

Scotland's National Centre for Languages

Confucius Institute for Scotland's School

Summary Report for April 2024 – March 2025

Scotland is a multicultural 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. Scholarship, 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 Scotland's languages policy

SCILT/CISS professional learning offer

Primary Professional Learning

Comparison of 2024-25 primary engagements with those in 2023-24 shows that the level of engagements was sustained over those two years. For the first time, information about professional learning for early career teachers (student teachers and first 5 years post qualification) 2024-25 is included in this section of the report as it now forms part of our overall professional learning offer.

Primary CLPL	April 2023 - May 2024	April 2024 - March 2025
Engagements	4 workshop bookings of which: 3 online workshops for 1 local authority 1 in person workshop for 1 local authority	6 workshop bookings, of which: 3 different online workshops for 1 local authority 1 in person workshop for 1 local authority 2 in person workshops for 1 school staff 2 online workshops for EIS
Cross-sector	Effective cluster working and transition processes (open access online, 14/11/23)	Managing and developing a positive multilingual ethos for middle leaders (20/02/25, 1 local authority)
Open Access opportunities	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 	April 2024 – March 2025 5 online primary open access workshops, supported by invited school-based practitioners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making assessment in primary languages active and accessible Getting outdoors with primary languages x2 Valuing linguistic diversity in primary schools Bringing the languages content to your primary IDL 28/5/24 EY & Primary Show & Tell – showcase of short examples of practice

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital tools in primary languages Introduction to multilingual approaches to primary pedagogy Target language phonics 	<p>from 7 practitioners, varied</p> <p>12/11/24 Give careers education with a languages twist: a workshop for primary teachers – partner with DYW Live eSgoil as part of Scottish Careers Week, online (supported by school-based practitioners)</p>
Early Career Teachers (student teachers and years 1-4 post qualification)	<p>09/05/23 Dumfries & Galloway primary NQTs and RQTs: Cultural contexts – an engaging approach to primary language learning (online)</p> <p>17/05/23 Clackmannanshire Council primary NQTs: First steps in primary languages (online)</p> <p>02/11/23 Dundee City Council primary probationers: Introduction to multilingual approaches to primary pedagogy (in person)</p> <p>28/03/24 Stirling BEd Primary with Modern Languages, Year 3 students: Active formative assessment in primary languages (in person)</p> <p>Primary ECT Languages Get Together and Languages Signpost Sessions. Open access. Monthly Jan – Mar 2024 x3 (online)</p>	<p>April 2024- Mar 2025 Primary ECT Languages Signpost Sessions. Open access. Themed on various issues, supported by invited guests from ITE and primary schools (online) x 5</p> <p>24/04/24 Clackmannanshire Council primary NQTs: First steps in primary languages (online)</p> <p>Sept/Oct 2024: 3 bespoke inputs with UG TESOL Yr 3 students, University of Strathclyde re: lesson planning, microteaching (in person)</p> <p>09/10/24 & 26/02/25 Student PLC (Languages & Education), University of Stirling (bespoke inputs around relationship building, using target language in teaching, 1+2 and DYW) (in person)</p> <p>09/01/25 Dumfries & Galloway primary NQTs and RQTs: Bespoke first steps in primary languages (in person)</p> <p>31/01/25 University of Glasgow Dumfries Campus, Primary PDGE students 4 different themed inputs (in person)</p>
Popular workshops (across all formats)	<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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First steps in primary languages x 3 Valuing linguistic diversity x3 Languages in Colour x2 Getting outdoors with primary languages x2

Requests from local authority officers for primary workshops from the SCILT menu remained low in the period April 2024 to March 2025 with bookings from two different local authorities, both in the central belt. First booking was for three primary workshops and one cross-sector. Another was for probationers in a local authority that we have supported consistently for the past four years with this input.

Our aim to actively cultivate relationships with local authority colleagues to encourage workshop bookings has had mixed success. Incredibly positive response from local authority probationer managers on publication and distribution of ECT offer in August – reflected in high registration for online Signpost workshops. Usual decline in conversion to attendance as the year goes on. For 2024-25 we changed scheduling for ECT Signposts to alternate months. Aside from Probationer managers, most other local authority professional learning contacts now have a wide-ranging remit of which languages is only a part. Increasingly difficult for us to reach the right person.

We were very appreciative of the focus group innovation that happened in May. A way to gather practitioner advice about past, current and future PL provision. All contributors to the focus groups made insightful and helpful comments that have informed the development of SCILT's professional learning offer to the profession.

The enthusiasm and credibility of the guest workshop presenters was identified as a strength of our open access input by focus group participants. This year invited speakers – school- and ITE-based practitioners – contributed to four of the SCILT open access workshops and three of the ECT Signposts. Typically, guests joined the workshop live and shared their current practice and offered advice and suggestions in responding to audience questions. In this way, we ensure our content is up to date and relevant. In particular, the guest presenters for the open access getting outdoors workshop in both online and in person versions deserve a special mention. Thanks to Aimee Bainbridge, Frogston Primary, Edinburgh for co-hosting online session in November. Thanks to Alison Kiyani, Thornwood PS for permission to use recording x3 IDL inputs. Thanks also to Caira Gibson and Gillian Griffith for hosting us as well as sharing practice at Grandtully PS, Pitlochry. Support from SCILT secondary colleagues has also been valuable this year in upskilling all staff in this specific area of IDL practice. Each outdoor learning workshop was unique, which primary PDOs found inspiring.

Other strengths identified by the focus group included:

Clear alignment to specific GTCS Standards.

Opportunity to hear from/share with peers incorporated in online workshops.

Digital reference collection of resources is valued as a tool to explore during the workshop and to revisit afterwards.

Otherwise, focus group participants suggested they would appreciate more in-person PL opportunities with SCILT.

After last year's success, the primary team would have liked to run another online Show & Tell event but decided to prioritise the Getting Outdoors in person workshop series instead. This way we avoided splitting the potential presenters and audience with a similar primary focused event from SALT at around the same time. In future, we would be interested in partnering with other professional learning providers to avoid overcrowding the primary space while mutually benefiting from wider networks.

Next steps

Agree a protocol for recognition/gratitude for all current/former practitioners invited to contribute to SCILT/CISS badged professional learning opportunities. [Distinct from commercial consultants who we call on very rarely.]

Explore the feasibility of themed short course modules with(out) accompanying language upskilling from cultural organisation partners. (Informed by EYCP PLP and OU TeLT)

Provide *you said, we did* style feedback to focus group participants and to other audiences.

Secondary Professional Learning

Comparison of 2024-25 secondary engagements with those in 2023-24 shows that, as for primary professional learning, the level of engagement remained consistent over those two years.

Secondary CLPL	2023-24	2024-25
Engagements	<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>	<p>16 local authorities</p> <p>Total number of CLPL engagements with local authorities = 24 (included Teaching Sprints inputs)</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>1 CLPL delivery for Higher Education colleagues</p> <p>1 CLPL delivery for ITE</p> <p>Early Career Teacher drop-ins: 2 sessions</p> <p>The Big Question series: 1 session</p> <p>Total engagements: 33</p>
Popular topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy, Planning & Practice in BGE Employability Language Skills Across the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching Sprints Employability Outdoor learning Moderation

	<p>Curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social-Emotional Learning <p>Again, this year, most of our CLPL sessions were bespoke or variations on the menu items.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social-Emotional Learning <p>Once again, our bespoke offer was by far the most popular.</p>
Cross-sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cluster working x1 • PGDE input x1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HE x1 • PGDE input x1

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 has been particularly successful in the case of our Teaching Sprints offer.

The Teaching Sprints programme is a timeboxed, collaborative approach pioneered by Simon Breakspear. It involves picking one high-leverage, research backed strategy, trying it with one class/year/group, gathering feedback, reflecting and refining, all within a short timescale (6-8 weeks). Under the strapline of *Small Change, Big Impact* SCILT and Education Scotland together devised a structured, research informed and practically supported professional development model, tailored specifically for language teachers seeking to embed effective, sustainable improvements in their teaching practice. This involved working with individual departments to identify their focus, providing professional reading to support this, and meeting online three times, at the start, mid-point and end of each sprint cycle.

This professional learning process has proved to be effective and impactful in schools which have participated. They have focused on a range of areas such as questioning, adaptive learning/differentiation and feedback and have found the changes to be both manageable and meaningful.

In addition to the Teaching Sprints, we offered the following workshops: Talking and listening in secondary languages classrooms, Reading and Writing, Social-Emotional Learning for languages and our most popular offer, the Build Your Own Workshop bespoke option.

Following evaluation, the Big Question series of open access workshops for 2025/26 will look different to previous; instead of four sessions in May/June, it will begin in May and will continue with one each term over the next session. As well as avoiding too much concentration of CLPL in the one term, as other organisations now also offer webinar series at this time, this will allow us to be responsive to ongoing curricular and pedagogical developments throughout the year.

