

Scotland's National Centre for Languages

Confucius Institute for Scotland's School

Summary Report for April 2023 – March 2024

Scotland is a multi-cultural society where many languages are spoken. This includes indigenous, Scottish languages and those originating from further afield.

Our vision:

SCILT is Scotland's National Centre for Languages, supporting a wealth of language learning and diversity across Scotland's communities. As a nation, we are developing the language skills that equip us for life in a globally interdependent world, thus contributing to a fairer, smarter, more successful Scotland. We achieve this by promoting and supporting high-quality language learning and fostering a climate that celebrates all languages.

The Confucius Institute for Scotland's Schools is part of Scotland's National Centre for Languages and shares the same vision and values. CISS contributes to the Scottish Government's China Engagement Strategy. We create opportunities and widen access for learners in our schools and the wider community to develop the knowledge, skills and cultural awareness required of citizens in the globally interdependent world of the 21st century.

Within this vision our priorities are:

- 1. Supporting the learning experience for practitioners and learners**
To support and promote high quality language learning experiences for all, in line with national priorities
- 2. Promotion and partnerships**
Working with partners to highlight the benefits of multilingualism and intercultural competencies so that languages are widely recognised as a key skill for life and work
- 3. Research and knowledge exchange**
To facilitate language-related research, share information and enable knowledge exchange in Scotland and beyond

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Scotland's National Centre for Languages

Priority 1: Supporting the learning experience for practitioners and learners

CLPL: learning and experiences 3-18 with a focus on 1+2

SCILT/CISS professional learning offer

Primary Professional Learning

Comparison of 2023- 24 primary engagements with those in 2022-23 shows that the level of engagements was sustained over those two years.

Primary CLPL	2022 - 2023	2023 - 2024
Engagements	3 workshop bookings of which: 1 x asynchronous recorded input for a RIC 2 x local authorities	4 workshop bookings of which: 3 online workshops for 1 local authority 1 in person workshop for 1 local authority
Cross-sector	Combining employability and languages skills (Angus, 17/05/22)	Effective cluster working and transition processes (open access online, 14/11/23)
Open Access opportunities	9 online primary workshops <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental engagement x 2 • DYW x2 • Active Assessment • Cultural Contexts for primary language learning • Multilingual approaches to primary pedagogy • Creative Translanguaging • Creative Translation with Stephen Spender Trust <p>1 online Show and Tell event for Early Years practitioners</p>	Languages for a Sustainable World: Primary CLPL – partnership with ScotDec 30/01/24, online Give careers education with a languages twist: a workshop for primary teachers - partner with DYW Live eSgoil 31/01/24, online 7 online primary open access workshops <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative Puppetry with Languages • Languages through drama • Families on board? • Celebrating cultural diversity • Digital tools in primary languages • Introduction to multilingual approaches to primary pedagogy • Target language phonics

<p>Popular workshops (across all formats)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combining employability and language skills (x3) • Parental engagement (x2) • Strengthening literacy links across languages (x2) • Active Assessment in primary languages (x2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families on board x2 • Give careers education a languages twist x2 • Introduction to multilingual approaches to primary pedagogy x2
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Requests from local authority officers for primary workshops from the SCILT menu remained low in the period April 2023 to March 2024 with bookings from two different local authorities, both in the central belt. Notably, one of these local authorities was one that we have consistently supported over the last decade, for the other local authority it was our first booking.

To meet the needs of individual teachers, keen to explore primary languages pedagogies, wherever they are in the country, the Primary PDO team planned and facilitated two series of online open access workshops (Sept – Nov 2023; Feb – May 2024). Across the board the open access workshops had consistently high registration numbers. This year we partnered with other educational organisations, ScotDec and DYWLive to present two open access workshops. In five of the SCILT open access workshops, school-based practitioners were invited to be guest presenters and to share their current practice. In this way we ensure our content is up to date and relevant.

In particular, the digital tools workshop with our invited guest presenter deserves a special mention, as the maximum capacity was raised twice from our usual maximum 50. As expected, the number of attendees for these free online workshops was always lower than the number of registrations. All these workshops were positively received by attendees on the day, although the amount of feedback shared via our online evaluation form post-workshop was minimal.

The information about professional learning for early career teachers (student teachers and first 5 years post qualification) 2023-24 is reported in the Supporting ECT section of this report.

Next steps

Continue to collaborate with PS team a) to review evaluation questions, and b) regarding promotion of all primary professional learning opportunities.

Continue to actively cultivate relationships with local authority colleagues to encourage workshop bookings.

Build on the cross-sector workshop from November 2023, work with secondary colleagues, school partners and cluster coaches to develop a PLP with a small number of members of the SLLP Alums Network.

Ensure all open access opportunities are promoted on Education Scotland Curriculum, Learning, Teaching & Assessment portal to national audience.

Secondary Professional Learning

Comparison of 2023- 24 secondary engagements with those in 2022-23 shows that, as for primary professional learning, the level of engagement remained strong over those two years.

Secondary CLPL	2022-23	2023-24
Engagements	<p>14 local authorities 3 RICs</p> <p>Total number of CLPL engagements with local authorities/RICs = 20</p> <p>1 CLPL delivery to Secondary Mandarin GTCS teachers</p> <p>1 CLPL delivery to PGDE languages students</p> <p>1 CLPL delivery to GTCS Supporters for Early Career Teachers</p> <p>The Big Question series: 4 sessions</p> <p>Total engagements: 27</p>	<p>12 local authorities</p> <p>RICs no longer in operation</p> <p>Total number of CLPL engagements with local authorities = 16</p> <p>1 CLPL delivery to Secondary Mandarin GTCS teachers</p> <p>1 CLPL delivery to PGDE languages students</p> <p>1 CLPL delivery for national teachers via DYW Live (Employability)</p> <p>1 CLPL delivery for national teachers via Scotdec (Global Citizenship)</p> <p>2 CLPL deliveries for Early Career Teachers</p> <p>Early Career Teacher drop-ins: 6 sessions</p> <p>The Big Question series: 4 sessions</p> <p>Total engagements: 32</p>
Popular topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy, Planning & Practice in BGE • Using Language Skills Across the Curriculum • Emerging Contexts <p>Many of our CLPL sessions this year again were bespoke, combining elements from the menu or adding in areas that were of particular relevance to the context.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy, Planning & Practice in BGE • Employability • Language Skills Across the Curriculum • Social-Emotional Learning <p>Again this year, most of our CLPL sessions were bespoke or variations on the menu items.</p>
Cross-sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental Engagement x1 • GTCS Supporters x1 • PGDE input x1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cluster working x1 • PGDE input x1

In order to maximise impact and capacity, the vast majority of secondary CLPL continues to be delivered online. This enables us to engage with teachers from a wider range of local authority areas than is easily possible in face-to-face workshops. In addition, it allows us to deliver to a variety of group sizes, ranging from individual schools to nationally, using online resources and breakout rooms to maximise interaction.

This year we offered six different workshops: *Policy, planning and practice in the BGE, Emerging contexts for language learning, Talking and listening in secondary languages classrooms, Reading and Writing, Language skills across the curriculum and Social-Emotional Learning for languages.*

In May-June of session 2023-24 we continued the popular Big Question series of four drop-in workshops tackling some of the big questions that teachers might be asking about teaching languages today.

In May/June 2023, we focused on the four core skills of Reading, Listening, Writing and Talking. For 2024, we went a bit further in each area, so the theme for this year was *One Step Beyond....*

Each session featured a mixture of input from SCILT presenters and from guests, discussion and sharing of practice and ideas. The four sessions were titled *One Step Beyond Listening – Interpreting as a tool for learning and teaching, One Step Beyond Talking – The importance of Social-Emotional Learning in Languages, One Step Beyond the Classroom – Outdoor Learning and Languages and One Step Beyond Reading and Writing – The use of AI in Languages: a blessing or a curse?*

These were once again well-attended and well-received, and we are very grateful to the guest practitioners who shared their expertise and advice in these sessions.

Next steps

Continued dynamic evaluation of this year's approach to workshop delivery and planning for future models of delivery.

Review of Early Career Teacher support

Development of cross-sector cluster working CLPL input with primary colleagues.

Continued extension of our delivery of bespoke sessions in order to meet specific needs within schools, clusters and local authorities.

TeLT Professional Learning Programme (SCILT/Open University)

SCILT's partnership with the Open University to deliver the TeLT programme came to an end in September 2023. By this point,

- 28 Scottish 2023 students on the Beginners programme and 13 students on the Post Beginners programme had completed at least 4/5 application tasks and received a certificate of completion
- 20 Scottish 2023 students on the Beginners programme and 7 on the Post Beginners programme met the Masters level criteria for at least 4/5 Professional Recognition tasks with GTCS and received their certificates

- The SCILT team did everything possible to support a smooth transition for the pedagogy strand of the 23J presentation.

Next steps

In order to support recruitment for the TeLT programme, SCILT will share promotional information as provided by the Open University via its weekly e-bulletin.

Support for early career teachers

Prior to that start of 2023-24, SCILT PDOs accepted requests from local authority officers for newly qualified teachers in their induction year, and from TEI colleagues for student teachers. In August 2023, we launched a tailored menu of workshops for early career teachers in both primary and secondary as well as series of less formal, open access opportunities for students undertaking undergraduate or postgraduate primary and postgraduate secondary initial teacher education, probationer teachers and recently qualified teachers (within 4 years post-probation).

This has had a direct impact on the scope and number of engagements SCILT PDOs have had with early career teachers over the period.

Early career teachers	April 2022 - March 2023	April 2023 – March 2024
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stirling BEd Primary with Modern Languages, Year 3 students: 07/04/22 – strengthening literacy skills across languages; 30/03/23 – active assessment in primary languages • PGDE Secondary Modern Languages students at the University of Strathclyde 17/01/22 – Learning for Sustainability & DYW Clackmannanshire NQTs 04/05/22 – first steps in primary languages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 09/05/23 Dumfries & Galloway primary NQTs and RQTs: Cultural contexts – an engaging approach to primary language learning • 17/05/23 Clackmannanshire Council primary NQTs: First steps in primary languages • 02/11/23 Dundee City Council primary probationers: Introduction to multilingual approaches to primary pedagogy • 30/01/24 University of Strathclyde PGDE Secondary ML: Learning for Sustainability & DYW • 28/03/24 Stirling BEd Primary with Modern Languages, Year 3 students: Active (formative) assessment in primary languages

		<p>Open Access opportunities: Secondary ECT Language Cafés, monthly Sept 2023 – May 2024</p> <p>Primary ECT Languages Get Together and Languages Signpost Sessions, monthly Jan – May 2024</p> <p>Secondary ECT workshop, 27/02/24 - Preparing for application and interview for languages posts</p>
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To ensure these new opportunities reached gatekeepers, we drew up an ECT mailing list – all local authority probationer support officers, members of SCDE Languages Group and other ITE contacts.

Promotion of the primary themed signpost sessions by certain local authority officers to primary probationers was evident by attendance by several individuals from particular local authorities e.g. Moray and Fife. Across the primary signpost sessions, students from four different TEIs attended.

