



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

#Linguastars – Courses Talk – Transcript

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Hello everyone! Bonjour à tous! Hola a todos! Ni hao! My name is Niamh, I'm 22, I live in Leeds and today I'm going to talk you through the course options here at the University of Leeds.

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You're all studying a language at A-Level and I hope you're enjoying it as much as I did (if you don't, don't worry). You're all here today so I can tell you a little bit about my own experiences studying languages. I believe it's the best thing I ever did and I'd really like to inspire you to do the same.

So during this session I'm going to explain why I think you should study languages at uni, especially at Leeds. I'm going to talk about studying languages at the University of Leeds and explain a bit about the course options, structure and how we learn. Hopefully this will give you an idea of what it would be like to study with us but do try to make an effort to come to one of our open days, either in person or virtually, so you can see the campus in action.

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Do you think languages benefit us? A lot of people often think that studying a language, or any other arts or humanities degree, at university is a bit pointless as you're not working towards a specific job or career path. Another thing they say is that everyone speaks English so learning languages is a bit pointless. Obviously your teachers and I completely disagree with this so hopefully today's session will explain why.

So to start with I want you to have a think about how languages can benefit us. It's great that we can learn, speak and write in a new language but how else do they help us in life? These three pictures represent more exciting aspects of learning languages. We want them to remind you of all the fun you can have when you learn a new language.

The suitcase shows that languages allow us to travel and explore more of the world. We can also learn more about the local people and culture if we are able to talk to them and ask questions.

The festival represents learning about new cultures, traditions and customs. Without languages we wouldn't have the chance to experience them first-hand, in the authentic way. And the world represents the ability to make friends from all around the world and build great friendships with people you would never have met if you hadn't learnt their language.

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The previous slide was a great reminder of why studying languages is so much fun and how it can benefit us in so many ways! But now I want to talk to you about why I feel you should study a language at university!

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I was a bit of an anomaly at school, because I worked out I wanted to do languages at university in around Year 8. I wasn't able to learn languages until secondary school, and it was then I realised that my mind loves working languages out – to me they're like a puzzle that needs to be solved! I also enjoyed Maths and Music, and I guess they are like languages too! I took French and Spanish as two of my GCSE options and continued them onto A-Level. Languages were a great option for me at university, because I wasn't 100% sure on what career I wanted to have (and there is so much more to language careers than being a teacher or a translator!) and the course would give me opportunities to explore the world whilst learning many valuable skills that would make me a valuable asset to any employer.

The Chinese came a bit later on. I went to China with my family when I was 15, and I fell in love with the country. My dad suggested that I looked into taking Chinese at a beginner's level at university, and it turns out many universities have this on offer, including the University of Leeds. So, when I went to university, I continued my French and Spanish and started my Chinese from scratch. I was given lots of opportunities with my Chinese learning especially, meaning that I went on a subsidised trip to China in my first year, and then lived there for a term in my third year!

Language learning is different at university than what you may have experienced at school. Here at the University of Leeds, the courses are known as Modern Languages, because you not only learn about the language, but all about the culture behind the language. You can do modules on topics like history, politics, literature and film. That's what makes Leeds so different to anywhere else.

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There are currently around 6500 languages spoken around the world, but all the languages you can see on this slide can be studied here at the University of Leeds! A lot more than your typical French, Spanish and German, which is what you've probably been learning at school. There is no better time than at university to pick up something new, so I would highly recommend researching whether one of these more peculiar languages would be up your street! I know my university experience was improved greatly by my decision to learn Chinese.



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There are a lot of different course options at the University of Leeds, this is why it's a brilliant choice. Not only can you study lots of different languages, but you have different course options depending on your preferences. You don't need to study just one language, you can study more than one and you can even study a language alongside another subject such as Business, English or History. Or you can even do discovery modules. These are where you can take modules alongside your degree in a completely different subject area. For example, you could be doing a French degree, but then take a module in Roman Comedy or Children's Rights.

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Here are just some of the one-language courses you can study at the University of Leeds? Can you see the language you study at A-Level on here? Or are you eyeing up a new language to give a try? With French and German, you do have to studied them at A-Level, but all the other languages you can start from scratch! On the next slide, we're going to watch a video from Ruth, who studies German.

