



School of Education
Languages Policy for

MA Honours
ILAC: Integrating
Languages Across
the Curriculum

Our Mission

In the School of Education, University of Aberdeen, we believe language and languages to be fundamental to the learning entitlement and experiences of all primary school pupils. This is in line with the Scottish Government's commitment to ensuring that all primary school children will have the opportunity to learn and use two languages in addition to the language used as the school medium for educating learners - either English or Gaelic. The new Scottish Language Policy 1 + 2 (2011) will be rolled out over the next few years and will involve all future primary school teachers.

Our Approach

We want all our teachers during their initial teacher education programme to engage with language learning and **using** in order to build their own confidence, skills and enjoyment when working with languages other than English. Some of you may have studied a foreign language such as French, German or Spanish to an advanced level in school; others may have very limited levels of other languages; and many of you may have an idea of themselves as 'not being very good at languages'. However, the innovative approach we have adopted in the School of Education is one which will enable all of you - regardless of your language level - to integrate additional languages into Curriculum for Excellence. We are not trying to turn you all into 'language teachers' but enable you to become teachers who know how to work with languages in topic work and literacy development in a range of motivating ways - for yourself and your pupils - within the regular curriculum. We will also introduce you to the European Languages Portfolio for your own and your pupils' use. This is used extensively across all other parts of Europe.

What does ILAC mean?

Integrated language work or CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) is not the same as more traditional approaches to language learning. Integrated approaches are built on the principle that language is a learning tool and we have to use languages and experience alternative cultures in order to learn. This also means that our pupils are enabled to use different languages to access new knowledge and skills - even when their level of competence in that language is limited - as may be that of their teacher. In other words we will enable you to use strategies and activities where pupils can use other languages to learn new 'things' rather than revisit old 'things' through a new language. It certainly does not mean endless lists of vocabulary, a few phrases and singing 'foreign' songs!



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What does it mean for me?

During your four years MA programme and school experience you will all have the opportunity to put ILAC into practice. This will begin by you selecting at least one 15 credit language course in years one and/or two as your Electives. It may be that you have previously enjoyed your language studies at school and wish to continue to develop these language skills. It may be that you would prefer to start a new language or you wish to learn more about Gaelic. You are therefore required during your first or second year to opt for a language course from the following: French, German or Spanish, Gaelic or Mandarin. There is currently an emphasis on introducing Mandarin into Primary Schools not only in response to the 1+2 Language Policy but also linked to the Confucius Classroom movement across Scotland. There is a Confucius Institute in the University of Aberdeen and an increasing number of schools in the area where Mandarin is taught. You can also gain an internationally recognized qualification in Mandarin (HSK) on a beginner ten week course. As well as the 15 credit language courses, the School of Education will provide you not only with ideas, skills and strategies for how you keep updated with the language and use it in your Curriculum for Excellence planning, but also with opportunities to try out these activities in school to build both your confidence and enjoyment.

What do I need to do?

We want to monitor the effectiveness of your experiences as closely as possible to ensure they are appropriate to your own needs. This is not about how good you are at languages, nor about suddenly expecting you to be a language teacher but about how you will be enabled to provide your pupils with good experiences to help them develop their skills as young adults in using different languages. We will ask you to complete a questionnaire at the start of the MA programme and one at the end to help us gauge the effectiveness of our provision. You will also be required to follow one of the language courses in semester 1 or 2 or 3 or 4, engage in activities to maintain your language level, work with the European Languages Portfolio (online) and carry out some language-related activities during your school experience.

What happens if I think I am 'no good' at languages?

The courses and experiences offered are tailored to your own needs - so there is no need for concern. We want you to leave with some good ideas about how languages can be used and brought alive in your own classroom without you necessarily being an 'expert' linguist! Your tutors will assist you if you have any worries.

If there are any further queries or concerns please do not hesitate to get in contact with:

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