Along with our primary colleagues, we were in discussion throughout the year as to the most effective way of gathering evidence of impact of our professional learning offer. This led to the creation of a focus group for each sector, and these took place for the first time in May 2025. This was an extremely positive development and resulted in meaningful conversation and very valuable feedback of an in depth and quality that could not be achieved through a form. We are so grateful to the practitioners who gave off their time for this. This discussion will inform us of our planning and practice in the year ahead.

Next steps

Continued evaluation of our approach to workshop delivery, taking into account the focus group discussions.

Expansion of the Teaching Sprints programme.

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

Support for teachers networks

Teachers of Italian in Scotland (TOIS) network

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. Since its inception in 2023, this group has provided 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

Engagement with initiatives continues to be very positive, with a network which now numbers over one hundred members. In November 2024 a first live online CPD event, delivered by a member of staff from Italian in the Department of Humanities at the University of Strathclyde, was well attended, with others taking the subsequent opportunity to watch the recording. Meanwhile, the launch in early 2025 of the interdisciplinary Calciamo project and pilot competition has been met with great enthusiasm by the teachers in the network, with large numbers of entries submitted. These two events have led to an enhanced sense of connectivity and community among members of the network.

Next steps

As was the case in the first year following its creation, ongoing initiatives will be taken 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 again 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, and the network will have opportunities to build on recent connections made with teachitalian.co.uk, a well-established network for teachers of Italian in England and Wales. Lastly, the imminent launch of the online version of the University of Strathclyde's Certificate of Continuing Education in Italian will provide a new and exciting opportunity for teachers of other languages across Scotland to gain the credits necessary to register as teachers of Italian.

Teachers of German in Scotland (TOGS) network

The Teachers of German in Scotland network was launched early in session 2024-25, following a scoping activity conducted during an event at the Goethe Institut in Glasgow in May 2024. Targeted at teachers of German in Scottish primary and secondary schools, this network was established to encourage sharing of practice, approaches and ideas around the provision and teaching of German, with the aim of building a community of practice and bolstering the dwindling numbers of pupils who are learning German in Scottish schools. The TOGS network can also rely on support from German cultural organisations and agencies in Scotland, including the German Embassy in Edinburgh, the Goethe Institut Glasgow, the British German Association and the UK German Connection, with whom SCILT enjoys strong professional relationships.

National qualification uptake figures for German have been falling for several years and the Scottish landscape for German learning is characterised by pockets of strong, sustained uptake combined with areas where German uptake is patchy and, in some areas, non-existent. The TOGS network offers a platform for practitioners to engage with and support each other. Because the network was established in response to teacher demand, it is no surprise that it has proven popular and subscriptions to the TOGS mailing list have grown from 88 practitioners in response to the scoping activity, to 135 practitioners to date.

The TOGS network meets once per term, online, and practitioners are keen to share practice. To mark the launch of this network, and to raise the profile of German learning both as a beginner and home language, SCILT ran a German poster competition for P1-S6 pupils. Over 110 posters were submitted and the winning entries in each category were displayed on the [SCILT website](#), along with a dedicated message from the German Ambassador in Edinburgh, Christiane Hullmann. Further to this, SCILT worked with the Goethe Institut Glasgow and the German Embassy in Edinburgh to produce a brochure entitled "[Making the Case for German](#)" that refers directly to the Scottish context. This will be updated annually, and feedback has been sought from the TOGS network about ways in which we could supplement this resource, i.e., with voices from Scottish industry, sports and entertainment.

Next steps

Continue meetings of TOGS network and encourage sharing from practitioners across Scottish schools.

Liaise closely with German partners across UK to identify offers and programmes that are relevant for Scottish learners and teachers.

Widen network to include German departments in Scottish universities.

Together with the TOGS network, develop a German strand of the existing Francofoot/Calciamo project that links football with language learning. This project will be aimed at BGE learners of German with a view to increasing motivation and participation in German learning.

Scotland's Language Leadership Programme

Professional Recognition from GTCS is undergoing a pause and review, therefore SLLP GTCS Professional Recognition: leadership in languages education has been extended until 2028. This includes a new logo which will be added to updated course materials.

Figures below show improved retention of SLLP participants in 2024-25 in comparison with 2023-24.

SLLP	2023-24	2024-25
Participant registration	52	45
Participant places accepted	32	36
Participant completion (GTCS Professional Recognition awarded)	20	31
Critical Friend recruitment	20	19 (18 returning, 1 new)
Critical Friend retention	18	18

A standalone webpage was created for the programme by the Information Services team, published in August 2024: [Scotland's Languages Leadership Programme](#). Useful place to direct interested parties.

2024-25 SLLP Programme Core Days included the chance for participants to virtually meet their critical friends ahead of receiving submission commentaries. Useful to be able to start building relationships early – hopeful that this will have a positive impact on retention and completion.

SLLP Alums network developed differently than anticipated between April 2024 and March 2025. Two network meetings with invited speakers (fees paid). Low attendance but both well received. Recording of the first speaker's session will be packaged and used with future SLLP cohorts. Interest from alums in taking part in a cluster working PLP was low and so the co-created project did not progress.

Recruitment to 2025-26 cohort in February and March 2025 was significantly down, with only 19 new places taken up with the addition of one deferral and three returning on the flexible route. Total 23 participants.

For the first journal submissions from 2024-25 cohort, the update of the original ES Leadership of and for learning Pre-Programme Activities to a more explicit languages focus had a significant effect on the relevance of those reflections, compared with in June 2023 when many did not make specific reference to leadership of languages.

Next Steps

Undertake a collaborative enquiry – gather, analyse and share leadership stories of SLLP Alums with various audiences.

For 2025-26 cohort we will introduce greater clarity and stringent process around skipping the final submission, relating to participants who require more than one upgrade. Also, in light of this, support on critical reading and writing will be included in SLLP Choice for next cohort.

Consider succession planning and schedule of SLLP with partners to most efficiently address/balance practitioner/system need.

Employability

Promotion of Employability

DYW and Employability continue to develop as a key cross-curricular context for learning. Languages sit centrally to this context, developing as they do both subject skills and vital skills for life and work such as communication, teamwork, problem-solving and intercultural competencies. Increasing learner awareness of this is central to increasing learner engagement with, and encouraging uptake of, languages.

SCILT offers support with this through professional learning, opportunities that encourage the integration of Employability within languages, and resources for teachers and learners. Some of these are:

- Including DYW and Employability into the Professional Learning menu as an option and as part of the bespoke offer in Primary and Secondary sectors. This allows us to deliver workshops that look at the place of languages in a DYW context, showcase examples of DYW projects and activities, and allow an opportunity to discuss how these could be applied in participants' own contexts.
- Offering regular sessions through e-Sgoil's [DYW Live](#) initiative. This has been our fourth year of delivering Secondary sessions through the interactive **Languages and Your Career** series. In session 2024-25 we have delivered a total of nine sessions: four monthly sessions (October – January), a special guest panel event for European Day of Languages in September, three events during Languages Week Scotland and a BGE session during the BGE Careers Fair in May. One of the sessions during Languages Week Scotland was a CLPL session for teachers on integrating careers education and languages. 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 been useful in informing ongoing 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 – Multilingual** to encourage partnerships between schools and cultural groups/organisations.

Next steps

Work on the content of the Employability section of the website to provide as much support, advice and exemplification as possible to Primary and Secondary teachers in a way that is easily accessible.

Continue to provide opportunities to share employability ideas and projects through CLPL workshops, webinars or discussion.

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

Scottish Languages Employability Award

The Scottish Languages Employability Award (SLEA) is designed to encourage schools, businesses and organisations to build partnerships through languages to develop young people's learning about the world of work and the value of language skills. It continues to be well used within schools, and the growing list of creative and innovative employability-centered projects undertaken is really impressive.

In session 2024-25, the following awards were given: 2 Gold, 3 Silver, 3 Bronze and 1 Achieved – due

to its nature, the SLEA – Local is an unlevelled award. 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 and can be seen on the [SLEA](#) webpage.

The **SLEA – Green** launched in the latter part of session 2023-24, and this session we have been delighted to have had three excellent submissions for this, all of which received a Silver award. These submissions, which can be seen on the [SLEA – Green](#) page of our website, represent a wide range of the Sustainable Development Goals and are truly inspirational community projects which all demonstrate impact and legacy.

Following its launch during Languages Week Scotland this year, the first **SLEA – Multilingual Award** was presented in June to **Multilingual Montrose**, a fantastic project by Montrose Academy which is multifaceted as well as multilingual, working with organisations such as the Angus Council Resettlement Team and the Montrose Community Trust to really make a difference in their local community. This earned them a very well-deserved Gold Award; more information about this can be seen on our [SLEA – Multilingual](#) webpage.

As well as case studies, these sections of our website also contain handbooks, 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

Continuing to promote all branches of the award

Support schools in how to go about developing partnerships.

Add to the support and resources on the SLEA webpages.

