

Get involved



The Business Language Champions scheme originated from our colleagues at CILT and CILT Cymru. The programme helps businesses and schools work together to motivate young people to learn languages for work.



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Case study

Scottish Football Museum

53 pupils at Kilwinning Academy worked in partnership with the Scottish Football Association and the Scottish Football Museum to learn about the relevance of languages in the workplace.

The young people took part in an exciting programme of presentations and workshops culminating in a visit to the Scottish Football Museum where they took part in a French treasure hunt and toured the stadium. Their final task was to create a French advertisement to promote the Scottish Football Museum to foreign visitors. The winning advertisement was displayed in the museum, and prize winners were treated to lunch in a French restaurant.



“ We became involved in the languages project at Kilwinning Academy as a means of perhaps increasing our output in languages, and also as a means of communicating with a local school on the importance and usefulness of languages in a visitor experience environment. We have found the experience to be a rewarding one. ”

Colin Lobban, Scottish Football Museum

Case study

Michelin

Michelin is an international company with headquarters in Clermont-Ferrand, France. It is now Dundee's biggest industrial employer, with some 800 staff working in its tyre production site in the north-east of the city.

The project was launched with a presentation at Grove Academy by Michelin's Head of Personnel, Training and Communications. During a site visit, the pupils conducted interviews in French followed by a language workshop that developed their understanding of the Michelin organisation and the skills required to work there. Finally, with help from Avian Communications Ltd, the pupils created a bilingual advertising campaign for a new Michelin eco-product.



“ As members of the global community we recognise the importance of a second, or even third, language and hope that by supporting this project we can share this experience with the next generation of Scots. ”

Donald MacKenzie, Head of Personnel and Communications at Michelin in Dundee

BLC BUSINESS LANGUAGE CHAMPIONS



A guide for businesses in Scotland

Language skills for business

It is the Scottish Government's ambition that by 2020 all children should learn an additional language from P1 to S3. A further additional language will be started no later than P5. The key to success of this policy lies in establishing successful partnership links.

The Scottish Government's 1+2 languages policy arrives at a time when globally the demand for language skills is expanding. Language skills are needed at all levels of the workforce, but the range and nature of languages being taught in UK schools is insufficient to meet current and future demand.

- English is a global language, but in fact only about 6% of the world's population are native English speakers and an estimated three quarters do not speak English at all.
- The UK has the worst foreign language skills in Europe, and there is a strong argument that limited language abilities and cultural awareness are acting in effect as a tax on UK trade.
- The UK needs more people who can supplement their specialist knowledge in a particular professional, scientific or other disciplinary area with an understanding of other languages.
- The major European languages continue to be those most in demand, but language skills geared towards doing business in China feature increasingly prominently. Many British employers also value employees who understand the languages and cultures of the UK migrant workforce.
- Fluency in another language can assist staff in their careers. Nearly a quarter (23%) of UK employers say foreign language ability assists staff mobility within the organisation.

References available from
www.scilt.org.uk/Business/Linkinglanguagesandbusiness

How can the Business Language Champion scheme help?

The Business Language Champions scheme helps schools and businesses to build partnerships through languages to equip young people with skills for life and work. The programme helps businesses to:

- Increase their local profile
- Gain fresh perspectives from young people
- Develop corporate social responsibility activities in an innovative way
- Harness and develop employees' language skills
- Increase employee satisfaction and motivation
- Raise awareness of the importance of languages for our economy



How does your business become a Language Champion?

Here are just some of the activities that we could help you organise to inspire language learners in your area:

- Talks to schools about how languages are important to your business
- Student and teacher visits to your company to see languages in action
- Provision of language mentors to support students in a local school or schools
- Development of business projects for students in target languages
- Visits to company premises in Scotland
- Access to company resources and documents in target languages

Case study

Loch Duart

Loch Duart produces and supplies Scottish salmon to specialist retailers and fish markets in the UK, Europe and beyond.

The sales manager launched the project at Montrose Academy by discussing his company's links with France. The young people then visited the company's offices and teleconferenced in French with the sales office in Brittany. Back at school, the SCILT team delivered a workshop in French, based on Loch Duart and its products. Finally, the youngsters created sales merchandise in French and presented their designs to the judges. Loch Duart will use the winning design to promote its products in French markets.



“Loch Duart is a Business Language Champion because 65% of our produce is exported and 30% of it is sold in France. The Montrose office communicates with France 6 days per week. Languages make our business work.”

Andrew Bing, Sales Director