

Est.  
1841

YORK  
ST JOHN  
UNIVERSITY

Hayes, Alison ORCID logoORCID:

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0390-7930> (2016) Careers Using Languages: how to set up a conference for schools. In: Corradini, Erika, Borthwick, Kate and Gallagher-Brett, Angela, (eds.) Employability for languages: a handbook. 1st ed. Dublin, Ireland, Research-publishing.net, pp. 51-55

Downloaded from: <https://ray.yorks.ac.uk/id/eprint/1617/>

The version presented here may differ from the published version or version of record. If you intend to cite from the work you are advised to consult the publisher's version:

<http://dx.doi.org/10.14705/rpnet.2016.cbg2016.463>

Research at York St John (RaY) is an institutional repository. It supports the principles of open access by making the research outputs of the University available in digital form. Copyright of the items stored in RaY reside with the authors and/or other copyright owners. Users may access full text items free of charge, and may download a copy for private study or non-commercial research. For further reuse terms, see licence terms governing individual outputs. [Institutional Repository Policy Statement](#)

# RaY

Research at the University of York St John

For more information please contact RaY at [ray@yorks.ac.uk](mailto:ray@yorks.ac.uk)

# 8 Careers Using Languages: how to set up a conference for schools

**Alison Hayes<sup>1</sup>**

---

## 1. Introduction

Since 2011, York St John University (YSJU) has run an annual one-day ‘Careers using Languages’ conference for schools in Yorkshire and Humberside. It has the aim of demonstrating to school students the opportunities in life that speaking a foreign language opens up as well as showing how they will be able to offer an added bonus to their future employers if they maintain their language skills.

The conference programme includes a high-profile keynote speaker with wide experience of using languages in their career, while the rest of the day comprises a range of interactive workshops.

It is advertised to local schools, including those with a high Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) score, and their feedback has always been overwhelmingly positive.

So far the event has been funded by Routes into Languages and supported by York St John Business School, and has become a fixture of our Widening Participation (WP) activities.

**Keywords:** languages, careers, schools, employability.

---

1. York St John University, York, United Kingdom; A.Hayes@yorks.j.ac.uk

**How to cite this chapter:** Hayes, A. (2016). Careers Using Languages: how to set up a conference for schools. In E. Corradini, K. Borthwick and A. Gallagher-Brett (Eds), *Employability for languages: a handbook* (pp. 51-55). Dublin: Research-publishing.net. <http://dx.doi.org/10.14705/rpnet.2016.cbg2016.463>

## 2. What we do

“Close to half of businesses (45%) recognise foreign language skills among their employees as beneficial” (CBI, 2015, p. 7).

Primarily, the Careers using Languages event aims to convey to school students the message that having some language skills will increase the variety and the level of jobs available to them, even if languages are not the main focus of their job or career, hence the title of the event: not Careers in Languages but Careers using Languages.

The students who attend are mainly in Years 9 and 10, usually between 13 and 16 years old, and typically are studying one or more languages at school. It is hoped that they will be inspired and motivated by the event to continue studying languages at A-level and beyond, and that in the future they will be aware of and interested in the possibilities that languages can create.

Engaging keynote speakers who have a career in an industry other than the obvious language-based areas of teaching, translating and interpreting are invited. An example is Sally Fagan of Business Language Champions (<http://business-language-champions.co.uk/>), who has an impressive background in international sales. She explained how she was employed because of her languages and trained in engineering and sales by her employers, as they felt this would be far quicker than employing an engineer and training them in languages. The keynote speaker for the 2015 conference was a representative from the Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ), who explained to students how languages can be useful in the world of James Bond!

The parallel sessions which comprise the rest of the day are mainly interactive; for example, getting students to create a French or Spanish marketing campaign, how languages are used in the hospitality industry, volunteering abroad, using culture and body-language when communicating internationally, studying abroad, language and culture tasters in Japanese, Arabic and British Sign Language, and also a hands-on introduction to interpreting.

“There is value in language learning for students of all disciplines and for individuals of all ages, throughout life” ([Born Global Symposium, 2014](#), p. 36).

In addition, the event gives students a taste of university life: the chance to see that it is a welcoming, lively place, and they are able to meet and ask questions to current undergraduate students in the form of Student Ambassadors, including during an optional tour of the campus at the end of the day, when students can see the range of facilities on offer.

The event has been funded by Routes into Languages for the last five years, and publicised to schools throughout the region, particularly those with a high IMD score, as this is the purpose of Routes into Languages: to encourage participation in Higher Education (HE) from schools with low involvement. These are the students who can often benefit most from the breaking down of perceived barriers or misconceptions about HE through a day of inspiring language and culture events in a university environment.

### **3. Discussion of outcomes**

Feedback from staff and students after each event has been overwhelmingly positive:

“All lectures and taster sessions were well planned and well delivered. Found the opening lecture interesting as to the roles in industry having a language can benefit”, said one teacher, and student comments included: “I really enjoyed this event, it has made me look further into studying languages”; “Motivated my thinking about languages and my future”; “I would like more opportunities in the future to do events like this” ([Routes into Languages, 2015](#), p. 1).

