

The Promotion of French and Francophone Studies at University Final Report

Introduction

This French Grant set out to encourage Francophone studies at a university level which, despite being just as important in our everchanging multicultural world, have faced serious budget cuts within education at a school and university level. My aims for this project were to inspire interest in GCSE students to continue their studies to A-level and subsequently university level.

French Culture

Throughout this academic term, I have worked closely with ISCA academy, a local Exeter school that teaches up to ages 16. This was the only school I selected, as I concluded that the funds would be the most beneficial if allocated to only one school. Three University of Exeter guest lecturers: Fiona Cox, Hugh Roberts and Ed Mills all visited the school on separate occasions to talk to the students about their specialities: Literature, philosophy and History of France. These lectures in these more sophisticated subjects all served as an introduction into French Culture which they hadn't yet been taught about which are studied at university level. Additionally, I organised a research competition where students could win money at the end of term. The students who wished to participate in this had to conduct research on any chosen French subject and then give a presentation to me, other teachers and fellow students. These subjects ranged from Simone de Beauvoir to the national French Handball team. The two winners were each gifted £40 and a 'fan favourite' was awarded for the interesting French law about marrying dead people, which won £20. As well as being a window into French culture, it can be considered a 'practise' for the Independent Research Project that A-level students have to do as a part of their speaking exams.

Workshops

Any afterschool participation was logged in their 'passports' which is a scheme that highlights a student's extracurricular efforts during the school year. I hosted two revision sessions around the time of their December mocks, which saw a good number of students come and ask for help with their preparation. Booklets and revision guides were bought and handed out to students, and more were requested to be bought for the French department. I gave a presentation on year abroad's at universities as well, given that they are seen as a large upside to doing a language degree or having a language added on to your degree. Studying and Working Abroad options were discussed and explained, as well as the processes that were required in the applications. I also expanding on what it was like studying languages at university and how it is a degree that offers much freedom of study and intense language learning.

Financing

As stated in my budget plan, the £500 grant was to be spent as follows:

- Presentations from three University Lecturers: Total £225
- Student Presentation on Year Abroad and French at University: Total £100
- Student Research Competition: Total £100

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- Workbooks for Workshops: £75

£48.14 was spent on workbooks for the after-school revision sessions, the remainder of these funds were originally going to be donated to the *Institut Français du Royaume-Uni*. However, the teachers requested the money to be spent on more workbooks, so that more students could benefit from them. Therefore, instead of donating the remaining £26.86, it was transferred to a teacher at ISCA academy, who would order them.

Conclusion

After discussing the effect of my contributions to the French department at ISCA academy with the teachers, we both feel like this project has been a success. Many students attended the events that were organised and wish to continue their studies of French to the A level standard at the very least. Personally, this has been a great experience for me to demonstrate my pride in my subject, and inspire the next generation of university students to continue their Francophone studies.