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Pause the presentation here to watch a video about Ruth, who studies BA German. A clickable link can be found in the description box below.

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These are just some of the options if you want to study two languages at the University of Leeds. You can study two languages from A-Level standard, like I did with French and Spanish, or you can start one from beginner's level, such as German and Chinese. You can even take two beginner's languages, on a course such as Arabic and Russian. By the time you guys apply for university, the name for these courses will have changed on UCAS from Languages and Cultures to Modern Languages, so just be wary of that if you start having a look on the website before you apply.

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Some of you might want to study languages alongside another subject and at Leeds you can do that as well. I know that some of these subjects may, ironically, seem a bit foreign to you, but again, it gives you an opportunity to broaden your horizons. Like with the dual language degrees, these are being renamed as Modern Languages and... Economics, Business, Philosophy courses for 2021 entry. On the next slide we're going to watch a quick video about Jessica who studies Modern Languages and Politics.

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Pause the presentation here to watch a video about Jessica, who studies Modern Languages and Politics. A clickable link can be found in the description box below.



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Now we're going to go into a little bit more detail about your options and how modules work here.

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Modules are split into two categories – compulsory and optional. Your compulsory modules are the ones that you have to do – usually these are your language modules, but in your first year you will tend to have some compulsory introductory culture modules as well. On the slide I have a few examples for you: Evolution of the French Language, Basic Japanese Language, Introduction to Italian Culture and Society and the Final Year Project, not that you need to worry about that for a long time!

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Like I said just now, the other type of modules are optional ones. These are where you can really delve into what interests you the most! These tend to relate to the cultural aspect of your degrees, but can also be a chance for you to learn an even more obscure language. Here are some examples: Politics and Society in France since 1945, Paris in Revolt, Linguists into Schools, which is a chance for you to get some work experience, and finally Catalan Language and Culture.

The photo on this slide is of the Brotherton Library – hopefully we'll have open days up and running by the autumn so you can come and see it for real, because it really is a work of art, and you can see where you might be writing your assessments during your time here.

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Here we have a timetable of a typical Languages and Cultures undergraduate student. As you can see, at university, you have a lot less contact time than at college or sixth form. However, that doesn't mean that you can spend all your time napping or playing Animal Crossing! You will be expected to do more independent study than you are perhaps used to, and hopefully you will also have some time to join a society or two, or get a part-time job. How does this timetable look to you? Pause the presentation here to get a closer look.

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Now I'm going to briefly explain the differences between sixth form and university.

Firstly, university is a lot more flexible than sixth form. When you pick a subject at sixth form, you are constrained about what you learn. However, at university, you are in control about where you want to take your learning, especially with the discovery option modules that you can do here at Leeds.



University is a place where you can be taught by those who are right at the top of their field. This will be especially apparent with your culture modules – your professors will be teaching you about a topic that they have dedicated years and years of research to.

Unlike A-Levels, you won't be assessed purely on exams. The assessment for each module is different, with a mixture of exams, essays, and group projects. Sometimes even your participation counts towards your final grades, so don't go missing your 9ams!

Going to university will open up a world of new opportunities for you. With over 38,000 students here at Leeds, there is always something new going on!

There is also a major difference in the ways in which you are taught. Lectures are kind of like what I'm doing right now, but in person. So, you have a professor at the front talking through a presentation to do with your module. In contrast, your seminar would take place later on in the week about the topic covered in the lecture, where you will be placed in small groups and be expected to discuss what you have learnt and your thoughts on it. Independent study is what you will be doing to prepare for your seminars, and working on assignments and/or revision.

Year Abroad is the final point and I think the most exciting one! It's pretty self-explanatory – you spend a year abroad, but this is something else that you can make your own! You can study, teach, or work, and it's an opportunity for you to improve your language skills, make new friends from all over the world and explore new places you would never have even imagined!

