

Careers using Languages

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Contents

Introduction.....	2
Getting started	3
Working Abroad	4
Translation and Interpreting.....	4
Teaching	7
Public Sector	8
Business, Finance and Management	11
Tourism.....	12
Building your skills and experience.....	12
Building your network and LinkedIn	14
Useful resources for vacancies and events.....	15

Introduction

You may be pleased and simultaneously overwhelmed that you can do almost anything with your languages degree. 70% of jobs are open to students from any discipline. A key question you will need to consider is how important is it to you to use your language as a core, daily part of your role. As you'll already know teaching, translation and interpreting are significant areas which allow you to use your languages on a daily basis.

However there a wide range of sectors where your language skills would be beneficial for the company, and a part of your role but maybe not on a daily basis. Your initial goal may be to get your foot in the door at an international organisation, even if you are not using your languages initially and find projects and roles later where you can speak your target language.

Whilst this guide cannot comprehensively cover all sectors you could apply for with languages we will cover some of the main areas where languages can be useful.

In addition to the information provided in the booklet we have a wide range of starting point guides in sectors languages students are typically interested in such as Advertising, Marketing and Public Relations, Human Resource Management, International and Overseas Development, Journalism and Broadcasting, Law for Non-law Students, Museums and Art Galleries, Music Industry, Politics and International Relations Related Work, Publishing and Working for a Charity, amongst others www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/services/downloads/

Information in our guide is up to date correct at the time of printing (Summer 2018). Certain career paths may be affected by the UK's exit from the European Union, and when we receive any up to date and reliable intelligence regarding Brexit, this guide will be updated accordingly.

Did you know?

The British Council's 2017 report 'Languages for the Future'¹ provides a ranking based on research to show of the 10 most important languages for the UK's language needs. The top five are (1) Spanish, (2) Mandarin, (3) French, (4) Arabic, and (5) German. They appear some way ahead of the next five, which are (6) Italian, (7) Dutch, (8) Portuguese, (9) Japanese, and (10) Russian.

Getting started

There are lots of links and resources in this guide to help you further research your options. However if you're just getting starting we recommend these two resources:

- 'I don't know what I want to do' section of the Careers Service website:
www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/whichcareer/idontknow. The webpage and guide covers working out what you enjoy and what you're good at and how to practically explore your options, and it addresses common careers concerns.
- 'What can I do with my degree – Modern Languages' page on the Prospects website'.
Find out more about what you can do with your degree by reading here www.prospects.ac.uk/careers-advice/what-can-i-do-with-my-degree/modern-languages . This includes links to very informative role profiles, which list the responsibilities of the job, salary, skills required, where to look for work experience and jobs.

¹ https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/languages_for_the_future_2017.pdf

Working Abroad

Around 10% of modern language graduates start their first jobs abroad after graduation, compared to 2% of all graduates. Do you want to live and work in a foreign country full time after graduation? You will need to research the graduate recruitment landscape, as opportunities will vary by country and may be fairly restrictive in certain places. Or would you like a job where you can spend periods of time abroad on secondments, trips and visits? If so it will be useful to look for UK based, but international companies and organisations who may offer such opportunities.

If you want to work overseas check out this page www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/findjobs/overseas for regional and country information. You can also log onto Passport Career from this page, which has over 80 country profiles with CV guidance and a jobs and internships search portal.

If you are thinking about living and working abroad <https://globalgraduates.com/> and <https://en.bab.la/> both have useful articles and information about where and how to find work.

Translation and Interpreting

If using your language skills as a central feature of your work is important to you, a career in translation and/or interpreting could be for you. Translation work focuses on the written word, and interpreting on verbal communication.

If you are interested in either of these career areas or both it's important to know that, whilst there are some in-house full time positions available (working directly for a company/organisation), the majority of work in these areas is freelance. Developing a successful freelance career requires you to be comfortable with working for yourself, finding new work on an ongoing basis and proactively networking.

