York has the whole package – it’s academically very highly rated, the Department of Language and Linguistic Science is one of the best in the country. The course itself is flexible, staff are always on hand, happy to help with problems big or small. The modules are extremely interesting, there are so many options you are guaranteed to find something you’ll love.

James, BA Linguistics with French
Why choose York for Language and Linguistic Science?

Language is so much a part of every aspect of our lives – our history, our culture, our friendships, and our thoughts.

At York we are driven by an interest in what language is, in every sense. Our degree courses are specifically designed to combine linguistics, the scientific study of language, with practical study in languages and cultures. If you are fascinated by the hidden patterns and structures in all languages, or are ready to find out what it takes to be fluent and culturally at ease in a foreign language, York is the place for you.

If you choose York to study linguistics, you will also study a language, or take our specialised English Language and Linguistics curriculum. Choose to study one or two foreign languages, and you will also be introduced to basic aspects of linguistics, as well as those that have direct application – such as pronunciation modules with trained phoneticians.

You will have the opportunity to learn from a scientific point of view about the sounds of languages, the relationships between the structures of languages, the development of language in babies, the historical development of languages over time, and sociolinguistic variation.

When you graduate, in addition to the direct skills of language fluency or linguistic investigation, you will have developed a robust set of practical and analytical skills which are highly valued by employers. Our students go on to a wide range of rewarding and interesting careers in the UK and overseas, including translation, publishing, media, education, public administration, marketing and communications, librarianship and IT.

We look forward to welcoming you.

Here are some key reasons why we think you should choose York:

- York is a world-class university in an historic city, with a strong reputation for research-led teaching.
- Our department ranked 2nd in the UK for world-leading linguistics research in the 2014 Research Excellence Framework.
- Our department is consistently rated highly for the depth of knowledge and passion conveyed by our teaching staff.
- You will learn from experts – our staff teach modules only in their specific subject or research areas.
- Our modern foreign language teaching focuses on fluency and professional competence through an understanding of social and cultural contexts.
- From day one you learn in a ‘hands-on’ approach, combining theory and practical exploration.
- Through York’s focus on research-led teaching, and our large and varied staff group, we offer an unmatched breadth and depth of choice in our final-year modules.
- We are a large, friendly and cohesive department, all located in one building, on the University’s Heslington West campus.
Jaume Plensa, *Spiegel*, 2010

Courtesy the artist and Yorkshire Sculpture Park.
Progression

Our goal is to train and equip you as an independent learner. First year modules are highly structured and run through all three terms of the year. In the second and final years you have more class time per week over a shorter module length (one or two terms). In the final year a wide range of modules offers you the chance to undertake independent study.

You will receive regular feedback on your work, in group seminars and through coursework, and you can seek further advice on a one-to-one basis. Assessment may be spread through the module or at the end, and can include written or oral exams, data analysis, essays, project work or presentations.

Flexibility

Some degree programmes with different titles share the same first year modules, allowing you to finalise your programme choice at the end of the year. You can focus module choices in the second and final year on subjects that interest you or relate directly to your developing career plans.

You can take one or two modules as part of your degree in a wide range of other languages from beginner level up with Languages for All (www.york.ac.uk/lfa), or in another department of the University (subject to availability).

I’ve always liked the broad, eclectic view the Department has had, with a strong emphasis on natural data and combining theory with empirical work.

Bring your curiosity with you, and use your time here to explore as many things as you can. You’ll be confronted with a lot of new ideas and ways of learning here, which will provide you with wonderful skills for life after your studies. Our Department is rich and diverse, so you should find plenty to enjoy.

Richard Ogden, Reader

Be prepared to engage and interact. We work closely with our students and get to know them well. Your studies will be based on small group seminars, with lots of discussion and interaction – all this in the target language. By the end of your degree, you will have learned to communicate effectively, precisely and with a high level of complexity.

Cathy Dantec, Lecturer in French

There are many very interesting and innovative courses that are unique to York, or where York is leading the way. The teaching quality is extremely impressive, and the courses allow all students to achieve their potential.

Department of Language and Linguistics, external examiner
What is linguistics?

Linguistics is the scientific study of language. If you enjoy a problem-solving approach to language – then linguistics is the right subject for you. You will learn to notice and describe fine details – the kind of detail that the human brain subconsciously pays attention to (eg is the grammatical structure of the previous sentence correct?). You will also develop an eye for the underlying patterns in a set of data. These patterns may reveal to us what human knowledge of language is.