Registration for these was typically c.10 with a core group of c.5 attending multiple sessions. Varied themed sessions with invited guest speakers for most. Invited speakers were well received on the day and told us they enjoyed the experience – more conversational, less formalised than other workshops - too.

Although the regular language cafes for secondary ECTs were not well attended, the dedicated workshop ‘Preparing for application and interview for languages posts’ was well received by a small number of secondary probationer teachers.

Next steps

PD Team update ECT menu and open access offer for both sectors. Primary PDs to ensure guest speakers to take part in all open access signpost sessions for 2024-25

Promote ECT professional learning offer on SCILT comms and via SCILT professional networks and collated ECT supporter mailing list

PD and PS collaboration to update ECT support info shared on SCILT website and on Education Scotland’s Stepping Stones webpage (Connect with national organisations | Early career teachers | Self-directed professional learning | Professional Learning | Education Scotland)

Contact LA probationer support officers as gatekeepers to connect with probationer primary and secondary teachers who engage in probationer practitioner enquiry into an aspect of practice for possible future publication in SCILT newsletter or SLR or different promotion via SCILT comms.

Fulfil all ECT bookings received from local authorities and teacher education institutions.

For 2024-25 support for early career teachers becomes a maintenance work strand, it will be subsumed into general SCILT/CISS CLPL offer.

Scotland's Language Leadership Programme

Recall Day on 11 May 2023 marked the end of the 2022-23 cohort. Twenty-three participants awarded GTCS Professional Recognition. Four participants from 2022-23 transferred onto flexible route, aiming to finish by May 2024.

SLLP	2022-23	2023-24
Participant registration	54	52
Participant places accepted	34	32
Participant completion (GTCS Professional Recognition awarded)	23	20
Critical Friend recruitment	20	20
Critical Friend retention	16	18

For the 2023-24 cohort, the tweak to applicant criteria - from min 5 years post qualification to min 3 years teaching experience - was meant to encourage teachers slightly earlier in their career to join the programme. No discernible difference this year to number of applicants. Impact may come to fruition over the longer term. Over the year, participant drop out or switch onto the flexible route meant that some critical friends were left without a participant to support. Disappointing but underlined the need to do more to establish relationships between participant and critical friend earlier and in a lower stakes situation.

We welcomed four new critical friends, returning to the programme immediately they completed the course as participants. Critical friends benefited from two – rather than one - professional learning days in June. Worthwhile as it gave us time to explore example submissions and draft critical friend commentaries together. Mutual support for critical friend trios/quads, with two coordinating critical friends who support three of these groupings each. Very supportive.

A significant number of first journal submissions in June 2023 did not make specific reference to leadership of languages. Several submissions required additional words to upgrade from criteria partially met. The regular optional Touchpoint sessions and summaries shared with participants also provided worthwhile support.

This cohort's SLLP Choice offer included: drop-in offer from ES Languages Team; coaching and mentoring; curriculum review with ES; inclusive practice; planning for progression in language learning; leading CLIL. Complemented by another SLLP Choice Anytime padlet collecting relevant asynchronous professional learning opportunities.

The optional Touchpoint sessions for critical friends to check in online proved useful opportunities to iron out niggles and to share constructive suggestions for next iteration of the programme i.e. inclusion of meet & greet between participants and critical friends and input on critical writing.

The SLLP Alum Network launched 29/02/24, representatives from all iterations of the TTT/LLP over the last decade.

The programme received official endorsement from Education Scotland PLL Team in recognition of Mlevel professional learning informed by the national model of professional learning.

In advance of new cohort, updated Pre-programme Activities to ensure specific focus on leadership of languages education.

Next Steps

Facilitate and support SLLP 2024-25 participants, critical friends and presenters

Summer 2024 programme team to undertake collaborative self-evaluation of 2022-23 and SLLP Core 2023-24

Summer 2024 professional services colleagues to create SLLP webpage recognisable by search engines

Further develop the SLLP Alums Network – plan for 3 network meetings with speakers; opportunity to take part in new Cluster working PLP; SLLP Choice 2024-25 to be shared

Plan application process & core days timeline for 2025-26

Teachers of Italian in Scotland's Schools (TOISS)

Due to issues around staffing and timetabling, teachers of Italian in Scotland often feel isolated, and disconnected from fellow teachers of the language, with the result that provision of Italian has reduced across the country. This group aims to provide a forum for teachers to connect, network and share resources, with a view to facilitating the growth of Italian in schools throughout Scotland's local authority areas.

Through regular online meetings and newsletters, this project aims to

- ensure teachers of Italian across Scotland feel more connected to fellow practitioners, potentially through the creation of local clusters;
- provide opportunities for knowledge exchange and professional learning;
- provide a forum for the sharing of ideas and resources;
- assist in the growth of Italian in Scotland's schools;
- provide teachers and their learners with opportunities to take part in national competitions.

The initial response to the project has been extremely positive. Within three months of its launch, the group comprised 93 members. Good numbers of these have attended the first three online meetings, while the inaugural poster competition (*Cosa significa l'Italia per me/noi*) attracted over 60 entries from pupils in four age groups. Some teachers in the group, meanwhile, have been recruited for the design and implementation of the British Academy funded project *Calciamo* (see separate entry in annual report).

Next Steps

Further efforts will be made to publicise the group and to increase its membership. Meetings and newsletters will continue to promote national competitions and projects, while opportunities for Italian-specific professional learning will be made available to members. Meanwhile, conversations and consultations will take place on tangible ways in which the group can help to bring about increased levels of provision of Italian in Scotland's schools.

Employability

Promotion of Employability

This year SCILT has continued to provide and develop a model of support for languages within a DYW and Employability context. This offers support in professional learning, opportunities that encourage the integration of Employability within languages, and resources for teachers and learners. Some of these are:

- Incorporating DYW and Employability into the Professional Learning offer in Primary and Secondary sectors. These workshops look at the place of languages in a DYW context, consider examples of DYW projects and activities and allow an opportunity to discuss how these could be applied in participants' own contexts. Over the course of the year, it has been delivered in both Primary and Secondary sectors and at Local Authority and RIC level.
- Offering regular sessions through e-Sgoil's [DYW Live](#) initiative. Secondary sessions, the interactive **Languages and Your Career** series, were offered 5 times on a live, monthly basis between September and January, followed by two new workshops in the summer term. The first of these was aimed at BGE learners and focused on the transferrable skills that come with language learning. The second was aimed at Senior Phase learners at the start of their new language courses and looked at tips for learning and for future career opportunities.
- In the course of the session there were also 3 new interactive sessions for primary learners in P4-7 which encouraged pupils to consider how their talents and interests can be enhanced by language skills and intercultural understanding now and in the future.
- Both primary and secondary teams offered DYW Live CLPL sessions for teachers on integrating careers education and languages during Languages Week Scotland 2024.
- All of the DYW Live sessions have continued to be very well-attended from schools across the country. Feedback has also been excellent and has informed continuing development of the courses.
- Encouraging participation in the **Scottish Languages Employability Award** as a means of promoting and developing local and sustainable business/languages partnerships. (see separate section below)
- Developing the **Scottish Languages Employability Award – Local** to encourage partnerships between cluster/RIC groups and business partners.
- Updating and promoting the SCILT online DYW/Generation Global toolkits

Next steps

Continue development and promotion of the SCILT and Erasmus+ toolkits and the employability section of the website in order to provide as much support, advice and exemplification as possible.

Continue to provide opportunities to share employability ideas and projects through CLPL workshops/webinars/online means.

Develop and deliver further DYW Live sessions in conjunction with e-Sgoil

Scottish Languages Employability Award

The Scottish Languages Employability Award (SLEA) is now in its fifth year of full operation, helping schools and businesses to build partnerships through languages to develop young people's learning about the world of work and the value of language skills.

Last year, we reviewed and revised the SLEA programme to clarify the processes and developed a handbook to guide schools together with a streamlined submission form. This has been well received and has led to an increase in submissions.

In session 2023-24, the following awards were given: 9 Gold, 2 Silver and 7 Bronze. Some of these schools were submitting for the first time; others had previously submitted and were upgrading their award. All of the submissions evidenced innovative, engaging and exemplary projects which integrated language learning and employability.

The first **SLEA – Local Award** was presented this year to a cluster of schools working with Ayrshire Chamber of Commerce and the Franco-British Chamber of Commerce in Paris. Details of this project, together with full information about this award, is on the [SLEA Local](#) page of the SCILT website.

In April, tying in with Earth Day, the newest SLEA award was launched, the **SLEA – Green**. This award is designed to encourage and recognise initiatives in which languages, global citizenship and intercultural competencies are fostered to prepare local learners for their role as part of a global workforce.

Case studies of all submissions are published in the [Employability section](#) of the SCILT website along with the handbook, documentation and advice for teachers who are interested in submitting for any of the different branches of the award.

The next date for submission and verification is in November.

Next steps

Continue to promote all branches of the award

Encourage pilots of the **SLEA – Green**.

Support schools in how to go about developing business partnerships.

Look at other possible award developments such as multilingualism.

Support for school – university liaison

To enhance the visibility of these projects and underline their interconnectedness, a [SCILT School-University liaison webpage](#) was launched at the start of session 2023-24.

Moving Forward with Languages – Senior Phase/University workshops

The 2023-24 series of “Moving Forward with Languages” was advertised via the SCILT weekly ebulletin from August 2023. In response to feedback from the 2022-23 series of workshops, the 2023-24 series were scheduled to take place midweek on Wednesdays at alternating times during the school day or as twilight sessions. Workshops covered the full range of skills included in the Higher and Advanced Higher language courses. Tips for current national qualification courses were combined with an insight into how languages are studied at university level, with the intention of providing attendees with practical information for immediate use as well as raising aspirations and dispelling doubts about studying languages in higher education.

Feedback from workshop attendees was positive and a number of people attended several workshops. Shortening the duration of the workshop from 2 hours to 1 hour, and adapting the timing from Saturdays to Wednesdays, had a positive impact on attendance figures, with the 2-3pm timeslot attracting more attendees than the 4.30-5.30pm timeslot. For comparison, there were 116 attendees in total across the 2022-23 workshop series, compared with approximately 332 attendees in 2023-24.

Continued collaboration with university colleagues has resulted in closer partnership across a number of projects, including Scotland’s Languages Explorers Programme and the Language Ambassadors’ Programme.

Next steps

Planning for 2024-25 began in January and 3 additional university partners (University of St Andrew’s, Heriot-Watt University and the Open University) signaled their interest in delivering workshops to senior phase pupils alongside the 6 existing partners (Universities of Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Stirling and Strathclyde).

This has led us to reshape the workshop framework in order to offer these within two conference days for senior pupils and their teachers. The first conference date is scheduled for 11th September 2024 and will be hosted by the University of Strathclyde. The second conference date will take place online on 11th December 2024.

It is hoped that these conference dates will raise the profile of language learning in the senior phase and create a closer sense of community between senior phase language learners, their teachers and the university partners.