Do I need to undertake further study?

It is possible to work as a translator and/or interpreter without a postgraduate qualification, by developing skills through experience (we know graduates who have done it!) However, you will find it's a competitive market, and therefore a master's qualification is a minimum requirement for many roles, and will help demonstrate your competence to potential clients and employers. This is especially true for interpreting. Successful graduates also work to build their skills and experience in the interpreting and translation field outside of the classroom alongside their postgraduate qualification. It may be informal work experience, for example translating the web page of a French charity or small business into English, but it all helps build your portfolio and network in the field.

Getting started

To get started with these career areas you should firstly understand the responsibilities entailed, what to expect on the job, where to look for job vacancies and what skills you need to develop. All this information and more can be found in these Prospects profiles:

www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/translator and
www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/interpreter

Useful links

- Find out if translation is for you by reading lingo24's career guide www.lingo24.com/resources/career-guide
- Capita is a translation and interpreting agency, which offers internships and work experience placements at their Manchester office in business support roles. Although you won't do translation or interpreting, it's a great way to get experience in the field and make connections. They also take on freelance translators and interpreters, but you will need further qualifications and/or significant experience for these roles. :
www.capitatranslationinterpreting.com

- There are many other sites where you can register your profile and look for translation/interpreting work such as www.translationdirectory.com, sites where you can search for live jobs such as www.welocalize.com, and sites where you can get in touch to enquire about freelance work such as www.thetranslationpeople.com and www.expresslanguagesolutions.co.uk

Professional Bodies

Professional body websites are invaluable for finding out the latest sector trends and news, and finding out more about the industry and how to get into it. Some of the bodies offer a student/affiliate membership for individuals starting their career which offer a range of benefits such as building your network, online forums, webinars and training. Joining can also show potential employers your commitment to developing in the field.

- **Chartered Institute of Linguists** is free to join as a student www.ciol.org.uk
- **The North West Translators Network** is free to join as a student www.nwttn.co.uk
- **The Institute of Translation and Interpreting** has an annual fee to join www.iti.org.uk
- **International Association of Conference Interpreters** has a great careers guidance section under 'Professional Resources' <https://aiic.net/>
- **Associations of Translation Companies** only offers membership for companies. However, there is a search tool you may find useful when looking for employment - 'Find an ATC Translation Company' www.atc.org.uk/
- **National Network for Interpreting and The National Network for Translation** were government funded initiatives under the programme 'Routes into Languages.' Although the content is no

longer being updated, due to the funding ending, there are some excellent resources about getting into the sector hosted on their sites www.nationalnetworkforinterpreting.ac.uk and www.nationalnetworkfortranslation.ac.uk

Teaching

We have a specific Starting Point Guide dedicated to teaching which you can access here www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/services/downloads/
The most popular languages taught in schools are French, German and Spanish. You could get a tax-free bursary of £26,000 or a £28,000 scholarship to support your training as a languages teacher. You can find out more about the routes into teaching, including school led training and university led training, here <https://getintoteaching.education.gov.uk/>
To search and apply for training programmes see www.ucas.com/postgraduate/teacher-training/ucas-teacher-training-apply-and-track

Another route into teaching languages is through the two year Leadership Development Programme run by TeachFirst, a charity founded on tackling educational inequality www.teachfirst.org.uk
Remember that teaching doesn't just include working with children in a school! You could establish a career teaching languages to adults, private tutoring, online teaching and/or training to individuals and/or companies.

Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)

We have a specific Starting Point Guide dedicated to TEFL which you can access here www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/services/downloads/
You may be particularly interested in the JET (Japan Exchange and Teaching) Scheme, where you can apply for an Assistant Language Teacher role, no Japanese ability required. Or if you speak Japanese (JLPT N2 required) you can apply for the Coordinator for International Relations role. Applications open in October and you can find out more here www.jet-uk.org/index.php.

