

January 2026

We had an absolutely fantastic evening at the St Dunstan's College Careers in Languages event . Thank you so much Jade McLellan, Kate and the brilliant Languages Department for hosting us all so well, it must have been a lot of work!



The quality of sessions was fantastic and the choice was superb. **Students learned from current undergraduates about their year abroad and choice of studies including the possibility of starting new languages from scratch.** We were treated to taster sessions in Ancient Greek, Japanese, Italian, Mandarin, Forensic Linguistics, Italian and Linguistics. **We were reminded of the huge interdisciplinary potential of our superpower – not only with the arts and humanities but also with STEM – STEMFL ! This diversity is reflected in a multitude of pathways and we heard from speakers in the Creative Industries, Government, Médecins sans frontières and also GCHQ: gathering intelligence to fight terrorism, organised crime and people trafficking demands linguistic flexibility let's not forget.** Linguists solve problems, bridge communities and save lives! We were delighted to hear about the revival of the Erasmus Scheme which will open up enormous opportunities for our students and we heard from one student who spoke about how this experience had changed his life.

We also were reminded of the empowering opportunities afforded by AI as language learners – exposure, repetition and practice allow learning and consolidation to complement limited lesson time but ultimately it cannot replace expert teaching and quality in-person interactions. Crucially, what AI cannot do, we were reminded, is empathy, cultural sensitivity or intercultural understanding which make us so important as linguists. **Language expertise is at heart an eminently human achievement which is even more highly prized in this automatic age.**

Ultimately, the world needs linguists to shape and lead safe, resilient and prosperous communities in an increasingly volatile world. **Home, Heritage and Community Languages are an asset that we should be putting front and centre on our CVs.** We need UK students to be even more committed to European languages as the need to rebuild relations with the EU becomes more urgent. We also need strong linguists to be brave and take up non-European languages especially Russian, Arabic and Mandarin.

It was so wonderful to have these inspiring messages reinforced with a group of very enthusiastic and committed linguists. May they do their bit and do us proud!!!

Catherine Ames