Update from the Linguistics Council (formerly UCGAL)

Issue 3
2 April 2026

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

Present: Billy Clark (Chair, President), Laura Bailey (Secretary), Jonathan Kasstan (Treasurer), Naomi Adam (Poetics and Linguistics Association), Daniela Francesca Virdis (Poetics and Linguistics Association), Anna Havinga (Forum for Germanic Language Studies), Zoe Boughton (Association for French Language Studies), Jim Scobbie (British Association of Academic Phoneticians), Rebecca Woods (Linguistic Association for Great Britain and Northern Ireland), Emma Humphries (Henry Sweet Society), Pawel Szudarski (British Association of Applied Linguistics)

News from member organisations

Various conferences, workshops and meetings are upcoming or recently took place: the Association for French Language Studies held a workshop on AI in language teaching and assessment; the Forum for Germanic Language Studies will take place in Leeds in April; the British Association of Academic Phoneticians colloquium is also coming up in April; the Philological Society's next meeting is in May at the British Academy; the Poetics And Linguistics Association conference is in Uppsala in August; the Henry Sweet Society's conference is in early September at Nottingham; the British Association of Applied Linguistics conference is also in the first week of September at Aston; and the following week the Linguistics Association of Great Britain and Northern Ireland conference is in Edinburgh. Busy time! Get a round trip booked in now.

Societies are noting a shift away from engagement on social media platforms (and indeed we closed our own X account following discussion at the last meeting) and towards LinkedIn or email mailing lists, though there is concern that information will reach fewer people (and attract fewer new people).

Several member organisations have also funded students' conference attendance, essay prizes, and seminar series. Do remember to check what support your society can offer when you're putting on an event!

President's news

Billy has been writing messages of support for departments and courses under threat, most recently Essex and Hertfordshire. While he doesn't get responses, we feel it's still important to do this, when colleagues want us to.

He also attended the Common English Forum where there was news about the National Curriculum updates: there is to be some focus on spoken English at GCSE level, which was previously absent.

Linguistics Council matters

We discussed the website again and decided that we would move away from our current host to something either free or cheaper, with a better editing interface. We also agreed that in the process we would commission a new logo and update the content. Suggestions for useful content are welcome!

Next steps

Date of next meeting TBC.

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)