Support for school – university liaison

Moving Forward with Languages – Senior Phase/University workshops

Building on the popularity of the original school-university workshop series, this project was reshaped to frame workshops within two conference days for senior pupils and their teachers. Moving to this format also allowed us to welcome collaboration from more university partners, with the universities of St Andrews, Heriot Watt and the Open University joining existing partners from the universities of Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Stirling and Strathclyde.

The first conference date took place as an in-person event hosted at the University of Strathclyde on Wednesday 11 September 2024. In total, 193 pupils from 27 secondary schools across 16 local authorities attended this event, with some participants travelling from Aberdeenshire, Dundee and Dumfries and Galloway for the day.

The second conference was held online to support equity and access. The keynote speech was delivered by Ross Noble, an interpreter with the European Commission and former pupil of Oban High School. His former French teacher was in attendance with her current class, bringing a lovely symmetry to the start of the conference. Twenty schools from 13 local authorities attended the online conference. In total, both conference days reached schools from 21 local authorities.

Workshops offered current Higher and Advanced Higher language learners a glimpse into language learning and student life at university level. Tips for current national qualification courses were also woven into workshops, providing attendees with practical information for immediate use as well as raising aspirations and dispelling doubts about studying languages in higher education.

Feedback from learners and teachers was positive and will inform the next iteration of this project in 2025-26. 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 is underway for the in-person and online legs of this conference series in 2025-26.

Dates will be shared with schools before the summer break, with registrations opening for schools in August 2025.

Support for bilingual learners and heritage languages

This year has seen continued support for bilingual learners and the promotion of heritage languages across Scotland. While engagement with complementary schools has been less than anticipated, the promotion of multilingualism and heritage languages has remained a central theme across numerous projects within the organisation which includes teacher professional learning workshops. Reinforcing the message that multilingualism is a strength has been an overarching theme this session and the successful launch of the new SLEA Multilingual award is indicative of this.

With the increase in numbers of participating schools in projects such as Discovering the World of Arabic and Discovering China, this has further raised awareness of heritage languages and cultures amongst teachers and learners in our schools. These projects encourage the recognition of home languages and reinforce the value of linguistic and cultural diversity within both educational and community settings. Although the establishment of the new Arabic Teacher Network in Scotland has paused for the moment, teacher networks of Italian and German continue to grow and thrive, again supporting heritage languages within schools. New partnerships with higher education institutions have since been established and these will allow for further exploration into Scotland's multilingual landscape and the place of heritage languages within the curriculum.

Next steps

Continue to provide opportunities to share practice and knowledge about supporting multilingualism and bilingual learners.

Continue to explore and further develop partnerships with external organisations to help strengthen support for multilingualism and heritage language education.

Continue to build and support heritage language teacher networks.

Support the Polish Pilot project with the University of Warsaw.

Continue to promote and encourage uptake of the SLEA Multilingual award.

Learning Partnerships

Multilingual Approaches

This year has seen significant progress and achievement in the development of our work on multilingual approaches. In December 2024, we were notified of the successful outcome of our application to the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) in support of the new project, Sustainable Designs for Living and Learning: Embedding Multilingualism into Learning for Sustainability (SDLL). We were delighted to have secured funding to allow us to continue and develop our work in this important area of research. The award, totalling £1,269,850, will support a three-year research project that builds upon our prior work that focuses on multilingual pedagogies, particularly those explored through arts-based approaches. Year 1 of the project will see the SDLL team work alongside 3 partnership schools, local artists and other external agencies such as Bilingualism Matters, Scotdec and the Permaculture Association to co-create a design framework in alignment with the project's outcomes.

The MtA team hosted 3 x Multilingualism Live sessions with five primary classes from schools in five different local authorities. Classes ranged from P5-7 and were paired with another for each of the live lessons. The themes of the lessons were discussed and agreed in advance with the teachers and the live lessons were delivered successfully. The children enjoyed taking part in the live lessons, especially having the opportunity to work on the same lesson content online with another school at the same time. From evaluations gathered, teachers valued the lesson content and input from the MtA team and found the approaches engaging for their learners. Teachers indicated that they would continue to explore multilingual approaches towards language learning within their practice.

To support early career teachers, an online signpost session on Valuing Linguistic Diversity was included into the professional learning offer for ECTs. The sign-ups for the session in November were high, with 17 practitioners in attendance on the day. Teachers appreciated the multilingualism input, noting that the discussions and resources raised awareness of the need to recognise and integrate children's additional languages into classroom practice.

Next steps

Continued collaboration with SDLL partners (University of Glasgow, Scotdec, BM, Creative Glasgow) and partner schools to develop a whole-school approach to designing multilingual and sustainable learning environments in line with the AHRC grant conditions. This will involve integrating multilingual, arts-based practices within a permaculture design framework aligned with Learning for Sustainability (LfS) education.

We will continue to promote multilingualism and multilingual pedagogies by embedding the value and importance of these approaches into professional learning opportunities for both pre-service and in-service primary teachers. Through professional learning, we aim to raise awareness of children's diverse linguistic repertoires and equip educators to support and integrate these languages into their practice, promoting inclusive and sustainable language learning in primary school.

Francofoot/Calciamo

Francofoot/Calciamo is a pilot project that ran during session 2024-25. Inspired by the previous SCILT project of Le Foot et la Francophonie, the University of Stirling and SCILT secured funding from the British Academy Talent Development Award scheme for a research project investigating the effectiveness of an interdisciplinary project linking PE and languages on addressing the gender gap in language uptake at secondary school level. This funding has allowed the original project to be evaluated, expanded, developed, and enhanced.

This was done by developing a Health and Wellbeing package of work specifically focused on football, with PE and languages teachers working together to plan and deliver a suite of lessons and activities in both curricular areas, leading to a national competition.

Preparation for this project began in March 2024 with the selection of six pilot schools across two languages (French and Italian); we are grateful to these schools for their collaboration in both resource creation and in the research strand of the project. These schools are Airdrie Academy (North Lanarkshire), Meldrum Academy (Aberdeenshire), Notre Dame High School (Glasgow City Council), Queen Victoria School (MOD Schools, Dunblane), St Mungo's Academy (Glasgow City Council) and St Ninian's High School (East Dunbartonshire). Initial online meetings were followed by two days of development work with a team of teachers from these schools in May 2024, then the collation and graphic design of materials from September to November, and the pilot/research phase of the project from November to February.

Materials are designed for S2 and S3 learners and provide teachers with scaffolded language learning resources which cover the topics of football and health & wellbeing in the target language. The vocabulary they learn in the language classroom is then designed to be used within PE lessons so that learners can consolidate their vocabulary in an authentic PE learning experience. Resources cover key curricular topics such as the gender gap within football and the diversity of players in the football world, as well as food, healthy living, and the culture of countries where the target language is spoken. Resources are all authentic and have been piloted, evaluated, and refined in the six project schools.

Following the pilot phase, all materials were published on the [SCILT website](#) in preparation for the running of a national competition designed to engage learners and motivate them to further their physical and linguistic abilities.

This competition ran from February – April 2025, with a live final held on 13 May at the University of Strathclyde. To enter, teams of learners, working in either French or Italian, submitted an entry video of a simple football training drill carried out in the target language, and a poster which would form the basis of a presentation if selected for the live final.

In the final, shortlisted teams participated in a football training drill race in their target language and presented on the key elements of a healthy and successful footballer's life, again in the target language. We also enjoyed a fascinating talk from Steve Eadon, founder of Mingalaba, on his extensive career within football and how languages have been key to this. The final was a lively and exciting event, and feedback from the learners showed how much they enjoyed it and found it engaging.

After a close competition, winning teams were announced as Montrose Academy (French) and Trinity High School (Italian).

Work is already underway on further developing the project for 2025-26; a draft Spanish version is already in place and planning for German and EAL versions has begun. The longer timescale than the pilot afforded will allow greater embedding of learning throughout the year, and two CLPL sessions have already taken place to support teachers in doing so.

Next steps

Collate and disseminate the research findings of the pilot project.

Plan CLPL support throughout the year for the ongoing project.

Expand the project into Spanish and German, and for EAL learners.

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 and is responsible for maintaining and updating the LANGS database, dissemination of information to LANGS members, and coordinating the online and in-person meetings.

During the past review year there was an in-person meeting in June 2024 and two online meetings in November 2024 and March 2025.

Two new Co-Chairs and a new Vice-Chair took up their positions in June 2024. A review of the membership was undertaken, identifying local authority representatives who were still on the mailing list but had retired or changed roles. Additionally, local authority representatives were asked to confirm via email that they still wish to act as a representative for their authority. As a result of this review there has been a drop in local authority membership, but with the aim that those who are on the list are more likely to attend meetings and to disseminate information.

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.

The local authority networking sessions, which take 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: decreased from 130 representing 31 authorities in March 2024, to 113 representing 29 authorities in March 2025. As outlined above, this decrease is largely due to the membership being reviewed and updated.
- LANGS meetings: attendance has remained largely consistent across in-person and online meetings:
 - June 2024: 45 attendees representing 13 authorities.
 - November 2024: 36 people representing 12 authorities.
 - March 2025: 43 attendees representing 13 authorities.