If you are interested in becoming a language assistant you can find out more here www.britishcouncil.org/language-assistants. Many students also apply for these posts for their Residence Abroad in third year.

Public Sector

There are opportunities for linguists in local, national and international government other than translation, interpreting and teaching. Please note that there are strict nationality requirements for many public sector jobs, particularly in the Civil Service.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO)

FCO roles involve working abroad in UK embassies. They offer intensive language tuition before each overseas posting, so languages aren't an essential requirement to apply, but will give you an advantage as you can demonstrate your ability and desire to learn languages, and just as importantly the cultural awareness you have developed throughout your degree.

The ability to speak the language of the host country is a prerequisite for 500–600 posts within the FCO around the world, based on the requirements of the specific job and the extent to which it is possible or desirable to communicate using only English. The priority languages are those used at the United Nations: Arabic, French, Mandarin, Russian and Spanish.²

The FCO offer a graduate internship (usually opens for applications in March) and also a graduate scheme called the Diplomatic Service Fast Stream (opens for applications in October). The Fast Stream is highly competitive, so should be considered alongside other opportunities, rather than being your sole focus. Another option is to apply for a live job vacancy at the FCO and work your way up, or apply for the Fast Stream when you have more experience under your belt. Find out more about working for the FCO and current vacancies here:

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/foreign-commonwealth-office/about/recruitment

² https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/languages_for_the_future_2017.pdf

UK Intelligence and Security Agencies

MI5, MI6 and GCHQ employs and trains graduates as Language Analysts. They recruit jointly and work with candidates to find the right agency for them. Current recruitment is for **Arabic, Mandarin, Persian and Russian**. Occasionally there are opportunities to retrain in a rare language if you have a 2:1 degree in two European languages.

If you are interested in applying for a Language Analyst role your language ability needs to be high and you should make your year abroad as immersive as possible to develop your skills. It is recommended that applicants become as familiar as possible with translation and writing in the language but also cultural references and speaking. The level needed is to easily read a broadsheet newspaper/understand a news podcast and to be able to translate this. There are practice exercises on the agency websites that you should do before applying.

The whole process to apply for a Language Analyst can take 9-12 months from submitting the application, so it is recommended to start the process early in the final year of study.

You can apply for a direct vacancy as a Language Analyst, or apply for the 11 week Summer Language Talent Programme (GCHQ only) which is only open to final year undergraduates.

Find out more and practice language tests here: www.gchq-careers.co.uk/departments/language-analysts.html

European Commission

The European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO) recruits for EU Careers Student Ambassadors, which is a part-time role (minimum two hours a week) raising awareness of the EU at universities. Applications open in March.

If you are looking for an entry-level graduate role you will need to apply for an 'Administrator Profile.' You need to be an EU citizen and fluent in one of the official EU languages, and proficient in a second. The recruitment process is called an 'open competition' and is launched every spring.

Find out more about the Student Ambassador and Entry Level roles here:

<https://epso.europa.eu/>

You can also apply to become a freelance interpreter with European Institutions by passing EU accreditation test but you must meet their eligibility criteria. As you can be recruited for freelance work even if you're not in the EU there will still be a demand for English interpreters after Brexit, and many people are in the process of retiring from the English booth opening up opportunities for new talent³. Find out what experience and qualifications are required here

http://europa.eu/interpretation/accreditation_en.htm

United Nations

The United Nations (UN) Secretariat recruits a variety of language staff, including translators, interpreters, editors, verbatim reporters, copy preparers/proofreaders/production editors, terminologists and reference assistants. The UN is very different to the EU as it does not pass legislation and only operates in six official languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish), whereas the EU has the produce and agree legislation in every language in the EU. UN Language professionals are recruited through Language Competitive Examinations and you can find out more here <http://languagecareers.un.org>

If you are interested in working for the UN, but not as a Language Professional there are opportunities on their volunteer programme, internship programme or the Young Professionals Programme. You can find out more about each of these programmes in addition to information about what the UN do, career paths and how to apply here

