

Update from the Linguistics Council (formerly UCGAL)

Issue 2
3 December 2025

*Notes from the latest
meeting of the
Linguistics Council,
representing General
and Applied
Linguistics in UK HE*

A summary of discussions at the latest committee meeting. Please share with member organisations and other interested parties.

Attending

Note: this newsletter covers two committee meetings held in quick succession, on 18 November and 3 December 2025.

Present 18 Nov: Billy Clark (Chair, President), Laura Bailey (Secretary), Naomi Adam (Poetics and Linguistics Association), Daniela Francesca Viridis (Poetics and Linguistics Association), Lutz Marten (Philological Society), Anna Havinga (Forum for Germanic Language Studies), Zoe Boughton (Association for French Language Studies), Jim Scobbie (British Association of Applied Phoneticians), Rebecca Woods (Linguistic Association for Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Present 3 Dec: Billy Clark (Chair, President), Laura Bailey (Secretary), Jonathan Kasstan (Treasurer and Association for French Language Studies), Pawel Szudarski (British Association for Applied Linguistics), Lutz Marten (Philological Society), Zoe Boughton (Association for French Language Studies), Jim Scobbie (British Association of Academic Phoneticians), Rebecca Woods (Linguistic Association for Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

News

The Scottish Languages Act came into force this weekend, formally recognising Gaelic and Scots as national languages and seeking to promote them. Kernewek (Cornish), too, looks set to get protection as a minority language.

National Linguistics Day took place on the 26th November, and linguists around the country organised events to celebrate, including talks, workshops, and social events. The Committee for Linguistics in Education (CLiE) announced a video competition, running till February, on ‘why study linguistics’ and are also putting together a pub quiz. Mark the date in your diaries for next year!

Billy, as Chair, has been liaising with other organisations and initiatives including the Common English Forum, Rebecca Mitchell of National Linguistics Day, the all-party parliamentary group about the importance of languages in schools, and the Curriculum and Assessment Review.

Member organisations reported on their latest events: too many to list here, but many successful conferences and meetings have just happened or are about to happen, and overall everyone is on an even keel and doing great work. Budgets and memberships are a concern for all, of course, as ever.

In less good news, more departments are under threat (Leicester and Nottingham, and possibly cuts at Lancaster). Both currently have petitions to support them, and we will do what we can.

What should the Linguistics Council be doing?

We continued our discussion about the future of the Linguistics Council, this time focussing on practicalities like the website and finances.

We agreed on updates to the [website](#), which you'll see appearing soon. We also need a new logo now we've changed our name, so if graphic design is your passion, get in touch! We are going to close our Twitter account, as it is dormant and members had the sense that it was not needed.

We also discussed widening our membership, so if you know of a group of linguists not currently represented on the Linguistics Council, get in touch. Billy is also reaching out to some potential organisations to see if they would like to have a representative on the Council.

Next steps

We will hold our next meeting in the new year. Have a good winter break and we'll see you in 2026.

Member organisations

Association for French Language Studies <https://afls.net/>
 British Association for Applied Linguistics www.baal.org.uk/
 British Association of Academic Phoneticians www.baap.ac.uk/
 British Association for Clinical Linguists www.bacl.info/
 Forum for Germanic Language Studies www.fgls.ac.uk/
 Henry Sweet Society www.henrysweet.org/
 Linguistics Association of Great Britain www.lagb.org.uk/
 Philological Society www.philsoc.org.uk/
 Poetics and Linguistics Association www.pala.ac.uk/
 UK Cognitive Linguistics Association www.uk-cla.org.uk/
 University Council for Languages <https://university-council-for-languages.org/>

Administrative roles

Chair: Prof. Billy Clark, Northumbria University (2025–2028)
 Secretary: Dr Laura Bailey, University of Kent (2022–2025, 2025–2028)
 Treasurer: Dr Jonathan Kasstan, University of Westminster (2021–2024, 2024–2027)