

DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGES AND CULTURES

# CONVERSING IN CULTURES

“ At the University of Reading, we enable our language students to become confident and competent language users as well as versant in the cultures and histories forged by the languages of their choice. We inspire our graduates with the knowledge, skills and life experiences to make a difference globally.

Come and join us.

And help connect the world beyond borders. ”



**Prof Daniela La Penna**

Head of the Department of  
Languages and Cultures

[www.reading.ac.uk/languages](http://www.reading.ac.uk/languages)





# SPEAKING EVERYONE'S LANGUAGE

The University of Reading enjoys a world-class reputation for teaching, research and enterprise in French, German, Italian and Spanish and 100% of our research has been recognised as of international standing.<sup>^</sup>

As a student with us, your classes will be enriched by the current research findings of expert staff who are passionate about their subjects and whose work has gained an international reputation.

<sup>^</sup> REF 2021, combining 4\*, 3\* and 2\* submissions – Modern Languages and Linguistics



# LONGITUDES AND ATTITUDES

# IDENTITY AND BELONGING

At Reading, we give you the opportunity to not only learn a language but to immerse yourself in the country, culture, and people of that language.

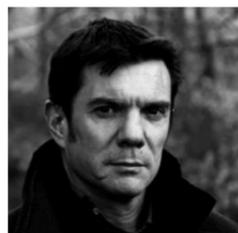
Our research projects include language issues faced by non-governmental organisations and aid agencies operating in crisis zones, challenging media representations of migration, and – from an historical perspective – informing perceptions of intellectual networks and the experience of conflict. This research directly informs teaching.

Whichever core language you are studying, you can choose from a variety of modules connected to the theme of identity and belonging and apply this knowledge to real-world issues such as war and conflict, migration, multilingualism, literacy and intercultural contact, othering and discrimination.

In your first year, you have the opportunity to study modules that introduce you to the history and culture of the languages you are studying. These courses are team taught by our experts, who cover their specialist areas.



## LANGUAGE, POWER AND MINORITIES



**Professor Federico Faloppa**

Professor Federico Faloppa is one of Italy's leading experts on hate speech – the language used to attack people based on their ethnic, sexual, social or political orientation. He has spent the past 20 years investigating the relationship between language and power, and the representation of minorities in public and media discourse. He is also a consultant and researcher on hate speech and language and discrimination for Amnesty International Italy, and a member of the "Committee of Experts for Combating Hate Speech" of the Council of Europe.

Federico's extensive research feeds into several modules, such as his second year module 'Linguistic Variety and Society in Contemporary Italy'.

On his final year 'Language and Power' module, he says, "I take examples of discourse: political discourse, discourse and mental health, discourse and social inclusion, unemployment and employment, to see how it shapes reality and how it shapes public opinion. Text and language don't just represent reality – they create reality."



## MIGRATION AND IDENTITY IN FRENCH-LANGUAGE LITERATURE



**Professor Julia Waters**

Professor Julia Waters is a specialist in twentieth-century and contemporary French and Francophone literature. She is interested in women's writing in French, especially Marguerite Duras and Ananda Devi, feminist and post-colonial theory. Her most recent book is *The Mauritian Novel: Fictions of Belonging*.

In Julia's second year module Global French Life Stories, students learn about how modern-day metropolitan France is an increasingly diverse, multicultural space, shaped by waves of migration from across the globe. They explore how diverse experiences of migration and mobility are represented in a series of semi-autobiographical short novels, all of which blur generic, geographic and linguistic boundaries and complicate received notions of 'Frenchness'.



“What really piqued my interest was the idea and definition of “Frenchness”: who is considered a French person and how has that definition changed? We explored this idea through books such as Azouz Begag's *Le Gone du Chaâba*, where we see French identity through the eyes of a second-generation Algerian immigrant.”