<https://careers.un.org/lbw/home.aspx>

³ 2018 talk from Helen Campbell, (Director of National Network for Interpreting), at the University of Manchester on 'Multilingual Meetings in the EU institutions: the Role of Interpreters

Business, finance and management

There are so many possible options in these fields it would be impossible to name them all, as any business which operates internationally would benefit from having employees who speak multiple languages. Areas you could research further are customer services, sales and marketing, media and communications, business development, logistics and transport, IT/technology (there are many roles in this industry you can do without a Computer Science degree), accountancy, banking and finance, management consultancy, retail, food and drink, buying and merchandising.

If you've studied a language with business as a Joint Honours degree you may be particularly interested in these areas, but don't worry if you haven't. Gaining more experience in customer facing environments would be a good first step for business roles.

If you are interested in these types of role but want to know more about what they actually entail, a good place to start is by sector on Prospects and then read through job profiles www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/browse-sector. Talking to people who work in these roles, such as family, friends and alumni (see page 14 for more information on building networks), and work experience can deepen your understanding of the jobs too.

When you have narrowed it down think about why would companies benefit from hiring you? You have not just language skills but also a deep cultural understanding which is incredibly difficult to do business without.

Bilingual Personal Assistant/Secretary

There are a variety of administration roles where your language skills would be useful. You may use your languages to write and translate documents, speak foreign languages on the phone and at meetings, including some interpretation, as well as general PA tasks such as diary management, arranging meetings, travel and accommodation. Good IT skills will be required, and you could consider taking a secretarial course to boost your skills. Some customer facing experience is important and you could look at temporary office work as a way to gain skills and

experience. You may see this as a long term career option, or a way to get a foot in the door at an international company.

Find out more in this useful article: <https://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/job-descriptions/275927-bilingual-secretary-job-description>

Tourism

There are a wide range of roles available in the tourism industry, from large international companies to small bespoke providers who want to offer their customer the best possible experience in country. You could be working for a travel agency at home, or a tour company abroad. You could also consider hospitality, including events and hotel /resort management, and admin/marketing /media roles which aim to promote tourism in a range of ways. Building your experience and network in your winter, spring and summer holidays can help pave the way for a graduate role in the industry.

For further links about where to look for jobs in the industry see the Prospects Profile for Tour Manager: www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/tour-manager

Building your skills and experience

This section encourages you to think about how you can develop your languages skills and experience broadly, even if you are not sure what sector you want to work in in the future. By trying out a number of different activities you will learn more about different jobs and what you might enjoy in the future.

- Make the most of your winter, spring and summer breaks by looking for temporary work or internships, and/or part time work throughout your degree. Typical summer jobs using languages may be found in call centres, market research agencies, tutoring, and hospitality. You could start by speaking to recruitment agencies to discuss what roles they have available.

- You may also want to look for work abroad to improve your language skills and roles may frequently be found in admin, hospitality and tourism, and summer camps.
- Manchester City Council has a full service communications agency M-four translations: www.manchester.gov.uk/
They sometimes have vacancies, and you can register interest as a freelancer. A training programme is offered to freelancers to ensure they meet the required standard
- Central Manchester Hospitals Interpreting & Translation Services recruit from the agencies DA Languages in Altrincham and Language Empire in Oldham: www.cmft.nhs.uk/information-for-patients-visitors-and-carers/patient-advice-and-support/interpretation-and-translation-service

Look for volunteering opportunities to use your languages and build transferable skills

- Multilingual Manchester (MLM) is a research unit based in the School of Arts, Languages and Cultures at The University of Manchester. MLM provides opportunities to learn more about the city's many languages and to use your language skills in volunteering and placement activities such as: working with interpreters in local hospitals to collect patient experience testimonies; providing English language support to new arrivals; delivering language taster sessions to school pupils; organising public events to celebrate language diversity, and more. MLM volunteers and placement students engage with people from a range of linguistic and cultural backgrounds, and, through work with host organisations and local communities, get hands-on experience in the area of 'diversity management' – gaining an awareness of population diversity, developing tools to assess the needs and interests of diverse communities, and developing strategies to respond to these needs. Such skills and experience are in high demand in a variety of sectors in all major global cities. Find out more at <http://mlm.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/volunteers/> or email alex.robertson@manchester.ac.uk .