While YSJU has often been involved in running taster sessions or masterclasses on school premises, it is also important to hold events at YSJU, in order to give

students a taste of HE as well as input on careers. Events have also been run on campus comprising language tasters and an ‘Introduction to HE talk by the marketing department, but these tended to involve one school at a time. The Careers using Languages conference involves students from five or six different schools, and while students tend to remain within their school groups, it is beneficial for them to see others from different institutions and possibly observe different attitudes to languages and careers amongst their peers.

#### 4. Conclusion

Although Routes into Languages funding is coming to an end, YSJU intends to continue to hold the conference using funding from other sources. As this event has become a regular part of the YSJU Business School’s WP activities, hopefully it will endure and evolve for many years to come. The Born Global Symposium’s Interim Report states that:

“Young people who can connect with others through their languages and through a shared understanding of diverse cultures are at an advantage in the global labour market over their monolingual peers” (The British Academy, 2014, p. 21).

The Languages team at YSJU hope that in a small way their event contributes to this.

#### References and links

- Born Global Symposium. (2014). *Summary of interim findings*. Retrieved from [http://www.ucml.ac.uk/sites/default/files/shapingthefuture/101/Born%20Global\\_Summary%20of%20Interim%20Findings%2017%20Oct%202014\(1\).pdf](http://www.ucml.ac.uk/sites/default/files/shapingthefuture/101/Born%20Global_Summary%20of%20Interim%20Findings%2017%20Oct%202014(1).pdf)
- CBI. (2015). *Inspiring growth: CBI/Pearson Education and Skills Survey 2015* [online]. London: Confederation of British Industry. Retrieved from <http://news.cbi.org.uk/reports/education-and-skills-survey-2015/education-and-skills-survey-2015/>

Routes into Languages. (2015). *Careers using languages* [online]. York St John University.

Retrieved from <http://goo.gl/0nt2jc>

The British Academy. (2014). *Born global: summary of interim findings* [online]. London:

The British Academy. Retrieved from [http://www.britac.ac.uk/policy/Born\\_Global.cfm](http://www.britac.ac.uk/policy/Born_Global.cfm)



Published by Research-publishing.net, not-for-profit association  
Dublin, Ireland; Voillans, France, [info@research-publishing.net](mailto:info@research-publishing.net)

© 2016 by Erika Corradini, Kate Borthwick, and Angela Gallagher-Brett (collective work)  
© 2016 by Authors (individual work)

**Employability for languages: a handbook**  
**Edited by Erika Corradini, Kate Borthwick, and Angela Gallagher-Brett**

**Rights:** All articles in this collection are published under the Attribution-NonCommercial -NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0) licence. Under this licence, the contents are freely available online as PDF files (<http://dx.doi.org/10.14705/rpnet.2016.cb2016.9781908416384>) for anybody to read, download, copy, and redistribute provided that the author(s), editorial team, and publisher are properly cited. Commercial use and derivative works are, however, not permitted.



**Disclaimer:** Research-publishing.net does not take any responsibility for the content of the pages written by the authors of this book. The authors have recognised that the work described was not published before, or that it was not under consideration for publication elsewhere. While the information in this book are believed to be true and accurate on the date of its going to press, neither the editorial team, nor the publisher can accept any legal responsibility for any errors or omissions that may be made. The publisher makes no warranty, expressed or implied, with respect to the material contained herein. While Research-publishing.net is committed to publishing works of integrity, the words are the authors' alone.

**Trademark notice:** product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

**Copyrighted material:** every effort has been made by the editorial team to trace copyright holders and to obtain their permission for the use of copyrighted material in this book. In the event of errors or omissions, please notify the publisher of any corrections that will need to be incorporated in future editions of this book.

Typeset by Research-publishing.net  
Cover design and frog picture by © 2016 Raphaël Savina ([raphael@savina.net](mailto:raphael@savina.net))  
Cover illustration by © 2016 Nicolas Fenix ([www.nicolasfenix.com](http://www.nicolasfenix.com))

ISBN13: 978-1-908416-37-7 (Paperback - Print on demand, black and white)  
Print on demand technology is a high-quality, innovative and ecological printing method; with which the book is never 'out of stock' or 'out of print'.

ISBN13: 978-1-908416-38-4 (Ebook, PDF, colour)  
ISBN13: 978-1-908416-39-1 (Ebook, EPUB, colour)

**Legal deposit, Ireland:** The National Library of Ireland, The Library of Trinity College, The Library of the University of Limerick, The Library of Dublin City University, The Library of NUI Cork, The Library of NUI Maynooth, The Library of University College Dublin, The Library of NUI Galway.

**Legal deposit, United Kingdom:** The British Library.  
British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data.  
A cataloguing record for this book is available from the British Library.

**Legal deposit, France:** Bibliothèque Nationale de France - Dépôt légal: juin 2016.