**Ishani Ramessur**

## HISTORY, NATIONS AND GLOBALISATION

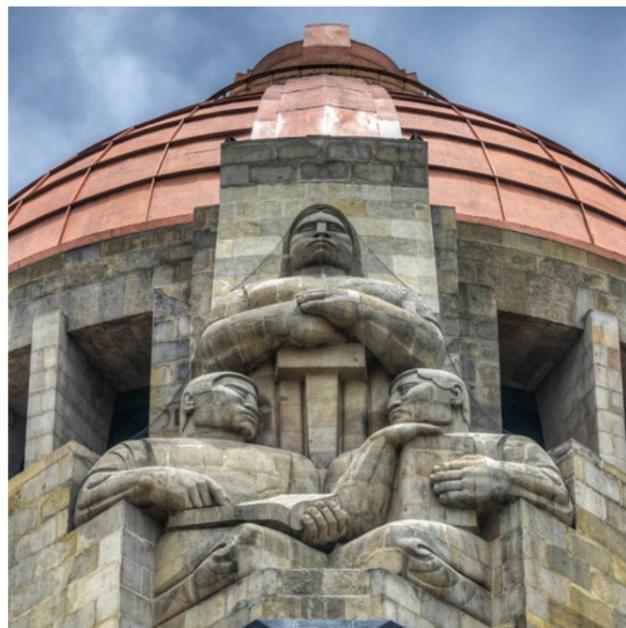


**Dr Catriona McAllister**

Dr Catriona McAllister is an expert on Argentine literature and culture, and she is particularly interested in ideas of nationhood and exploring the relationships between history and literature. Her current research focuses on the representation of historical narratives in Argentine museums and in cultural production for children. Catriona teaches on the Spanish first-year history module Icons of Spain and Latin America. In this module, students learn about the development of Spain and Latin America, and the push for independence in Latin America that characterised the nineteenth century. They discover the Mexican Revolution, the Spanish Civil War, the Cuban Revolution of 1959, immigration and Latino culture, and contemporary debates about globalisation.

“ This module really opened my eyes to the diverse world of Spanish and Latin American culture and history. There was something for everyone as we focused on literature, film, poetry, art and theatre amongst others! The classes were always engaging and exciting, and we had a different teacher for each topic which helped us to get to know the department in first year. The skills that I gained from this module will help me in whichever career path I choose, as cultural awareness is a vital skill to have in an increasingly globalised world. ”

**Sophie Murray**



## THE GERMAN LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY



**Dr Melani Schroeter**

Dr Melani Schroeter is Associate Professor in German Linguistics. She specialises in analyses of public and political discourse and has investigated public debates about migration and immigrants in Germany, and public debates about language use, including silence and concealment in political discourse. She is currently investigating the anti-political correctness discourse perpetuated by the German New Right.

Melani teaches The German Language and National Identity, a third-year module which introduces students to the role of language in national identity. Students learn about the role of the German language in providing a sense of shared identity across German-speaking territories. Melani shows students how increased political participation in mass democracies led to criticism of the use or abuse of language by politicians to gain and sustain political power.

“ In this culture module we look at the development of the German language throughout history in relation to territory changes, identity, and migration. I found it really interesting to correlate the movement of a mass of people from one nation to another through border changes with language and identity, especially as this relates to many migration issues today, and allows us to better understand the identity struggle that people may face. ”

**Emily Woodall**

# BON VOYAGE



An integral part of your Modern Languages degree is spending a year abroad. During your third year you get the opportunity to immerse yourself in the language and culture of your chosen destination. This is a chance to apply the extensive knowledge and skills you have gained during your first two years either on a work placement, as a student, or as an English language assistant. You can choose to study in a diverse range of locations; in big culturally diverse cities or in more rural locations, depending on your own personal interests and the type of experience you are looking for.

All of our students describe their year abroad as life changing and talk about personal and academic growth that sets them up for the future. Here, two such students, James Dowds, French and Italian and Caitlin McClinchy, German and Economics discuss their experiences.

## Where did you go?

**JD:** "I went to Poitiers and then on to Rome. I chose Poitiers because it looked really lovely and when I was there I enjoyed the small town feel to it. In the town square you would bump into somebody that you knew, be it a student or someone from the community which made you feel really at home. I chose Rome because it sounded amazing with loads to see and do. It had a tourist feel to it but you could really experience life in a city."

**CM:** "I went to Graz in Austria, it was a small city and not touristy. The accent was slightly regional but I enjoyed the challenge. I studied for the first semester and then worked in the Environmental Office of the local Government, where I produced a brochure, leaflets and presentations. It was a fantastic experience. I could have got halls but I found a flat through Facebook. It was nice living with Austrians and experiencing living independently."

## How did the University prepare you and then support you during your time abroad?

**CM:** "The staff worked with us to prepare us for our time away and were always available via email for any questions we had. We could contact staff at any time with any questions and my tutor would email regularly to check that we were fine. Lecturers would ask how things were going so I still felt very connected to the University."

