



Language Learning in Action: First ever National Modern Languages Spelling Bee in Scotland

School pupils from the Highlands to the Borders will be testing their linguistic skills tomorrow (Friday 31 May) in the final of Scotland's first National Modern Languages Spelling Bee, at the Scottish Parliament.

In the spirit of "1+2", pupils will demonstrate their knowledge of vocabulary and spelling in French, German or Spanish before an audience of parents, teachers, fellow pupils and invited guests.

The spelling bee has been organised by the University of Strathclyde-based SCILT, Scotland's National Centre for Languages, in partnership with Routes into Languages and part funded by the European Commission.

SCILT Director Sarah Breslin said: "Spelling Bees have been a feature in England and Wales for a number of years. They have proved to be incredibly powerful in promoting language learning in schools and in motivating pupils in early secondary to take their language learning further. They provide an excellent opportunity for young people to learn new vocabulary, develop new skills and build self-confidence.

"Today's final will provide a forum to celebrate the success and passion of Scotland's young linguists and we look forward to a successful, enjoyable day."

Dr Alasdair Allan, Minister for Learning, Science and Scotland's Languages, said: "I want to congratulate all of the young people who have taken part in the Spelling Bee. Competitions such as this encourage young people to learn languages in an entertaining and engaging way.

"This is exactly the type of activity which will help make the Scottish Government's aim of creating the conditions in which every child will learn two languages in addition to their mother tongue a reality."

The event is being sponsored by Aberdeen South and North Kincardine MSP Maureen Watt. [Participants in the spelling bee will be welcomed by Edinburgh Southern MSP Jim Eadie.](#)

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Notes to Editors:

1. SCILT, Scotland's national centre for languages, was established in 1991 and is based at the University of Strathclyde, UK University of the Year in the 2012 Times Higher Education Awards. The centre's vision is for a multilingual Scotland where all languages are valued and where lifelong language learning is recognised as a key skill, one that makes a significant contribution towards the creation of a fairer,

smarter, more successful Scotland. SCILT receives a grant from the Scottish Government to fund its core activities, which have four key strands: professional development; research; information services, and promoting languages. More at <http://www.strath.ac.uk/scilt/>

2. Routes into Languages is a consortium of universities working together. It is funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England and is led by the LLAS Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies, in partnership with the University Council of Modern Languages (UCML).