Language Explorers Scotland (formerly Scotland's Languages Explorers Programme)

Following consultation with UCFLS, 8 partner universities signed up to be part of the Year 2 national pilot of Scotland's Languages Explorers Programme in 2023-24: these were the universities of Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Stirling, Strathclyde, Heriot-Watt University and the Open University. Partners from these institutions met monthly as a steering group for the Year 2 national rollout.

SCILT created a [webpage](#) of information for interested schools and mentors, and the SLEP 2023-24 was advertised to schools in SCILT's ebulletin at the start of the new term. Schools were asked to apply by 11th September and mentor recruitment started when students returned to university in mid-September.

SCILT staff prepared a comprehensive suite of training materials to support delivery of three training sessions for mentors. Similarly, SCILT provided support materials for mentors to underpin the delivery of their mentoring sessions with S2 and S3 language learners.

Plans to run a "meet the mentor" event at the participating universities were adapted due to the [wide geographic distribution](#) of both schools and mentors. This was run, instead, as an online "meet the mentor" session. Mentor interventions took place as six weekly sessions with small, discreet groups of up to 10 mentees until the end of February.

When the programme launched in October 2023, 24 schools across Scotland representing a wide range of geographic and socio-economic contexts had applied to take part during the first year of the national rollout.

Due to a lack of applications from a few universities, and a large mentor attrition rate across the piece, numbers of participating universities and schools dropped in the course of 2023-24:

	Schools	Mentors
Applications received by October 2023	24 schools (15 LAs)	28 applications from 6 universities
Start of mentoring sessions in November 2023	19 schools (15 LAs)	
Completed the full programme by end February 2024	14 schools (10 LAs)	11 mentors from 5 universities

There were several mentor withdrawals throughout the training phase due to a range of reasons and some attrition was anticipated. The initial training dates that were published had to be rescheduled due to the impact of Storm Babet, which coincided with the in-person training day on 21st October. This was rescheduled to 4th November instead. The in-person training day was very successful and helped to establish good communication between SCILT and the mentors. 24 schools had applied, and withdrawals were mainly due to changes in staffing circumstances and time constraints.

Evaluation and evidence-gathering of this first national year provided rich feedback to inform preparations for this programme for session 2024-25. Feedback from participants indicated that the target group of learners in S2/S3 had a positive mentoring experience overall, which is testament to the commitment of individual mentors.

Feedback from school mentees:

"It helped me decide and know the benefits of choosing a language."

"It has made me think about taking languages."

"It teaches you about the perspective of a university student."

"it is inspiring."

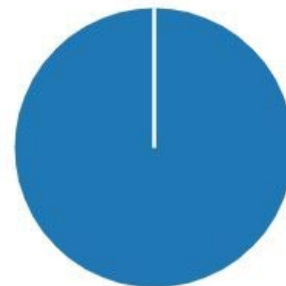
Feedback from teachers:

Would you recommend colleagues in other schools to participate in the mentoring programme?

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)

● Yes	10
● No	0



Feedback from mentors:

"I improved my self-confidence."

"I enjoyed taking the sessions online, and have realised that, if possible, I would like to have a job that allows me to continue promoting languages."

"I always thought I was too shy a person to pursue my childhood dream of being a teacher, but since enrolling in this programme I have learned that it is now a very real possibility for me."

"It is an amazing opportunity to understand why or why not students take languages, and it is a unique opportunity to be able to do so. "

"It's a good experience. It's not too stressful to do alongside studies as it's only short sessions every week or so and you get to work with students to help them to see all the benefits of language learning."

Next Steps

Longer lead-in time (post Easter promotion, applications open in September for schools, and in October for student mentors following compulsory attendance at an initial information session on 2nd October 2024)

Adapting application questions for both schools and mentors to include an indication of desired mentor session timings

Plan for large mentor attrition rate (50% drop-out minimum) and delay pairing schools with mentors

until 3 compulsory training sessions have been completed at the start of November 2024

Firmer exit outcomes for pupil mentees to be shared from the start with the view to creating a nationwide Honour Roll of mentee reflections. This is intended to raise the profile of the programme and create a sense of community amongst language learners in Scotland

Scope and develop accreditation opportunities for student mentors, beginning with students from the University of Strathclyde to set a proposed template

Request buy-in from UCFL Scotland universities to assist with additional running costs (e.g. travel and events)

Language Ambassadors Online

In session 2023-24, the previous Language Ambassador Programme relaunched as Language Ambassadors Online, a fully online, bookable series of monthly workshops featuring students from universities across Scotland. The aim of these sessions is that, by sharing their experiences, together with their advice on studying languages, these students will inspire the learners who attend to develop their own language learning experiences.

Six sessions were held between September and March, rotating around different days and times in order to allow as many classes as possible to attend.

There are 4-6 ambassadors in each session; these are students of languages (as a main subject, joint subject or elective) from universities across Scotland. In session 2023-24, 40 ambassadors signed up from 6 different universities (Aberdeen, Dundee, Heriot-Watt, St. Andrews, Stirling & Strathclyde).

Sessions are interactive, featuring quizzes, tips and advice as well as input from all of the ambassadors. Each student speaks for 5-10 minutes using two slides each – one of information/advice about their languages experience and one of pictures of times spent abroad. Ambassadors are supported with training and help with planning and delivery before, during and after each session.

Across the six sessions, schools from 23 out of Scotland's 32 local authorities attended. Almost 3000 learners were registered for the sessions.

Individual universities continue to offer, where appropriate, in-person language ambassador visits to schools in their local area. University contacts for this are published on the [Language Ambassador page of the SCILT website](#).

Next steps

Continue to offer online monthly sessions, possibly increasing the frequency in order to allow all ambassadors more opportunities to participate.

Explore the possibility of creating videos of sessions that could be shared for asynchronous use.

Put in place digital certification for students who participate in the programme.

Support for bi-lingual learners and heritage languages

To expand the reach of the Branching out with Languages workshop series delivered by SCILT and Bilingualism Matters (BM), fruitful discussions about planning for cross-border collaboration in 2023-24 were held with the Association for Language Learning (ALL). Having the opportunity to advertise workshops on both the ALL and BM websites meant that SCILT was able to reach a wider audience and thereby create more opportunities for networking and sharing practice.

Dates were identified to run three “Branching out with languages” workshops in Spring 2024, building on the success of last year’s series. SCILT delivered two workshops, with Bilingualism Matters running one, as was the basis for our collaboration in 2022-23. A promotional flyer was created and shared through the SCILT/BM networks, through contacts within the Chinese complementary school network, with the Polish Saturday school network and with SCILT’s team of Arabic teachers. This was also shared on the ALL and BM platforms.

Attendance figures:

Workshop 1 – Bilingualism: The Bigger Picture 31/1/24 (run by BM) - 53 registered

Workshop 2 – The Languages Buzz 29/4/24 (run by SCILT): 42 registered

Workshop 3 – The supportive classroom 20/3/24 (run by SCILT): 31 registered

Attendance at these sessions has increased compared to 2022-23. This is partly thanks to the success of the 2022-23 sessions, and partly due to mutually supportive collaboration established with ALL.

Next steps

A date has been set to shape SCILT’s approach to raising the profile of home, heritage and community languages in 2024-25, based on evaluative feedback and attendance numbers from the 2023-24 workshop series.

Consideration will be given to how we can further augment the work of complementary schools and celebrate and share the benefits of multilingualism, perhaps by focussing more on large heritage language communities initially (e.g. Arabic, Polish, Mandarin, German, Italian) which would articulate with existing and emerging professional communities (Arabic Teaching Council for Scotland, Teachers of Italian in Scotland network, Teachers of German in Scotland network).

Ukrainian Response

The number of Ukrainian adults attending free EAL classes staffed by volunteers remained steady from April 2023 until the summer break in June, when numbers dropped slightly due to some families being relocated or people being accepted onto more formal courses that run at the same time as the EAL classes. After this point, attendance numbers at classes never quite returned to what they had been at the start of the war in Ukraine.

Home Office drop-in sessions were well-attended and provided a conduit for Ukrainian people to seek practical advice. Over time, these also saw a decline.

Liaison with the Glasgow Ukrainian Community Integration Network through their monthly meetings was very useful as a channel to provide attendees at EAL classes with up-to-date information about

learning and employability opportunities in the local area. This forum also provided another way to advertise our free weekly classes to people in the community who may benefit from them.

Throughout, cohorts of TESOL McS students from the University of Strathclyde volunteered during EAL lessons. Participation in these classes supported the students with their micro-teaching module on trauma-informed pedagogy, which is taught by Tomasz John and Joanna McPake in the Institute of Education.

Next steps

By March 2024, it was clear that the EAL classes and Home Office sessions had served their purpose, and plans were made to discontinue both. The experience of offering support to such a large influx of conflict refugees has been extremely rewarding and the closure of these activities is seen as a positive step and new Scots come to terms with their new lives in their new land.

Voices of Hope (part of Refugee Week Scotland June 2023)

Due to the high number of moving entries received from Ukrainian young people for the 2022-23 Mother Tongue, Other Tongue poetry competition, SCILT bid for a small amount of funding from Refugee Festival Scotland to develop an online exhibition and launch event to showcase this work. This was very well attended and proved to be a popular event, run in a hybrid format, and attended by over 50 attendees. 22 poems were uploaded to the SCILT website and can be viewed here: [Voices of Hope](#).

Learning Partnerships

Multilingual Approaches

This session has seen continued collaboration with colleagues from the University of Glasgow to support SCILT's work on multilingual approaches to language learning using art-based methodologies. To continue and develop our work in this area, we submitted a bid to the AHRC in December 2023 with the outcome due in Autumn 2024. As part of the grant conditions for the GKEF award, the Multilingualism through Art (MtA) team created and published the MtA activity pack for teachers that provides a range of activities to support language learning with art. This resource both digital and printed was published in December 2023. During Languages Week Scotland 2024, the resource was widely promoted and yielded the following quantitative data:

MtA Activity Pack – post Languages Week Scotland 24 promotion on X. Statistics from Jan – March 2024
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<p>2.9 views of the post 16 retweets 26 likes 4 bookmarks 27 URL clicks 44 requests from for printed MtA pack 1258 downloads of digital MtA resource from WordPress site</p>
--

Teachers who received the activity pack felt confident to try out some of the activities with their learners. In addition to creating the resource, the MtA team engaged in various dissemination events including presenting at 5 x conferences (national and international) and 2 x public engagement events.

Multilingualism and supporting bi/multilingual learners have been prevalent themes across all primary professional learning. Encouraging teachers to think about each child having their own individual repertoire and exploring ways in which to support them has been a specific focus. To further support this, a tailored PL workshop was created for the primary Open Access series. 15 practitioners attended this event and from the evaluations gathered, many felt the session was useful, supportive and relevant.

Next steps

Continue to integrate multilingualism across SCILT's (primary) professional learning offer.

Continue to motivate and encourage educators to recognise that each learner has their own individual repertoire and help them explore pedagogical approaches to support this.