Initial compulsory core modules in linguistics give you a grounding in a subset of the following areas, then you can choose from a wide range of option modules in these areas:

- Phonetics and Phonology (the sounds of speech)
- Syntax (sentence structure)
- Semantics (word and sentence meanings)
- Sociolinguistics (language in its social context)
- Language Acquisition and Psycholinguistics (how children and adults learn language, language as human behaviour).

Teaching and learning in English language and linguistics

We offer a mix of teaching and learning methods, from lectures to smaller group sessions and the opportunity to undertake independent research.

A typical week

In the first year you study six modules. For English or linguistics modules, you have a lecture (60–120 students), set reading and exercises (often online) and one or more small group seminars (15–20 students).

Why study language and linguistics together?

All of our degree programmes combine the study of language and linguistics, but allow you to choose the proportion of language to linguistics that suits you. We strongly encourage even students on BA Linguistics to take modules in language as part of their degree in the first year. You can choose from a range of languages and levels. The process of learning languages helps you to gain an even better understanding of how language works.

Q101 Linguistics

First year module mix: 2/3 Linguistics + 1/3 Language (English or any other language)

Linguistics is primarily a study of cognitive matters – how the human mind learns and processes language, and the long-term knowledge that speakers of a particular language possess. Linguists also focus on how aspects of linguistic structure vary from speaker to speaker, and how they change across generations.

The Q101 Linguistics degree allows you to specialise in the study of linguistics throughout your degree. The breadth of module options means you can develop high-level skills in several areas of linguistics if you wish, or opt to focus primarily on one or two areas.

Q101 gives you choice and flexibility, and will challenge and stretch you intellectually as you tackle the debates inherent to contemporary linguistics. At York you will be taught by a team of international experts in each of the core areas of linguistics in which we offer modules.
Q302 English Language and Linguistics
First year module mix: 1/3 English Language + 2/3 Linguistics
Q302 English Language and Linguistics is our most popular degree programme.
If you have taken English Language at A level (or equivalent) and enjoyed the ‘language investigation’ component you will enjoy our approach to the study of English, which deals primarily with spoken language data. You will significantly deepen and extend your understanding of linguistic frameworks. If you haven’t, don’t worry, as our first year modules take you back to first principles, and other subjects such as languages, (social) sciences or mathematics will also give you an edge.
In your first year you will study the History of English, which includes the opportunity to learn some Old English. By experiencing first-hand how differently English was structured 1000 years ago, you’ll get a fresh perspective on English as just one language among the many others spoken in the world.
If you want to study English Literature alongside English Language take a look at our combined degree QQ31 English/Linguistics.

Combined degrees with linguistics

QQ31 English/Linguistics
This combines the study of literature, in the Department of English and Related Literature, with the study of English language and/or linguistics, in our Department. Modules chosen in our Department can focus on sociolinguistics or historical linguistics/Old English, alongside core modules in phonetics, phonology and syntax.

QQ11 Linguistics/Mathematics
This combines the study of mathematics, in the Department of Mathematics, with study of linguistics in our Department. Initial focus in linguistics is on semantics, alongside core modules in phonetics, phonology and syntax.

VQ51 Philosophy/Linguistics
This combines the study of philosophy, in the Department of Philosophy, with study of linguistics in our Department. Initial focus in linguistics is on semantics, alongside core modules in phonetics, phonology and syntax.

You can see the detailed structure and content of all our degree programmes at www.york.ac.uk/language/undergraduate/courses.

You can see all our currently offered modules, with details of how each module is taught and assessed at www.york.ac.uk/language/current/undergraduates/modules.

Questions? Contact our Admissions Tutor on linguistics-ug-admissions@york.ac.uk.
Two language courses

RR12 French and German Language
RR13 French and Italian Language
RR14 French and Spanish Language
RR23 German and Italian Language
RR24 German and Spanish Language
RR34 Italian and Spanish Language

We offer three pathways through these degrees:

• Pathway one: Two languages and linguistics throughout the entire degree (with a year abroad in two countries)
• Pathway two: Two languages throughout degree, with linguistics in Years 1 and 2 only (with a year abroad in two countries)
• Pathway three: One language and linguistics throughout degree, with a second language in Years 1 and 2 only (with a year abroad in one country).

You decide which pathway you wish to follow during your first two years of study. For these two language programmes you should have a grade B at A level (or equivalent) in at least one of the two languages you want to study.
One language courses
• with a year abroad
RQ11 French and Linguistics
RQ21 German and Linguistics
RQ31 Italian and Linguistics
RQ41 Spanish and Linguistics
• without a year abroad
Q1R1 Linguistics with French
Q1R2 Linguistics with German
Q1R3 Linguistics with Italian
Q1R4 Linguistics with Spanish

You can study one modern foreign language (French/German/Italian/Spanish) with linguistics, in either a four year or three year degree (with/without a year abroad). It is possible to switch between these degrees during the second year and you decide that you do/don’t want to spend a year abroad.

