

The future of languages in the UK

Submissions by the British Academy, ASCL and the APPG on Modern Languages to the Comprehensive Spending Review 2021

Introduction

[Languages are strategically vital for the future of the UK](#) as we look to recover from the coronavirus pandemic and strengthen our commercial, soft-power, defence, security, cultural, and research relationships across the world. It has been estimated that [our language skills deficit could cost the UK economy up to 3.5% of GDP per annum](#)¹ as a result of overdependence on Anglophone export markets. We need [urgent, concerted and coordinated action](#) to address the inadequate, longstanding, and worsening supply of the language skills needed by the UK to meet future needs. [Languages are key facilitating subjects](#): they help with literacy and with other areas of the curriculum, with levels of literacy being a major predictor of children's attainment in science and maths. We need to develop these skills much more equitably across socio-economic groups, so that individuals benefit from the educational, career, and personal benefits that languages bring, whatever their social background and their region.

These needs have been recognised by the UK government in general and within the four jurisdictions in particular. We – the British Academy, the Association of School and College Leaders, and the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Modern Languages² – recognise that initiatives have already taken place in the four jurisdictions to boost language learning (including for England NCELP and the Mandarin/Latin Excellence Programmes). However, we believe that given the scale of the challenge there is an urgent need for further action to build on those initiatives.

Based on previous work across our organisations, we have identified a set of five immediate priority areas to further language learning in the UK. Three of which (proposals 1-3 below) relate specifically to England, but could be or are already being implemented elsewhere; the fourth and fifth are UK-wide. Each proposal is grounded in a recommendation from the earlier document [Towards a National Languages Strategy](#) (see below) and aims to boost language learning and skills in the UK. The suggested measures can support the government's goals of [levelling up](#) (Build Back Better: our *plan for growth*) and of pursuing '[openness as a source of prosperity](#)' (*Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development, and Foreign Policy*).

The proposed prioritizing of the five areas below is specifically designed to:

- complement the other measures the Department for Education is taking to increase GCSE uptake of a modern or ancient language and so make more achievable its ambition for 75% of pupils to study the EBacc by 2022 and 90% by 2025 (proposals 2 and 3 below)
- boost uptake in languages at A-Level (proposal 1 below), which will boost numbers studying languages at university
- boost essential international links in language learning (which have been compromised by the pandemic and other factors) at both school and university level (proposal 4 and 5 below).

Each proposal is intended for inclusion in submissions to the Comprehensive Spending Review 2021 and demonstrates how the programme would complement existing initiatives – and address unmet demand – in language learning; and evidences the route to impact, both for learners and for wider strategic value. While the strategic priority of languages means that language learning should not be the sole concern of the Department for Education, this proposal is addressed for the Department's attention as the bids below fall under its remit. However, we recognise that progress in language

¹ Foreman-Peck, J and Wang, Y (2013): The Costs to the UK of Language Deficiencies as a Barrier to UK Engagement in Exporting: A Report to UK Trade & Investment
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/309899/Costs_to_UK_of_language_deficiencies_as_barrier_to_UK_engagement_in_exporting.pdf

² AHRC has contributed to the development of this document through facilitating discussions with experts, including those it funds, whose research has helped to constitute the evidence base for the proposals.

learning will positively impact the work of several other departments,³ and recommend that the Government approach languages with greater cross-departmental strategic notice and responsibility.

The evidence in these bids draws on existing schemes or best practice and so offers the advantage of building on evidenced success in skills development in other strategic priority disciplines, such as maths. This document includes the following individual proposals:

1. Advanced Languages Premium
2. Languages Mentoring Programme
3. German for All
4. Turing Scheme for International Mobility for Schools
5. Turing Scheme for International Mobility for Higher Education

In addition, we would also like to draw attention to concerns around the falling numbers of Initial Teacher Training (ITT) recruitment and the loss of the Language Teacher Training Scholarships (LTTS). The 2021 data on changes to both schemes was not complete in time for bids to be drafted as part of this submission. However, there are early and concerning indications of a fall in modern language ITT recruitment, and that a significant shortfall is expected in the coming years due to difficulty in EU nationals accessing training funding. Any such shortfall will likely impact regionally, and hit disadvantaged schools harder as they struggle to recruit.

