

Routes into Languages: the next journey

Business plan to promote the take up of languages and student mobility

1 Objectives

The programme will build on the achievements of the Routes into Languages programme (2006-13) bringing new ideas and new partners to address the challenges and policy priorities of the next three years. It will adopt the following objectives:

1. Promote **increased take-up in learning** languages and associated cultures in secondary and higher education, including the learning of a diverse range of languages.
2. Promote **increased take-up of work and study abroad** in language degrees and in other subjects, especially encouraging students to spend a year abroad during their studies.
3. Promote **greater national capacity** in those areas of employment that require proficiency in languages and intercultural competence, including careers where cultural mediation is a key asset, as well as careers in translation, interpreting, teaching and research.
4. Promote **raised aspirations and attainment** of students in secondary school and higher education, thereby widening access to language study and helping to encourage a broader social profile of undergraduates studying languages (gender, ethnicity, socio-economic background, diversity of languages).
5. Promote **greater collaboration** between participating universities, schools and key stakeholders, including cooperation between academic communities with different identities and between academics and managers in widening participation and careers services.

2 Programme of activity

2.1 The Routes programme will be delivered by nine consortia across the country, comprising a total of 62 universities in England. Each consortium will be led by a partner university with a strong commitment to languages and with specialist expertise in a significant aspect of the programme. The lead partners will be Anglia Ruskin, Aston, Brighton, Bristol / UWE, Hull, Manchester Metropolitan, Newcastle, Nottingham Trent, Westminster / SOAS.

2.2 The consortia will deliver a programme of activities that will have as their focus those that have proven to be successful in the past five years, and consortia will spend the majority of their resources on the following:

1. Organising **sustained interventions** to raise attainment and to secure the lasting engagement of school pupils with languages. They will include programmes of Languages in Context, in which activities combine learning languages with another subject area or specialism, particularly Sport, Film, and Business. They will include mentoring and tandem schemes, regular support for teachers in particular schools and 'Adopt-a-class' schemes. They will also include language related competitions, such as the national Spelling Bee, and the regional Mother Tongue-Other Tongue.
2. Delivering a programme of **one-day events**, aimed at motivating students to continue language learning throughout secondary school, and pursue their language studies at university, both in specialist degrees and in elective modules. Events will include sixth form conferences, student information days, taster days, master classes, careers events and workshops giving students an opportunity to experience the work of interpreters and translators. In some cases, events will involve employers, particularly local SMEs. Events may also facilitate CPD opportunities for teachers.
3. Training **Student Language Ambassadors** from among language undergraduates and other students with languages, and deploying them in schools to support teachers and stimulate interest in pupils. This is a flagship activity of Routes, which is highly valued by all participants. It confers benefits to schools in providing support for language learning and in motivating pupils through the powerful role models provided. It benefits the ambassadors by enhancing their experience and employability, and it encourages them to consider a career in teaching..

2.3 Consortia will have the discretion to use up to 25% of their resources to develop and deliver activities which are new and experimental or which are specifically tailored to the needs of the area. Where possible, successful activities will be rolled out to other areas.

2.4 Consortia will promote close cooperation between academic departments and widening participation units in institutions, integrating Routes programmes into institutional WP strategies and OFFA statements, where this is not already the case. They will ensure that a larger proportion of Routes sustained interventions are targeted to support disadvantaged schools.

2.5 The nine lead universities will have responsibility for managing and co-ordinating the work of institutions in their region so as to ensure effective collaboration, coherence and quality, and will work to engage institutions that have not previously been involved in collaboration or in outreach activity in the area of languages.

2.6 A lead partner in each of the nine areas will take responsibility for developing a particular aspect of the Routes programme.

- increasing uptake at GCSE or equivalent (East of England)
- improving transition from sixth form to university (London)
- interventions in areas of social deprivation (East Midlands)

- increasing diversity in languages and in participation (North West)
- promoting the year abroad (West Midlands)
- language learning and work placements for students of other subjects (South East)
- languages for culture, history and society (South West)
- learning languages in context (Yorkshire and Humber)
- addressing issues of teacher supply (North East)

They will work with appropriate national bodies and with the co-ordinating team to ensure that innovations, good practices and materials are shared across the networks.