The first two years of the three year and four year programmes are identical. You can take German, Italian or Spanish from scratch in these degrees.

Combined degrees with languages
VR11 History/French
This combines the study of history, in the Department of History, with study of the French language. Modules studied in our Department include two compulsory French modules each year, plus a third option module, which can be taken in French, or another language, or in linguistics.

RV15 French/Philosophy
RV25 German/Philosophy
This combines the study of philosophy, in the Department of Philosophy, with study of either the French or German language. German can optionally be taken from beginner level in this degree.

In all of our combined degrees the split between the two Departments is equal in the first year (60 credits in each Department).
In most programmes you can start to bias your module choices more towards one Department than the other after the first year.

You can see the detailed structure and content of all our degree programmes at www.york.ac.uk/language/undergraduate/courses.

You can see all our currently offered modules, with details of how each module is taught and assessed at www.york.ac.uk/language/current/undergraduates/modules.

Questions? Contact our Admissions Tutor on linguistics-ug-admissions@york.ac.uk.
Of all the places in the UK to study sociolinguistics, York has the best combination of breadth, depth and innovative thinking.

Paul Kerswill, Professor of Sociolinguistics

A hallmark of the University of York is our commitment to research-led teaching.

Ann Taylor, Undergraduate Admissions Tutor

By choosing to study at York you are signing up to be taught by leading academics who are setting the agenda internationally in linguistics. Many undergraduates can be actively involved in ongoing research projects and all our students will be able to use data or findings from current research for their own projects.

Our distinctive focus is on the integration of formal theory and empirical investigation. We are interested in the structural properties of language, how languages are acquired and used, and how language evolves over time. We work in research groupings, some of which are highlighted here.

Sociolinguistics

We are an internationally recognised centre for research in the growing field of sociophonetics, which marries the insights of sociolinguistics with phonetic analysis of speech. A recent research project in sociolinguistics in our Department investigated accent and identity along the English/Scottish border (www.york.ac.uk/res/aiseb). We offer an undergraduate module in the applications of sociophonetics in forensic speech science, taught by staff who not only research phonetics but are also experienced forensic caseworkers.

We are also a major centre for an approach to historical linguistics rooted in the interpretation of variation in historical texts, using the tools of contemporary syntactic theory. We host databases of Old and Middle English texts, which students can learn how to use and analyse.

You will connect with this research in advanced modules relating to sociolinguistics, language and identity, phonetics and phonology, and forensic phonetics.

Language acquisition

Ground-breaking research on both child language acquisition and second language acquisition is carried out at York.

A series of research projects are investigating the emergence of language-specific speech patterns in young children up to the age of two. We use state-of-the-art infant speech perception techniques to investigate the role of both perception and production in learning.

Experimental research on language acquisition in our Department includes grammaticality judgement tests, perception and production tasks, and neuroimaging studies. We work on acquisition of both syntax/semantics and phonetics/phonology, and offer modules in all areas of our research.

The question of what mechanisms underlie language acquisition is one of the hottest topics in linguistics today, and discoveries made in this area will decide the direction of linguistics for years to come. You will learn about these through a second year module in Introduction to Language Acquisition, which is taken by almost all our students. This opens up the option of advanced final-year modules in psycholinguistics and language acquisition from different theoretical approaches.
Universal properties of language

Another key area in our research profile is mainstream generative linguistics, which aims to investigate the abstract and universal properties of language through careful description and deep theoretical analysis. Our research team works primarily within the Chomskyan Minimalist Program, with a focus on cross-linguistic comparison. We know that languages are related, as in the family depicted here which can be traced back to Proto-Indo-European, but research into precise grammatical properties within and across the many families of the world’s languages is still at an exploratory stage.

Our goal is to develop precise models of linguistic variation through formal investigation of the universal properties of language. You will learn about this research in final-year modules covering syntax, semantics and comparative linguistics.

For a full list of modules visit www.york.ac.uk/language/current/undergraduates/modules.
Roughly 15 per cent of our undergraduate student body is from outside the UK (including Europe). Since everyone in our department is keenly interested in languages and cultures – by definition – international students are made to feel completely at home.