This will further increase the achievement gap and, coupled with the loss of the Language Teacher Training Scholarships provided by the British Council, raises concerns for the sustainability of future language learning in schools. Subject Knowledge Enhancement funding needs to be targeted at modern languages ITE courses in order to widen the pool of prospective teachers and because a sufficient level of subject knowledge is essential for the subject. This general SKE need has moreover increased because COVID-19 has prevented many modern language students from experiencing their year abroad in the last two academic years, resulting in subject knowledge gaps. Yet there have been problems this year with SKE funding, which needs to be targeted at ITE courses for modern languages, in order to increase the number of qualified teachers.

Towards a national languages strategy

In July 2020, the British Academy and its partners published [a series of proposals for a strategy](#) which would provide the urgent, concerted and coordinated action which is necessary to address the current linguistic deficit. The strategy takes a joined-up, holistic approach which is coherent across the education and skills systems, and which can, where appropriate, be implemented across the UK, to maximise the return which can be achieved. The strategy seeks to build on existing initiatives and increase their impact, led wherever possible by the language education community itself.

³ Most notably: the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, and the Department for International Trade. In addition, progress in languages positively impacts: the Ministry of Defence, Home Office, Ministry of Justice, Department of Health and Social Care, and the Department of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

1. Advanced Modern Languages Premium

What are we asking for?

[As language take-up differs substantially across different localities in England](#), we recommend the introduction of an Advanced Modern Languages Premium for study of modern languages at RQF level 3 (A level and equivalent) as a levelling-up incentive to schools in England that have low levels of provision and take-up (see also proposal 2, below). This would be on the model of the scheme introduced in the 2017 Budget [supporting mathematics](#). Current post-16 funding models make small A Level groups uneconomic (typically where there are fewer than 10 students) and such provision is rapidly disappearing. We expect this to be a short-term measure until a healthy pipeline from GCSE has been restored (in line with the DfE's EBacc ambition).

Why should this be supported?

Despite the UK's urgent need for better language skills and the considerable benefits to individuals, the numbers of students studying a language (other than compulsory English or Welsh) to qualification level at school and to degree level at university is, despite minor fluctuations, very low compared even with the start of this century.⁴ This has resulted in an overall contraction of provision in secondary schools and at degree level in universities.

For schools and colleges, [loss of A level provision](#) makes it more difficult to attract high-quality teachers, and to resource and promote GCSE take-up. Strategies such as shared provision across schools are extremely difficult to manage logistically and when selecting three subjects for A level, pupils often opt for subjects that their own school can offer. Ideally, talented linguists would have the opportunity to study more than one language but enabling this diversity makes it even more likely that class sizes for individual languages will be small. The loss of A level language provision in schools is hard to reverse, particularly in communities in need of support with [local economic growth](#) and local investment. As the UK [Builds Back Better](#) A Level language skills will be an essential part of economic recovery, productivity and competitiveness in an international arena.

How much would it cost?

The Advanced Maths Premium provides additional funding of £600 per year to schools for each additional student pursuing Level 3 maths compared to a 2017 baseline. For 2019-20, £10.6 million was allocated across around 2,000 schools and colleges in England, which would facilitate an increase in take-up of approximately 20%. To support a comparable increase in numbers taking modern languages would cost **around £3m a year** – considerably less than the £14m allocated to the maths premium in the 2020-21 academic year alone – i.e. £9m in total for the 3-year period 2022-25.