Next steps

Chairs are investigating setting up a dedicated LANGS mailbox as well as a LANGS website distinct from the SCILT website.

Chairs are discussing reinstating the LANGS focus group with renewed membership.

Chairs are looking at ways to increase representation to cover all local authorities.

Dates for 2025-26 meetings to be decided.

International partnerships

Partnership with Qatar Foundational International

SCILT's partnership with QFI entered its fifth year in 2024-25 and the Discovering the World of Arabic courses have reached 1145 pupils in Scottish primary and secondary schools this session.

Our team of Arabic teachers continue to engage enthusiastically with regular departmental meetings, quality assurance processes and opportunities for professional learning. The Arabic teaching team observed online classes delivered by Mandarin teaching colleagues to share practice in approaches to teaching a language that, like Arabic, is not based on the Latin alphabet. These observations will lay the foundations for professional learning in April and May around sharing strategies to encourage learner engagement and providing feedback in the online environment. Schools return to this programme because they value the high-quality learning experiences that their learners receive, and it is of paramount importance to us that this continues to improve as the programme grows.

Children and young people have been invited to join their Arabic teachers at SCILT's Ramshorn base for an event entitled Celebrating the World of Arabic, which will take place on 15 May 2025. We look forward to engaging attendees in a range of cultural activities while giving them the chance to showcase their own Arabic learning.

In May-June 2024, we introduced a mini-series of four introductory Arabic lessons for teachers. The Taste of Arabic sessions met with enthusiasm from class teachers, who enjoyed the chance to gain an insight into Arabic language and cultures, while getting to know our Arabic teaching team. Another benefit of the Taste of Arabic was that it allowed teachers to become more familiar with the delivery platform for live and asynchronous lessons, thereby mitigating technical issues that often occur at the start of the courses. Based on the success of this mini course, we will offer it again in the summer term 2025.

Throughout this academic session, **eight** primary schools from **five** local authorities (around 334 learners) and **ten** secondary schools from **five** local authorities (around 736 learners) participated in weekly live Arabic sessions. In two cases, the entire year group took part in Arabic lessons and schools reported the positive impact that this had on inclusion within multicultural school communities, particularly where these involved Arabic heritage speakers.

Promotion for 2025-26 has begun and registrations for primary and secondary Arabic courses are due to close at the end of April 2025.

Next steps

We are exploring ways of offering an Arabic language immersion experience to young people who are following the Discovering the World of Arabic courses. Preliminary ideas for approaches to this were gathered during the QFI Arabic immersion event in Newcastle in July 2024.

Next session, we will consider how we can incorporate opportunities for young people to meet assessment outcomes in Arabic that articulate with the Scottish curriculum.

Partnership with other language centres (INNLC)

The 2024 INNLC conference was held on 10-11 June 2024 in Fribourg, Switzerland. SCILT sent two PDOs to attend this event, the focus of which was “Trajectories: language teachers’ professionalisation path in a light-speed moving world”. Nine partner countries were in attendance (Austria, Denmark, France, Hungary, Netherlands, Norway, Scotland, Sweden, Switzerland) and the context of the conference gave opportunities for rich sharing of approaches to teacher recruitment, training and retention. The focus of national updates was specifically on the pathways for middle school language teachers and included consideration of transversal factors i.e. language teacher wellbeing, motivation, beliefs and expectations.

During the conference, we were invited to observe language classes within a high school. We also visited a teacher education faculty within the university of Fribourg to hear about their teacher education pathways. The multilingual nature of Switzerland was accentuated during this visit as Fribourg sits on the linguistic border between the French and German-speaking part of Switzerland and is, itself, a bilingual city.

The INNLC network offers us a valuable opportunity for knowledge exchange and networking with colleagues who lead on language learning across Europe. Scotland continues to enjoy positive working relationships with our European colleagues. SCILT has reached out to the INNLC network to assist with information gathering about matters such as language requirements for entry to university, uptake of languages in various curricula, etc. Being able to access this kind of network whose participants are at the forefront of languages policy in their own countries is more important than ever in our post-Brexit climate where such opportunities are increasingly scarce. We cannot afford to be isolated from our nearest neighbours.

British Sign Language (BSL)

Support for BSL

This year, there was continued strong demand from schools for the limited number of places available in our online British Sign Language (BSL) lessons, with 28 schools from 14 local authorities applying to take part – a slight decrease from last year. Over 100 pupils from four schools participated in a 10-week block of online learning, delivered by a deaf tutor and supported by a qualified interpreter. Feedback from both pupils and teachers was overwhelmingly positive, with many highlighting how much they value the opportunity to learn BSL and the wider impact it can have in promoting inclusion, communication, and understanding in society.

An article featuring a case study developed in partnership with Education Scotland and the British Deaf Association (BDA) was published in BATOD magazine. The case study focused on Deaf young people who use BSL, reflecting on their experiences in education and highlighting key insights into the role of BSL in supporting inclusive learning. This article was widely shared by all partner organisations.

We have begun exploring the possibility of offering online BSL lessons to a wider audience. The aim is to support professional and personal development, equipping individuals with the basic BSL skills and knowledge about Deaf culture to help promote greater inclusion, communication, and awareness across diverse settings.

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.

Explore options to offer online BSL learning opportunities to a wider audience.

Promotional events/campaigns

Support for national competitions

Jacqueline Munro-Lafon essay prize

SCILT supported the Franco-Scottish Society of Scotland in an advisory capacity in session 2024-25. This competition, which is administered by the Alliance Française in Glasgow on behalf of the FSSS, has now been running for five years and has attracted a total number of 56 essay submissions during that time.

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, six essay submissions were received from AH French candidates across Scotland in 2025. Should the Franco-Scottish Society decide to review the format of this competition, SCILT would be happy to advise and advertise as required. Going forwards, SCILT's involvement in the Jacqueline Munro-Lafon French Essay Prize will be limited to promoting the competition.

Words for the World

This year the [Words for the World](#) competition, which runs every second year, took place from January to March 2025. The theme of this year's competition was Water to tie in with World Water Day on 22 March. Focusing on Sustainable Development Goals 6, 13 and 14, we asked learners to use a template to design and write a postcard to the First Minister to show how important water is in our world and what we need to do to look after it.

The required message length differed for each age group; P1-4 = maximum 50 words, P5-7 = between 50 and 100 words; S1-3 = between 100 and 150 words and S4-6 = between 150 and 200 words. Entries were judged on language use, content and creativity.

This year's competition received fewer entries than in previous years, perhaps due to its now biennial nature and to other competitions that were running at a similar time. We are reviewing this competition for future iterations – watch this space! The entries that we received showed flair, creativity and real global awareness; some of these can be seen on our [2025 Awards page](#).

Next steps

Evaluate and review competition purpose and format for future iterations.

Our World

Our World is a national, inter-disciplinary competition for S1-6 learners, previously run by the Scottish European Educational Trust (SEET) and now organised by SCILT, Scotland's National Centre for Languages. It combines language learning with the art of filmmaking, bringing in aspects such as design, drama, sound and technology within the context of Learning for Sustainability and environmental education. The competition builds valuable employability skills such as team-working, creativity, organisation, communication, problem solving and much more.

Learners work in teams to create a storyboard for a short film, based on the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Learners whose films are shortlisted are then given the opportunity to work with a professional filmmaker to turn their ideas into a real film, which is shown at the film screening showcase and awards ceremony. It is a great opportunity for budding filmmakers to use their language skills, or for budding linguists to use their filmmaking skills!

SCILT took over this competition in May 2024 and ran the final events for schools on 12 June 2024. We are very grateful to SEET for the work that they had done in supporting learners over session 2023-24 and for their full and detailed handover that enabled us to run the final event. This was hosted by Brodies LLP in Glasgow's Merchant City, where the filmmaking workshops during the year had also been held. Awards were presented in S1-3 and S4-6 categories for language use, filmmaking techniques and global citizenship content. There were 23 finalists across both categories: congratulations to the winning teams from Clydeview Academy, Park School, Prestwick Academy, Ardrossan Academy, Thurso High, Bellahouston Academy and The Glasgow Academy.

This year, Our World has been run by SCILT from the outset, beginning with the competition launch and unveiling of our new [webpage](#) in September. Storyboard judging took place in December, with two in-person filmmaking workshops being held in The Ramshorn in February for all 22 shortlisted films. The competition concluded with the live premiere and awards ceremony in June. Based on feedback from previous years, SCILT chose to run the competition across three-year groups: S1-2, S3-4 and S5-6. Additionally, judging categories were communicated to entrants in advance, along with clear guidance on judging criteria. Full details of the 2024-25 winners will be included in next year's report due to the timing.