We strongly encourage applications from international applicants who wish to join our growing community of students from around the world. The University’s International Recruitment team can help international students with any aspect of the applications process. We offer two annual scholarships for overseas undergraduate students, worth £1000 annually for the duration of the course. This is subject to satisfactory academic progress and takes the form of tuition fee remission. Successful applicants will be required to meet the balance of the costs of their course and living expenses.

Once you arrive, the University has an International Student Support team which helps overseas students with all aspects of studying and living in York. There is a popular International Students’ Association which organises events throughout the year.

Visit our website for full details at www.york.ac.uk/study/international.

If English is not your first language you will need to provide evidence of your English language ability. After you arrive in York, the University offers further support throughout your course with free, specialised English language tuition.

Information about our English language entry requirements can be found at www.york.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/applying/entry/english-language.

Global perspective

The mix of languages spoken by students in class becomes data for analysis.

Tamar Keren-Portnoy,
Undergraduate Admissions Tutor
At York if you study French, German, Italian or Spanish to degree level you will have the opportunity to become immersed in your language of choice by spending time studying or working abroad. We strongly encourage language students to take a year abroad if they can – it will transform your levels of fluency in language, as well as your overall confidence levels and employability.

You can choose to spend your year abroad either on a university placement or as an English language assistant in a school. We also offer assistance in finding industrial work placements.

If you study two languages, a hallmark of the York programme is that you divide your year abroad between each country.

If you are on a three year degree programme you also have the option to apply – through a competitive exchange programme – for a place to study abroad in your second year, in North America, Australia or Asia.

See www.york.ac.uk/studyabroad.

I loved that my year abroad in Chile was part of the degree. It was the scariest thing I ever had to do but if I chickened out then I would have failed my degree... so I just got on and did it and it was the best experience of my life!

The language courses in York are usually designed around the culture, history, politics, economics, etc of the country/countries that speak that language rather than literature in that language (although you can choose modules that include literature if it’s something you enjoy). Travelling and getting to know other people is so much more valuable when you understand their history, their roots, their traditions, their beliefs, etc. which is not really something you can necessarily learn from just literature.

Amy, BA French and Spanish
Effective communication is crucial in any career, and studying language and linguistics will equip you with an all-round set of analytical skills which translate readily into any work context. In the last three years, 91 per cent of our students have secured employment or a postgraduate study place within six months of graduation.

What gives our graduates the edge? The study of language and linguistics equips you with complementary skills from both arts and sciences:

- Written and oral communication skills
- Team working
- Data management, interpretation and presentation
- Self-management
- Intercultural awareness
- Logical steps in argumentation
- Creativity and innovation
- Abstracting and synthesising information.

Hear alumni in a range of careers explain how they use transferable skills from their degree in their job at [www.york.ac.uk/language/careers/skills](http://www.york.ac.uk/language/careers/skills).

Check the ‘Skills’ tab for online descriptions of our final year modules at [www.york.ac.uk/language/current/undergraduates/modules](http://www.york.ac.uk/language/current/undergraduates/modules).

We work closely with the Careers Service to provide training and opportunities for all our students as they seek to develop their own employability plans.

For more information about the Careers Service see [www.york.ac.uk/careers](http://www.york.ac.uk/careers).
What our graduates say

These days you need to have something which sets you apart from the crowd. My languages degree from York is a distinct advantage: as well as language skills, I developed a range of valuable transferable skills – from self-management to global cultural awareness – and learned to be creative and resourceful. These contributed to my career as an interpreter and translator, and have been vital in establishing my own language services business.

Nathaniel Elcock, BA French and German Language, 2007
Director/owner, Aardvark Language Services Ltd

I learned so much more from my degree than I imagined. I developed transferable skills which made me a strong candidate in the highly competitive global job market. I now have a job which is both fascinating and rewarding and provides a huge range of opportunities. In the nuclear graduates programme I will work across the UK and internationally in a range of roles, from working in power stations to developing policy at government level. After gaining experience in implementing policy in the UK I am currently exploring opportunities to work in a commercial or governmental role in Japan.

Carl Bradshaw, BA English Language and Linguistics, 2011
Graduate trainee, Nuclear Decommissioning Authority

I have worked in publishing since I graduated and I love it. As is typical in publishing, work experience is vital to get a job. I discovered Multilingual Matters because I referenced one of their books while writing an essay at York. I wrote and asked for work experience and I was lucky to be offered two months in the summer before my final year, which resulted in a job offer as a Publishing Assistant. As the company has expanded, so has the range of jobs I’ve been asked to do, and I’m now an Acquisitions Editor.

