University of Birmingham

BA Modern Languages

The key to understanding another society is mastering its language. From this starting point, you can examine a country's history, its literature and culture; and by comparison you can learn more about our own society. The BA Modern Languages suite of programmes is designed for students who wish to specialise in the study of one, two or three languages. You'll need to be highly motivated and able to demonstrate a real interest in, and flair for, languages.

Our five core languages are French, German, Italian, Russian and Spanish, but we also offer Portuguese, Japanese, Mandarin Chinese and English Language. You'll be learning at one of the biggest, most prestigious centres for the study of modern languages in the UK, with teaching from experts in their field. It's an exciting chance to develop skills that will equip you for a huge range of careers, both in this country and abroad. The wide range of posts recent graduates have secured include roles in journalism, law, publishing and teaching at every level.

Modern Languages graduates from Birmingham benefit from a higher than average rate of employability for the subject, with 87% going into work or study within six months of graduation. An impressive 85% of those graduates go into professional or managerial roles within six months of graduation.

Study here and find out why the University of Birmingham has been awarded The Times and The Sunday Times University of the Year 2013-14 (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/news/latest/2013/09/20-sep-Birmingham-announced-as-University-of-the-Year.aspx)

Course fact file

UCAS code: R901

Duration: 4 years

Places Available: 117

Applications in 2013: 608

Typical Offer: AAB (**More detailed entry requirements and the international qualifications accepted can be found in the course details (?OpenSection=EntryRequirements)**)

Start date: September

Contact

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School of Languages, Cultures, Art History and Music (/schools/lcahm/index.aspx)

Department of Modern Languages (/schools/lcahm/departments/languages/index.aspx)

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

Department of Modern Languages: German Studies (/schools/lcahm/departments/german/index.aspx)

Department of Modern Languages: Hispanic Studies (/schools/lcahm/departments/hispanic/index.aspx)

Department of Modern Languages: Italian Studies (/schools/lcahm/departments/italian/index.aspx)

Portuguese Studies (/schools/lcahm/departments/portuguese/index.aspx)

Department of Modern Languages: Russian Studies (/schools/lcahm/departments/russian/index.aspx)

Details

The BA Modern Languages programme involves the study of one, two or three modern languages via one of our four pathways. The degree programme is four years in length, and you will spend your third year studying, teaching or working abroad before returning to Birmingham for your final year.

Our pathways:

- **Languages and Cultures (/undergraduate/courses/lang/modern-languages-pathways/languages-cultures-pathway.aspx)**
- **Translation Studies (/undergraduate/courses/lang/modern-languages-pathways/translation-studies-pathway.aspx)**
- **European Studies (/undergraduate/courses/lang/modern-languages-pathways/european-studies-pathway.aspx)**
- **Business Studies (/undergraduate/courses/lang/modern-languages-pathways/business-studies-pathway.aspx)**

Each pathway offers a very wide variety of modules to choose from - you can find out more about the modules available by using our **My Choices app (http://www.mychoices.bham.ac.uk/)** .

During your first year of study in French, Hispanic Studies, German and Italian, you could have the opportunity to participate in a subsidised one week escorted European Cultural Tour during the Easter vacation. You will visit a city in the country of your target language and partake in language classes, cultural visits and have time to explore the city yourself (please note that places are limited). For those studying Russian, all beginners will take part in a subsidised trip to the city of Petrozavodsk in western Russia for an intensive four-week language programme.

The small print

- If you choose to study three languages, you are normally expected to have followed two of them to A-Level standard.
- Combinations that are impossible for timetabling reasons: Italian/Portuguese, Italian/Mandarin, Portuguese/Mandarin, German/English Language, Post A-Level Russian/beginners Spanish.

- French and English Language are only available from post A-Level or equivalent.
- The English Language variant is not English as a second language but consists of advanced linguistics which requires native standard English Language competence as well as a good pass in English Language A-Level or equivalent.