Await the outcome of the AHRC bid and plan accordingly.

Investigate further opportunities to disseminate MtA project.

Continue to promote the MtA activity pack, encouraging teachers to share feedback having tried the activities with learners.

Quality improvement

Digital strategy to support SCILT/CISS practice

In the summer of 2023, bespoke AV video conferencing equipment was installed at the Ramshorn. This equipment had been purchased before the pandemic, but in 2022, the suppliers informed us that an upgrade would be necessary for the system to function, requiring additional costs.

Due to budget constraints, the Business and Finance Manager collaborated with the University AV team and suppliers to find a cost-effective solution, ensuring there were no extra expenses for the centre. Non-essential equipment was sold at cost to other university departments, with the proceeds used to cover the upgrade and installation fees.

This investment has significantly enhanced our technical capabilities, resulting in substantial savings in staff time and travel. Furthermore, it has strengthened our digital presence and ensured equitable access to our services, particularly for teachers living and working in remote and rural areas.

Priority 2: Promotion and partnerships

Professional partnerships

Languages Network Scotland (LANGS) partnership

Languages Network Group Scotland (LANGS) meets three times a year to facilitate communication between language stakeholders in Scotland. Meetings include key updates from Scottish Government, Education Scotland and SCILT/CISS, as well as information from cultural organisations and opportunities for members to network and share ideas.

SCILT facilitates and is a key player in the organisation of the group – in consultation with the Chair of LANGS and a focus group which helps to decide on the direction of travel – and is responsible for maintaining and updating the LANGS database and for dissemination of information to LANGS members.

During the past review meeting there was a hybrid meeting in June 2023 and two online meetings in November 2023 and March 2024. Due to budgetary constraints, the decision was made to run two online and one in-person meetings over future sessions.

The Chair and Vice-Chair of LANGS will be stepping down in June 2024, and SCILT is facilitating the election process and enrolling of new Chairs.

The LANGS webpage continues to be updated with materials after each meeting, and the LANGS Team allows for opportunities to be shared in between meetings.

This local authority networking sessions, which takes place as an online twilight session separate from the main meeting, have continued over the past review period. These allow teachers who are class committed to contribute to LANGS discussions and network with colleagues if they are unable to attend the main meetings.

Sources of evidence

- LANGS group membership: changed slightly from 127 representing 32 authorities in June 2023, to 130 representing 31 authorities in March 2024.
- LANGS meetings: attendance has remained largely consistent, with a small drop-off for the March 2024 meeting:
 - June 2023: 49 people representing 21 authorities.
 - November 2023: 55 people representing 21 authorities.
 - March 2024: 41 attendees representing 16 authorities.

Next steps

New Chairs will take up their posts following the June 2024 meeting.

Dates for 2024-25 meetings to be decided.

There may be changes to the focus group, wider group membership and meeting structure depending on how the new Chairs decide to take the group forward.

International partnerships

Partnership with Qatar Foundational International

SCILT's partnership with QFI continued into Year 4 of the Discovering the World of Arabic course in 2023-24.

The established team of Arabic teachers engaged enthusiastically with regular departmental meetings, quality assurance processes and opportunities for professional learning. Two of our Arabic teachers co-delivered workshops in national for a (the SALT conference and SCILT's Branching out with Languages workshop series).

Children and young people reported progress and demonstrate positive achievement. A visit to Meldrum Academy (Aberdeenshire) in February 2024 allowed for further scoping of the Arabic BGE short course in this context and comments from teachers and pupils were overwhelmingly positive. The number of schools who have signed up to this initiative bears this out.

The expansion of courses to include BGE and SP short, 8-week courses as well as longer, 24-week courses, has proved successful and has afforded many more pupils the opportunity to learn about Arabic language and cultures. Being able to offer bespoke classes has also contributed to the growing participant numbers.

Throughout this academic session, 11 primary schools from 6 local authorities (around 267 learners) and 6 secondary schools from 4 local authorities (around 103 learners) participated in weekly live Arabic sessions.

Next steps

Promotion for 2024-25 has begun and registrations for primary and secondary Arabic courses are due to close at the end of April 2024.

In addition to our core business delivering Arabic language and cultural learning as an L3 offer, we have expanded our work with QFI to include some ambitious new projects which will pilot in 2024-25:

- Establishment of Scotland's first Arabic Teacher Council
- Mobility experience between Scottish schools and partner school in Doha
- Inaugural summer camp for learners of Arabic in Scotland's school

GETs – partnership with University of Mainz

In the annual report for 2022-23 we stated that the organisers at Get Across Borders were investigating alternative funding streams, as the Erasmus+ funding originally used is no longer available to them. This was not secured for session 2023/24 and as such the programme did not go ahead. As of now, Get Across Border have not confirmed that funding is available for the 2024/25 session.

The GETs programme has been removed from the SCILT strategic plan for 2024-25, however we are open to discussion with partners in future should funding for this programme be secured.

British Sign Language (BSL)

Support for BSL

Due to a lack of capacity, Garvel Deaf Centre withdrew from the partnership with SCILT to deliver online BSL lessons for primary learners. A new BSL tutor and interpreter were recruited enabling lessons to continue during session 23/34. Demand for BSL as an L3 offer was high with 30 schools from 12 local authorities registering for a limited number of places. Four schools from 4 local authorities took part in the block of online learning. From the evaluations gathered, teachers and learners responded positively having engaged with the BSL classes. They felt privileged to have been afforded the opportunity to learn about deaf culture and how to communicate using BSL, especially from a Deaf tutor. They valued the experience greatly and viewed the ability to communicate in BSL as an important life skill for today's society.

SCILT, Education Scotland and the British Deaf Association (BDA) completed a case study that provides an insight into the experiences and challenges of Deaf young people in Scotland attending secondary school, college, or university. The case study focuses on what supported the Deaf young people to effectively engage and achieve in an educational setting. At present the supporting videos are going through the editing process with the case study due for publication in June 2024.

In SCILT's continued support for BSL, the SCILT website now features the link to Education Scotland's newly updated BSL Toolkit for Practitioners. This link has been placed within relevant sections of the website to increase visibility and support for practitioners.

Next steps

Continue to promote BSL as a viable L3 learning opportunity

Continue to offer online BSL classes for primary learners, increasing numbers if funding permits

Promote the SCILT/ES/BDA case study widely

Continue to promote where applicable the updated BSL Toolkit for Practitioners

Co-author and promote article for The British Association of Deaf Teachers magazine

Promotional events/campaigns

Support for national competitions

Jacqueline Munro-Lafon essay prize

SCILT reluctantly had to step back from administering the Jacqueline Munro-Lafon French essay competition in 2023-24 due to funding cuts. However, we continued to support the Franco-Scottish Society of Scotland in an advisory capacity throughout the fourth year of this project. The Alliance Française in Glasgow generously stepped in to administer the competition.

Past essay questions and competition judging criteria, which adhere to the marking criteria for the Advanced Higher French writing exam, had previously been made available on the SCILT [webpage](#). These proved useful in supporting participating schools whose learners submitted essays this year.

In total, 7 essay submissions were received from AH French candidates across Scotland.

The competition winner and two runners-up will be celebrated in an article to be written and published by the Franco-Scottish Society of Scotland. This will be added to SCILT's competition webpage in due course.

Languages Week Scotland

Languages Week Scotland ran from 29 Jan – 2 Feb 2023/4. The theme was “Languages for a sustainable world”.

The dates for LWS24 were announced on 6 October through the SCILT ebulletin, SCILT social media and the @LangsWeekScot Twitter. In the middle of November, SCILT contacted partners by email with full details of the week and an invitation to get involved. This invitation included a list of ideas for how to celebrate LWS24, hosted on the SCILT website, a tweet to share and an invitation to tell us how they will celebrate through a Qualtrix survey.

We followed this by sharing a series of tweets highlighting the theme of languages and sustainability, to include a quote from a report on the value of languages. These were shared, twice a week, throughout December.

In December we uploaded ideas for how schools could celebrate LWS24 onto the SCILT website. We promoted this page through a series of posts during the first week of January.

In December, SCILT employed two interns to work on creating content and a schedule to promote and celebrate SCILT's own projects during LWS24.

We published the 5 Challenges for LWS24 at the beginning of January and promoted them through the bulletin and social media. This was to give schools the opportunity to prepare for joining in with the Challenges during LWS.

We received a video from Jenny Gilruth MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills. We uploaded this onto our website and shared it on social media to open LWS, on Monday 29 Jan 2024. The Week was covered in the Glasgow Times ([Glasgow Gaelic School students celebrate Languages Week](#)), the Daily Record ([Successful singer visits Fernhill School to inspire youngsters about learning languages](#)) and the Helensburgh Advertiser ([Hermitage Primary pupils take part in Language Week Scotland](#)).

This year, we saw schools across the country celebrate, with particularly strong engagement with the week on Twitter from East Renfrewshire, Glasgow and Falkirk. We saw a variety of activities shared on Twitter including those around the theme of sustainability as well as general celebrations of languages. Recurring activities included pupils and parents leading learning, external visitors to promote languages as a skill for work.

A wide range of partners joined in the celebrations, including SQA, Scottish Book Trust, Stride, SEET, IfE, S Lan libraries, N Lan libraries, Gaelic4Parents, Bòrd na Gàidhlig, BC Scotland, Scottish Parliament, Bookbug

From 8-12 Jan we issued a series of posts from @LangsWeekScot to encourage schools to get involved in the week. This year there was an increase of 77% in visitors to the pages hosting these

activities compared to last year.

The LWS section of the SCILT website accounted for 32% of the overall page views to the SCILT website in January and 10% in February. Visits to the LWS section of the website for 2024 totaled 5196, an increase of 13% from 2023.

At the start of LWS22, we uploaded a video from Jenny Gilruth MSP, opening the week. On our @LangsWeekScot account, the video had 1K views, 18 retweets, 18 likes. Over the course of the week, interest in these Challenges grew, with Monday's challenge gaining 471 impressions, Wednesday's challenge gaining 1048 impressions and Thursday's challenge gaining 705 impressions. Schools shared the work they had produced as a result of these challenges, and the pages hosting the full challenge on the SCILT website received over 1.4K visits in January and February.

Next steps

The dates for LWS25 are 3 - 7 Feb and the theme is "Our multilingual futures". For 2024 we will be working with a steering group in an attempt to engage more local authorities and partners from wider society.