**JD:** "It was the next best thing to just having their office to walk into...they were so responsive...they were brilliant."

## While you were away, how did you get to build on your learning, your language and cultural skills? And did it help you personally?

**JD:** "Time abroad opens your eyes to different cultures and ways of life. It improves your language and your confidence with the language. While you're there you think 'I'm just going to go for this' – you force yourselves into situations with the confidence to do things you wouldn't ordinarily do."

**CM:** "The travelling was amazing. Everywhere was accessible by train. While I was away I even travelled to Venice. I noticed big improvements to my German. I was so glad that I did it. After doing that, I think you can do anything."

## Will your time abroad stay with you and help open doors to your future career?

**CM:** "It opened my eyes completely, I was confident before I left but I'm even more confident now. I feel more politically and culturally aware. Even my lecturers noticed a difference; not just with my language skills but with everything really – job interviews are so much easier having lived abroad."

**JD:** "After doing a language and a year abroad, I became so much more confident and independent. Having a language means that there are at least three job markets available to me - the UK, Italy and France plus all the countries in the world that speak those languages. And, as a proven independent learner, companies will know that they can train you and, if necessary, confidently send you to work overseas."

**CM:** "My year abroad opened my eyes to the world."

**JD:** "My year abroad got the inner me out of me. Inspiring."

For details of Year Abroad options for each programme please check our website at:  
[www.reading.ac.uk/languages](http://www.reading.ac.uk/languages)



# ¿UN POCO, BIEN O MUY BIEN?

## Learn at your own level

Depending on your chosen degree and previous level of study, you can start your language studies at Reading at different levels; beginner's, intermediate or advanced, picking up new or advancing existing GCSE language.

Here at Reading we have extensive experience in providing specialist languages teaching at beginner's level for degree students. You could combine your degree studies in that

language with a further language or subject broadening your skills further. For example you could combine German with Business or if you already have an A-level in French you could broaden your horizons by choosing to combine advanced French with beginner's Italian.

One of our students, Beatrice, decided to study at Reading because she wanted the combination of International Relations and

Spanish and a great Year Abroad Programme. Although not studying a language at A Level, Beatrice decided to take advantage of the University of Reading Beginner's and Intermediate entry to their Modern Languages degrees.

Please see entry requirements for all our programmes: [www.reading.ac.uk/languagesdegrees](http://www.reading.ac.uk/languagesdegrees)

“ I'd studied GCSE Spanish but I didn't take it up in the 6th Form, and then I decided to take it back up at University. You become a massive family. I've made so many new friends and you meet different people. The staff are absolutely lovely. They make sure that you know what you are doing every step of the way and they are so helpful – they are more than happy to give their own time. ”

# COURSES

## BA Modern Languages

Our flexible BA Modern Languages gives you the opportunity to either specialise in one core language, or to combine two or three languages, choosing from:

- French
- German
- Italian
- Spanish.

You can enter these languages as a complete beginner<sup>1</sup> or at intermediate<sup>2</sup> or advanced level<sup>3</sup>.

You will reach near-native proficiency by the time you graduate and you will also be able to explore the culture of the countries where the language

is spoken through the study of cultural modules and the Year Abroad.

## Additional languages

You can also opt to combine one or two core languages with one of our wide range of additional languages, starting it as a beginner and carrying it forward throughout your degree. Additional languages include Arabic, British Sign Language, Chinese (Mandarin), French, German, Japanese, Italian, Modern Greek, Spanish or Russian. Find out more about additional languages options on our website:

[www.reading.ac.uk/languages](http://www.reading.ac.uk/languages)

## Studying a language and another subject

You can choose to combine one of the core languages (French, German, Italian or Spanish) with another subject, broadening your skills further. For instance, you could hone your business skills and combine Modern Languages and Business, or expand your horizons through studying Modern Languages and International Relations.

<sup>1</sup> If studying 2 or 3 core languages only one can be entered at beginner level.  
<sup>2</sup> Please note that in some rare cases timetabling constraints may make certain three-language combinations unavailable.  
<sup>3</sup> Changes in the range of languages will be dependent upon availability.