Laura Longworth, BA French and German Language, 2010
Acquisitions Editor, Multilingual Matters

I’m halfway through a two year postgraduate course which will qualify me to work as a Speech and Language Therapist. After graduation I built up relevant work experience – which is needed, alongside a good degree, to get a place on this type of course – by working with children and adults with a range of special needs, and also working part-time at the North East Trust for Aphasia. The MSc is wonderful; very challenging and thoroughly rewarding. Another fellow former student of the Department of Language and Linguistic Science is on the same course as me, and I was talking to her just the other day about how brilliant the teaching is at York, particularly in phonetics, and how well it has equipped us for this MSc.

Kate Mason, BA English Language and Linguistics, 2009
MSc student in Language Pathology
In our modules you will study variation in English and other languages, past and present.

Here is a dialect survey of the word for ‘church’, using written sources from the first half of the 15th century.

Each instance of the word in a document is pinpointed on the map at the location where the document, such as a will or charter, was created. The survey reveals considerable complexity in the distribution of different forms of ‘church’ going far beyond a simple north-south divide.

The Department of Language and Linguistic Science welcomes all enquiries from potential undergraduates and we are committed to offering places to students from a diverse range of educational and vocational backgrounds. We hope you will become part of our lively and dynamic community.

All applications should be made through UCAS.

**Entry requirements**

For full details of our entry requirements and how to apply please visit [www.york.ac.uk/language/undergraduate/offers](http://www.york.ac.uk/language/undergraduate/offers).

Our French, German, Italian and Spanish programmes are designed to promote fluency in the languages. For this reason we do not normally offer places to native or near-native speakers of French, German, Italian or Spanish who wish to study their own language.

**Mature students**

Every year we welcome a number of mature students. We can offer you the necessary support and guidance to successfully complete your degree course and develop the skills to help you obtain a rewarding career.

**Student financial support**

We encourage everyone with potential to study here. Information about fees and financial support is available on the University website at [www.york.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/fees-funding](http://www.york.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/fees-funding).

**Bursaries and scholarships**

The University of York has a range of general scholarships and bursaries available for home students and scholarships for overseas students. For full details please visit [www.york.ac.uk/students/housing-and-money/financial-support/bursaries](http://www.york.ac.uk/students/housing-and-money/financial-support/bursaries).

**Visit our Department**

We’d love you to visit the Department of Language and Linguistic Science on one of our Open or Visit Days, when you can come and see the University and meet the admissions tutor, see the Department and talk to our staff and students. For forthcoming dates visit [www.york.ac.uk/openday](http://www.york.ac.uk/openday).
Life in York is varied, colourful and lively. A diverse range of shops, galleries, clubs, cafés, museums, music groups and sports clubs means that the city really does offer something for everyone.

With a population of 190,000, York is big enough to feel cosmopolitan but small enough not to be overwhelming. It is a friendly place you can settle into quickly, but which still feels fresh and exciting once you get to know it well.

York was recently voted Britain’s favourite small city in a Rough Guide poll and its historic streets bustle with visitors from all around the world. There is plenty to impress, from the famously soaring gothic Minster and winding medieval streets to a packed calendar of cultural activities including festivals, concerts and sporting events.

York is also one of Britain’s best connected cities, with excellent transport links to other major cities as well as the wealth of beautiful countryside and coastline for which Yorkshire is famed.

Most first year students live in one of the seven undergraduate colleges, and remain part of the college community throughout their time at University and after they graduate.

The college system is a major part of the student experience at York and each college has its own distinctive identity, atmosphere, facilities and history.

The colleges help to foster a strong sense of community, providing members with opportunities to form friendships, take part in social and sporting events and access welfare support at whatever level they need it. College members include staff as well as students, alumni, and members of the wider York community.

For further information about student life in the city of York visit www.york.ac.uk/study/student-life.

York – where history and tradition meet innovation and inspiration.

Professor Peter Sells
Course list

Three year degrees
Q101 Linguistics
Q302 English Language and Linguistics
Q1R1 Linguistics with French
Q1R2 Linguistics with German
Q1R3 Linguistics with Italian
Q1R4 Linguistics with Spanish
QQ31 English (Literature)/Linguistics
QG11 Linguistics/Mathematics
VQ51 Philosophy/Linguistics

Four year degrees
RR12 French and German Language
RR13 French and Italian Language
RR14 French and Spanish Language
RR23 German and Italian Language
RR24 German and Spanish Language
RQ31 Italian and Linguistics
RR34 Italian and Spanish Language
RQ11 French and Linguistics
RQ21 German and Linguistics
RQ41 Spanish and Linguistics
VR11 History/French
RV15 French/Philosophy
RV25 German/Philosophy
“Language is what makes us human.” Discuss.