2.7 The programme will be enhanced by national partners, who will work with the consortia to extend the content and reach of regional activities, and will develop national activities and resources:

1. Translation and Interpreting Group (T&I), an umbrella group bringing together the Directors of the National Networks for Translation, for Interpreting and for Public Service Translation and Interpreting, will ensure that translation and interpreting are integrated into at least one careers event per year in each region. It will hold at least two national events annually focused on careers in the language industries, and will sustain the existing forum of employers and professional bodies, which has met annually for the last five years.
2. LLAS Centre for languages, linguistics and area studies will organise national activities, including an annual national training event for a representative proportion of student ambassadors; provide support for the T&I Group; and manage the robust system of evaluation.
3. The Association for Language Learning (ALL) will promote relationships between consortium members, teachers and schools through ALL members and groups. ALL will promote collaboration at local level, will participate in activities to raise the profile of language teaching as a career and will contribute to increasing teacher supply.
4. ThirdYearAbroad.com (TYA) will develop online and social networking tools to increase interaction between students and pupils nationally and regionally. It will help to build student-based virtual communities, and will promote take-up of year abroad opportunities, building on its experience with ThirdYearAbroad.com website.
5. The Open University will provide access to online dissemination tools and will pilot an initiative to use online tools, such as webinar applications, to extend the reach of locally organised events, such as taster days and master classes. It will also, where possible and appropriate, through its regional centres be involved in the activities of the consortia.
6. The regionally based Network for Languages will work with the consortia to provide continuing professional development for teachers linked with the Routes events for school students.

3 Management and governance

3.1 Routes will be managed and co-ordinated by the University of Southampton, who will be accountable to HEFCE. The Programme Director will be Prof. Mike Kelly, who has directed Routes since its inception. He will be supported by Vicky Wright, as Deputy, and an experienced team at LLAS Centre for languages, linguistics and area studies, which specialises in educational projects and professional development in the area of languages and related subjects. The co-ordinating team will:

1. co-ordinate the work of the consortia so as to ensure consistency in approach across the country, and promote collaboration, sharing of ideas and innovations;
2. monitor activities through the twice yearly consortia activity monitoring reports which have been employed since the outset of Routes, and through annual budget statements, so as to ensure accountability and measurement of performance;
3. coordinate the participation of the Association for Language Learning (ALL), ThirdYearAbroad.com (TYA), the Network for Languages (NfL) the Open University (OU) and institutions who are leading the development of particular themes, to ensure that the results are disseminated across the country;
4. support and disseminate the programme through printed and online resources and materials for use across the country; through national events and through a Routes strand in the biennial HE Languages conference in 2014 and 2016, in collaboration with UCML and AULC.
5. organise governance structures through the Advisory Board.

3.2 An Independent Steering Group will provide accountability and challenge for the programme coordinators. It will be established by HEFCE and will meet annually.

3.3 A Routes Advisory Board will be established to advise on strategy and direction, and to receive evaluation reports. Its members will be appointed by the Director, and it will meet twice yearly. It will be chaired by Jocelyn Wyburd (UCML) and will comprise representatives of HEFCE, HEFCW, UCML, AULC, ALL, TYA, British Council, British Academy, Universities UK, AHRC, BIS, DFE, Melanie Fitton, Diane Appleton, 2 Directors of Routes consortia.

3.3 In agreement with HEFCE, the programme will retain the Routes into Languages identity and resources. IPR in future products and services will lie with the institutions that generated them.

4 Sustainability

4.1 Routes will work to assist the sector in putting languages on a more sustainable basis. Routes is one of several initiatives that are working on this task, following the recommendations of the Worton Report (2009). The main thrust of Routes work will continue to be focused on demand-raising in the school sector. It will increasingly work at national and local level with project

partner organisations (especially ALL and TYA), and with other bodies (e.g. UCML, AULC, British Council, British Academy, Speak to the future) to raise the profile of languages in the wider community, to develop awareness of the employment opportunities that are available and to raise awareness of the Year Abroad for students of all disciplines. It will also promote sustainability through collaboration between HEIs and collaboration with schools and with employers.

4.2 Routes will increase the sustainability of demand-raising activities by securing greater institutional commitment in participating institutions. In particular, partners will encourage Senior Management Teams to incorporate Routes and Routes-type activities into their OFFA statements, their teaching and learning strategies and their international strategies.

4.3 Routes will seek to embed outreach activities by enabling and encouraging institutions to carry them out within their own resources. This will be achieved through:

1. Embedding Routes activities in the normal schedule of language departments, widening participation units and careers services;
2. Increasing the number of Student Language Ambassador modules, in which courses are integrated into degree programmes, or into institutional programmes of student enrichment (e.g. HEAR);
3. Extending the range of Resource packs available to universities and schools;
4. Extending charges for participation in activities, where this is possible;
5. Seeking further sponsorship and funding opportunities.