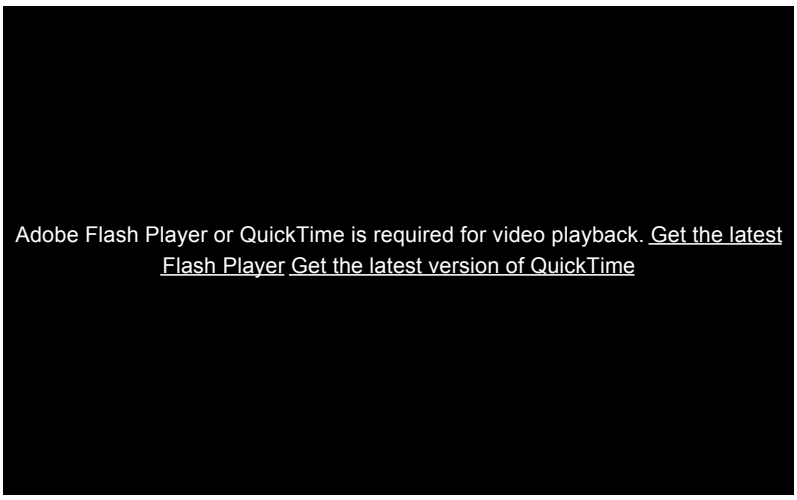
Year abroad

The Year Abroad is one of the most exciting aspects of the programme and many graduates remember it as one of the best years of their life. You will spend it studying at a university, teaching or working abroad. You will be exposed to many new experiences and people and be immersed in your target language. Upon your return to Birmingham your language skills will have developed considerably. Where two languages are studied, you can split the year abroad between two countries or spend the bulk of the year in one country followed by a vacation placement in the other. If you're studying three languages, it is possible to follow a vacation course in the third language. For your beginner language, you are required to spend at least a semester (or equivalent work period) in a country where that language is spoken.

Other ways to study Modern Languages

You can study Modern Languages in a wide range of other degree programmes and in combination with many other subjects. **Please see the Modern Languages course list (/schools/lcahm/departments/languages/undergraduate/index.aspx)** for all available courses.

Modern Languages Graduates 2013



Why study this course

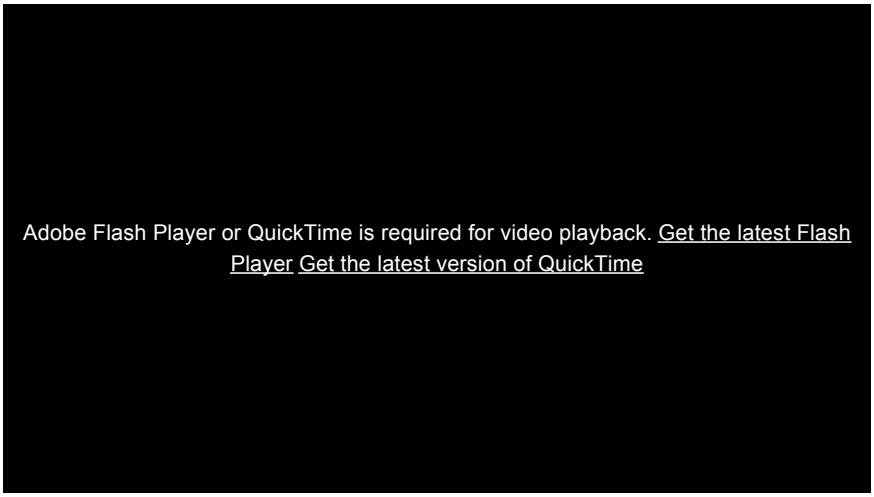
The University of Birmingham is one of the biggest and most prestigious centres for the study of modern languages in the country. We offer an exceptionally broad range of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. You can choose from French, German, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Japanese and Russian, and you can study these languages, together with the cultures associated with them, in a variety of programme combinations.

Consistently rated highly in the UK teaching and research rankings, we are a leading centre for innovative research. We are a Jean Monnet European Centre of Excellence and have lively programmes of national and international experts who come to the Department to give lectures and seminars.

At Birmingham, you'll benefit from an intellectually challenging and stimulating environment for your undergraduate studies, focused on ensuring you're a fully supported and active learner. Our unique degrees are designed to provide both academic excellence and vocational development; a balance that's highly sought after by employers in today's intellectual and creative industries. The courses are also very flexible, allowing you to specialise more and more as you progress, culminating in a final-year dissertation that allows you to carry out in-depth, individually supervised research into topics of your choice.

Read our **ten reasons to study Modern Languages at Birmingham (/schools/lcahm/departments/languages/about/strengths.aspx)** .

Open day talk



Fees and funding

Standard fees (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/ug/courses/fees/standard) apply
Learn more about **fees and funding (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/fees/undergraduate/loans.aspx)**

Scholarships
Learn more about our **scholarships and awards (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/fees/undergraduate/funding/index.aspx)**

Entry requirements

Number of A levels required: 3

Typical offer: AAB

Required subjects and grades: A level (or equivalent) in at least one modern language

General Studies: accepted

Additional information: Other qualifications are considered - learn more about **entry requirements (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/ug/requirements)**

International Baccalaureate Diploma: 36 points including a modern language at HL

Important information: please see "How to apply" for UCAS language / pathway codes

International students:

We welcome applications from international students and invite you to join our vibrant community of over 4500 international students who represent 150 different countries. We accept a range of qualifications, our **country pages (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/international/students/country/index.aspx)** show you what qualifications we accept from your country.