⁴ [British Council \(2018\): Language Trends 2018: Language Teaching in Primary and Secondary Schools in England survey report](#); [British Academy \(2018\): The landscape for humanities and social sciences in higher education: the current picture](#)

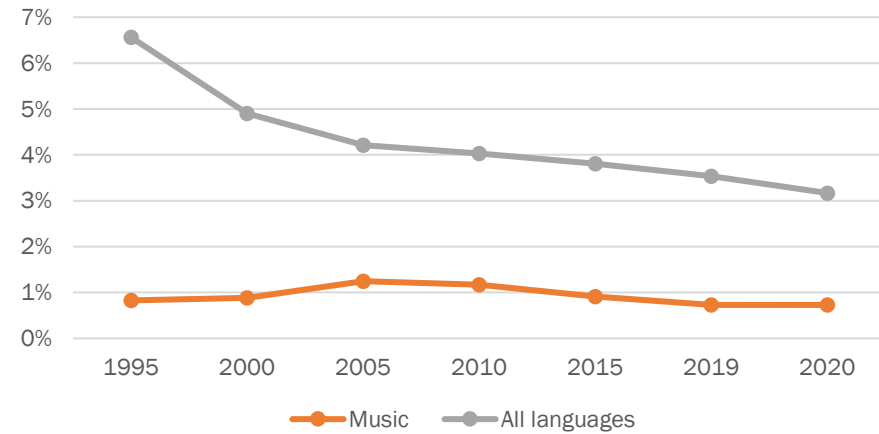
Annex – Supporting data

Modern languages have experienced a uniquely steep and long decline in numbers at A level. Music and ‘Classical Subjects’ are the only standalone subject areas with entry numbers comparable to individual modern languages.⁵ The charts below show the A level entries in modern languages (French, German, Spanish and Other Modern Languages) and in Music as a proportion of the total A level entries for that year. The data show that while numbers for Music have declined over the period, the fall has been much steeper for modern languages.

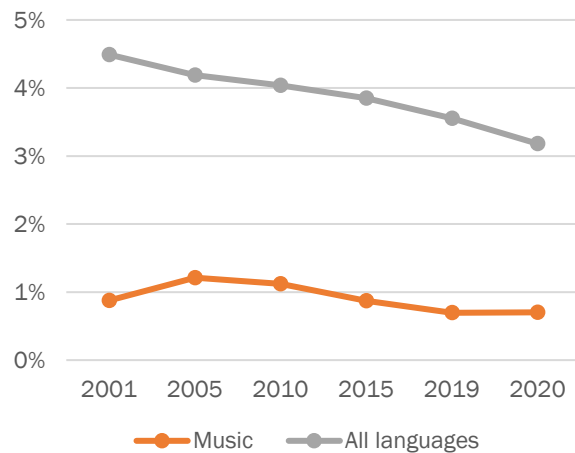
The case for a Premium to support provision in modern languages is therefore urgent and uniquely strong.

Note: Data from the Joint Council for Qualifications, <https://www.jcq.org.uk/examination-results/> Entries for Welsh and Irish have not been included, but are an important part of the overall picture of linguistic capacity for the UK as a whole.

