We use cookies to ensure that we deliver the best user experience of our website. If you would like to, you can change your cookie settings at any time. Continue

Mrs Agnès Gower Maîtrise, MPhil

Language Coordinator (French Studies)

Department of Modern Languages: French Studies (/schools/lcahm/departments/french/index.aspx)

Contact details

Telephone +44 (0)121 414 5970 (tel:+44 121 414 5970)

Email a.m.gower@bham.ac.uk (mailto:a.m.gower@bham.ac.uk)

University of Birmingham
Edgbaston
Birmingham
B15 2TT
UK

About

I first came to Birmingham as a Colloquial Assistant (lectrice), as part of the University's long-standing exchange with The *Université Lumière Lyon 2*. After a few months back in France, I decided to return to Birmingham and the Department of French Studies, again as a Colloquial Assistant. I have not left since.

Qualifications

- Licence de Langue Vivante Etrangère: anglais (equivalent of a BA in English) : Université Lumière Lyon 2
- Maîtrise de Langue Vivante Etrangère: anglais (equivalent of an MA in English) : Université Lumière Lyon 2
- MPhil in History: University of Birmingham

Biography

Before coming to Birmingham, I did two years in the *Classes Préparatoires aux Grandes Ecoles* in Lyon, specialising in English in my second year, before joining The *Université Lumière Lyon 2* where I obtained a *Licence de Langue Vivante Etrangère: anglais* (equivalent of a BA in English).

Immediately after my *Licence*, I was sent by my home university to Birmingham as a *lectrice*. At the same time I completed a *Maîtrise de Langue Vivante Etrangère:anglais* (equivalent of a MA in English) at Lyon 2 University.

In 1991-92, I assisted Henri Béjoint (*maître de conférences at l'Université Lumière Lyon 2, France*) in his work on the lexical notes and correspondence pages for the Oxford-Hachette French Dictionary which was published in 1994.

I came back to Birmingham to work as a Colloquial Assistant in September 1992, was appointed Language Tutor in 1996.

At the same time, I studied for an MPhil in the Department of History at the University of Birmingham, under the supervision of Professor Peter Jones. I graduated in December 1997. My MPhil was entitled *A Comparative Study of the Development and Impact of Child Labour Legislation in Birmingham and the Stéphanois region of France from 1830 to 1900*.

I was promoted to Language Coordinator inthe Department of French Studies in 2003.

I became of a member of the Institute for Learning and Teaching in 2001 (subsequently the Higher Education Academy). I have been a fellow of the HEA since 2007.

Teaching

When I started teaching at the university I taught *expression orale* and language laboratory classes. I taught not only Single Honours and Joint Honours students, but also Engineering, Science, Commerce, Law students who were on "with French" programmes, mostly but not exclusively post-A-level students. In 1991, I was one of the first tutors teaching for the newly created Modern Languages Unit, and subsequently taught Open Access classes for a couple of years for the Centre for Modern Languages.

I taught on Modern France 1 and 2 for anumber of years before moving more exclusively into language teaching.

I am responsible for overseeing language modules in the Department, and more particularly in charge of all the oral and aural teaching in French, as well as Final Year language, a Final Year interpreting option and the First Year Business French module.

I have been involved right from the start in the development of online self-assessment language exercises, first on the intranet with the creation of the Self-Assessment Facility (SAF tests) in the early 1990s and then on WebCT, the University's virtual learning environment.

Research

I have always been employed on a teaching only contract, so I concentrate on teaching and administration.

Other activities

In the Department, I am in charge of the 4 Assistant Language Tutors that come to us each year from our 4 French partner universities (Lyon 2, Montpellier 3, Nancy 2, and Toulouse 2) and take part in the training of new language assistants for the School. I also take part in the selection of the 4 assistants Birmingham sends each year to each of our partner universities.

Publications

- 'Case study 3: First-Year language course for (specialist) post-A-Level students of French', in Heather Fry, Steve Ketteridge, Stephanie Marshall (eds), *A Handbook for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, Third Edition, Routledge, 2009, pp. 339-341.
- 'Using the foreign language assistant', in James A. Coleman and John Klapper (eds), *Effective Learning and Teaching in Modern Languages*, chapter, Routledge, 2005, pp. 102-107

© University of Birmingham 2014