

## **UCML Executive Committee Meeting, April 2022**

### **Report from the Vice Chair Education (Languages and Intercultural Studies)**

This brief report reviews activities since the last meeting.

#### **The UK Languages landscape**

##### **1. Purchasing additional UCAS data**

Given the impact of the Report on Granular Trends in Modern Languages in UCAS Admissions Data<sup>1</sup> which reviewed degree combinations with languages between 2012-2018, we have been in contact with UCAS to purchase the latest data sets (to include the 21/22 academic year). We will again to be restricted to the publication of 100 data points (i.e. any one point made in a report is counted as 'one' whether it draws on one or more pieces of data) . We hope to work closely with the British Academy on this project as in the last report.

##### **2. AULC / UCML annual survey.**

As with the last joint survey, we are collaborating with AULC in order to draw as detailed a picture as possible of the UK languages landscape. This time we are sending out separate surveys but plan to write a joint report which we hope will be available from the beginning of July.

The main AULC objectives for the AULC survey are:

- To assess the scale of IWLP activities to compare with 2017 (changes over a 5 year time horizon)
- To see the scope of IWLP activities beyond conventional language courses, and to better define and understand IWLPs
- To identify trends in different languages
- To assess capacity for teaching
- To identify challenges and opportunities across the sector as a whole
- To develop strategies for future developments within AULC

The main objectives for the UCML survey are:

- To establish where degrees with languages are / are not available
- To identify trends (e.g. which languages at what levels; increase / decrease in take-up) in different languages over the last 5 years
- To identify trends in UG degree content (e.g. focus on sustainability, decolonising the curriculum, teaching of translation and interpreting) and titles
- To establish how languages are included in PG programmes
- To understand the ongoing influence of the pandemic on our practices
- To understand ongoing issues around travel abroad (due to Brexit and the pandemic)

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<sup>1</sup> <https://university-council-modern-languages.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/UCML-BA-UCAS-Granularity-Report.pdf>

- To identify trends in the take-up of study abroad and any changes in the typical requirement to spend a substantial period of study abroad.
- To continue to promote Routes into Languages as a brand and to identify common outreach activities (in particular the use of student ambassadors) where institutions can work effectively together.

Both surveys were sent out before Easter and will need to be completed by the 30<sup>th</sup> May, 2022. The survey was sent to 71 Heads of Languages and it is hoped that we will get a good return. At the time of writing there have been 10 responses and already there are some interesting trends appearing.

Following an approach from the BA and the formation of the informal Home / Heritage / Community Languages Advisory Group hosted by the British Council and the Association for Language Learning, we will be sending out an appendix to the survey asking about institutional policy on qualifications in home, heritage and community languages and to establish whether admissions policies include restrictions on the acceptance of A levels and equivalents in these languages.

### **Promoting Languages**

- **Routes into Languages**

As I reported at the January plenary every English region was represented at the first UCML Routes sub-committee meeting of the new year, 2022, alongside Routes Cymru, the national networks for Translation and Interpreting and for the first time Northern Ireland were represented through NICILT and Scotland through SCILT. This is a great achievement, given the lack of funding and it is rewarding to see new university partnerships springing up in the English regions. We will be holding the next meeting in May.

The most exciting news for Routes however has been the recent appointment of Sky Herington as UCML's national Routes Coordinator. She will be helping to coordinate a number of Routes activities including a potential soft re-launch across the Routes networks around the European Day of Languages on the 26<sup>th</sup> September and setting up a national training course for UG ambassadors. Given that there is potential to develop a new Routes website with support from the technical team at Southampton, she will also be contributing to its re-design and development.

Routes was contacted by Michelle Langley, a Policy Adviser in the British Academy's Higher Education and Skills policy team, and we have made a contribution to an updated paper on research into what works in languages mentoring on the latest Routes activities.

- **National Centre for CLIL: Learning through Languages UK**  
I attend the regular meetings of this group on behalf of UCML.
- **Gender Action** (<https://www.genderaction.co.uk/>)  
I am on the steering group for GA and attend their regular meetings. There is still ongoing active discussion around future funding sources to take the GA programme forward and crowd sourcing is currently one area of interest. It is a great shame that the GA scheme has not found a sustainable way forward since it has had a real impact in schools which have adopted the programme and could be particularly useful in bringing more boys into our subject areas.

### **Other activities**

I have attended several meetings of the Languages Cultures and Societies Subject Benchmark Advisory Group and am on a working sub-group looking at defining principles for an inclusive curriculum and pedagogy. I am also representing LCS on the Linguistics Advisory Group. These meetings have been very fruitful and very positive.

VW, April 2022