

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 and stand out

For further ideas access [JCU Job Ready](#)

Modern Languages

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

The [JCU LinkedIn](#) page provides detailed information on current and past employers and positions held by Modern Languages alumni (graduates).

Nearly 100 JCU Alumni detail Modern Languages in their [LinkedIn](#) profiles. Some employers of JCU alumni are:

- James Cook University
- Apple
- The Paradigm Effect
- InBestThing Pty Ltd
- SMASH Inc.
- The Education University of Hong Kong
- Australia Philippines Business Council

Retrieved from [JCU Alumni LinkedIn](#), December 2019

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 2020.

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 positions may require a particular skill set or area of knowledge and employers may recruit from a number of degrees. 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 Government Graduate Programs](#)
- [Seek](#)
- [CareerOne](#)
- [JCU CareerHub](#)

Please note, JCU does not endorse any of the organisations detailed.

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](#)
- [Australia Japan Society – Far North Queensland](#)
- [Alliance Française Townsville](#)
- [Australia Japan Society - Townsville](#)

Semester Abroad

JCU Modern Language students have the opportunity to spend up to a semester abroad to be immersed in their target language and culture.

Additionally, for those who are unable to leave Australia for a long period of time, JCU offers short immersion programs (2-6 weeks) which allow students to travel abroad as part of their language studies.

See the [JCU Global Experience Outbound Programs](#) webpage for more information.

Internships

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, cadetship and work experience opportunities can be searched via:

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

Or Google search for more.

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](#)
- [Cairns Community Directory](#)

Further Study Options

Honours

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.

An honours degree enables you to explore a topic in greater depth and demonstrates to employers, academic achievement and advanced research and writing skills. It is usually essential for entry into Higher Degrees by Research, such as a Master or PhD.

Visit the [Bachelor of Arts handbook](#) for eligibility information.

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 within the organisation.

Students apply for graduate programs during **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 and social media, the Graduate Recruitment Directories [GradAustralia](#) and [GradConnection](#) and the [Australian](#) and [State](#) government online graduate portals.