Priority 3: Research and knowledge exchange

National and international knowledge exchange events

Participation in, and attendance at, national and international conferences

SCILT and CISS colleagues have presented at or facilitated sessions at numerous conferences and knowledge exchange events since April 2023, including:

- Bilingualism Matters Research Symposium
- Explorathon Extravaganza The Riverside
- International Professional Development Association (IPDA) Annual Conference – Developing professional learning through collaboration and learning from other professions
- NLTL Conference 2023 and ANPE Norge's IX Conference 2023
- QFI International Symposium: Arabic Teaching, the realities of policy and practice
- SALT Conference 2023
- Scottish Educational Research Association (SERA) Annual Conference – Meeting global and local challenges through interdisciplinary partnerships and collaborations in education

SCILT and CISS colleagues have also attended conferences and other knowledge exchange events, a selection of these include:

- 9th SCEN Youth Summit: 'Mandarin Stories' & Scottish schools Mandaring reading competition
- Scottish Learning Festival Conversations
- Scottish Professional Learning Network
- Teaching Peace – How can educators respond to events in Palestine & Israel

Engagement with research publications and collaboration with research projects

Scottish Languages Review

The *Scottish Languages Review* (SLR) is an open-access online journal, with up to two editions per year. The SLR aims to

- provide language teachers, students, and researchers in Scotland with a strong voice in relation to all aspects of language teaching and learning.
- promote discussion amongst language practitioners across all education sectors about mutual areas of interest or concern.
- encourage greater debate between language learning theory and practice

The digest section contains information on recent language-related publications and provides links to articles from other academic journals that are free to download without subscription. There is also a summary of important upcoming language-related events and conferences.

The new editorial structure outlined in last year's report, comprising a team of four instead of a single editor, has provided new impetus and increased momentum. The wider range of categories available to potential authors, also reported last year, ensured publication of issue 37 in the spring of 2024, and has seen, between April and August, expressions of interest (via a newly created bespoke form accessible via the journal's homepage) from six potential contributors to issue 38. In addition, a flyer and a slide have been created for SCILT staff to include in both internal and external presentations, while the British Association of Applied Linguistics (BAAL) has agreed to help publicise the SLR in a forthcoming newsletter.

The SLR webpage attracted 1944 hits during 2023-24, an increase of 17% on the previous year. A notable 47% of readers accessed the site from outside the UK, demonstrating the publication's international reach.

Next steps

With such healthy numbers of potential contributors having already expressed an interest in having their work included in issue 38, it is anticipated that this will be published in late 2024 or in early 2025. SCILT staff will continue to advertise the SLR at events and conferences, while the editorial team will continue to look for partners willing to help publicise the SLR as an accessible forum on which practitioners in Scotland and beyond may wish to disseminate their work. To enhance the international profile, partner associations from the INNLAC network will receive targeted approaches.

Collaborative Doctoral Award studentship (PhD)

During session 2022-23, SCILT, together with colleagues in the University of Stirling (as project lead) and the University of Glasgow, submitted a proposal to the Arts & Humanities Research Council – Scottish Graduate School for Arts & Humanities for funding to support an AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Studentship (PhD). This proposal was accepted in May 2023 and funding was given for a 3.5-year project to undertake 'An evaluation of the Scottish Government's 1+2 language policy and its relation to uptake of French, Spanish and German in national school exams'.

In June 2023, the successful candidate was appointed, and David Vescio took up post on 1st January 2024.

SCILT is the Partner Organisation within this studentship, which means that David will spend 6-18 months of his studentship undertaking work within SCILT that will contribute to his overall research.

Much of this time is currently focused on the development of an interdisciplinary project featuring PE and languages (French and Italian specifically) through which he will examine the effect of such a project on the gender gap that exists in uptake of languages. This project, called Francofoot & Calcio and inspired by the previous SCILT project of Le Foot et la Francophonie, is funded by the British Academy Talent Development Award scheme. Preparation for this project began in March, followed by two days of development work with a team of teachers from pilot schools in May, and the finalisation of teaching and research materials thereafter.

Since January David has also begun the work of his PhD, with a team of supervisors from all partners, completing the literature review, working on methodology and beginning research.

This studentship, and the activities that it includes, will inform learning, teaching and leadership of languages and, hopefully, contribute significantly to the debate around future-proofing languages in our schools.

Next steps

Research and teaching begin for Francofoot & Calciamo

Evaluation of the wider 1+2 policy and its impact on uptake begins.

Outward facing communication

Website review

Maintaining an easy to navigate, relevant and attractive website is crucial to SCILT engaging with its stakeholders. During the period April 2023 to March 2024, the SCILT website saw 50,700 visitors and 123,299 viewed.

SCILT has 1.4K subscribers to our weekly news bulletin mailing. This, together with our presence on social media, accounts for 80% of referred visitors to our site.

Visits to the News pages and Events pages have increased by 14% and 11% respectively. We saw an increase in the number of SCILT items to be promoted in the bulletin and social media, which may account for this increase.

Visits to Languages Week Scotland pages have increased by 5%, and this is good to see as engagement with the Week on social media decreased. The increase in website engagement suggests that schools continued to engage with the week, even if this wasn't evident on social media.

Our page to support schools in welcoming Ukrainian families continued to see a sustained number of visits this year (1797 visits) and is the 11th most visited page.

There has been an increase of 17% in the number of visits to the SLR, and the page returned to the top 10 this year. This reflects the fact that a new issue was published in May, and we are pleased that publicity around the publication on social media and in the bulletin has had such a positive impact.

The employment section of the website continues to be the most popular. Job Profiles account for 47% of visits and the SLEA and associated Case Studies account for 22%.

Visits to the Professional Learning section of the website remained steady. These pages host information on the range of PL opportunities SCILT provides, including PL workshops for local authorities, PLPs, the OU TELT course and the LLP. In addition, this year we uploaded information on the monthly secondary and primary series, which ensured visits to the PL pages remained steady throughout the year.

There has been an increase in the number of visitors to the Beyond School pages of the website (67%). This is because information about the popular school-university liaison programme is now

hosted on these pages, and interest in these programmes has increased. These programmes are Language Explorers Scotland, Language Ambassador Programme, Moving forward with languages.

Next steps

SCILT continues to monitor engagement and continues an annual review cycle to ensure content remains relevant. SCILT continues to promote specific website content through its social media channels and weekly news bulletin to ensure that its audience can access the most relevant pages of the website easily.

Communication strategy

E-bulletin

The bulletin aims to provide subscribers with a weekly selection of items happening in the languages community in Scotland, the UK and beyond. It is our primary means of promoting SCILT news and events and is an important and effective means of communication with practitioners.

Several teachers who wrote to me after seeing the last summer Scilt newsletter have submitted their application form and a few are in the process of doing so. Thank you for advertising the course. (Joan-Emilie Lefever-Rhodes, University of Strathclyde re CCEd in French).

Over the period August 2023 to June 2024 there is an 8.2% increase in subscribers. Subscriber numbers in March 2023 stands at 1461.

We are delighted that the most popular section of the bulletin is SCILT/CISS news as we use the bulletin as our primary way of communicating our news to the languages community. However, all the sections of the bulletin see a similarly high level of engagement.

The most popular links from SCILT are initiatives to support language teaching and learning in the classroom, including promoting uptake and exam preparation, closely followed by professional learning opportunities for language teachers, including new initiatives for student and early career teachers. Our Christmas, Language Week Scotland and EDL pages continue to be popular, with DYW sessions for primary and secondary learners highlighting future benefits of language learning also receiving high engagement this year.

Next steps

As the number of SCILT opportunities increases, we will look at ways to ensure that the layout of the bulletin is clear and that these opportunities are easy to find.

We will place a limit on the number of times an item can be advertised in the bulletin, with the hope that the layout will be clearer and news items easier to see.

Communicating with wider society

As part of the communications strategy, we have continued to build on the success of our targeted social media approach. We have seen an increase in followers on X of (3%) and of likes on Facebook (7%) and on Instagram (18%). (X – 5815 followers; Facebook – 1747 followers; Instagram - 375). SCILT's combined presence on X and Facebook account for a significant number of external site referrals to our website (see above).

On X, we post daily to promote SCILT news, opportunities and resources. On Facebook, we share a mixture of SCILT opportunities, resources or opportunities from our partners and motivational quotes and fun language facts. On the Instagram feed we share inspiring quotes, fun language trivia and facts and relevant SCILT opportunities. We use the Instagram Stories feature to promote specific SCILT resources/opportunities and to share news from our partners.

Facebook was the highest source driving traffic to our website. 46% of visitors to our website came from Facebook, and we saw good engagement in particular with posts promoting SCILT news and opportunities. Engagement with X has dropped since last year.

Next steps

We will consolidate our presence on Facebook and Instagram and explore using other platforms to share SCILT news and resources, such as LinkedIn, Threads and Bluesky.

Newsletter

The SCILT newsletter is published twice yearly. The newsletter features articles about the work of SCILT and includes articles submitted from cultural organisations, local authorities and schools that showcase interesting approaches to language learning and teaching.

The SCILT newsletter was published in December 2023 and June 2024 on the SCILT website. The page on the SCILT website hosting the latest two editions saw a total of 222 visitors to the page which hosts it over the period August 2023 – July 2024. This is a significant decrease in visitors of 40% compared with the same period last year. Due to staff shortages in the PS team, we were unable to run our usual promotional campaign for the December newsletter, which may account for some of this.

Next steps

We will continue to investigate ways to promote the newsletter to ensure that it is widely read and that we are receiving contributions from a wide range of schools and other partners.

Digital interns

SCILT/CISS recruited seven S6 students to participate in the 2023-24 digital internship programme. The aim of the programme is for S6 students to promote languages and language learning to their peers (15 to 18-year-olds) through social media. The interns receive initial training from the SCILT/CISS team as well as ongoing support/mentoring throughout the project. This is supplemented with an additional training session in January where the digital interns hear from a range of external speakers.

This year, the team of digital interns chose to use Instagram and TikTok and posted regularly from August onwards. Posts included cultural and language content, and aimed to engage learners across a range of languages and stages. The SCILT/CISS teams are pleased with the quality of their content as well as the size of audience the interns have managed to build and engage with. Best performing post has 527.8K views and 46.8K likes with 2030 comments on TikTok.

Next steps

We have recruited six interns for 2024-25 and will continue to make use of the strengths of online and in-person meetings to create a hybrid programme of training and support for the coming year.

Ramshorn communication strategy

The year has seen an increase in the use of the Ramshorn as an events space. We welcomed events from partners at the University of Strathclyde and we are pleased to have increased the number of external bookings from outside the university community. This is elevating the profile of the Ramshorn, alongside the Ramshorn website, making the building an asset that is now helping to generate revenue for SCILT activities

Confucius Institute for Scotland's Schools

Priority 1: Supporting the learning experience for practitioners and learners

CLPL: learning and experiences 3-18

Support for GTCS registered teachers of Mandarin

We continue to maintain and support a network of local Mandarin teachers. This support is given directly or indirectly depending upon their needs. We offer professional learning events for all GTCS Mandarin teachers and student teachers in Scotland. In the financial year 2023-24, we delivered three

professional learning and support sessions as per the objectives in our strategic plan. This was one less than year 22-23 due to funding cuts and more restrictions on our time. The first, on 19th May 2023 was organised by the GTCS teachers' focus group themselves and was a 'show and tell' format. 17 GTCS registered Mandarin teachers attended the online session.

Four presenters shared examples of how they teach listening and talking skills in the Mandarin classroom. Feedback showed the teachers appreciated hearing from fellow classroom practitioners and the informal nature of this session.