## CORE LANGUAGE: FRENCH

A truly global language, French is spoken across five continents and in countries famous for their rich histories and vibrant cultures. Develop an in-depth knowledge of the language, explore the eventful past and deepen your understanding of the fast-moving contemporary cultures of the francophone world.

You can choose to focus on developing your knowledge and understanding of French and the

francophone world, or combine French with one or two other languages. See our website for a full list of languages available: [www.reading.ac.uk/languages](http://www.reading.ac.uk/languages)

Joint degrees are also available across a range of subjects, including Economics, International Development, Business, English Literature, History, International Relations and English Language.

### YEAR ONE

#### Compulsory modules include:

- French language (beginner's, intermediate or advanced level)

#### Optional modules include:

- The making of modern France
- Introduction to French culture
- What is comparative literature?
- Thinking Translation: History and Theory
- Introduction to linguistics
- Greats of European Cinema

### YEAR TWO

#### Compulsory modules include:

- French language (intermediate or advanced level)

#### Optional modules include:

- How to think in French
- The First World War: then and now
- French Children's Literature
- Global French Life Stories
- Society, thought, and art in modern Europe
- Unity, nationalism and regionalism in Europe
- Science, perversion, and dream in global fantastic literature

### YEAR ABROAD (YEAR THREE)

Our students spend their Year Abroad in a French-speaking country, either on a work placement, studying at university, or working as a British Council Teaching Assistant. It may also be possible to undertake a combination of work and study during your Year Abroad for half a year each.

### YEAR FOUR

#### Compulsory modules include:

- French language

#### Optional modules include:

- Philanthropy à la française: the history of ideas and practices in the French third sector
- French Popular Music and Society
- May '68
- Identity and Conflict in Modern Europe
- Language and power
- The French Caribbean: Language, Literature and Identity

# CORE LANGUAGE: GERMAN

Germany is a leading economic and political force internationally, and has historically played a central role in shaping European culture. Our students develop a high level of expertise in the German language, together with an in-depth knowledge of social, cultural and political issues relating to the German-speaking world. Through the study of a wide range of topics in history, film, literature and linguistics, you will gain a deep understanding of the cultural developments that shape contemporary German

society and culture.

You can choose to focus on developing your knowledge and understanding of the German language and the German-speaking world, or combine German with one or two other languages. See our website for a full list of languages available: [www.reading.ac.uk/languages](http://www.reading.ac.uk/languages)

Joint degrees are also available across a range of subjects, including Economics, History, Business, English Literature, International Relations and English Language.

## YEAR ONE

### Compulsory modules include:

- German language (beginner's, intermediate or advanced level)
- Icons of modern Germany

### Optional modules include:

- German texts and genres
- What is comparative literature?
- Thinking Translation: History and Theory
- Greats of European cinema
- Introduction to linguistics

## YEAR TWO

### Compulsory modules include:

- German language advanced level

### Optional modules include:

- Cinema of Germany
- Glorification, denial and contempt – reconstructing Austria's past
- Society, thought, and art in modern Europe
- Unity, nationalism and regionalism in Europe
- Science, perversion, and dream in global fantastic literature

## YEAR ABROAD (YEAR THREE)

Our students spend their Year Abroad in Germany or Austria, either on a work placement, studying at university, or working as a British Council Teaching Assistant. It may also be possible to undertake a combination of work and study during your Year Abroad for half a year each.

## YEAR FOUR

### Compulsory modules include:

- German language

### Optional modules include:

- The German Language and National identity
- War on Screen – Germany and its films about WWII
- Identity and Conflict in Modern Europe
- Language and power

# CORE LANGUAGE: ITALIAN

In literature and film, history and politics, business and the arts, Italy has long been among the most important and influential countries in Europe.

Studying Italian as your core language will allow you to learn more about this country by studying its language in the context of its fascinating culture and history, and will allow you to study or work in Italy. At Reading we provide a focused and intensive approach to language learning and the opportunity to study a wide range of optional culture topics with experts from different disciplines, including

literature, film and linguistics, within a friendly, professional environment.

You can choose to focus on developing your knowledge and understanding of Italy, or combine Italian with one or two other languages. See our website for a full list of languages available:

[www.reading.ac.uk/languages](http://www.reading.ac.uk/languages)

Joint degrees are also available across a range of subjects, including Economics, History, Business, Classical Studies, International Relations, English Literature and English Language.