Sources of evidence

Our World in its current form is currently under review. Ann Robertson, former trustee of SEET, is undertaking a full evaluation and review and this will inform our planning going forward. We will be seeking a cost-effective way to maintain the focus and impact of Our World in order to guarantee a sustainable future for the principles behind it.

Next steps

Reflect on the completed evaluation once we receive it.

Use this to shape our planning for the future.

Look creatively at ways to encourage the combination of filmmaking, languages and sustainability.

Euroquiz

Euroquiz is an annual project open to all P6 pupils across Scotland, which sees teams of four working together to broaden their knowledge of Europe and the wider world. Subjects covered include languages, history, geography, culture and European affairs. Heats take place in local authorities

from February to March, with the winning teams from all areas progressing to the National Euroquiz Final in June.

In April 2024, SCILT took over the running of Euroquiz, previously organised by the Scottish European Educational Trust (SEET). SCILT coordinated the final which took place in June 2024, and we are grateful to SEET colleagues for all the arrangements already in place and the comprehensive handover notes to support this.

In September 2024 SCILT launched Euroquiz for the 2024-25 session. Materials were updated and moved over to the SCILT website, and information sessions were held for local authorities and schools. SCILT colleagues also took on the role of composing all of the questions required to run the heats and the final.

Local authority heats took place online and in-person throughout February and March 2025. We enlisted the support of students at Heriot-Watt University to provide the translations and audio recording for the languages round. Local authority organisers reported some sound quality issues in their feedback, which we will review for the coming year.

The final which took place in June 2025 will fall under next year's annual report timeline.

Sources of evidence

30 authorities took part in June 2024 final.

30 local authorities ran heats in 2025.

560 schools participated in heats for the 2025 competition, the same number as 2024 and equal highest-ever engagement.

Evaluations conducted with LA coordinators and with finalist teachers and pupils, which will be reviewed when future planning.

Next steps

Full evaluation of project internally.

Review length and delivery of languages round.

Investigate possibility of receiving external sponsorship and support.

Support for language promotion

The European Day of Languages (EDL) is celebrated across Europe on 26 September every year. It aims to promote the rich linguistic diversity of Europe and raise awareness of the importance of lifelong language learning for everyone.

SCILT supports schools celebrate EDL by:

- sharing news, themes, update, opportunities and online resources from ECML
- updating our website with ideas on how to celebrate with links to external sites
- celebrating the events that schools organise by promoting them in our EDL blog and our newsletter

We ran a social media campaign on all our platforms in the run up to the day, sharing ideas for how schools could celebrate EDL 2024 and directed people to the range of online resources on our EDL webpage. These posts received a high level of engagement and the EDL pages on our website are the sixth most viewed pages for 2024-25, with nearly 3K views in September alone.

The social media campaign did not have the same impact as previous years due to the falling number of schools using X.

Eight schools submitted an article for the EDL. We included four of these articles in the SCILT winter newsletter, a further opportunity to spread the word about the day.

Next steps

We will continue to promote EDL and highlight the online resources available on our website and elsewhere, seeking to diversify the social media platforms we use.

Languages Week Scotland

Languages Week Scotland 2025 took place from 3 - 7 February. The theme for 2025 was "Our multilingual futures".

SCILT employed two interns to work on creating content and a schedule to promote and celebrate SCILT's own projects during LWS25.

In December we uploaded ideas for how schools could celebrate LWS25 onto the SCILT website. We promoted this page through a series of posts during the first week of January.

We published the five Daily Challenges 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.

Social media highlights for January - February 2025 compared with December 2024 - January 2025:

- Net audience growth: +1,725%
- Published posts: +554.8%
- Engagement rate: +6.9%

Key takeaways:

- strong Engagement across all platforms, with engagement rate above 3% for all platforms
- LWS X saw highest post reach and engagement
- audience growth on 3/4 platforms, with a significant growth of 10% on Instagram

During Languages Week Scotland we saw 521 engagements with the hashtag #ScotlandLovesLanguages, a **50% decrease** from 2024.

This year, we saw schools across the country celebrate, with more local authorities and more secondary schools engaging with the week than previously. We saw a variety of activities shared on X. Recurring activities included pupils and parents leading learning, language portraits, global citizenship and employability.

A range of partners joined in the celebrations, including Midlothian Libraries, British Council Scotland, Institut français d'Ecosse, Scots Language Dictionaries, British German Association, Pàrlamaid na h-Alba, Edinburgh College, University of Aberdeen, University of Stirling.

Next steps

Move from X to another or other social platforms.

Make greater use of the SCILT mailing list to promote LWS.

Establish a standalone website for LWS.

Priority 3: Research and knowledge exchange

National and international knowledge exchange events

Scholarship and knowledge exchange activities

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

- Royal Society of Edinburgh/Bilingualism Matters (Oct 2024) - "Modern Language Learning in Present-Day Scotland."
- BERA Project (March – April 2025) "Valuing Disagreement in Classrooms: Teacher Education and Democracy." With University of Strathclyde (Institute of Education), University of Plymouth, University of Cape Town.
- The Languages Gateway working group (March 2025).

Participation in, and attendance at, national and international conferences

SCILT colleagues have presented at or facilitated sessions at numerous conferences and knowledge exchange events since April 2024, including:

- INNLAC Conference (June 2024) – Fribourg, Switzerland
- SALT Conference (Nov 2024)
- Bilingualism Matters Symposium (March 2025)
- IPDA Conference (Nov 2024) - Leeds
- LfPL Conference (Jul 2024) - Santiago, Chile (online presenting)

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 editorial team, formed in 2023, continues to provide impetus and momentum. The wider range of categories available to potential authors was appealing to contributors for issue 38 (spring 2025) and reflected in the varied nature of their submissions. In addition, the SLR continues to be advertised by SCILT staff during presentations, and by media and comms colleagues in their bulletin and social media output.

Sources of evidence

The SLR webpage attracted 1996 hits during 2024-25 – a small increase on the previous year. A notable 42% of readers accessed the site from outside the UK, demonstrating the publication's international reach.

Next steps

Following the publication of issue 38 in spring 2025, expressions of interest and submissions have already begun to arrive for Issue 39, which we anticipate publishing during the winter months of 2025/26. 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. In order to enhance the international profile, partner associations from the INNLAC network will again 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 has now been in post since 1 January 2024.

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

During session 2024-25, David spent a considerable amount of time working with SCILT on an interdisciplinary project featuring PE and languages (French and Italian specifically) through which he has examined the effect of such a project on the gender gap that exists in uptake of languages. This project, called Francofoot & Calciamo, is described separately in this report. As part of that project, David has examined the role of an interdisciplinary project on addressing the gender imbalance in uptake of languages, and his research on this, as well as being valuable in its own right, has served as an introduction to research within schools and will be useful in David's ongoing PhD work.

This work is carried out under supervision from the University of Stirling and the University of Glasgow, together with SCILT and brings together existing 1+2 data from local authorities, and new research carried out by David.

The hope is that this will inform learning, teaching and leadership of languages and, at this key time of curriculum review, contribute significantly to the debate around future-proofing languages in our schools.

Next steps

Conclusion of the Francofoot/Calciamo pilot, and involvement in expansion of the project.

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

Focused work with an identified sample of local authorities.

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 2024 to March 2025, the SCILT website saw 55K visitors and 159K pages viewed.

SCILT's website supports SCILT's priorities, as stated in the Strategic Plan.

Priority 1: To support high quality language learning and teaching in line with national priorities

The Professional Learning pages see a consistent number of visitors throughout the year, averaging around 100 each month. 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. Pages supporting School-University liaison are also popular, with the Languages Explorers Scotland pages receiving a high proportion of visits.

Priority 2: To highlight and demonstrate the benefits of multilingualism and intercultural competencies so that languages are widely recognised as a key skill for life and work

The pages hosting information and resources to support schools in celebrating European Day of Languages, Languages Week Scotland and the SLEA have been consistent popular from last year to this year, and we are delighted to see such strong engagement with these campaigns.

There has been an increase of 11% in the number of visits to the job profile pages, and we published one new job profile on these pages this year.

SCILT took over the running of Euroquiz this year, and the high number of visits to the pages hosting information on this competition reflect the popularity of the competition.

Priority 3: To share information and language-related research, and facilitate knowledge exchange in Scotland and beyond

The News pages continued to see a high number of visits – this year the number of visits to the news pages (23217) was eclipsed only by the number of visits to the pages holding information on Euroquiz (27981).

Visits to the Newsletter have increased by 257%.

Visits to the SLR continue to be high (1996 and an increase of 20% from last year).

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.

“Last year we had nearly 100 attendees, we are looking forward to a repeat of last year's success. Last year your help was crucial. Your help is very much appreciated. (Mónica Legazpi-Iglesias, University of Glasgow re School of Modern Languages Language Tasters for secondary students).

Over the period August 2024 to June 2025 there is an 4.4% increase in subscribers. Subscriber numbers in June 2025 stands at 1540.