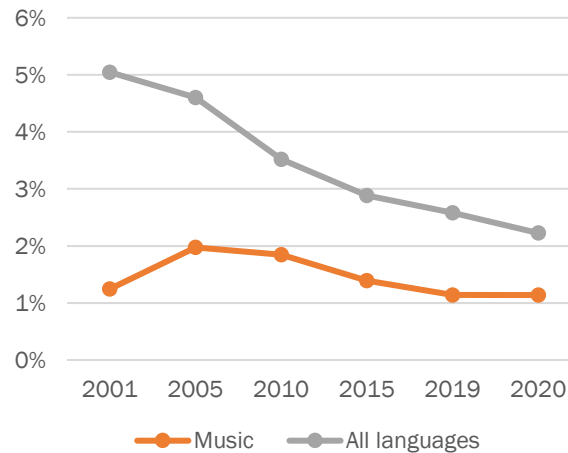
UK



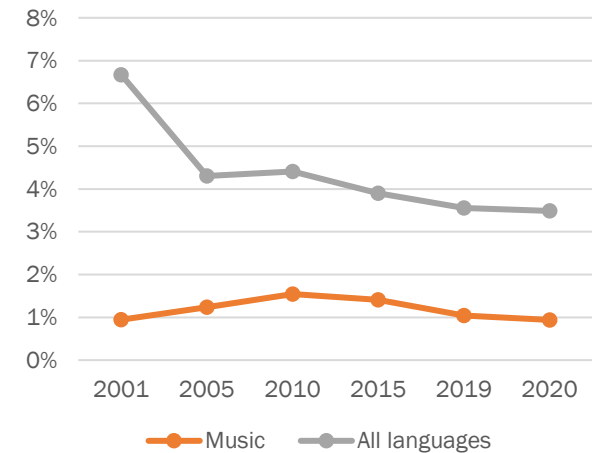
England



Wales



Northern Ireland



⁵ Entry numbers are also below 10,000 in ICT, Drama, English Language & Literature, and Performing/Expressive Arts, but this reflects variations in qualification titles within a wider curriculum area.

2. Languages Mentoring Programme

What are we asking for?

We recommend a Languages Mentoring Programme to support language mentoring schemes at schools in those parts of England where they will have the biggest impact in levelling up language-learning and in helping to achieve the government's EBacc ambition. At present, [there is a danger of language cold spots emerging](#), since in some parts of the country relatively few students access language learning at GCSE and A level and develop the intercultural skills that are required in a globalised economy. Additionally, there are issues around [low participation of boys](#) in languages, especially French and Spanish, that requires attention. These mentoring programmes increase uptake of languages GCSEs and A levels by placing university students in schools to increase pupils' motivation and resilience for language learning. Most previous programmes have targeted Key Stage 3 students who are about to decide whether to take a language at GCSE; others have targeted the Key Stage 4 to Key Stage 5 transition.

Why should this be supported?

Despite the strategic importance of languages for the future of the UK and the Government's aspiration to [reduce regional inequalities](#), at present there is [a pronounced and increasing gap in language-learning between London and the rest of the UK](#). While 64% of students in Inner London enter a language (excluding English) at GCSE, outside London this ranges from 48% in the South East to 38% in the North East of England. In Hartlepool, the local authority with the lowest share of languages GCSEs taken, the figure is 26.5%. Mentoring is needed to improve uptake of languages at GCSE, especially where uptake is particularly low (among socially disadvantaged students; [among boys; in certain regions](#)), in order to level up and to foster educational opportunity after the pandemic, and to help address the UK's well-documented languages deficit. Language mentoring is continuing in Wales (currently funded by the Welsh Government up to 2022) and in Northern Ireland (funded by its Department of Education, starting in 2021-22).

In terms of the benefits of such a programme, evaluations of existing schemes (e.g. [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)) show that students are substantially more likely to choose a languages qualification after participating in a mentoring programme. One study showed that the share of students likely to study a modern language at GCSE level increased from 21% to 49% after the intervention. Language skills are associated with economic benefit – both for individual companies and on the national level. SMEs can [increase their income from exports by 30%](#) by hiring staff with languages capabilities and developing those. On the national level, one report, requested by a House of Lords Select Committee, estimated that [language skills deficits could cost the UK economy up to 3.5% of GDP per annum](#).⁶ Even if this were an over-assessment, closing the attainment gap even moderately would be associated with substantial increases of the nation's wealth, and targeting the lowest attainment areas would contribute to closing the skills gap with more prosperous regions in the UK, as the Plan for Growth calls for.

How much would it cost?