4.4 In this way, Routes will use limited central funding to stimulate matched effort, and leveraging of the public investment. Based on the year 2011-12, it has been calculated that every £1.00 of HEFCE funding to the regional consortia was expected to generate activity worth at least a further £1.50. Since the volume of activity in practice exceeded the targets by a significant margin, this multiplier was undoubtedly even greater. Routes will further develop this value added by embedding of language enrichment and outreach activities in institutions and building on good practice developed in collaboration with schools, colleges, businesses, Local Authorities and other partner organisations.

4.5 Routes will consider further actions to achieve sustainability, including identifying additional sources of funding to extend and amplify activities, developing partnerships with a wider range of organisations and developing project proposals at UK and EU level. The programme team will present plans to the Advisory Board in June 2014.

5 Evaluation

5.1 Routes will use an evaluation system developed by the Routes evaluation working group, following the recommendations of SQW in 2011. It will be coordinated by LLAS and will use a set of tools to collect data in all nine consortia. This approach was piloted in 2011-2012 and the analysis of its effectiveness indicates that it offers a robust model. The model will continue to be further refined and developed to reflect OFFA guidance on how to produce an

Access Agreement for 2014-2015 and HEFCE's WP Evaluation Toolkit. It will use a mixed methods approach involving the following tools:

1. **First-year undergraduate survey**, which measures students' prior experience of languages outreach activity and perceptions of its impact on attitudes to language learning and decisions to study languages. It will also include a question on whether students are planning a period of residence abroad and if not, the reasons why. Schools and colleges attended by the undergraduates prior to university will be analysed using evidence-based WP criteria (POLAR 2/3, IMD, FSM, Pupil premium and attainment) and this data will be compared each year.
2. **Student language ambassador survey**, which collects data from SLAs at the start and end of each academic year and examines the impact of the scheme on SLAs themselves (including employability) and on learners in schools. Schools and colleges attended by the SLAs prior to university will be analysed using WP criteria.
3. **Pre-event and post-event pupil survey**, which is based on questionnaires that investigate learners' experiences of Routes activities, their attitudes to languages and their aspirations with regard to languages study. It also measures indications of post-event changes in attitudes and aspirations. The impact of activities on different groups of learners (e.g. boys/girls and those in different types of schools) will be analysed as will the effect of different types of activities. This will help to show which activities are associated with the most significant attitudinal changes. A particular focus for data collection will be those activities which involve efforts to raise attainment and close the gap (e.g. GCSE revision days).
4. **Post-activity teacher survey**, which is based on questionnaires that elicit the views of teachers on the likely benefits for pupils of Routes activities and their suggestions for improving activities. Possible differences in the views of teachers working in different types of schools and colleges will be monitored
5. **School/college case studies** providing a detailed picture of the longer-term impact of Routes. In a new approach designed to overcome limitations in large-scale tracking data, detailed case studies will be developed by each of the nine consortia and will include annually a selection of the following: a longer-term pupil tracking survey with participants in Routes activities, a semi-structured interview with a modern languages teacher (face-to-face, telephone or email), pupil focus group interviews and/or teacher focus group interviews. Uptake and attainment data will be collected for these schools over the 3 years of the project. A majority of the schools/colleges will be those which meet widening participation criteria and these will be targeted using a robust evidence base in line with HEFCE guidance. Learner level WP data will additionally be collected from these schools (e.g. postcode, parental/carer occupation etc.). The non-WP schools will be used as a potential contrast indicator for the data obtained from the WP schools. At the end of 3 years, this will yield a very detailed picture of the impact of Routes engagement with these schools/colleges and it will include tracking data.

6. **The Advisory Board** will receive and comment on evaluation reports and will advise on the direction and impact of Routes, so as to inform planning.

5.2 The results of these evaluation activities will be analysed on a national basis by the co-ordinating team in autumn 2014 as formative evaluation. It will be discussed at meetings of the Routes partners and presented to the Advisory Board and Steering Group. A further formative evaluation will be conducted in autumn 2015. A final, summative evaluation will be based on these two analyses together with interim reports in the summer of 2016, and will be presented to HEFCE in July 2016. Formative evaluations will be used to inform planning of future Routes activities regionally and nationally. Evaluation outputs will be made available in different formats, in line with advice in the WP Evaluation Toolkit.

5.3 Consortia and institutions will identify other evaluation processes that are being conducted in respect of widening participation. They will seek where possible to collaborate, for example, to combine data collection approaches, exchange findings and share good practices. It is recognised that these processes will vary between institutions and consortia will share experience so as to achieve synergies.

5.4 Evaluation reports will be used to promote the programme and its messages to policy-makers, education leaders and employers. Full reports, including executive summaries will be published on the Routes website. A series of Powerpoint presentations of key findings will also be produced so that they can be presented to a variety of audiences and stakeholders. Annual reports of key findings will also be published and these will be directed at senior leaders in universities and schools.

M. Kelly
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