CAREERS FOR LANGUAGE GRADUATES

SKILLS GAINED FROM STUDYING LANGUAGES
The primary skill is the ability to communicate at a high level in another language, together with knowledge of another country. However, employers will be at least as interested in the more general skills developed including **written and verbal communication** (in English as well as in another other language[s]); **analytical skills; initiative and self-reliance** (developed through the year abroad); **time management and organisational skills**.

CAREERS ASSOCIATED WITH LANGUAGES

**Teaching, translation, and interpretation**

Teaching is a strong option for graduates of language degrees. There is a range of careers on offer in teaching. Whether it’s teaching in schools, further education colleges or universities, private language schools, or teaching abroad, you will have to use the language regularly and pass on your knowledge to learners.

Teaching a foreign language at a secondary school in the UK requires attaining Qualified Teacher Status. There are a number of ways to become qualified ([https://getintoteaching.education.gov.uk](https://getintoteaching.education.gov.uk)). Languages taught include French, German and Spanish, and Japanese and Mandarin Chinese among other non-European tongues.

Adult and Further Education colleges – this generally involves teaching students aged 16 and above. ([https://www.feadvice.org.uk/](https://www.feadvice.org.uk/))

Some language graduates go into Teaching English as a Foreign Language as a career. There are work options in the UK and abroad, but teaching in a country that speaks your second language gives you the chance to put your skills to good use. ([https://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/job-descriptions/279417-tefltesl-teacher-job-description](https://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/job-descriptions/279417-tefltesl-teacher-job-description))

Translation demands attention to detail and a complete mastery of language. If you have these attributes, translation is a rewarding and varied career choice. It involves translating a text from one language into another language. The source material may range from subtitles for an advert, to a death certificate, and everything in between.

Many translators work on a freelance basis, which allows them to take on a variety of work. It is usually necessary to pass a test before an employer will give you any work, but once a good reputation has been built up the amount of work can snowball.

Alternatively, if you want the stability of being a contracted, permanent employee, civil service translation jobs are an option. The government employs many translators to translate documents pertaining to official matters. Civil service jobs can be found on their website ([http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/jobs/](http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/jobs/)).

Charities, international organizations, and other political bodies (such as the EU and the UN) also require translators. Translation jobs can be obtained with an undergraduate degree, but postgraduate
qualifications and knowledge of specialist subject areas (especially those related to business, law and politics) are prized.

Interpreting is similar to translation, but has one vital difference: interpreting is live. It involves translating the spoken words of one person into a language intelligible to the interlocutors. This may be required in one-to-one settings, business meetings, or large conferences.

Much like translation, interpreting is largely done on a freelance basis. Again, postgraduate qualifications, and specialist interpreting or translating licences will aid the search for work.

Interpreters are in demand in politics, business and civil service jobs wherein direct communication with foreign language speakers is required.

(https://targetjobs.co.uk/career-sectors/media-journalism-and-publishing/288845-translation-and-interpreting-graduate-area-of-work)

Translation services

The Association of Translation Companies has a list of members at http://www.atc.org.uk/en/members/members-links

SOME OTHER CAREERS WHERE A LANGUAGE DEGREE WOULD BE USEFUL
Most of these job roles will value language skills and possessing them will potentially open up more opportunities in your career. You may not always have the opportunity to use them on a day-to-day basis as a new graduate, but be patient!

**Finance** – banks, insurance companies and accountancy firms operate on an international basis and offer opportunities both to work with foreign clients from the UK and to be seconded to overseas offices.

**Food and Drink** – sourcing products from around the world and negotiating with suppliers demands good language skills - and don't forget the wine trade!

**Law** – many of the large commercial firms in London also have offices in other European capitals and commercial centres (particularly in Brussels)

**Sales and Marketing** - with British companies needing to export their products or with multinational companies

**Transport, Tourism and Leisure** – freight distribution, air and sea transport, hotel management, travel agency work, courier/tour guide

**Public Sector** – the Civil Service (including the Diplomatic Service)

**International organisations, including the UN and the EU institutions**

http://www.prospects.ac.uk/options_modern_languages.htm

CAREERS OPEN TO ALL GRADUATES

A large percentage of all vacancies advertised for graduates do not ask for a specific degree subject. However, you may sometimes need postgraduate training or work experience.
Major areas of graduate recruitment include Business and Finance, Computing and IT, Education, Marketing, Public Sector Management but there are many more opportunities.

WHO EMPLOYS MODERN LANGUAGES GRADUATES?

Below are just a few examples of companies and organisations which employ language graduates in roles that either require language skills or which offer the chance to work in other European countries. However, many other employers will be able to make use of your languages, or post you abroad, at some point during your career.

Bloomberg, Civil Service – European Fast Stream, L’Oreal, Headline Media, Decathlon, Diageo, The Diplomatic Service, European Commission, Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ), Heinekin, Inter-Continental Hotels, Reckitt Benckiser, The Security Service (MI5), and Sony

Recruitment agencies for linguists

iAgora www.iagora.com international jobs and internships

Appointments Bi-Language www.appointmentsbilanguage.co.uk

Bilingual People www.bilingualpeople.com

Corinium Language Associates www.coriniuimlanguage.co.uk

Euro London Appointments www.eurolondon.com

French Recruitment www.frenchrecruitment.co.uk

The Language Export Centre www.lxcentre.co.uk

Lingua-jobs www.lingua-jobs.com

Multilingual Vacancies www.multilingualvacancies.com

Top Language Jobs www.toplanguagejobs.co.uk

WORKING ABROAD

Some language graduates obtain their first job after graduation outside the UK. Few of these jobs, though, are "career posts" - more often, they are seen as a way to live abroad for a little longer without necessarily offering any long-term prospects. Most recent graduates working abroad are, in fact, teaching English as a foreign language (although this can be a long-term career if the graduate wants).

It may be more difficult for new graduates to enter the type of "career posts" abroad that they might expect to obtain in this country. In the UK Humanities graduates can enter careers in business and finance which would only be open to graduates with business-related degrees in most other European countries. It is usually easier to join a graduate training scheme with a UK (or UK-based multinational) employer in this country, and then move with them to another country after two or three years, than to get onto an equivalent scheme abroad.

Non-EU countries will also have work permit regulations that may prevent or limit your taking up employment.
For more information on working abroad in a variety of countries, go to: https://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/working-abroad

English language assistants with The British Council:

http://www.britishcouncil.org/study-work-create/opportunity/work-volunteer/english-language-assistants

**POSTGRADUATE STUDY**

Information about study for a **Masters or PhD degree** can be found within the further study section of the Prospects website.

Information on teacher training and TEFL – see above

**OTHER OPTIONS**

Like many graduates, you may not want to go straight into a full-time job or course when you graduate. Alternatives may include time out, voluntary work or starting your own business - but all these need thorough investigation and planning. The links provided will help you to make a start.

An annual languages show takes place in London, usually in October

http://www.languageshowlive.co.uk/

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