- Volunteer Hub is the University's database for local opportunities. On advanced search you can specify languages under 'area of interest' www.find-volunteering.manchester.ac.uk
- If you have a Manchester postcode you can apply for opportunities with Volunteering Manchester, and if you don't have a Manchester postcode they can direct you onto your local council: www.manchestercommunitycentral.org
- Do-it is a national database if you are not based in Manchester, but you can also look at what is available at a local level in your hometown/city: <https://do-it.org>

Building your network and LinkedIn

Every year the Careers Service hosts two **language events** aimed at connecting you with alumni, students who previously studied at the University of Manchester. These are 'Meet the Languages Graduates' in October and 'Love Languages' in February. Our events are always informal and relaxed giving you opportunities to chat to and ask questions to our guests such as 'how did you decide what you wanted to do?', 'what do you enjoy about your job?', and 'how did you get into it?' to help inspire you and inform you about the wide range of options available with your degree. You can sign up to these on CareersLink at the relevant times of year www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/careerslink

LinkedIn is growing, and previous languages students have been targeted with job offers on LinkedIn because of their specialist skills. If you're not on LinkedIn recruiters cannot find you! As well as the potential for being headhunted and finding jobs on LinkedIn one of the benefits of the platform is the ability to connect with and see what former students are now doing with their languages degree. To find them go to The University of Manchester's page on LinkedIn, click on 'See alumni.' Scroll across by clicking 'next' and click on 'What they studied' to search for your language(s). Don't be nervous about messaging alumni for advice; people are usually flattered and willing to help! www.linkedin.com . For more help with getting started on LinkedIn, see the information on the Careers website at

www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/applicationsinterviews/linkedin or come along to one of our LinkedIn Academy events.

You can also access '**The Manchester Network**' which is a University run portal hosting a wide range of alumni who have signed up to help you and provide advice! You can either apply for **Manchester Gold Mentoring** which is a 6 month programme of support from one mentor, or message individuals on a one off basis under our 'Ask me About' feature. Some alumni are offering work shadowing and work experience placements, as well as advice on careers, CVs, interviews and more. Find everything you need to get started here

www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/experience/mentoring

Useful Resources for vacancies and events

There are numerous recruitment websites where you can look for roles using languages. Most recruit worldwide (see exceptions in brackets) and you can typically search by location, language or sector and subscribe for job alerts:

- www.toplanguagejobs.co.uk/
- www.multilingualvacancies.com
- www.eurolondon.com/
- www.europelanguagejobs.com
- www.languagebusiness.co.uk/
- www.lingua-jobs.com/
- www.languagematters.co.uk/
- www.linguistsdirect.com/
- www.ablrecruitment.com

CareersLink is the University of Manchester's vacancy database where you can find part time work whilst you are at university, internships for the summer and your year abroad and jobs after graduation. You can use it for two years after you graduate. If you click on advanced search you can filter the results by language and location. You can also sign up to our

events on CareersLink including our languages events and our LinkedIn Academy workshops: www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/careerslink

The Language Show is an annual event that takes place in London every October/November and you can attend for free. You can talk to a wide range of exhibitors, attend free seminars, do taster classes and meet fellow language enthusiasts. Seminars change every year but to give you an idea session from last year included 'What it takes to be a Public Services Interpreter,' 'Language Roles in Social Media Management,' and 'Becoming a Professional Translator' <http://languageshowlive.co.uk/>

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