We recommend a Languages Mentoring Programme in two phases, with Phase 2 being subject to the Phase 1 meeting its KPIs. Phase 1 would target schools in the 50 local authorities with the lowest share of GCSE language entries in England (see attached table). We estimate that, working with 300 Year 9 classes in those local authorities, this programme would cost **£300,000 per year** and £900,000 for 2022-25. This includes project management/overhead costs.

⁶ Foreman-Peck, J and Wang, Y (2013): The Costs to the UK of Language Deficiencies as a Barrier to UK Engagement in Exporting: A Report to UK Trade & Investment
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/309899/Costs_to_UK_of_language_deficiencies_as_barrier_to_UK_engagement_in_exporting.pdf

Annex A – Implementation

A Languages Mentoring Programme would consist of

1. **Central support** for regional mentoring schemes to be seeded and developed through hubs in areas with the greatest need (see Annex B);
2. **Evaluation** of effectiveness of a scheme through a randomised control trial, to add even greater rigour to the existing body of evidence (which includes control groups but not RCTs), before proof of concept is confirmed and follow-on funding agreed.

The implementation would take place in two stages, where progression to a second phase is contingent upon the success of a first trailblazer phase, as assessed by a randomised control trial (RCT).

Phase 1 Proof of Concept (2.5 years)

- Appoint host for Central Programme through tender process
- Develop digi-platform (e.g. by re-activating and updating the platform that was developed by the DfE for Language Horizons)
- Recruit central Programme Manager
- Identify the first region (by analysing data on GCSE languages uptake and proximity of potential partner universities)
- Set up a regional hub; recruit a hub manager (e.g. a university widening participation officer)
- Hub recruits local schools and universities (including for the RCT)
- Universities recruit undergraduates as mentors; hubs also recruit Modern Language Assistants working in local schools as mentors (via the British Council, whether or not it is also the host for central support)
- Central support provides hub with (i) digi-platform, (ii) training, (iii) localised materials, (iv) pump-priming funds
- Regional mentoring scheme and RCT run for two years

Phase 2 (subject to success of Phase 1)

- Central Programme team to receive bids to support the creation of other regional hubs and mentoring schemes, whether by creating new networks or building on existing ones⁷
- Bids assessed according to (i) need, proxied by low GCSE languages uptake per local authority; (ii) the evidence for what kind of mentoring increases GCSE uptake of languages; (iii) bids' alignment with the government's levelling up and building back better agendas
- Rolling out to Modern Language Assistants across the country, widening numbers of pupils reached including to those schools not located near a university with a modern languages department

⁷ E.g. <https://www.routesintolanguages.ac.uk/contact>

Annex B – Supporting data

The 50 local authorities with the lowest percentage of languages GCSE entered in 2019.
Source: British Council Languages trends 2019

Local Authority	Region	% GCSE languages entered
Southampton	South East	41.2%
Wiltshire	South West	40.8%
Lancashire	North West	40.8%
Leicester	East Midlands	40.7%
Northumberland	North East	40.6%
Liverpool	North West	40.5%
Derbyshire	East Midlands	40.5%
Portsmouth	South East	40.4%
St. Helens	North West	40.1%
Northamptonshire	East Midlands	40.1%
Rochdale	North West	40.0%
North Lincolnshire	Yorkshire and The Humber	39.7%
North East Lincolnshire	Yorkshire and The Humber	39.6%
Nottingham	East Midlands	39.6%
Warrington	North West	39.2%
East Riding of Yorkshire	Yorkshire and The Humber	39.1%
Wolverhampton	West Midlands	39.0%
Solihull	West Midlands	38.9%
Bedford	East of England	38.7%
Staffordshire	West Midlands	38.3%
Somerset	South West	38.0%
Cornwall	South West	37.7%
Peterborough	East of England	37.4%
Bolton	North West	37.3%
Central Bedfordshire	East of England	36.6%
Gateshead	North East	36.5%
Walsall	West Midlands	36.3%
Luton	East of England	36.2%
Isle of Wight	South East	36.2%
Cumbria	North West	36.2%
Stoke-on-Trent	West Midlands	35.8%
Torbay	South West	35.4%
Tameside	North West	35.4%
Swindon	South West	34.8%
County Durham	North East	34.8%
Calderdale	Yorkshire and The Humber	34.6%
Bracknell Forest	South East	34.4%
Doncaster	Yorkshire and The Humber	34.2%
Rotherham	Yorkshire and The Humber	34.2%