We are delighted that the most popular sections of the bulletin are SCILT/CISS news and SCILT/CISS events as we use the bulletin as our primary way of communicating our news to the language community.

This is closely followed by News from Language and Educational Organisations sections, with the Resources section close behind. These sections contain a weekly selection of resources, news or events that are hosted externally. We source these from social media, TES, emails from our partners along with news from external language and educational organisations.

SCILT initiatives dominate the listing of most popular links ranging from professional learning opportunities for language teachers, promoting uptake and supporting exam preparation to awards and competitions. Our Christmas pages continue to feature high in the list with our Language Week Scotland and EDL pages also amongst the most popular. Events run in conjunction with eSgoil and DYW promoting the benefits of language skills for life and work have again received high engagement.

Next steps

Continue to ensure that the layout means the wide number of SCILT opportunities are easy to find.

Add a disclaimer to make it clear that we do not endorse any commercial offers.

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 a significant increase in followers on Instagram (35%) as well as an increase in followers on Facebook (4%). We saw a decrease in followers on X (-4%). (Instagram – 507 followers, Facebook 1813 followers, X – 5815). X continues to be the platform with the most followers, by a significant amount.

SCILT will no longer post on X from August 2025, and we began researching other platforms to use. This year, we began posting on Bluesky and LinkedIn and have 497 and 346 followers respectively. SCILT's combined presence on X and Facebook account for a significant number of external site

referrals to our website.

On X and Bluesky, we post daily to promote SCILT news, opportunities and resources. On Facebook, we share a mixture of SCILT opportunities, motivational quotes and fun language facts. On the Instagram feed we share inspiring quotes, fun language trivia and facts and relevant SCILT opportunities. On LinkedIn we post twice a week – once to highlight SCILT opportunities and the other time to advocate for language skills.

Facebook was the highest source driving traffic to our website. 58% of visitors to our website came from Facebook, followed by 14% from X.

Next steps

We will consolidate our presence on Facebook and Instagram and continue to use LinkedIn and Bluesky. We will no longer post on X.

Newsletter

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

The SCILT newsletter was published in December 2024 and May 2025 on the SCILT website. The page on the SCILT website hosting the latest two editions saw a total of 764 visitors to the page which hosts it over the period August 2024 – July 2025. This is a significant increase in visitors of 257% compared with the same period last year.

Next steps

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

Digital interns

SCILT/CISS recruited six S6 students to participate in the 2024-25 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 December 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 impact of their content on TikTok, with nearly half of their posts receiving >2K views; the highest performing post had 25.5K views. Feedback from the interns this year indicated they would like more support through more frequent online meetings.

The December training session this year took place at the Directorate for Culture and External Affairs at Scottish Government. Interns had the opportunity to meet with team members and find out about a career in an international environment. Interns also heard from a member of the Scottish Government communications team. Feedback from the interns and from the civil servants was very positive.

Next steps

We have recruited 7 interns for 2025-26 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, building in more opportunities for the interns to meet and collaborate online.

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 2024-25, we delivered two professional learning and support sessions of the target of three we had set out in the strategic plan. This was one fewer than year 23-24 due to reduced capacity in quarter 3, when the second input was due to take place. A variety of other unforeseen work took place during this time, including additional professional learning for Chinese volunteer teachers.

The first input of the year on 23 May 2024, was organised by the GTCS teachers' focus group themselves and was a 'show and tell' format. Twenty-one GTCS registered Mandarin teachers attended the online session. Four presenters shared examples of how they embed cultural content into their teaching. Feedback showed the teachers appreciated hearing from fellow classroom practitioners and the informal nature of this session. Due to reduced capacity, the GTCS teachers focus group did not meet for the remainder of 2024.

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. Seventeen GTCS Mandarin teachers attended, along with 66 Chinese Exchange Teachers. This included a keynote speech, a plenary discussion, a core workshop specific to GTCS teachers and three in-person workshops with each having a choice of three options. A variety of speakers presented included those from University of Strathclyde, SCILT and CISS professional development officers and associates. The theme was Inclusion for the Future of Mandarin in Scotland and topics covered included planning and delivering ASN-inclusive language lessons; the National Framework for Inclusion; Social and Emotional Language Learning; the Multilingual Classroom; Supporting Mandarin Learners through use of Technology; What is Inclusion and Why do we do it?

Next steps

We plan to hold three professional learning workshops throughout the year 2025-26 in May, November and February. As last year, the May session will be a sharing good practice format run by the teachers themselves, one will include input from an outside speaker, and one will be an in-person conference around a relevant theme. The steering group will hold an AGM and build on previous work to allow for greater sustainability within the Mandarin teaching sphere.

CCEd (Online) in Mandarin

Following the successful launch of two first-year undergraduate modules in Mandarin within the Department of Humanities at the University of Strathclyde, 2024-25 saw the introduction of these

modules in a new online format, comprising Year 1 of the new Certificate of Continuing Education (CCEd), a part-time evening course already well established in French, Italian and Spanish, highly regarded by the teaching community and recognised by the General Teaching Council for Scotland. The introduction of the course in Mandarin not only addresses the appetite among teachers of languages in Scotland for a bolt-on qualification in Mandarin but also heralds a new era of online delivery of the CCEd across the other languages in the department, to meet increasingly evident demand from outside the University's traditional market of the central belt.

Guided and assisted by the expertise of Learning Technology specialists in the HaSS Faculty, during 2024-25 staff from CISS and the Department of Humanities have been working on the creation of materials for the two second-year modules of the online CCEd, which will be delivered in 2025-26. As was the case with the first year of the course, the second-year modules will be delivered through a mixture of synchronous and asynchronous teaching and will be enhanced by a broad range of learning resources created by teaching staff and fully produced by the learning technologists.

Sources of Evidence

The pilot CCEd Mandarin course attracted seventeen students in Year 1, all of whom completed the two modules. The application period for a new first-year cohort in 2025-26 is currently underway, and evidence would suggest that there is sufficient demand for this to run.

Next steps

During the delivery of the second year of the course in 2025-26, staff from CISS and the Department of Humanities will continue to work with the learning technologists on the creation and production of resources for the two modules which will constitute the third year of the course in 2026-27.

Meanwhile, of the first cohort to have completed Year 1 of the online CCEd in Mandarin, eleven will complete a four-week bespoke residential experience at Beijing Capital Normal University. For the teachers in the group, this will contribute to the fulfilment of residency requirements for full GTCS registration. The immersive language and cultural experience and will be fully evaluated for future cohorts looking to go to China.

Meanwhile, staff in SCILT and CISS continue to consult with partners in China to explore further potential sources of funding for residential courses, which would enable more practising GTCS registered teachers who complete the CCEd to satisfy residency requirements and add Mandarin to the languages they are qualified to deliver in Scotland's schools.

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 59 new volunteer exchange teachers who arrived in two groups in September 2024. Seven teachers employed by Tianjin Municipal Education Commission (TMEC) also remained in Scotland for a second year. Of the 59 new CETs, 10 were post graduate education students from South-West Jiao Tong University in Chengdu and 49 were students from Tianjin Normal University and Tianjin Foreign

Studies University.

The comprehensive professional learning programme included four 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 were given support and advice in finding accommodation, setting up bank accounts and were trained in using Microsoft software packages.

The induction programme was followed by eight monthly professional learning input sessions (alternating between two-hour synchronous interactive workshops, two in-person professional learning conferences and asynchronous recordings). There were also six hour-long monthly online tutorial sessions. The CETs were split into nine groups of seven or eight CETs for the discussion tutorials, each facilitated by a CISS/SCILT professional development officer or associate and supported by one other volunteer tutor from the CISS network to allow for more individualised support. This upscaling of the previous structure has proven very successful, with CETs reporting that they feel supported and are progressing in their teaching.

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. The Year 1 CETs followed one programme, and the Year 2 CETs follow a different programme, using the same format. They joined together for the monthly discussion sessions, and the groups are allocated broadly on a geographical basis, allowing for mutual support and proximity. Full evaluation of the programme was conducted by means of a survey of all exchange teachers in April 2024. This fed into our plans for 2024-25. 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.

Next steps

Review professional learning programme for exchange teachers in light of increased numbers over 2024-25, in particular the tutor group set up, and to evaluate the new workshops developed for the Year 2 programme to inform future practice among CETs who choose to stay for another year.

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

Our Chinese Exchange Teachers were introduced to the Mandarin Framework during their initial induction training in September 2024, when its purpose, structure and contents were discussed in depth. Throughout last year, CETs, Hub Co-ordinators and Mentors had further opportunities to become familiar with it, at Regional Hub meetings, at December's CLEC Conference during a workshop on how to use it to plan a structured lesson, and at our PL Conference in February, where the Framework formed the basis for a workshop on Differentiated Learning.

Stage 1 of the Framework has now been in use by CETs since 2021 and Stage 2 was introduced in 2024. All 66 CETs have confirmed that they are familiar with the Framework, and most have been using it in their schools to plan and assess their Mandarin programme.