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The University of Leeds is proud to be a member of the Russell Group, a group of 24 UK universities that are renowned for their world class research. They produce more than two-thirds of the world-leading research produced in UK universities and support more than 300,000 jobs across the country. Russell Group universities have outstanding teaching, research and student facilities, which means you are taught by world-leading experts! Within the Languages department, this will be especially apparent in your culture modules, as these will be the cultivation of years of research by your professors.

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University isn't just about the studying, it's about meeting new people and doing new things, having fun. UoL is a campus university, which means that lecture theatres, the student's union and accommodation are all in one place, as well as the Sports Centre and some shops. I went to a campus university, and as I come from a small village, it was a great transition from home life to independent living. However, I think Leeds is even better than Lancaster in this instance, because you have the homely feel of campus and then the city centre within walking distance! The university union is what represents us as students. It technically works separately to the university itself, and is constantly advocating for its students to make sure you get the best experience ever. In the union building, there are bars, cafes, and even a club! It also offers a range of exciting opportunities, including jobs, societies and events.



We have three libraries on campus, each offering its own distinct feel and workspaces. I'd said Brotherton is definitely the prettiest of the three libraries, but Laidlaw and Edward Boyle both have cafes inside the library, perfect for a caffeine fix to get you through your assignments. We want you, as a Leeds graduate, to stand out by your ability to talk clearly and confidently about your knowledge, skills, attributes and experiences to benefit you on whatever route you take when you leave us. Leeds for Life is about preparing you for your future. It's about inspiring and enabling you to get the most out of your academic and co-curricular experiences and to recognise the value of everything you have done at university. Leeds for Life helps you to get the most out of your time at university by supporting your personal and academic development, so you have the skills and attributes to help you succeed academically and impress potential employers.

Most Unis have organised volunteering schemes, where students can get involved in the local community. Here at Leeds we have RAG, a student led, student-orientated society which works to fundraise large amount of money for a variety of local, national and international charitable causes whilst providing students with exciting experiences to help them love their time at Leeds. This includes fundraising itself as well as organisational and leadership opportunities.

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Here at the University of Leeds we want to ensure that students have the opportunity to realise their potential regardless of their background. We do a lot of work with young people from a variety of backgrounds to show them what is on offer at university, to support them through the application process and to help them realise their potential.

At UoL we have our Access to Leeds scheme which is an alternative admission scheme for all UG courses. The aim is to recruit the best and brightest students regardless of background and to encourage a socially diverse student community.

Applicants must meet at least 2 of the Access to Leeds Criteria – full details can be found on our website but some examples of the criteria include first generation of your immediate family to go to uni, household income of up to £25000, living in public care, studies disrupted by personal, social or domestic life (maybe pick out a couple of these, depending on how much time you have).

If you meet this criteria, you may have the opportunity to receive an A2L course offer which is lower than a standard offer, take part in the module before they start, helps with transition to uni, gain uni tuition before starting the course, attend campus events, lots of support during their studies. If they want more information on this they can visit the website.

We also have an alternative pathway for anyone interested in studying a degree in Arabic, Middle Eastern or Islamic Studies. Again you would be required to meet one of the criteria which is similar to the Access to Leeds scheme and again would be given an alternative offer which is lower than a standard offer.



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Information about disability is not used when considering academic eligibility for the chosen programme of study. We encourage applicants to indicate their disability status on their application form. The university can then work with you to make adjustments to your learning and teaching, and so that we can set up your support and exam arrangements for you.

You can tell the university in a number of ways. Firstly on your UCAS application form. You can email us at disability@leeds.ac.uk or you can complete the form on the disability services website. <https://students.leeds.ac.uk/disabilityservices>. Thank you.

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In an ideal world, I'd tell you to go on open days and explore universities for yourself, but obviously that isn't possible at the moment. Here at Leeds, we are offering a virtual open day, and I think this is a great way for you to explore university life whilst sitting on your sofa!

When applying to Leeds remember that the course name will come up on course finder as Modern Languages and then you pick the language you want to study.

You might be able to apply under one of our alternative offer schemes. Look online if you need any more information on these, pass on questions to your teachers or ask me at the end and I'll help you where I can.

Any questions or if you need some help then contact our admissions team.