Barnsley	Yorkshire and The Humber	33.4%
Blackpool	North West	33.0%
Wigan	North West	31.6%
Knowsley	North West	31.2%
Sandwell	West Midlands	31.0%
Oldham	North West	30.2%
Redcar and Cleveland	North East	29.5%
Isles of Scilly	South West	28.6%
Middlesbrough	North East	28.4%
South Tyneside	North East	27.5%
Hartlepool	North East	26.5%

3. German For All

What are we asking for?

We recommend the introduction of a programme designed to boost the uptake of German in state schools. The programme would be designed to support schools that currently offer German and to incentivise schools to introduce German or retain it if it is in danger of disappearing as part of a school's language provision.

The programme would focus primarily in establishing an organisation that will coordinate and promote current offers and opportunities that exist to promote German i.e. offers from the British Council, Goethe Institut, UKGC and others. Opportunities that could be widely promoted would include facilitating a schools partner for participating schools if they do not at present have one, access to a Modern Language Assistant, the chance to send students on a pupil course (these are run by the UKGC), information on exchange funding and a 'pupil day' to reward pupils for their participation.

The programme would be targeted at primary as well as secondary schools. For primary schools, the organisation would create a freely available German resource which would give an introduction to German culture, geography and language, as pupils have very little exposure to this in schools currently. This may be similar to the [Arabic](#) and [Polish](#) resources, created by the British Council, with links to [Language Magician](#) and UKGC.

Incentives for schools to introduce or re-establish German would include

- Financial support for schools with a high share of pupils on free school meals (FSM), teaching German in the curriculum from KS3 (to support with resources)
- A free "Why learn German day" with the Goethe, UKGC etc. including activities, materials and training for pupil ambassadors
- Recognition by Ofsted where German has been recently introduced as part of a school's language provision and commitment to languages.

Why should this be supported?

German is crucial to the UK and yet has experienced a particularly sharp decline in schools. Because of these two factors, German should receive particular support, following on from the Department for Education's targeted support for one non-European language (Mandarin) and one classical one (Latin). German is a [language of great strategic importance](#) for the UK, as German speaking countries are the second largest destination for UK services exports⁸ - a sector that represents the main comparative advantage of the British economy. This programme will aim to level up opportunities to learn German in state schools, where its provision is falling far behind that in independent schools. According to a [British Council 2021 Language Trends survey](#), German is taught in only 5% of Primary schools compared to 72% of schools offering French. The figure in secondary schools has long been in decline, including by 8% in the past 3 years, and looks set to decline further. Three out of four schools where German is taught are located in more affluent areas. Whereas both Spanish and French have recently seen modest increases at Key Stage 4, German has continued to decline, leading to an overall decline in language learning.

⁸ Office for National Statistics (2020): UK trading partners and trade relationships: 2020
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/internationaltrade/articles/uktradingpartnersananalysisoftrade/relationships/2020>



This means that access not just to languages in general (see 2. Languages Mentoring Programme, Annex B) but to German in particular is unequally distributed across the UK and the availability to students is dependent on a 'post code lottery' of the current declining provision. As the UK aims to [Build Back Better](#), investing in German language skills offers potential to boost economic recovery, productivity and competitiveness with key economic partners.

How much would it cost?

The centre for coordination would cost **£2 million annually** and financial support would amount to £6 million for 2022-25. This includes project management/overhead costs.

4. Turing Scheme for International Mobility for Schools

What are we asking for?