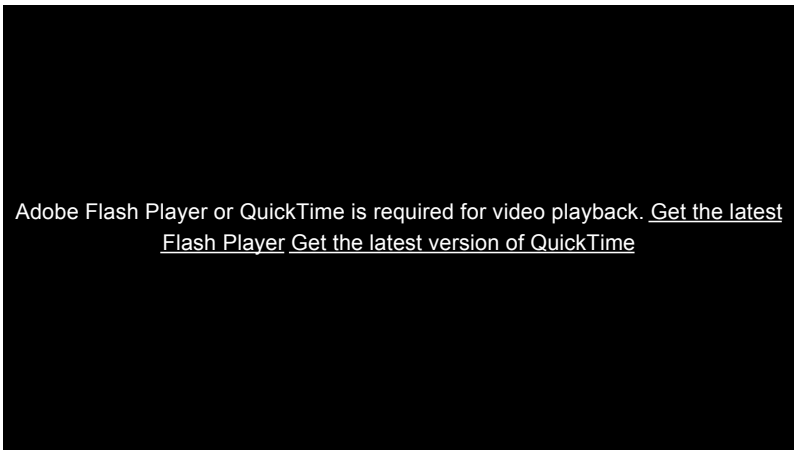
Depending on your chosen course of study, you may also be interested in the Birmingham Foundation Academy, a specially structured programme for international students whose qualifications are not accepted for direct entry to UK universities. Further details can be found on the **foundation academy web pages (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/foundation-academy/Pathways/index.aspx)** .

How to apply

Important information: When completing your UCAS application, please indicate your proposed subjects under 'Further details' in the 'choices' section of the application by using the **following codes (/undergraduate/courses/lang/modern-languages-additional-admissions-information.aspx)** , separated by a space.

Apply through UCAS at **www.ucas.com (http://www.ucas.com/)**

Learn more about **applying (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/ug/courses/apply)**



Joint Honours combinations

Joint Honours in Modern Languages (/schools/lcahm/departments/languages/undergraduate/joint-honours.aspx)

Key Information Set (KIS)

Key Information Sets (KIS) are comparable sets of information about full- or part-time undergraduate courses and are designed to meet the information needs of prospective students.

All KIS information has been published on the Unistats website and can also be accessed via the small advert, or 'widget', below. On the **Unistats website (http://unistats.direct.gov.uk)** you are able to compare all the KIS data for each course with data for other courses.

The development of Key Information Sets (KIS) formed part of HEFCE's work to enhance the information that is available about higher education. They give you access to reliable and comparable information in order to help you make informed decisions about what and where to study.

The KIS contains information which prospective students have identified as useful, such as student satisfaction, graduate outcomes, learning and teaching activities, assessment methods, tuition fees and student finance, accommodation and professional accreditation.

Related news and events

University of Birmingham and The Open University launch new modern languages course (/news/latest/2014/09/open-university-new-modern-languages-course.aspx)

Learning and teaching

As a Birmingham student you are part of an academic elite and will learn from world-leading experts. At Birmingham we advocate an enquiry based learning approach,

from the outset you will be encouraged to become an independent and self-motivated learner, qualities that are highly sought after by employers. We want you to be challenged and will encourage you to think for yourself.

Your learning will take place in a range of different settings, from scheduled teaching in lectures and small group tutorials, to self-study and peer group learning (for example preparing and delivering presentations with your classmates).

Support

To begin with you may find this way of working challenging, but rest assured that we will enable you to make this transition. You will have access to a comprehensive support system that will assist and encourage you, including personal tutors and welfare tutors who can help with both academic and welfare issues, and a formal transition review during your first year to check on your progress and offer you help for any particular areas where you need support.

Our **Academic Skills Centre** also offers you support with your learning. The centre is a place where you can develop your mathematical, academic writing and general academic skills. It is the centre's aim to help you to become a more effective and independent learner through the use of a range of high-quality and appropriate learning support services. These range from drop-in sessions to workshops on a range of topics including note taking, reading, writing and presentation skills.

From the outset, you will be assigned your own **Personal Tutor** who will get to know you as you progress through your studies, providing academic and welfare advice, encouraging you and offering assistance in any areas you may feel you need extra support to make the most of your potential and your time here at Birmingham.