## YEAR ONE

### Compulsory modules include:

- Italian language (beginner's, intermediate or advanced level)

### Optional modules include:

- Making Italians: a journey in the history and culture of modern Italy
- What is comparative literature?
- Thinking Translation: History and Theory
- Greats of European cinema
- Introduction to linguistics

## YEAR TWO

### Compulsory modules include:

- Italian language (intermediate or advanced level)

### Optional modules include:

- Intellectuals and Society in Twentieth Century Italy
- One country, many languages. Linguistic variety and society in contemporary Italy
- Society, thought, and art in modern Europe
- Unity, nationalism and regionalism in Europe
- Science, perversion, and dream in global fantastic literature

## YEAR ABROAD (YEAR THREE)

Our students spend their Year Abroad in Italy, either on a work placement, studying at university, or working as a British Council Teaching Assistant. It may also be possible to undertake a combination of work and study during your Year Abroad for half a year each.

### Compulsory modules include:

- Italian language

### Optional modules include:

- Crisis, Change, Opportunity: Italy from 1968 to the Present
- History of the Italian Language
- Identity and Conflict in Modern Europe
- Language and power

# CORE LANGUAGE: SPANISH

Spain and the countries of Latin America together form a key economic and political presence on the international scene and are known for their extraordinary cultural diversity and fascinating history.

Studying Spanish at Reading is a life-changing experience that gives you an in-depth knowledge of the Spanish language and more broadly of Hispanic culture in the many countries around the globe where Spanish is spoken.

You can choose to focus on developing your knowledge and understanding of the Spanish language and the Spanish-speaking world, or combine Spanish with one or two other languages. See our website for a full list of languages available: [www.reading.ac.uk/languages](http://www.reading.ac.uk/languages)

Joint degrees are also available across a range of subjects, including Economics, History, Business, English Literature, International Relations International Development and English Language.

## YEAR ONE

### Compulsory modules include:

- Spanish language (beginner's, intermediate or advanced level)

### Optional modules include:

- Icons of Spain and Latin America: from revolution to globalisation
- Introduction to Spanish and Latin American culture
- What is comparative literature?
- Thinking Translation: History and Theory
- Greats of European Cinema

## YEAR TWO

### Compulsory modules include:

- Spanish language (intermediate or advanced level)

### Optional modules include:

- Literature and society in the Modern Hispanic world
- Transatlantic exchanges: Latin America in the Global nineteenth century
- Modern and contemporary Spanish narratives
- Society, thought, and art in modern Europe
- Unity, nationalism and regionalism in Europe
- Science, perversion, and dream in global fantastic literature

## YEAR ABROAD (YEAR THREE)

Our students spend their Year Abroad in a Spanish-speaking country, either on a work placement, studying at university, or working as a British Council Teaching Assistant. It may also be possible to undertake a combination of work and study during your Year Abroad for half a year each.

## YEAR FOUR

### Compulsory modules include:

- Spanish language

### Optional modules include:

- Narrating the Colombian Conflict
- Memory, dictatorship, and cultural resistance in the Southern Cone
- Writers and Publishers in Spain
- Identity and Conflict in Modern Europe
- Language and power

# ADDITIONAL LANGUAGES

In addition to one or two 'core' languages (French, German, Italian or Spanish), students on our BA Modern Languages can choose to study one additional language from beginner's level. This language will be studied up to independent-user proficiency level (B1 level) and there will be no requirement to spend time in a country where this additional language

is spoken during the year abroad. The study of this additional language will focus on developing students' linguistic abilities.

The additional languages on offer may include Arabic, British Sign Language, Chinese (Mandarin), French, German, Japanese, Italian, Modern Greek, Spanish or Russian

(subject to availability).

If you have studied one of these languages before and wish to continue developing your linguistic abilities, please contact us as we may be able to offer your language level.

Find out more about additional languages options on our website: [www.reading.ac.uk/languages](http://www.reading.ac.uk/languages)



# A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITIES

It is well documented that there is a great shortage of well-qualified linguists in the UK. People fluent in French, German, Italian and Spanish are especially highly sought-after.

When you study with us you will receive the support of a dedicated careers advisor, and benefit from regular events with professionals showcasing careers where languages and humanities graduates are particularly valued. Recent events have focused on translation, publishing, advertising, journalism and marketing.

Professional skills training and work placement opportunities are embedded in our courses, while CV surgeries and support for applying for jobs abroad is provided alongside your studies.