We recommend increased flexibility in the use of the Turing Scheme funds, as well as expanding the scheme to support schools in re-establishing international links lost during the pandemic – whereas in 2018 around 22% of schools in England had international activities, only 8% did so in 2021.⁹ Since the UK's withdrawal from the European Union, the Turing Scheme is intended to replace the Erasmus+ and become the most important exchange programme enabling staff and students to establish and maintain international links and participate in the vital exchanges that are required for the UK's global engagement. There are, however, specific challenges for schools and colleges to continue their vital international work. In its current form, the Turing Scheme funds 5,000 student placements annually at schools abroad, at a cost of £2,000 per student, for an annual total of over £10m allocated to schools. There is no support for schools to initiate and maintain the cooperation necessary to allow this engagement with partner schools. We therefore recommend increasing the flexibility of funding criteria for school's participation in the Turing Scheme in three different areas:

1. **School partner funding**, as currently only UK schools can benefit from the Turing Scheme. Many schools, especially in the most disadvantaged areas, don't have a partner – or have partnerships that have lapsed due to COVID-19 and Brexit upheavals. Experience has shown that it is difficult to organise a visit to a school overseas without having a firm relationship. This funding would support UK and international partner schools to initiate such cooperation.
2. Support for **virtual exchanges** would be recommended. As some pupils will not be able to make visits due to health, special needs, parental resistance to travel and a variety of other reasons, this would enable those pupils to have an international experience.
3. A third tier of enhanced flexibility would allow funding of **Teacher Continuing Professional Development**. The aim would be to enhance teachers' professional development in languages and enable them to develop links with international partner schools.

Why should this be supported?

The [Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy](#) states the central importance on 'openness as a source for prosperity.' The Turing Scheme supports schools, FE colleges and universities in placing students in partner institutions abroad, allowing our young people to develop the crucial intercultural and language skills needed to make this openness to the world a reality. The reason why this is crucial is because [languages are strategically vital for the future of the UK](#), as are the intercultural skills associated with languages learning. There is [overwhelming evidence](#) of an inadequate, longstanding, and worsening supply of the language skills needed by the UK to meet the needs of society, the economy, business and future research. It has been estimated that [our language skills deficit costs the UK up to 3.5% of GDP per annum](#) as a result of overdependence on Anglophone export markets. Languages are a core part of a broad and balanced curriculum (and so are EBacc subjects in England). [Languages are key facilitating subjects](#): they help with literacy and with other areas of the curriculum, with levels of literacy being a major predictor of children's attainment in science and maths.¹⁰ Additionally, language learning and attainment is very unevenly distributed across the different nations and regions of the UK, where in many towns in the North of England the share of languages learners is particularly low. Despite having some of the most deprived neighbourhoods in the UK, in the London Borough of Newham 75% of pupils entered a languages GCSE, while less than 27% of students in Hartlepool did so.¹¹ Supporting the Turing Scheme could

⁹ [British Council \(2021\): Language Trends 2021. Language teaching in primary and secondary schools in England](#)
[British Council \(2021\): Language Trends 2021. Language teaching in primary and secondary schools in England](#)

¹⁰ [Woll, B and Li Wei \(2019\): Cognitive Benefits of Language Learning: Broadening our perspectives Final Report to the British Academy](#)

¹¹ [British Council \(2019\): Language Trends 2019. Language teaching in primary and secondary schools in England](#)

help reduce these spatial inequalities in access to languages education in Britain and contribute to the [Plan for Growth's](#) aim of levelling up.

How much would it cost?

The Turing Scheme for schools would primarily enhance flexibility in the way the funding of £10m could be spent and would add 25% of programme management to the existing funding and represent an additional **annual spending of £2.5m**, or £7.5m for 2022-25. This would allow the number of placements to remain constant, if not increase, while greatly increasing the schools' ability to support the programme.