A review of the first stage document is currently underway, with a focus group and survey centring on the use, contents and format of the Framework and its associated resources producing data

which will be used to inform an update before the arrival of new CETs in September 2025.

Support for Chinese Exchange Teachers (CETs): Support visits

In addition to having their own mentor locally, this year each CET has been a member of a Tutor Group. The nine groups consist of 6-8 CETs and two tutors from amongst SCILT staff and our associates. The groups meet monthly online to follow up on Professional Learning sessions and to offer CETs the chance to get to know each other. Tutors are responsible for giving feedback to CETs on their monthly Reflective Tasks.

A programme of visits to Hub Schools focussed on new Hubs and some that requested the support of an in-person visit at this point in their development. In early 2025, these included Culross Primary School in Fife, Stornoway Primary School and the Nicolson Institute in the Western Isles, Armadale Primary School in West Lothian, St Mary's Primary School and Greenwood Academy in North Ayrshire, Annanhill Primary School in East Ayrshire and Grantown High School in the Highlands.

Learning partnerships

Development of specialist hubs

With the end of links with existing Specialist Hubs, CISS has discussed how we can change the focus of our work with cultural partners and community organisations. We would like to explore the development of partnerships around specific joint projects that would be of interest to pupils and teachers working in our Hub schools and beyond. For example, we are talking to Glasgow Life about a possible partnership with the Burrell Collection to develop resources based on their Chinese exhibits.

Virtual Exchange Teacher (VET) Programme: Learning and Teaching

The Virtual Exchange Teacher Programme continues to go from strength to strength and is now in its fifth year, having completed nine iterations of the programme. What started out as a response to decreased numbers of Chinese Exchange Teachers to deliver Mandarin lessons to Scottish primary school learners due to the global pandemic, has now become a means of widening participation in Mandarin learning and teaching across local authorities. In 2023 we opened the programme to any state primary school anywhere in Scotland, expanding our provision beyond solely schools in local authorities with a Confucius classroom hub.

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 secondary learners across Scotland.

Lessons are taught using an 8-week progressive Mandarin courses at three levels, developed by CISS and 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.

From April-June 2024 the Virtual Exchange Teachers from South-West Jiaotong University delivered 8 weeks of Mandarin lessons to classes across the country, including in schools in remote areas and

the islands.

As new partnerships were formed and the subsequent large increase in numbers of CETs arriving in September 2024, we expected uptake of the virtual programme to decrease. However, this was not the case and registrations for the VET programme from October-December 2024 remained equally strong.

Chinese Exchange Teachers from Tianjin Normal University, newly arrived in Scotland, delivered these lessons online, direct from Glasgow.

Dates	Classes	Schools	Local Authorities	VETs	Learners
April-June 2024	42	21	14	42	1100
Oct - Dec 2024	31	20	7	8	690

Next steps

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

Work with partners at Southwest Jiaotong University to continue the pipeline of Mandarin teachers available to teach online lessons.

Virtual Exchange Teacher (VET) Programme: Professional Learning

From April-June 2024, 42 existing VETs from SWJTU continued with their professional learning by means of four fortnightly professional learning seminars over the teaching block period, delivered in two levels by professional development officers. VETs new to the programme in October 2023 took part in a 'first level' programme, whilst those who had taken part in VETs in previous academic years followed a newly developed 'second level' programme.

Themes covered in the first level programme included:

- review of learning intentions and success criteria
- teaching reading and writing skills
- micro-teaching
- meeting learners needs

Meanwhile, the more experienced VETs covered the following themes:

- formative assessment
- creating positive relationships with learners
- discussion of challenges in teaching online Mandarin lessons
- using digital technology

These sessions were followed by a fifth seminar where the teaching programme was evaluated.

In weeks 6 and 7 of the teaching block (June), VETs were observed in lessons and given personalised

feedback on their teaching. In all, 26 lessons were observed by CISS development officers and their SCILT colleagues.

Prior to their participation in the programme in October 2024, the eight CISS CETs delivering the VET programme were given induction training both as part of the intensive, general CET induction in September over four days, as well as VET programme specific training over three weeks. 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.

Throughout the session, the VETs followed the PL programme for CETs, as would be expected.

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

Next steps

Evaluate and expand a two-level professional learning programme for VETs to accommodate those who are new to the programme and those who have participated before, covering two teaching blocks.

Hub links

Eco Learning Partners

CISS ran another very successful Eco Learning Partners project, formerly known as Climate Ready Classrooms, for the fourth time in April-June 2024. 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 2024, 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.

Eco Learning Partners 2024

Classes	10
Schools	8
Local Authorities	7
Participants	384 (in Scotland)

In autumn 2024, CISS launched the promotion of the 24/25 programme.

Classes	20
Schools	16
Local Authorities	15
Participants	476

Sixteen Scottish primary schools registered along with their partner schools in Tianjin, China. In all, 30 Scottish teachers and CETs attended a full day in-person training and information day to prepare for the launch of the 2025 iteration in February 2025, 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 2025, along with a follow up planning meeting for Scottish teachers. At the end of Q4, the 2025 programme was ready to launch.

Next steps

Continue to offer this opportunity to schools in the summer term of school session 2025-26 and work with them to develop a sustainable and long-lasting project which can be fully integrated into the schools' curriculum.

Aim to maintain or increase participation in session 2025-26 by sustained promotion of the project in a variety of ways.

Carry out a full evaluation of the project, including pupil voice for the first time, as well as feedback from class teachers and CETs. Report on findings.

Supporting uptake in National Qualifications and other accreditation

Discovering China National Qualifications

In session 2024-25 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, we continue to present a small number of learners each year for the Chinese Bridge Award, a bespoke SQA qualification developed by CISS. This works well as an entry level qualification for learners for whom the jump to a National Qualification is daunting, or who are earlier in their school career. This year, we revised the Chinese Bridge Award resources and assessments to take account of changes in SQA unit availability. This process will also be included extending the Award from the previous SCQF levels of 3 and 4 to levels 3, 4, 5 and 6 and has been agreed in close collaboration with SQA. This award will be presented for the first time at our Immersion Course in July 2025 and will be in use thereafter.

Within the Discovering China programme, 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 the preparation, teaching and assessment of classes with the support and collaboration of staff in schools, for which we are very grateful.

In session 2024-25, the Discovering China programme consisted of 93 learners from 18 different

schools and 15 different local authorities across the country. This represents a significant increase in all numbers over 2023-24 and is testimony to the high-quality teaching that our excellent teachers provide.

This year we have had some staffing changes. As demand has increased, we were delighted to be joined by a third teacher, who took up post in June of last year and who has already contributed significantly to the work of the team. A further teacher joined us in August initially to cover maternity leave and has fitted into the team seamlessly.

This session we were given the opportunity for the first time to have 3 Chinese Exchange Teachers assigned to the Discovering China programme. They joined us this year to support our teachers in preparing authentic resources and working within classes to support teaching and learning. Learners benefitted greatly from this, and we really appreciated all their input. We are delighted to be able to have three more CETs for next session and look forward to meeting them in September.

Our new timetabling system, introduced last year, has continued to prove effective in balancing the requests of different schools with different timetables. We are continuing to develop this to be able to deliver Mandarin online teaching to as many learners as possible.

To further aid this process, we plan to arrange for our teachers to visit all schools in person during August/early September 2025. This will enable the building of relationships and will facilitate a smooth start to online learning.

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

Next steps

Evaluate and continue to improve our timetable systems.

Incorporate the Chinese Exchange Teachers meaningfully into the teaching programme.

Create a timetable for in-person visits of teachers to schools in August to allow learners and teachers to get to know one another at the earliest stage possible and thereby enhance online learning.

CET arrival and pastoral support

In September 2024, 59 new volunteer CETs arrived from China to be deployed in Confucius hubs across Scotland. The teachers arrived in two groups, the first coming from South-West Jiao Tong University in Chengdu and Tianjin Normal University, and the second 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.

The 59 new volunteer CETs joined seven remaining Chinese exchange teachers, all on secondment from Tianjin Municipal Education Commission to make a total of 66 CETs working in schools across Scotland in 20 local authorities.

Thanks to these continued partnerships with Chinese Universities, we will welcome a similar number of new Chinese Exchange Teachers to Scotland in autumn 2025 to teach in Scotland's schools for a year.

Next steps

Fully evaluate the new mechanisms and procedures in place to support an increased number of CETs over session 2025-26.

Look for new ways for schools across Scotland to engage with Chinese Exchange Teachers in their schools and continue to encourage schools to have a Chinese Exchange Teacher.

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 schools 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 19 attendees (an increase of four compared to last year) and the second was providing information for CET mentors and had 36 attendees (an increase of 27 comparing to last year, since the number of CETs has increased by three folds). 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.

Regional hub support meetings

In quarter 3, three regional engagement sessions took place to provide support for all hubs. These took place in Aberdeen and Glasgow. There were five attendees at the Aberdeen and Edinburgh meetings and 20 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.