The **Academic Writing Advisory Service (AWAS)** will provide you with individual support from an academic writing advisor and postgraduate subject-specialist writing tutors. You will receive guidance on writing essays and dissertations at University-level which can be quite different from your previous experiences of writing. Support is given in a variety of ways, such as small-group workshops, online activities, feedback through email and tutorials.

Student experience

Supporting you throughout your transition to University, offering research opportunities and study skills support and helping you develop and prepare for your post-University careers - our **Arts and Law Student Experience Team (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/university/colleges/artslaw/student-experience/index.aspx)** strive to help you get the most out of your academic experience.

Language laboratory sessions allow you to practise your listening and spoken skills and are an essential part of all our language programmes.

Assessment methods

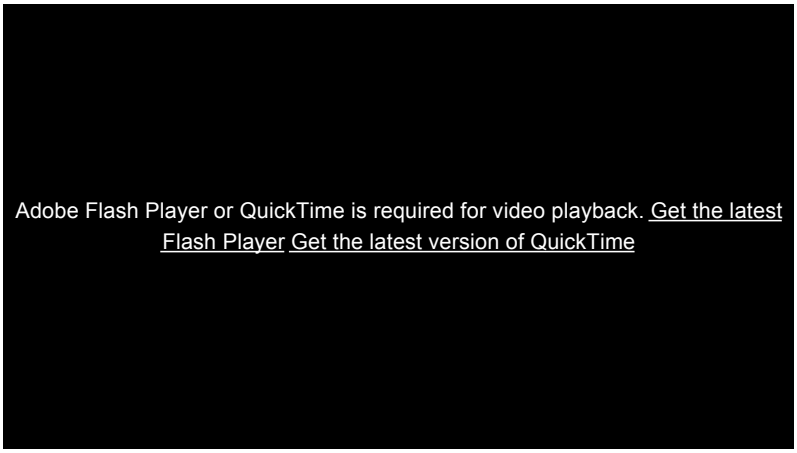
Studying at degree-level is likely to be very different from your previous experience of learning and teaching. You will be expected to think, discuss and engage critically with the subject and find things out for yourself. We will enable you to make this transition to a new style of learning, and the way that you are assessed during your studies will help you develop the essential skills you need to make a success of your time at Birmingham.

You will be assessed in a variety of ways, and these may be different with each module that you take. You will be assessed through coursework which may take the form of essays, group and individual presentations and formal exams (depending on your chosen degree).

During your first year you will undergo a formal 'transition' review to see how you are getting on and if there are particular areas where you need support. This is in addition to the personal tutor who is based in your school or department and can help with any academic issues you encounter.

At the beginning of each module, you will be given information on how and when you will be assessed for that particular programme of study. You will receive feedback on each assessment within four weeks, so that you can learn from and build on what you have done. You will be given feedback on any exams that you take; if you should fail an exam we will ensure that particularly detailed feedback is made available to enable you to learn for the future.

Employability



[**Video above** - Dr Emma Tyler discusses careers and employability during the Modern Languages open day presentation]

Modern Languages graduates have a range of skills that are highly prized by graduate employers: oral and written communication in one or more foreign languages, critical thinking, intercultural awareness and understanding. You will also develop leadership, teamwork and organisational skills through activities such as group projects and your year abroad.

87% of our Modern Language graduates go into work or study within six months of graduation. 50% of vacancies advertised for new and recent graduates don't specify a degree subject, and our graduates enter a wide range of careers similar to other arts and humanities graduates but with much greater scope in international settings. This includes business, government, journalism, the creative arts, teaching and law. Some go abroad to develop their language skills while working as TEFL teachers and university language tutors.

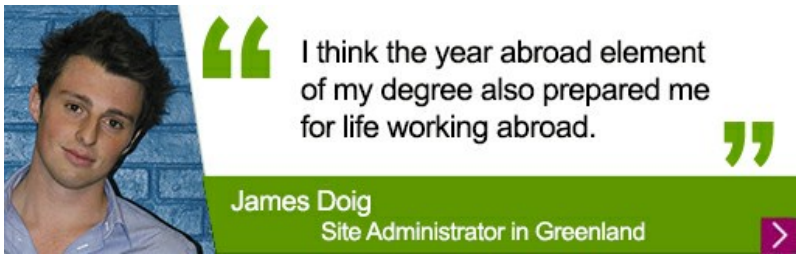
Modern Languages graduates from the University of Birmingham have excellent prospects after graduation. An impressive 85% of our graduates go into professional or managerial jobs within six months of graduation. Our graduates have started careers with employers including British Airways, Deloitte, HSBC, Pricewaterhouse Coopers, the British Council, NATO, BP, central and local government, and universities in the UK and abroad.