5. Turing Scheme for International Mobility for Higher Education

What are we asking for?

We recommend a longer-term commitment for funding of the Turing Scheme and to allow higher flexibility in its use. Currently, commitments to both funding and reciprocity of mobility schemes vary across the UK: the Welsh Assembly have invested £65million in an International Learning Exchange Programme in addition to the Turing Scheme, allowing an additional 15,000 participants from Wales to participate in mobility exchanges between 2022-26.¹²

1. **Long term funding settlement:** The Turing Scheme in its current form does not include a long-term commitment as does the Erasmus+ programme under the EU's multiannual financial framework. Under the Turing scheme, funding for subsequent academic years is to be set out in future spending reviews. A longer-term commitment, however, is critical to renegotiating reciprocal arrangements with partner higher education institutions to support recruitment in modern languages.
2. **Increase flexibility:** We also recommend that the UK Government should seek to develop and enhance opportunities for students and higher education staff as part of the Turing scheme, including outgoing and incoming student and higher education staff mobility, to facilitate the circulation of ideas and talent, and that it should also consider reciprocity in fee waivers, visa costs and healthcare coverage. A limitation of the current Turing Scheme, compared to Erasmus+, is that it does not provide for staff mobility or for funding incoming students, whereas in order for tuition fee waivers for outgoing students to be achieved, there needs to be reciprocal support offered for incoming students.

Why should this be supported?

The UK is currently a world-leading player in research in SHAPE disciplines, which help create and nourish a positive future for people, the economy, and the environment. Research in these disciplines is outward looking and internationally engaged, benefitting from the exchange of ideas, people, methods, and practices across borders. The presence of international students and staff in UK higher education contributes to the depth, the range of perspectives, and the vitality of SHAPE disciplines, including through collaborative research and international exchange. Incoming students, as well as incoming academic staff, have significant lasting impacts on the networks of institutions and collaborations, including a catalytic effect on attracting other students and academic staff members as well as encouraging them to pursue further studies or activities in the UK. International students provide an important supply of language teachers and tutors. Furthermore, there are important soft power benefits of having international students come to the UK. By studying or working in the UK, they build critical connections that last long after they return home and become ambassadors for the UK and the UK university system, strengthening international links to the benefit of the UK.

The Erasmus+ programme has helped enhance language skills and ensured that UK-based students from different disciplines and academic staff could work across different cultures and within a diverse workforce, as well as establishing critical international partnerships. It is a crucial that the Turing Scheme allows for a comparable level of international exchange of people and ideas and continues to promote links to a breadth of countries, including those where English is not the first language. The Turing scheme's budget for 2021-22 is £110 million, of which £67m were awarded to universities. In the past, association with Erasmus+ was based on €162m in 2019¹³ (ca. £136m as per August 2021) UK Government spend. On the economic benefit side, EU students provide a net contribution to the UK economy, generating £3.4 billion in 2018. This represented 14.5% of the UK's total education related

¹² <https://gov.wales/new-international-learning-exchange-programme-make-good-loss-erasmus>

¹³ https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/eu-budget/long-term-eu-budget/2014-2020/spending-and-revenue_en

exports and transnational education activity in 2018.¹⁴ Of this total contribution, [incoming Erasmus+ students alone spent £440m in the UK economy on living expenses](#) in the same year.

How much would it cost?

Our suggestions for a multi-year commitment of the Turing Scheme for Higher Education would lengthen the time horizon, enabling participating providers to engage in international cooperation that would otherwise be difficult to initiate and to sustain, as well as increasing the flexibility, so that academic staff exchanges and incoming students can be supported. In order to support (i) staff mobility and (ii) incoming and outgoing higher education students as the basis for the mutuality of the programme, we estimate that an uplift by 25%, **£16.8m annually** or £51m for 2022-25 would be required.

¹⁴ [Department for Education \(2020\): UK revenue from education related exports and transnational education activity in 2018](#)