Our graduates are qualified to work in areas where the ability to communicate effectively – using both the spoken and the written word – is a top priority. They find careers in many different sectors, including education, publishing, translation, EU institutions, finance, fashion, entertainment, the film business and tourism, both in the UK and abroad.

They have found employment with companies and organisations such as the Ministry of Defence, Energis Communication, BNP Paribas, the Taylorian Institution Library and Riso Scotti SRL, Christie's, Prada, Dolce and Gabbana, PGL Travel Ltd, Sony Europe, the Civil Service, Dow Jones and Price Waterhouse Cooper, all of whom clearly value the technical and intellectual training of a degree in modern languages.

For more information on our Careers Advisory Service, visit [www.reading.ac.uk/careers](http://www.reading.ac.uk/careers)

“As firms look to markets around the world, languages are becoming increasingly valuable. Employers are showing a growing interest in those skills.”

Dr Adam Marshall, Director General,  
British Chambers of Commerce

## Disclaimer

This brochure was issued in 2022 and is aimed at prospective undergraduate students wishing to apply for a place at the University of Reading (the University) and start a course in autumn 2023. The University makes every effort to ensure that the information provided in the brochure is accurate and up-to-date at the time of going to press (Sept 2022). However, it may be necessary for the University to make some changes to the information presented in the brochure following publication – for example, where it is necessary to reflect changes in practice or theory in an academic subject as a result of emerging research; or if an accrediting body requires certain course content to be added or removed. To make an informed and up-to-date decision, we recommend that you check [reading.ac.uk/study](http://reading.ac.uk/study)

The University undertakes to take all reasonable steps to provide the services (including the courses) described in this brochure. It does not, however, guarantee the provision of such services. Should industrial action or circumstances beyond the control of the University interfere with its ability to provide the services, the University undertakes to use all reasonable steps to minimise any disruption to the services.

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## Modules disclaimer

Sample modules are provided as a taster of some of the modules that may be available on each course. The sample modules listed may be compulsory (core) or optional modules. Information is correct at the time of going to press (Sept 2022) but the University cannot guarantee that a module appearing in this list will definitely run. Teaching staff on specific courses or modules mentioned in this prospectus may be subject to change.

For optional modules, the University cannot guarantee that all optional modules will be available to all students who may wish to take them, although the University will try to ensure that students are able to take optional modules in which they have expressed interest at the appropriate time during their course. Optional modules vary from year to year and entry to them will be at the discretion of the Programme Director.

## Joint courses disclaimer

Our joint courses may have extra requirements, including English language requirements. Please check the individual course pages on our website for further details.

## Year abroad and placement fees

Some courses include an optional or compulsory year abroad or placement year. During this year you will only pay a partial fee which is currently set at 15% of the normal tuition fee. Check the website for the latest information: [reading.ac.uk/fees-and-funding](http://reading.ac.uk/fees-and-funding)

## Placements disclaimer

Programmes with a Professional Placement Year (also known as 'Year in Industry' or 'Placement Year') are fully dependent on students securing their own placement opportunity, normally through a competitive recruitment process. The University provides dedicated career and application support for placement year students. Students who do not secure a placement or who are unable to complete the placement year due to extenuating circumstances, have the option to transfer to a three year variant of their programme with agreement from their School/Department.

## Placements disclaimer

The partnerships listed are correct at the time of publication (Sept 2022). For up to date information on the University's partnerships contact [studyabroad@reading.ac.uk](mailto:studyabroad@reading.ac.uk).

Where Study Abroad is not a compulsory part of the degree programme, the University of Reading cannot guarantee that every applicant who applies for the scheme will be successful. Whilst efforts are made to secure sufficient places at partner institutions, the number of places available and the University's partners can vary year-on-year. In all cases, the University cannot guarantee that it will be possible for applicants to choose to study abroad at a particular institution.

Further, certain courses and/or institutions may require you to satisfy specific eligibility criteria. It can be a competitive process. For further information on the University's Study Abroad Scheme please contact [studyabroad@reading.ac.uk](mailto:studyabroad@reading.ac.uk)



**Department of Languages and Cultures**

[www.reading.ac.uk/languages](http://www.reading.ac.uk/languages)

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THE QUEEN'S  
ANNIVERSARY PRIZES  
FOR HIGHER AND FURTHER EDUCATION  
2021