Whether you have a clear idea of where your future aspirations lie or want to consider the broad range of opportunities available once you have a Birmingham degree, **our**

Careers Network (https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/employability/careers/index.aspx) can help you achieve your goal. This is a unique careers guidance service tailored to your academic subject area, offering a specialised team who can give you expert advice. This includes individual careers advice and talks and events, including 'Careers with Languages', to provide insight into careers of interest to our students. Many languages students will also find our events about careers such as teaching, law, marketing, journalism and advertising of interest.

We work hard to help students identify how the year abroad may help their future career. We also encourage all our students to apply their skills in the workplace by undertaking internships in the summer; the work experience bursary scheme enables students to apply for funding for those career areas where placements are often unpaid. You can even apply for our 'Global Challenge' to work overseas on an expenses paid placement during your summer vacation.

Modern Languages alumni profiles

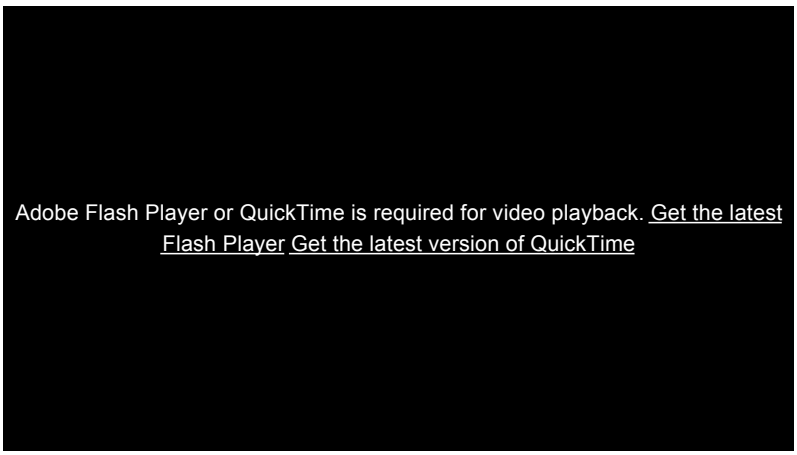


(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/lcahm/departments/languages/undergraduate/modern-languages-alumni-ug.aspx)

Extra-curricular activities

To enhance your career prospects even further, you will need to think about engaging in some extra-curricular activities while you're at university to broaden your skills and your network of contacts. This can include the many societies at the Guild of Students and also the many voluntary opportunities offered with local arts organisations. Our employer-endorsed award-winning **Personal Skills Award (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/careers/psa.aspx)** (PSA) recognises your extra-curricular activities, and provides an accredited employability programme designed to improve your career prospects.

Our College of Arts and Law **undergraduate research scholarship scheme (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/university/colleges/artslaw/studentexperience/urs/index.aspx)** enables interested students to work on a current academic research project being run by one of the College's academic researchers. Undergraduate research scholars gain work experience over the summer after their first or second year and have the chance to develop skills in both collaborative and independent research.



Cultural Internships

Our innovative **Cultural Internships (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/culture/volunteering/regionally.aspx)** offer graduates the opportunity for a six month paid internship at a leading cultural institution in the West Midlands. These internships are a unique opportunity to learn fundamental, transferable business and interpersonal skills, through experience of real work in an established cultural institution. Our current partners include Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, Birmingham REP, Birmingham Royal Ballet, the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Ironbridge Gorge Museums Trust and the Library of Birmingham. We have plans to expand the scheme to include our own major cultural assets, such as Winterbourne House, the Lapworth Museum, and the Barber Institute of Fine Arts. This scheme will give you professional experience to set you apart in a competitive graduate market.

We also offer voluntary work which complements your studies by helping you gain practical experiences in occupational settings while contributing back to society. This can bring new skills that will be useful throughout your future and can make a positive impact on your learning whilst at university. Volunteering enables you to develop skills such as communication, interpersonal skills, teamwork, self-confidence and self-discipline all of which can be transferred into your studies.

Your Birmingham degree is evidence of your ability to succeed in a demanding academic environment. Employers target Birmingham students for their drive, diversity, communication and problem-solving skills, their team-working abilities and cultural awareness, and our graduate employment statistics have continued to climb at a rate well above national trends. If you make the most of the wide range of services you will be able to develop your career from the moment you arrive.

98% Students agreed staff are good at explaining things

BA (Hons) Modern Languages
Full time
Year abroad

To see more details and compare with other courses
Visit UNISTATS
Official data collected by HEFCE

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