



# Routes into Languages: lessons learned and sustainability

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# Routes: a short history

Set up in 2006

Lead partners:

Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and  
Area Studies (LLAS)

CILT, the National Centre for Languages

University Council of Modern Languages (UCML)

Funded by HEFCE, with support from DCMS/  
DfE (after Dearing Review), and HEFCW



# Aims and objectives

- Respond to decline in take up of languages in secondary and higher education
- Address falling recruitment of British graduates in professional language employment
- Increase and widen the take up of languages through cooperation between universities, working with secondary schools
- Cooperation between universities in recruiting and training specialist interpreters and translators
- Promote work and study abroad in undergraduate programmes (post 2013)

# Activities (1)

One-day events, including careers events, year abroad presentations, tasters, cultural days, master classes, competition finals.

Sustained interventions, including Foreign Language Spelling Bee, Mother-Tongue-Other-Tongue, Adopt-a-Class, Linguastars, Pop Video competition, Gold Award for Languages, Linguacast, World Cup 2014 Challenge, Language Leader Award, Year 9 Summer Residential, Pre-16 Language Programme, Doubles Clubs with sports teams.

# Activities (2)

Student Language Ambassadors, including tutoring, mentoring and coaching in schools, participating in promotional events, supporting Routes activities.

National Networks for Interpreting and Translation, bringing together universities that offer specialist postgraduate degrees.

Making the case for languages. Including national events, cooperation with other languages organisations, websites (Why study languages), presentations and resources (classroom materials, posters, calendars, blogs, Webinars, MOOCs etc)

# Some numbers

9 regional consortia covering all the English regions

67 participating universities across England.

Routes Cymru, consortium of 4 Welsh universities

Activities in England 2014-15

870 activities and events

850 undergraduate student language ambassadors

2,300 schools reached by Routes

87,000 school students reached, including 38,000 from disadvantaged schools.

# Lessons identified (1)

- Many factors influence take up of languages
  - Political issues (EU, migration, foreign policy etc)
  - Public attitudes
  - Government policies for education
  - School policies
  - Examination results
  - Career paths
  - Promotional activities, like Routes
  - Teachers
  - Role models
  - Curriculum
  - Individual aspirations

# Routes: lessons identified (2)

- Routes has been good at building motivation for students and teachers
- Cooperation builds community and encourages sharing of ideas, mutual support
- Cooperation must be based on mutual interest, and must recognise areas of competition
- National project needs support of government, stakeholders
- Teachers are passionate and inventive
- Students are charismatic



# Sustainability

- National funding of £1m per year has facilitated activities worth much more (x3)
- With the end of national funding Routes will become a looser, devolved network
- We hope to continue the identity with light-touch coordination to:
  - Protect the Routes identity (principles & IPR)
  - Collect information on activities
  - Maintain website facility

# Questions and comments

Website:

<https://www.routesintolanguages.ac.uk>

Contact:

[routes@soton.ac.uk](mailto:routes@soton.ac.uk)