

# MODERN LANGUAGES CAREER SNAPSHOT



## BOOST YOUR EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS



Explore your options and set career goals



Build your networks



Gain experience



Fine tune your job search skills



Show initiative, engage in extra-curricular activities and stand out

For further ideas, access [JCU Job Ready: Steps to Employment Success](#)

## Modern Languages

For graduates of the Bachelor of Arts, majoring in Languages it might appear difficult to pin down one particular career associated with this major. This in itself is what makes a graduate in Languages highly employable.

There are careers very much associated with this study area, however language skills can be used in many careers. Living in an increasingly connected global economy sees many Australian companies conduct business with international manufacturers, suppliers, buyers, and consultants.

Language graduates are therefore employed by a wide variety of employers and sectors. Organisations that value foreign language skills are multinational companies, not-for-profit and aid organisations, foreign affairs, and government departments.

Not only are you a good communicator (both orally and written), but you may also develop the following skills:

- Effectively gather, assess, and interpret information
- Read pages of text and pick out the essential points
- Develop opinions and propose ideas
- Effectively research and analyse information and data

## Career Paths

Some modern languages graduates work on a self-employed basis as interpreters or translators. Many others are employed by companies who trade or offer services internationally, or to non-English speaking customers and suppliers.

Some industries where foreign language skills are most in demand include tourism, media, trade, international relations, technology and science. Having a second language is a great skill on a resume and is relevant to any profession. Sectors that employ Modern Language graduates include:

- Multinational businesses
- Tourism
- Media
- Foreign Relations
- Government
- Translation
- Not-for-profits and non-government organisations
- Education
- National security

Types of jobs include:

- Diplomacy
- Interpreter
- Translator
- ASIO Foreign Language Analyst
- Inbound Travel Consultant
- Private tutors
- Teaching English to people with English as an additional language
- Charity worker
- Museum/library worker
- Language Teacher in primary or secondary schools

*Please note some jobs may require postgraduate or additional qualifications.*

## Translators



1,500 workers  
Employment Size ⓘ



Very high skill  
Skill level rating ⓘ



41% Full-Time  
Full-Time Share ⓘ



43 hours  
Average full-time ⓘ



47 years  
Average age ⓘ



64% female  
Gender Share

## Interpreters



4,000 workers  
Employment Size ⓘ



Very high skill  
Skill level rating ⓘ



22% Full-Time  
Full-Time Share ⓘ



41 hours  
Average full-time ⓘ



50 years  
Average age ⓘ



67% female  
Gender Share

Retrieved from [Job Outlook](#), October 2021.

## Job Opportunities

Identifying a career direction can be a challenge for BA graduates.

Vacancies listed on online job boards, graduate directories, employer websites and social media platforms all provide information on the **range of positions and industries available** to BA graduates plus the knowledge, skills and attributes required.

Many employers do not mention a specific major or degree required but define the work by a skill set rather than qualification.



For job opportunities in the sector check the following websites:

- [Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade - Careers](#)
- [THE unijobs – Languages, Literature and Linguistic jobs Australia](#)
- [NEAS jobs board](#)

#### Online job boards

- [Queensland Government Graduate Portal](#)
- [Australian Public Service Graduate Programs](#)
- [Seek](#)
- [LinkedIn Jobs](#)
- [CareerOne](#)
- [JCU CareerHub](#)

Job vacancy listings will also give you an understanding of **employer expectations** for various positions.

It is important you work towards **gaining the skills, knowledge and experience** you identify as in demand to ensure you are competitive when entering the graduate labour market.

## Professional Associations

Students are encouraged to investigate Professional Associations relevant to the discipline of Modern Languages and to consider student memberships.

Membership of a professional organisation is a clear signal to employers about commitment to a student's area of interest and professional development.

The benefits of membership may include access to industry news, professional development, networking and job vacancies.

Some examples of Professional Associations linked to Modern Languages include:

- [Australian Federation of Modern Language Teachers Associations](#)
- [National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters](#)
- [Australian Council of TESOL Associations](#)

Some local organisations include:

- [Alliance Française Cairns](#)
- [Alliance Française Townsville](#)

## Language Immersion Experience

JCU B Arts - Language students have through the subject LN2622, the opportunity to study in a non-English speaking country for up to 21 days and be immersed in their target language and culture.

Additionally, the [JCU Global Experience](#) team offers JCU students the opportunity to gain international experience through a number of Outbound programs. Check their [webpage](#) for more information.

## Work Experience

An **internship** is a component of the final year, SP2 core Bachelor of Arts subject, [BA3000: Arts Edge](#).

Internships are designed to offer students practical experience to enhance their knowledge and skills plus gain exposure to the breadth of services offered by the employer. They are an opportunity to develop your professional networks and gain work experience in your field of interest.

Check the following website for international opportunities in the sector:

- [The Intern Group – Foreign Language Internships](#)

General internship, vacation work, cadetship, and work experience opportunities can be searched via:

- [GradConnection](#)
- [GradAustralia](#)
- [Australian Government](#)
- [Queensland Government](#)

## Volunteer Work

**Volunteering** is a great way to form professional networks, develop work skills and stand out from the crowd. Many employers value evidence of volunteer work.

Volunteering enables students to experience different work environments plus demonstrate their values and the causes they care about. Students are recommended to consider:

- Volunteering for opportunities presented through their degree
- Becoming a [JCU Student Mentor](#)
- Becoming involved in community organisations, particularly in areas

utilising your language skills and knowledge.

Opportunities are advertised through:

- [FNQ Volunteers](#)
- [Volunteering North Queensland](#)
- [Townsville Community Directory - volunteering](#)
- [Cairns Community Directory - volunteering](#)

## Further Study Options

### Honours and Postgraduate Research

An Honours year is available to high-achieving BA Modern Languages students. It consists of extra study and the development of a personal research project and thesis. This may be followed by further graduate research study, either Master's or PhD. Visit the [Bachelor of Arts handbook](#) for eligibility information.

### Postgraduate Coursework

Alternatively postgraduate coursework study options are available for graduates choosing to gain further knowledge and skills or to enter professions such as law and teaching through post graduate study.

## Graduate Programs

**Graduate programs** are structured professional development positions offered to recent, high-achieving graduates as many place emphasis on the development of future organisational leaders.

Opportunities exist within both the public and private sectors and successful applicants are provided on-the-job training, mentoring and professional development within the organisation.

Organisations' generally **recruit students through their final year of study** for commencement of employment in the following year. Students must check graduate program portals from the beginning of final year to ensure they do not miss out.

**Graduate programs** are advertised through employers' own websites (e.g. [Australian](#) and [State](#) government graduate portals) and social media, and the Graduate Recruitment Directories: [JCU Career Directory](#), [GradAustralia](#) and [GradConnection](#).