

Options with modern languages

From solicitor to retail buyer, language skills are in demand and can be used in almost any career

Job options

Jobs directly related to your degree include:

- [Interpreter](#)
- [Secondary school teacher](#)
- [Translator](#)

Jobs where your degree would be useful include:

- [Broadcast journalist](#)
- [Diplomatic Services operational officer](#)
- [English as a foreign language teacher](#)
- [Event organiser](#)
- [Logistics and distribution manager](#)
- [Marketing executive](#)
- [Patent examiner](#)
- [Retail buyer](#)
- [Sales executive](#)
- [Solicitor](#)
- [Tour manager](#)

Remember that many employers accept applications from graduates with any degree subject, so don't restrict your thinking to the jobs listed here. To find out [what jobs would suit you](#), log in to My Prospects.

Work experience

Most modern language degree programmes offer a year abroad (usually the third year). If you choose to undertake a work placement during this year, try and find one in a career you are interested in and take the opportunity to develop your transferable, as well as your language, skills.

Some graduates wanting a long-term career using their language skills choose to take on a short-term role, such as teaching English, while living abroad and perfecting their

language skills. Others take short-term roles in the tourism and leisure industry.

Another option is to embark on a career in interpreting or translating. Most of this work is now done on a freelance basis. To get yourself established, it is essential to have some experience behind you, perhaps as a volunteer. Joining an agency may be a good idea. Self-employment requires great contacts and the ability to market yourself. Having an interesting mix of languages will also be attractive to potential clients.

Search for placements and find out more about [work experience and internships](#) and [self-employment](#).

Typical employers

Some modern language graduates work on a self-employed basis as interpreters or translators. However, many others choose careers not directly related to their subject but where there is the opportunity to use their language skills, for example working for companies who trade or offer services internationally or to non-English speaking customers and suppliers. This means that language graduates work for a huge variety of employers and sectors, including:

- [teaching and education](#);
- [government and public administration](#);
- [business services](#);
- [museums and libraries](#);
- [hospitality and tourism](#);
- [media and publishing](#);
- [science, engineering and technology](#);
- [transport and logistics](#);
- [charities and voluntary work](#).

Skills for your CV

Studying a language clearly makes you a communicator, both orally and in writing.

Additional skills gained through a language degree include the ability to:

- gather information, assess and interpret it;
- lead and participate in discussions and groups;
- organise your workload and work to deadlines;
- develop opinions and propose ideas;
- read pages of text and pick out the essential points.

Spending a year abroad during your degree helps you develop cultural awareness, adapt to new and changing surroundings, and to work both in a team and independently. These skills have value in a job market that is becoming increasingly global and are appreciated by employers, whatever career you go into.

Further study

Some modern language graduates decide to pursue further study in order to gain a postgraduate qualification in interpreting or translating. Although knowledge and ability are the essential prerequisites, further study is often a real asset for these careers. Some employers prefer candidates with professionally accredited postgraduate qualifications.

You can also choose to specialise in an area of language study that interested you during your undergraduate degree, for example European studies.

Some graduates choose to **study abroad** in order to increase their chances of getting an international career.

As modern language graduates pursue a wide range of careers, further study or training in subjects such as marketing, finance, business, IT and journalism are also popular, and for some careers, such as law and teaching, essential.

For more information on further study and to find a course that interests you, see [postgraduate study in the UK](#) and [search courses and research](#).

What do modern language graduates do?

Almost two-thirds of modern languages graduates enter employment within six months of graduation or combine work with further study. Popular areas of work include translating, teaching, advertising and marketing, personnel and HR, and business.

Nearly a fifth of modern language graduates go on to further study. Some specialise in a particular area of language, such as translation or interpreting, while others take the opportunity to broaden their options and move into other career areas.

Graduate destinations for modern languages

Destinations	Percentage
Employed	57.7%
Further study	18.7%
Working and studying	7.5%
Unemployed	8.8%
Other	7.3%

Types of work entered in the UK

	Percentage
Retail, catering and bar work	16.5%
Business and financial	14.3%
Marketing, sales and advertising	12.6%
Clerical and secretarial	11.3%
Other	45.3%

For a detailed breakdown of what language graduates are doing six months after graduation, see [What Do Graduates Do?](#) Graduate destinations data from the Higher Education Statistics Agency.



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