean. He is currently British Academy Lead Fellow for Languages.

Lisa has joined the Education Scotland team as Senior Education Officer for Languages and Latin. In previous roles at SCILT, Inverclyde and Learning and Teaching Scotland (LTS), Lisa has worked at school, local authority and national levels to develop and promote language learning and international perspectives for all learners.



Lisa Hanna

Senior Education Officer for Languages, Education Scotland; Depute Director of SCILT; Teaching Fellow, University of Strathclyde



Plenary

JohnPaul has been HM Inspector of Education for almost nine years. He has HMIE lead responsibility for modern and classical languages. He also has a lead role in liaising with independent schools. JohnPaul was formerly QIO at Angus Council, where he co-ordinated languages across the 'pan-Tayside' network. He was also a formerly PT languages and depute head at Renfrewshire Council.



JohnPaul Cassidy

HM Inspector of Education,
His Majesty's Inspectorate of
Education in Scotland



Laurence Findlay

Director of Education and
Children's Services,
Aberdeenshire Council;
President of the Association of
Directors in Education Scotland

Laurence Findlay is Director of Education and Children's Services with Aberdeenshire Council. Prior to this, Laurence held similar senior positions within Moray Council. Laurence started his career as a teacher of Modern Languages, teaching French and German at schools in Edinburgh and Fraserburgh before moving to Keith Grammar School in Moray where he was Principal Teacher of Modern Languages and then Depute Head Teacher. Laurence moved to Forres Academy in Moray as Head Teacher in 2008 before taking on the role of Head of Schools and Curriculum Development and then Director. In his current role within Aberdeenshire Council, Laurence's portfolio includes all areas of education from early years onwards through primary and secondary and community learning and development as well as Children and Families Social Work services and Aberdeenshire's culture and sport services. Laurence is currently President of the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES)



Panel



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.



A Head of Faculty for Modern Languages in a secondary school in Aberdeen with extensive experience teaching French and Spanish across the full secondary range, including Advanced Higher, the teacher holds the GTCS Professional Recognition Award for Leading Learning in Modern Languages and an MEd from the University of Glasgow, alongside postgraduate qualifications in Modern Languages and Inclusive Education. Their career has combined classroom practice with educational leadership, curriculum development, and whole-school improvement. They also contribute to national curriculum development through their role as a member of the Modern Languages Core Group of the Curriculum Improvement Cycle currently run by Education Scotland. They are particularly interested in language learning as a tool for equity, cultural understanding, and learner confidence, and in the evolving future of Modern Languages education in Scotland.



**A Principal Teacher
of Languages**

Aberdeen City Council

Speakers



Leanne Duncan

Depute Head Teacher, Seaton School,
Aberdeen City Council

Leanne has been teaching in Aberdeen city for 15 years. She is very passionate about promoting languages across the city and has been involved in this in various capacities for many years. She is based at Seaton School, which is the Mandarin Hub for Aberdeen City Council.



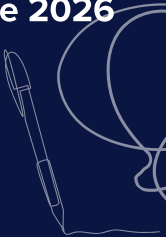
Laura has worked as Faculty Head of Modern Languages in a rural school in Aberdeenshire for nearly a decade, and is currently Depute Headteacher at Turriff Academy. She studied French and English at Aberdeen University and has been passionate about language education since spending a year abroad as a Language Assistant in Rennes and Quimper. Her love for France and its culture began even earlier, sparked by a school trip to Normandy in 2001. With extensive experience working with the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) in various roles, she also currently serves as Co-Chair of LANGS and contributes as an Education Scotland Associate for Modern Languages. Additionally, she led the Aberdeenshire Curricular Network Group for over 5 years. In these roles, Laura works collaboratively with colleagues at a local and national level to support and enhance language education across Scotland. Laura is committed to fostering the sharing of knowledge and ideas within the language teaching community and passionately advocates for language learning as a vital life skill for all.



Laura Morris

Depute Headteacher,
Turriff Academy





Speakers



Lauren Cameron

News reporter, Highland News & Media

Lauren graduated from the University of Aberdeen with first-class honours in French and Linguistics in 2022, before going on to spend a year living and working in the French Alps as a lectrice de langue étrangère at l'Université Savoie Mont Blanc. She discovered this role through a partnership between UofA and USMB, and it was a fantastic opportunity to develop her working French while gaining valuable experience teaching English to university students. In 2023, she went on to pursue a Master's in Journalism at Edinburgh Napier University, which led to her current role as a news reporter with Highland News & Media. As a journalist, she draws on the skills she developed during her language degree every day - from clear communication and critical thinking to engaging with a wide range of perspectives. She is particularly interested in how language skills can open up diverse and sometimes unexpected career paths. Studying languages also gave her the confidence to adapt quickly, ask the right questions, and build connections with people from different backgrounds - all of which she relies on in her work as a journalist.