Planning for the school year 23-24 took place in September with a rejuvenated teachers' focus group. The group now has 10 members, including 9 GTCS Mandarin teachers and a CISS PDO. 2 of last year's members stood down and 5 new members joined. With this broader and larger group, we hope the focus group will be more dynamic and sustainable as we bring in youthful enthusiasm and creativity as well as drawing on the experience of longer-standing members.

In November an online workshop was held with input from colleagues at SCILT. The theme was: Contexts for learning: Literacy, Numeracy and Learning for Sustainability. 22 GTCS Mandarin teachers attended. Feedback was very positive, and attendees appreciated the opportunity to have guest speakers with broader expertise. We hope to continue to work with SCILT for GTCS Mandarin teacher PL inputs annually.

Finally, In February CISS held a full-day in-person professional learning conference at the Ramshorn, Glasgow. This event was held jointly with CISS Chinese exchange teachers as an opportunity to network and share ideas as well as learn about new pedagogies. 10 GTCS Mandarin teachers attended, along with 18 Chinese Exchange Teachers. This included a keynote speech, a plenary discussion, an online workshop on teaching pinyin and 3 in-person workshops with each having a choice of two options. A variety of speakers presented included those from Higher Education Institutions, SCILT and CISS professional development officers and associates. The topics covered included Artificial Intelligence in language teaching, Social and Emotional Learning in Language Teaching, Planning for Progression, the multilingual classroom and creating positive relationships in the classroom.

Next steps

We plan to hold three professional learning workshops throughout the year 2024-25 in May,

November and February. As last year, one of these will be a sharing good practice format run by the teachers themselves, one will include input from SCILT Professional Development Officers, and one will be an in-person symposium where the theme will be based on inclusion.

The steering group will hold an AGM and build on the foundations made in 23-24 to allow for greater sustainability within the Mandarin teaching sphere.

Support for Chinese Exchange Teachers (CETs): Professional learning programme

We continue to offer professional learning opportunities which are designed to meet the needs of teachers in different contexts as part of the teaching of Chinese language and culture across Scotland. We provide support to the Chinese Exchange Teachers sent by CLEC by way of pastoral care and a comprehensive professional learning programme to help them along their individual journeys.

Continuing from the success of the professional learning and support programme for Chinese Exchange Teachers (CETs) introduced in 2020, we delivered this programme to the 17 new CETs who arrived in 3 groups from August to October 2023. 7 teachers were exchange teachers employed by Tianjin Municipal Education Commission (TMEC) and 10 were post graduate education students from South-West Jiao Tong University in Chengdu.

The comprehensive professional learning programme included a 4 days of induction workshops and support for new exchange teachers to integrate them into life and work in Scotland. Each day of workshops covered a particular theme relating to life and work in Scotland and Scottish schools.

Themes for the day included: Welcome to Scotland; Education System in Scotland; Lesson Planning and Practical advice for working in Scotland. In addition to workshops and professional learning based on the education system, exchange teachers are given support and advice in finding accommodation, setting up bank accounts and are trained in using Microsoft software packages.

The induction programme is followed by eight monthly professional learning input sessions (alternating between two-hour synchronous interactive workshops, 1 in-person professional learning conference and asynchronous recordings) and 7 hour-long monthly online discussion sessions. The CETs were split into 3 small groups for the discussion sessions, each facilitated by a CISS professional development officer or associate, to allow for more individualised support. All the themes covered by the professional learning are linked to the Standards for CETs, which were created from the GTCS Standards for Provisional Registration.

Our one remaining CET from session 22-23 completed a bespoke but parallel programme building on their learning from year 1, looking at the standards in more detail. They joined the Year 1 CETs for the monthly discussion sessions.

Full evaluation of the programme is conducted by means of a survey of all exchange teachers in April 2023. This fed into our plans for 2023-24. Teachers responded positively to the hybrid nature of professional learning, with a mix of personal interactions, asynchronous videos for self-access at a convenient time and synchronous online workshops which was easier, cheaper and more convenient to access than travelling long distances. CETs reported feeling supported in their work and grew in confidence in their teaching.

Next steps

Up-scale professional learning programme for exchange teachers in light of planned 66 CETs deployed for session 24-25 compared to 18 in 23-24 and ensure sustainability of programme whilst maintaining same high-quality support.

Develop new workshops for Year 2 programme to fit the particular context and experiences of returning CETs.

Support for Chinese Exchange Teachers (CETs): Framework of progression

The original Mandarin Framework for beginner learners in the BGE has now been in use by Chinese Exchange Teachers since 2021. The Framework has been developed to help CETs to plan and structure their lessons, providing a Progression Pathway through the initial stages of language acquisition. Familiarity with the Framework and its use is an important element of our CET's Induction training, and the subject is revisited during ongoing Professional Learning, with CET's views on its contents and effectiveness being sought throughout their experience of working in Scottish schools, in order to ensure continuous improvement.

Presentations and Workshops on the Framework were included in our Regional Hub meetings in November 2023 and during the Chinese Teacher's PL event in February 2024. This Workshop focused specifically on Planning for the BGE using the Framework. All 18 of our CETs (2023/24) confirmed that they were familiar with the Framework and were making use of it during their planning process.

This year, the Second Stage of the Framework, which follows on from the first, was completed, peer assessed, approved and introduced to the CETs. The Working Group, responsible for putting the Framework documents together, included some of our more experienced CETs as well as Hub coordinators, CET Mentors and GTCS Teachers of Mandarin.

The contents of the Second Stage document are organized around three themes: All About Me, Living in China and Our World. The Second Stage builds on the language developed in Stage One, with an increased focus on Reading and Writing, and the introduction of themes around Learning for Sustainability. These can link with the work done by schools in Scotland and China during the Eco Learning Partners project.

Our website includes resources to support the Stage One themes of Greetings, Likes and Dislikes, Family and Sports. A Word mat to support classes during Stage One has been developed and is now available on the website.

Support for Chinese Exchange Teachers (CETs): Support visits

Due to time constraints, it has not been possible to conduct school visits to CETs this session. Instead, regular support for Chinese teachers has been provided online both through the monthly twilight discussion sessions and individually through email. Additionally, the CETs have had a full in-person training day where they have had the opportunity to raise concerns with CISS staff.

Next steps

Plan a programme for school visits for CETs to receive a visit from a member of the CISS/SCILT team as part of on-going quality assurance procedures, as well as to check on their wellbeing.

Develop a 'tutor group' system of a small group of CETs who are geographically near each other, facilitated by a member of the CISS/SCILT team and school/hub-based volunteers for mutual professional and personal support and social opportunities.

Learning partnerships

Development of specialist hubs

Support for Specialist Confucius Classrooms continued this year through online and in-person activities which allowed for collaboration in projects and sharing of project work with other hubs.

CISS continued to collaborate with RZSS to produce teaching materials and framework for the Eco Learning Partners programme which was used by eight primary schools participating in the programme.

CISS supported Scottish Opera in the development of the Mandarin content of 'How the Dragon Was Made' which was promoted to schools via the SCILT/CISS network as a Chinese New Year activity.

Next steps

Maintain the programme of support for Specialist Confucius Classrooms with regular meetings and sharing of project work.

Continue to seek opportunities to widen the network of Specialist Confucius Classrooms.

Virtual Exchange Teacher (VET) Programme: Learning and Teaching

CISS continues to develop our partnership with South-West Jiao Tong University in Chengdu, China and has used this partnership to increase our provision of online Mandarin lessons to primary and BGE secondary learners across Scotland. Numbers of Chinese Exchange Teachers (CETs) continued to be greatly reduced this year due to travel and visa restrictions. What started out as a response to decreased numbers of CETs in Scotland due to the global pandemic, has become a means of widening participation in Mandarin learning and teaching across local authorities where there is a Confucius hub.

In August 2023 our VET programme was made available to all schools in Scotland, regardless of whether they were in a local authority with a Confucius classroom hub or not. VET lessons continued to prove popular, particularly in primary schools. Additionally, in May-June 2023 VETs supported a hub secondary school with online Mandarin lessons for 9 S1 and S2 classes for a period of 6 weeks during the long-term absence of their Mandarin teacher.

Date	Classes	Schools	LAs	VETs
April- June 23	38	14	7	46
Oct- Dec 23	61	26	12	50

CISS has now developed 8-week progressive Mandarin courses at three levels, which have been extensively evaluated and adapted to meet the needs of BGE learners studying Mandarin as an L3. The course materials continue to be improved following feedback from Scottish teachers and VETs themselves.

Next Steps

Continue to offer online VET course to schools across Scotland to provide equity of access to Mandarin learning to all primary and BGE learners.

Create additional resources to support class teachers and VETs in reinforcing language taught in online lessons, including interactive games, word mats and worksheets.

Virtual Exchange Teacher (VET) Programme: Professional Learning

Prior to their participation in the programme, new VETs were given induction training online over the course of 4 days in October 2023, before embarking on their online teaching journey for school session 2023-24. Topics covered during the induction were: An overview of the Scottish Education System; Safeguarding; Planning a lesson; Delivering Online Lessons; Scottish Primary Schools; Working with colleagues; IT systems and the VET course. In total 50 VETs took part from October-December 2023 of which 29 new VETs and 21 returning from 22-23.

Throughout the session, they continued to follow a professional learning programme delivered by our Professional Development Officers.

From April – June 2023 continuing VETs took part in 4 professional learning sessions followed by 1 end of block evaluation and review session. Topics covered this term included:

- Looking at Learning Intentions and Success Criteria
- Teaching Listening & Talking Skills
- Teaching Reading & Writing Skills
- Micro-teaching session

In weeks 6 & 7 of the teaching block (June), VETs were observed in lessons and given personalised feedback on their teaching. In all, 20 lessons were observed by CISS.

From October-December 2023 VETs took part in 4 professional learning sessions, followed by 1 evaluation and review session. Topics covered this term included:

- Introduction to Formative Assessment
- Engaging learners online
- Sharing good practice in the online language lesson
- Teaching talking skills

In weeks 6 & 7 of the teaching block (December), VETs were observed in lessons and given personalised feedback on their teaching. In all, 21 lessons were observed by CISS staff and their SCILT colleagues.

Next steps

Develop a two-level professional learning programme for VETs to accommodate those who are new to the programme and those who have participated before.

Hub links

Eco Learning Partners

CISS ran the highly successful Eco Learning Partners, formerly known as Climate Ready Classrooms for the 3rd time in April-June 2023. Eco Learning Partners is an interdisciplinary project combining Learning for Sustainability with Mandarin language, which builds Scottish learners' intercultural competencies through working in partnership with their counterparts in Tianjin, China and sharing in their learning together via video calls.

Teachers from participating schools are trained to use a progressive, adaptable framework of lessons to cover a minimum of eight weeks and which tackles themes such as climate and climate change, the carbon cycle, biodiversity, the Global Goals and climate action. Over eight weeks from April to June 2023, the schools simultaneously delivered a series of lessons on climate emergency, based on materials adapted from Keep Scotland Beautiful, RZSS' Beyond the Panda programme and resources developed by CISS staff. Mandarin language resources which link to each of the themes have also been developed by CISS staff so that language can be integrated into the theme fully.

From the Scottish teachers' perspective, the programme was a huge success and they and their learners enjoyed taking part and benefitted from the experience.

The CISS training session was well received and deemed useful and informative. Teachers particularly liked the chance to meet and hear others' experiences from the pilot project.

"I found the help and guidance from CISS extremely helpful."

"Great to chat to other practitioners. Useful to hear their experiences of what worked well and things to remember for next time."

Feedback related to the lesson framework created by CISS was very well received and teachers appreciated the depth and variety of resources available.

"It was really helpful and gave us a clear idea of what we needed to do".

The live linkups helped create enthusiasm for the project as learners were curious and excited to interact with their peers across the globe.

"They particularly enjoyed this aspect as they had the opportunity to share, ask questions and learn more from their peers in China."

"They loved it. Some Chinese pupils had previously sent self-introduction videos so they recognised each other which was lovely."

In autumn 2023, CISS launched the promotion of the 23/24 programme and eight Scottish primary schools signed up, from seven different local authorities, along with their partner schools in Tianjin, China. In all, sixteen Scottish teachers and CETs attended a full day in-person training and information day to prepare for the launch of the 2024 iteration in February 2024, and feedback was extremely positive from the teachers. Training was given on the format and structure of the project, how to use the software necessary to run the project smoothly, successful collaboration with Chinese partners, and how to plan lessons around the framework. An online information session was held with Chinese schools in March 2024, along with a follow up planning meeting for Scottish teachers. At the end of Q4, the 2024 programme was ready to launch.

Next steps

Offer this opportunity to a wider number of schools in the summer term of school session 2024-25 and work with them to develop a sustainable and long-lasting project which can be fully integrated into the schools' curriculum.

Supporting uptake in National Qualifications and other accreditation

Discovering China National Qualifications

In session 2023-24 we have been delighted to once again be able to present learners in Mandarin (Simplified) at National 4, National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher. In addition, a small number of learners were presented for the Chinese Bridge Award, a bespoke SQA qualification developed by CISS.

Live lessons take place in a Microsoft Team within Glow for each class. This also enables smooth and effective communication between teachers and learners. SCILT/CISS teachers, who are all fully qualified and GTCS registered, undertake all of the preparation, teaching and assessment of classes with the support and collaboration of staff in schools, for which we are very grateful.

In session 2023-24, the Discovering China programme consisted of 54 learners from 16 different schools and 10 different local authorities across the country. These learners were taught by our two excellent GTCS Mandarin teachers, Xiaoyan Zhou and Minrong Zhang. As a result, all learners succeeded at their present level. In the National 5 class, 91.6% of learners gained an A pass, and at Higher 100% of learners were awarded an A.

To celebrate their successful completion of courses, we were able once again this year to organise and facilitate a visit to Glasgow for our National Qualifications learners to allow them to meet their teachers and each other in person. This was an excellent event, including fun cultural and language-based activities and presentations in the Ramshorn.

At the start of this session, we trialed a new system of timetabling, arranging classes to suit individual schools' particular schedules. We continued to develop this system further as we moved into 2024-25 and this has allowed us to accommodate more learners more efficiently and effectively. In addition, demand for classes has allowed us to recruit a third full-time teacher, Aaron Nicoll, who took up the post in June of this year. This has helped us to meet the current demand for online Mandarin classes. Mrs Zhang is now on maternity leave, and we are delighted to have Chloe Li working with us to cover this time. We will also be joined for session 2024-25 by 3 Chinese Exchange Teachers who will support our teachers in preparing authentic resources and working within classes to support teaching and learning.

Full details of the national offer, including videos and our handbook, are available on our website [here](#).

CISS has continued to offer support in the teaching of Mandarin to teachers across Scotland, and to promote Mandarin as part of the suite of SQA language qualifications. We have also been able to support with lesson delivery in the case of teacher absence in a local authority school.

Next steps

Evaluate and continue to improve our timetable systems

Incorporate the Chinese Exchange Teachers meaningfully into the teaching programme.

Revise the Chinese Bridge Award resources and assessments to take account of changes in SQA unit availability. This process will also include extending the Award from the current SCQF levels of 3 & 4 to levels 3, 4, 5 & 6 and has been agreed in close collaboration with SQA.

CET arrival and pastoral support

Between August and October 2023, 17 new CETs arrived from China to be deployed in Confucius hubs across Scotland. The teachers arrived in 3 groups, the first coming from Tianjin, the second from Chengdu and the third also travelling from Tianjin. During their induction, their health and wellbeing needs were met by the Chinese Director, while a full induction programme of professional learning took place, led by CISS Professional Development Officers.

CETs spent four days in Glasgow on arrival, acclimatising themselves to their new environment after which they transferred to their hub schools. Workshops covered a balance of information on living in Scotland and teaching preparation, including lesson planning, safeguarding, Scottish primary schools, Scottish secondary schools, the Scottish education system and looking at resources. CETs continued to be supported throughout the academic year by the Chinese Director and CISS staff.

Looking ahead, thanks to new partnerships with Chinese Universities, we will welcome 59 new Chinese Exchange Teachers to Scotland in autumn 2024 to teach in Scotland's schools for a year.

Next steps

Plan for a significant increase in CET numbers in 2024 and establish robust support mechanisms for their welcome, induction and pastoral care throughout their time in Scotland.

Look for new ways for schools across Scotland to engage with Chinese Exchange Teachers in their schools.

Quality improvement

Hub support and challenge: planning for improvement

Operational plans

Part of the quality assurance procedure for our 41 Confucius hubs is monitoring the annual operational plan submission procedure. Hubs are required to submit annual returns including a finance report from the previous school year; an operational plan detailing what the project plans are for the coming school year with estimated budget for each project; and statistics on numbers of pupils who took Mandarin, length and frequency of classes and who delivered the classes. The submitted paperwork is checked for relevance, financial accuracy and content by the Business and Finance Manager and CISS PDOs and feedback is given on the projects.

The two Professional Development Officers, one to support primary and one for secondary schools, offered hubs additional support and gave detailed feedback on proposed plans, which has been welcomed. Despite ongoing staffing issues in some hubs, all plans had been completed and returned by quarter four, with suggestions given on how to develop projects moving forward.

Online hub support sessions

In quarter two, CISS held two information and support sessions for hub staff to ask for advice, network and receive training on aspects of running a hub. The first was related to project planning and completing operational plans and had 15 attendees and the second was providing information for CET mentors and had 9 attendees. Although attendance has been quite limited in numbers, those attending have reported these sessions as extremely useful and a great opportunity to ask questions in a more informal way and to share ideas with other hub staff. In addition, 3 individual hubs were supported through online meetings and school visits for staff new to the CISS network or new hubs.

Regional hub support meetings

In quarter 3, two regional engagement sessions took place to provide support for all hubs. These took place in Aberdeen and Glasgow. There were 7 attendees at the Aberdeen meeting and 23 attendees at the Glasgow meeting. During these sessions, CISS staff gave an overview of current developments and projects, then invited hubs to share their work over the past session followed by open discussion and sharing of ideas for projects and addressing any questions or concerns about running a hub.

Next steps

Arrange individual visits to hubs to observe CET teaching, provide feedback, address any concerns and for general quality assurance purposes across the hubs.

Priority 2: Promotion and partnerships

Professional partnerships

CISS Board and Advisory Group

Four Advisory Group meetings in hybrid format were held in 2023/24 year. The Advisory Group and Board are chaired by Douglas Brodie, Associate Principal and Executive Dean, HaSS Faculty. The Advisory Group has representatives from the University of Strathclyde, schools, Confucius hubs, Heads of Education, businesses and independent consultants. The Board has a wider membership including head teachers, teachers, parents and CISS alumni.

A Board meeting took place in Tianjin in October 2023 with Douglas Brodie attending in person in Tianjin while the Director, Deputy Director and General Manager of CISS attended online.

International partnerships

Liaison with CLEC (Centre for Language Education and Co-operation) and TMEC (Tianjin Municipal Education Commission)

Links with TMEC

Work with TMEC in 2023/24 was focused on restarting the mobilities for pupils and strategic educational leaders. Applications for Tianjin scholarship started in Oct 2023 and 18 scholars successfully received the scholarship offered by Tianjin. Pupils' summer immersion course went ahead with a relatively smaller group compared to pre-pandemic time.

The number of Chinese Exchange Teachers (CETs) dispatched by TMEC remained low in 23/24, which was 18. However, Tianjin Normal University has agreed to recruit 50 volunteer CETs for 24/25 and CISS put in place an interview process in March to select the volunteer CETs.

Next steps

System set up with Tianjin Normal University to ensure a steady number of volunteer CETs from Tianjin. Work closely with TMEC to prepare for a larger number of schools and pupils participating in Summer Immersion Course and an increase of the scholarship application.

Links with CLEC

The Dean of Humanity and Social Science at the University of Strathclyde, Director, Deputy Director and General Manager of SCILT/CISS attended the Chinese World Conference in December 2023 in Beijing and met with the Deputy Director of CLEC to discuss collaborations of a range of projects. The 'Teacher of Mandarin' funding from CLEC supported 24 posts of GTCS teacher of Mandarin in 2023-24.

Next steps

Continue to discuss collaboration opportunities in terms of developing Mandarin teaching workforce, continue to promote the 'Teacher of Mandarin' funding to schools and facilitate _____

discussions with CLEC, SCILT and the University.

Collaborative masters degree development

A good deal of progress has been made this year in terms of the development of the collaborative degree. The format of the degree and the modules has been agreed with Southwest Jiaotong University (SWJTU) and an agreement has been reached regarding who will teach what content. CCap forms for the Strathclyde-led modules have been submitted and the degree has been passed through the academic scrutiny process at faculty level. The panel has recommended the proposal should now advance to university level with a few conditions that we have endeavoured to fulfil. We are currently working on developing the legal agreement with Southwest Jiaotong University which as this is a completely new model of degree may take some time to be realised. Given, too, that recruitment in China for post-graduate degrees usually occurs in September/October, we have decided to commence the first year of the degree in September 2026. This has been agreed with SWJTU and will give enough time for all legal implications and arrangements to be fully considered and in place. There has been further discussion with other university partners in China who may also be interested in collaborating with a similar model.

Next steps

Once the degree has been passed at the university level, we will work to get the legal agreement in place. Throughout 2025, we will be collaborating with Chinese colleagues to finalise the materials and content of the degree. We will also be working with HaSS IT Development colleagues to develop the online content and ensure the quality of the online content. We will be looking to start recruitment in September 2025 for a 2026 start.

Support for engagement between hubs and Chinese partners

CISS continued to support hubs to develop links with their partner schools in 2023/24.

Eco Learning Partners (ELP) in 2023/24. Eight primary schools in Scotland took part and worked with their partner schools in Tianjin. Details of ELP can be found in the Eco Learning Partners section in this report.

An Eric Liddell themed Sports Day event was organised for the pupils took part in the Summer Immersion Course from six local authorities with their partner schools in Tianjin. The Sports Day event was a huge success.

Next steps

In session 2024-25 CISS will promote ELP more widely with an aim to increase uptake.

Follow up on school-to-school engagement discussions after Headteachers' visit to China in Oct 2024.

Scholarship programmes

Offered jointly by CISS and the Tianjin Municipal Education Commission, the Tianjin scholarship facilitates scholarships for S6 school leavers to study Mandarin for ten months at Tianjin Normal University, and includes full tuition, accommodation, and living allowance.

After a hiatus during the Covid-19 pandemic which prevented international travel to China, the Scholarship has now resumed for the 2024-25 academic year. We worked closely with TMEC to ensure the application process restarted on time and have continued to work closely with TNU to ensure that university and visa applications were completed successfully.

18 young people from across 13 local authorities left for China on September 2nd 2024. With interviews taking place in November 2023, the Scholars have since had a very busy few months in the lead up to departure. Including participating in two briefing meetings and one 'getting to know you' meeting, compiling masses of documents and completing applications to TNU, applying for their VISAs, making videos for the CISS AGM, and all through the while, finding time to become firm friends and a very supportive group of scholars. The lead up to their departure was a cross-project effort, with CETs translating application documents and two CETs delivering twice-weekly pre-departure Mandarin classes for 4 weeks in March and June. We also had members of the Alumni network and their parents speaking at briefing meetings.

For now, the scholars will be making monthly blogs/vlogs on their experiences in China and CISS staff will be providing pastoral support throughout their time abroad.

Next steps

The next Scholarship will run September 2025-July 2026. Applications for this have recently launched, with a closing date on October 31st 2024. Interviews will take place w/c November 18th. We foresee having a larger pool of applicants this year, with many of them being previous participants on the Immersion programme, due to the increased visibility of the programme after its successful relaunch and positive word-of-mouth from current participants, parents, and teachers.

Promotional events/campaigns

Cultural exchange events

To celebrate the 100-year anniversary of Eric Liddell's at the 1924 Paris Olympics, CISS organised a poster competition for primary schools. The competition aimed to increase the awareness of Eric's contribution to the friendship between China and Scotland and promote cultural and educational exchange between the two countries. The competition was run in partnership with The Eric Liddell Community, the lead organisation of the Eric Liddell 100 programme. Over 750 entries were submitted from around 45 schools.

Priority 3: Research and knowledge exchange

Outward facing communication

Website review

The website continues to follow a schedule of timely updates to news and events, projects in Scotland and our resources pages. Project pages are the most regularly updated areas of the website and have continued to see good levels of engagement, particularly for the Eric Liddle poster competition and the Scholarship project.

Next steps

An annual audit will be carried out at the end of summer 2025 to evaluate the overall website's performance. We will continue to evaluate analytics and page hits to assess which sections need better promotion or adjustments and use social media to further promote specific areas of the website that might drive increased engagement.

Communication strategy

Newsletter

One edition of the CISS newsletter was published in 2023-24. A summer edition in May 2024. This newsletter was compiled and designed internally by the Projects and Events Coordinator using online design tools, based on the same original template. This system is a good way to provide updates to hubs on CISS projects, hub activities, and partner news and events.

The newsletter received articles from schools we had not had engagement from before, showing better engagement with the newsletter and a desire to share ideas on Mandarin learning and teaching practice across the hub network. The newsletter also included articles from CETs and Scholars. These were well received, with schools and education contacts positing positive feedback on social media and by email, showing increased engagement with the newsletter when showcasing work from CISS project participants.

Through the Winter newsletter no longer happening and increased promotion of the CISS newsletter submission process, we increased submissions by 11% from the Summer 2023 to the Summer 2024 editions.

Next steps

The CISS team will continue to publish one annual newsletter, based on a template that will remain similar each time to enable ease of publication. We will continue to encourage submissions and engagement from colleagues and partners and showcase the creative and innovative work of hubs and beyond.

Social media

CISS events and projects are documented and shared on social media, in order to engage with colleagues and stakeholders and encourage them to share CISS content.

Output during the year has focused on events and projects related to the Eric Liddell Poster Competition, and popular projects including Eco Learning Partners, Virtual Exchange Teachers, Discovering China, Scholarship, and Immersion.

We encouraged the use of project-specific hashtags and key words, directly targeting schools involved in projects and asking them to share their highlights and progress during the project. This led to a large increase in the projects' social media presence, with Scholarship and Eco Learning Partners being a particularly positive example of this increase in school participation. This led to a consistent stream of photographs and videos of the projects from Scottish schools being shared on CISS social media.

Twitter continues to be the most active and engaged-with account, and Instagram remains popular for the engagement of the Scholarship project, due to previous and current Scholar's increased use of the platform.

Next steps

Due to funding reductions, the creation of original creative campaigns will be downscaled in the coming year, and the focus will be on the promotion of CISS projects and opportunities, as well as sharing content from schools.

General operations

Planning and quality improvement

Many of us adapted to working remotely for a significant period throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, gaining valuable insights into how we can work flexibly and effectively whilst delivering our work and achieving our objectives. As we transitioned back to increased on-campus presence and service delivery, we remained committed to offering flexibility to help colleagues balance their work and personal life.

By April 2023, the university updated its Agile Working policy, requiring full time staff to spend a minimum of three days on campus (pro-rated for part time staff). To support adherence to this policy while ensuring adequate office coverage each day, an office Rota was implemented.

A new strategic plan was drawn up with collaboration across both centres and submitted to Scottish Government and shared with both SCILT and CISS Advisory Groups. The plan evolved as the year progressed, and we have learnt to be responsive to the needs of our partners and stakeholders.

Funding

SCILT

SCILT is financed by and administered through Scottish Government's Curriculum Unit. As we began planning for the new session in 2023, we planned under the assumption that the hybrid working model would continue. However, with meetings and events increasingly returning to in-person formats, we adjusted our budget to reflect these changes.

For the financial year 2023-24 SCILT and CISS received a combined funding grant of £900,000 to fund staff costs, University levy and operational costs, representing approximately an 18% reduction compared to previous years.

The final expenditure for the 2023-24 financial year was £1,081,924. This increase was driven by the rise in in-person meetings and events, the university's annual cost-of-living salary adjustment, and applicable staff increments. The shortfall of £181,924 was covered through alternative funding streams, with the Scottish Government grant accounting for approximately 83% of total costs for the financial year.

Next steps

Although we continue to operate a hybrid working model, it is anticipated that face-to-face activities will increase in the year ahead, leading to higher travel costs. Combined with annual salary increases, we are likely to face financial challenges in the coming year if our budget reduction is not reversed.

To address this, we will work closely with the university's finance business partners to develop a three-year financial model. This will equip us with the necessary insights to plan effectively for the challenges ahead.

Other funding

China

The Chinese language programme run by SCILT receives funding from Tianjin Normal University and Centre for Language Education and Cooperation (CLEC). A total of approximately £1,044,906 was allocated from China to cover the cost of hubs, Chinese Exchange Teachers, GTCS teacher salaries and projects.

Qatar Foundation funding for Discovering the World of Arabic

In January 2023 we were awarded £131,543 from the Qatar Foundation International (QFI) to continue and support the delivery of an Arabic programme in Scotland. The budget is used to support work with state schools, both primary and secondary schools and includes funding towards SCILT staffing support.

The project runs on a year-to-year basis and commenced in January 2023 with an end-date of December 2023. On submission of the final year-end report, we received confirmation of further funding to continue the project in 2024.

Staffing

SCILT and CISS

	Senior Leadership Staff	Teaching Staff	Professional Support Staff
2023-24	Director Depute Director Chinese Director (part of teaching exchange programme from TMEC)	7 Professional Development Officers (one is 0.4 a week) 2 Professional Development Assistants	Business and Finance Manager (0.5) General Manager Information and Communications Officer (0.6) Projects Assistant 3 Communications and Project Coordinators (one is 0.6 a week) Administrative Assistant (Information, communications and project support) (0.6) Administrative Assistant

Procedures and handbook

Across both SCILT and CISS, procedures are in place for all aspects of the centres' management. These are evaluated on a regular basis to ensure they are robust, up-to-date and appropriate. This ensures that all staff comply with university regulations and policies but also with any internal procedures that are developed on a continuous basis.

The SCILT/CISS handbook is updated annually with contributions from all staff. It serves as an integral part of the induction process for new team members while also providing a valuable reference for existing staff, reinforcing University and internal procedures.

Staff development

Staff development continues to form an integral part of the SCILT and CISS work culture and where possible, staff are encouraged to identify and attend training courses. This will then feed into the annual University staff Accountability and Development Review (ADR) process through the Learning and Development section of the ADR form.

Strategic planning

As part of the preparation process for the annual strategic plan, staff from both SCILT and CISS participated in two half-day planning sessions. Planning days feed into further opportunities for colleagues to discuss how they can, as individuals, but also part of a team, contribute to the SCILT/CISS strategic plan for the coming year. This ensures that colleagues are given regular

opportunities to share information about activities to find synergies between areas of work and responsibilities, but also to enhance communication between staff members and across teams.

Quarterly reporting

This year all Scottish Government meetings have continued to be conducted online. The current system for quarterly reporting works well. We now include an overview document with quarterly updates and projected targets, whereby data is collected for each priority area of the strategic plan. The quarterly report for Scottish Government is also shared at Advisory Group meetings.

Weekly catch ups using Trello software

During the first lockdown, the Professional Services team introduced daily online catchups to improve communication and monitor staff health and wellbeing. These meetings have since been reduced to once a week, with feedback and evaluations consistently highlighting their multiple benefits for all staff members. Over the past year, these catch-ups have continued to support effective communication as the team continues with hybrid working.

The Trello board has also adapted to changing requirements while remaining an effective tool. It is widely used by staff for various purposes, including one-to-one meetings, finance meetings, team meetings, project meetings and personal action planning.

Action plans

Action plans are collaboratively developed and implemented by the teams involved in each project. These plans are continuously updated, feeding into quarterly reporting. Both SCILT and CISS operate with project-based budgets, and the action plans play a crucial role in ensuring effective time management and budget control.

Safety, health and wellbeing

Staff safety, health, and well-being are fundamental to all activities within SCILT and CISS, reflecting the University's strong commitment to these priorities. The University's Strategy Vision aims to create a culture of care where everyone feels safe, secure and supported. SCILT is committed to upholding this vision by prioritising the safety and wellbeing of all staff.

Staff are encouraged to incorporate health and wellbeing practices into their working day, such as walking and taking regular lunch and tea breaks. The University has a comprehensive staff sickness policy that provides full support for staff facing personal or health-related issues. Appointed staff members collaborate with the University's Occupational Health and Safety advisers to ensure appropriate support is available.

In addition, SCILT's Finance and Business Manager actively participates in faculty and school Health and Wellbeing meetings, ensuring the centre is up to date with current policies and procedures. Staff can also access a dedicated Health and Wellbeing page on the faculty's SharePoint site, alongside extensive resources on the University website, aimed at promoting overall staff wellbeing.