Individual hub visits

In addition, ten individual hubs were supported through in-person visits, including two in the Western Isles.

Next steps

Continue with the same level of hub support. 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 2024/25 year. The Advisory Group and Board are chaired by Douglas Brodie, Associate Principal (Inclusion), 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 2024 which coincided with the first Scottish Strategic Educational Leaders' Visit (formers called Scottish Headteachers' Visit) after the pandemic. The Scottish chair of the CISS board, Professor Douglas Brodie co-hosted the board meeting in Tianjin with the deputy director of TMEC, Mme Lui. The deputy director of SCILT/CISS gave the annual report, and Yanyan Zhao, Chinese Director of CISS also attended in person with the delegation of head teachers from Scottish schools.

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 2024/25 was focused on the mobilities for pupils and strategic educational leaders, and the Tianjin scholarship learners. The first mobility after the pandemic of six local authorities with a total of 54 pupils and staff went to Tianjin and Beijing in July 2024 for two weeks' language and cultural immersive experience. Eighteen learners that received the Tianjin scholarship completed their one-year course in Tianjin Normal University. We are liaising with TMEC for the new cohort of 21 scholars which will start their journey in September 2025.

The number of Chinese Exchange Teachers (CETs) dispatched by TMEC has jumped from 18 to 66, largely due to the new collaboration with Tianjin Normal University, who were able to recruit student teachers (volunteer CETs) from the university.

A TMEC delegation visited University of Strathclyde and met with the chairs of the SCILT and CISS boards and SCILT/CISS colleagues to discuss areas where both sides could develop to deepen the collaboration.

Next steps

System set up with Tianjin Normal University to ensure a smooth recruitment process of volunteer CETs to ensure CET number is maintained 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

Douglas Brodie, Associate Principle visited CLEC in October 2024 and met with Mr Hu, the Deputy Director of CLEC to discuss collaborations of a range of projects. The 'Teacher of Mandarin' funding from CLEC supported 25 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. Negotiate the renewal of agreements with CLEC.

Collaborative master's degree development

The proposal for the new degree was accepted by senate in October 2025. Work is now underway to get the legal agreements in place. After discussions with colleagues at SWJTU, it appears that there have been some misunderstandings which now are being ironed out. The degree will go for approval at SWJTU at faculty and university level in March 2026 and then forward for scrutiny at the provincial level. Once these approvals and agreements are all in place and course content finalised, we will be looking to launch it in September 2027.

The model for this degree has been attracting interest from other universities in China, and it is likely that we will be able to include other partners in the future.

Support for engagement between hubs and Chinese partners

CISS continued to support hubs to develop links with their partner schools in 2024/25.

Eco Learning Partners (ELP) in 2024/25. Sixteen 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.

Schools who took part in the summer immersion programme visited their Tianjin partner schools. Home visits were also organised for the pupils and staff in Tianjin.

Next steps

In session 2025-26 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 and the Tianjin Headteachers visit in 2025 and start the preparations for 2026 Scottish Strategic Educational Leaders' visit to China.

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.

Our 2024-25 scholars have all successfully completed their year at TNU. These 18 young people, representing 13 local authorities across Scotland, have benefitted from this unique opportunity, and have represented their families, schools and Scotland in an exemplary manner not only as students, but at official events such as the King's Birthday celebration at the UK embassy in Beijing. The scholars chronicled their experiences all year in a series of vlogs, and they

continue to share their enthusiasm and passion for Chinese language and culture through meetings and events.

Our next group, Tianjin Scholars 2025-26 will depart on 10 September 2025. They have participated in two briefing meetings and one 'getting to know you' meeting; they have compiled documents, completed applications to TNU and applied for their visas. They have found time to become firm friends and have connected with the previous scholars, who are in a unique position to offer support. Several of this year's scholars were participants in the 2024 immersion visit, and this has clearly inspired interest and enthusiasm, and given them confidence to live in China for the year.

The 2025-26 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 2026 - July 2027. Applications for will launch in mid-September, with a closing date on October 31st, 2024. Interviews will take place in November. We anticipate 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

We had another successful Chinese New Year poster competition in 2025 with over 1000 submissions received. Nine winners were selected from three-year group categories. A video showcase of the Eco Learning Partners programme was also launched for the UN Chinese Language Day with all 16 pairs of schools participated. The video showcase was demonstrated at CISS AGM.

Alumni Group

The 2024-25 group will see a new generation of CISS alumni join the Tianjin Scholar family. We continue to engage with former scholars from the pre-covid cohorts, and they have supported our work by speaking at events and meetings in 2024-25.

The 2024-25 Scholars have produced very engaging materials which we have shared with hub schools and the wider network. When this group returns to Scotland, we plan to leverage their experience in preparing the next cohort for their Tianjin experience, as well as other promotional events and activities.

Priority 3: Research and knowledge exchange

National and international knowledge exchange events

Participation in, and attendance at, national and international conferences

CISS colleagues have presented at or facilitated sessions at numerous conferences and knowledge exchange events since April 2024, including:

- Scotland & Northern Ireland Volunteer Chinese Exchange Teachers Conference (December 2024)
- Symposium on Intercultural Pedagogy for Education (January 2025)
- Professional Learning Conference for Teachers of Mandarin (February 2025)

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 Eco Learning Partners programme and the Scholarship project.

Next steps

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

A summer edition of Newsletter was published in May 2024, and the content was highlighted in the CISS AGM in June. 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.

As the Projects and Events Coordinator, who was responsible for the delivery of newsletter left the post, we had to pause the work for future Newsletters until suitable staff are identified to deliver this work.

Next steps

The CISS team will aim to continue to publish one annual newsletter, based on a template that will remain similar each time to enable ease of publication once suitable staff is in place. 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, 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 Chinese New Year 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.

Next steps

The focus will be on the promotion of CISS projects and opportunities, as well as sharing content from schools but most of the social media activities will be carried out by SCILT comms team.

General operations

Quality improvement

During the reporting period, the team continued to strengthen its planning and quality-improvement processes to ensure resilient and efficient operations. A key development has been the full transition to the University's updated Agile Working policy, introduced following the Covid-19 pandemic. Under this hybrid working model, all Professional Services staff now work a minimum of three days per week on campus.

To maintain consistent service levels and ensure the smooth day-to-day running of operations, a monthly on-campus rota is coordinated to guarantee adequate staffing coverage across the office. This structured approach enables the team to balance flexibility with operational reliability, ensuring that core functions remain fully supported while accommodating modern working practices.

Funding

SCILT

SCILT is financed by and administered through Scottish Government's Curriculum Unit. As planning commenced for the 2024 session, assumptions were based on the hybrid working model. However, with meetings and events increasingly returning to in-person formats, the budget was adjusted to reflect the associated rise in operational activity and costs.

For the 2024-25 financial year, SCILT and CISS received a combined funding grant of £938,000 to support a proportion of staff costs, the university levy and operational expenditure. The increase of £38,000 from the previous year was allocated specifically to cover the operational cost of the inherited SEET projects.

Total expenditure for the 2024-25 financial year amounted to £1,143,384. 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 resulting shortfall of £205,384 was met through alternative funding streams, with the Scottish Government grant accounting for approximately 82% of total annual costs.

Next steps

Although we continue to operate a hybrid working model, it is anticipated that face-to-face activities will continue to 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 is not increased.

To address this, we will continue to work closely with the university's finance business partners to maintain and refine our three-year financial model. This ongoing review ensures we have up-to-date insights to support effective planning and to respond proactively to 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 £1,048,927 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 2024 we were awarded £181,123 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 2024 with an end-date of December 2024. On submission of the final year-end report, we received confirmation of further funding to continue the project in 2025.

Staffing

SCILT and CISS

	Senior Leadership Staff	Teaching Staff	Professional Support Staff
2024-25	Director Deputy Director Chinese Director (part of teaching exchange programme from TMEC)	7 Professional Development Officers (5 x 1 FTE, 1 x FTE 0.4, 1 x FTE 0.2) 4 Professional Development Assistants (This includes 1 x Maternity cover)	Business and Finance Manager General Manager Information and Communications Officer (FTE 0.8) Information, communications and project support (FTE 0.6) Projects Assistant 3 x Communications and Project Coordinators 2 x Administrative Assistants

Procedures and handbook

Across both SCILT and CISS, procedures are in place for all aspects of the Centre's 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 annual strategic planning cycle, staff from both SCILT and CISS participated in two half-day planning sessions. These sessions provided structured opportunities for colleagues to reflect on their individual and team contributions to the SCILT/CISS strategic priorities for the year ahead. They also supported open discussion, enabling staff to share updates on ongoing and planned activities, identify synergies across work areas, and strengthen communication within and between teams.

Following the development of the draft strategic plan, the Business and Finance Manager was able to produce a budget forecast aligned to the proposed project activity. This ensured that financial planning was fully integrated with strategic objectives.

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.

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.