Katie currently works in the Sales & Marketing team for Absolute Escapes, a tour operator based in Edinburgh specialising in self-guided walking, train and driving holidays in the UK & Ireland. She has been with the company for 3 years and her role is Senior Travel Specialist. Following graduating from the University of Aberdeen in 2021 with an MA in French & Hispanic Studies, she worked in France for a year before returning to Scotland to begin a career in the travel and tourism industry.



Katie Rogen

Senior Travel Specialist,
Absolute Escapes

Speakers



Fiona Williamson

Programme Coordinator
Executive,
ESCP Business School London

Fiona Williamson currently works as the Programme Coordinator Executive for Bespoke Executive Education at ESCP Business School, London Campus. Previously, Fiona held positions at Third Bridge Group Limited, including Project Manager and Client Associate for European Consulting, and was also an Associate focusing on French/European Markets. Fiona's diverse experience includes working as a flight attendant for TUI, and an English language assistant at Collège Lycée Saint Magloire in Brittany, France. Fiona holds a degree in French and International Relations from the University of Aberdeen.

Sheena joined Scotland's National Centre for Languages (SCILT) at the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow as a Professional Development Officer in October 2019. She is an experienced secondary teacher of French, Spanish and Italian, and now supports language learning and teaching across the country. In addition, she is an SQA marker for French at Higher and Advanced Higher levels and one of the core organisers of the Future of French en Écosse forum.



Sheena Bell

Professional Development
Officer, Scotland's National
Centre for Languages (SCILT)



Judith McKerrecher


Curriculum Leader for
Modern Languages
and International Education,
Craigmount High School

Judith McKerrecher is a Scottish educator specializing in modern languages and international education, currently serving as a Curriculum Leader at Craigmount High School in Edinburgh. She has extensive experience in language teaching, including French, German and ESOL, and she oversees Spanish, Mandarin and heritage languages in the faculty. She has previously worked as a Professional Development Officer for the Confucius Institute for Scotland's Schools at Scotland's National Centre for Languages. Judith is a strong advocate for cultural exchange and using languages to support diplomacy, peace and harmony in the world. Her passion for languages and her strong belief in, and commitment to, young people play a key role in ensuring inclusion, social justice and drive in education.

Speakers



Liegha Laing

Faculty Head of Languages,
Mintlaw Academy 

Liegha has been a teacher at Meldrum Academy in Aberdeenshire since 2005 and Faculty Head since 2015. She is very proud of leading a busy and dynamic faculty where the focus is on high-quality learning and teaching and providing suitable pathways for all.

Stephanie McIntosh is an MLitt student in Comparative Literature at the University of Aberdeen, building on her undergraduate degree in French. Passionate about promoting language learning, she serves as a Language Ambassador and regularly takes part in school visits and SCILT online sessions to support and inspire new learners.



Stephanie McIntosh

Student



Harrison Stuart


Student

Harrison has recently completed his French-German undergraduate degree at the University of Aberdeen, where he also volunteered as a Language Ambassador. He has completed a teaching assistantship in France and has twice attended the UK Prix Goncourt, where students from several universities form reading groups which meet to discuss and select the laureate from the shortlist of francophone books established by the Académie Goncourt.

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.



Tatiana Messenger

Language teacher
Oldmachar Academy 

Speakers

With a background in Hispanic studies and translation, Philippe Liria quickly moved into FFL teaching and pedagogical coordination, before focusing on teacher training. The training sessions he leads around the world cover classroom management, intercultural communication and mediation, the flipped classroom, phonetics, and, more recently, AI and its implications for language teaching. He is also an author and designer of FFL resources. In publishing, as an editorial project manager, he has coordinated several FFL book series. He currently works as a pedagogical representative for the publisher CLE International. He regularly acts as a consultant in the field of FFL and, more broadly, in language teaching and learning.



Philippe Liria

Teacher Trainer
CLÉ International



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

Visiting Researcher, SCILT
PhD student, University of Stirling

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.

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Made possible thanks to:



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Additional thanks to:

