

# WHY GERMAN?

SIX GOOD REASONS TO LEARN GERMAN

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## IN A NUTSHELL

Germany is the **3<sup>rd</sup> largest economy worldwide**, the largest economy in the European Union and the **2<sup>nd</sup> biggest trading partner of the UK**.

German is the **most widely spoken first language in Europe<sup>1</sup>**, and the EU as a whole is the biggest trading partner of the UK.

German is the **most sought-after second language by UK employers.<sup>2</sup>**

**22,000 undergraduate and graduate programmes are offered in Germany yearly.**

<sup>1</sup> German is spoken in Germany, Austria, Liechtenstein, parts of Switzerland, Italy, Belgium and Luxembourg.

In these 6 European countries, almost 100 million speak German.

<sup>2</sup> According to a 2024 City Lit Study



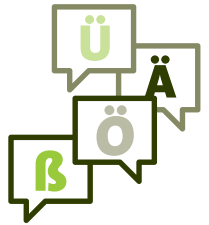
### GOOD REASON TO LEARN GERMAN NO. 1

## EQUIPPING LEARNERS

German and French remain the two most desirable languages according to employers<sup>2</sup>, yet the number of pupils learning German in school remains historically lower than those learning French and Spanish. This means that, at a time when **German is more sought-after than ever**, offering German as part of your curriculum **gives pupils an in-demand skill** and enhances your school's reputation.

Embracing **linguistic diversity** reflects positively on the school's commitment to providing students with a **well-rounded education**, contributing to the students' development as global citizens.

Language learning is regarded as an important part of a rounded education, with a 2023 poll from YouGov and the British Academy finding that **71% of UK adults support** the idea of making the **study of a modern language** compulsory in secondary school.

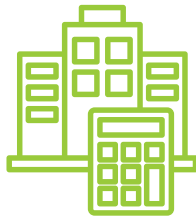




## GOOD REASON TO LEARN GERMAN NO. 2

# FUTURE DESTINATIONS

Germany is the UK's second biggest trading partner and is the **language most in demand by UK employers** – close trade links mean that many businesses require German speakers in a variety of fields, and German speakers can expect to have more career opportunities. The steep drop in EU migration since Brexit has disproportionately impacted UK businesses' ability to hire native German speakers, so they **increasingly rely on people from the UK with German skills**.



**Around 2500 German companies are located in the UK, employing over 400,000 people.** Especially in Scotland, German energy companies are playing an increasing role in the **transition towards renewables, a fast-growing industry sector both in Germany and the UK.**

Germany is also the second most used scientific language, making it very beneficial for careers in STEM and academia.



**At Scottish universities, German can be combined with over 30 subjects at degree level** (\*over 60 in UK) - ranging from Archaeology and Law to Philosophy and Business – quite apart from other languages.

Learning German at school enables pupils to attend universities across Germany: Germany is home to some of the world's **top universities** and boasts a **renowned vocational training system**. Plus:

**There are no tuition fees, even for international students.**

Germany offers **support for work and study in Germany** through organisations and funding programmes such as the German Academic Exchange Service DAAD, who support well over 100,000 international as well as German students and researchers every year.

Germany is facing a shortage of skilled workers and is actively looking for foreigners to work in Germany. This concerns all kinds of careers. Thus, **having German language skills broadens the career opportunities enormously**.

Last but not least, having a second or third language on your CV is a significant advantage in general. Employers see this as a positive sign that a candidate has the **will and the stamina to pursue more challenging long-term goals**.

### GOOD REASON TO LEARN GERMAN NO. 3

## BENEFITS ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

90% of studies examining the impact of language learning on academic performance show that language **learners perform better across a range of academic subjects** than students who don't study a second language. Learning another language also **boosts pupil literacy**, which gives learners an advantage in other school subjects.

Other studies also show a measurable impact on **concentration and focus, memory, communication skills, empathy, and creativity**.



Plus, it doesn't have to be hard: English and German **originate from the same language family**. This means there are similar structures and it's easy to spot similar words in both languages, which boosts motivation for learning. Pupils in Scotland have an additional advantage, as the German pronunciation comes especially easy to them.



Goethe-Schiller monument in Weimar

### GOOD REASON TO LEARN GERMAN NO. 4

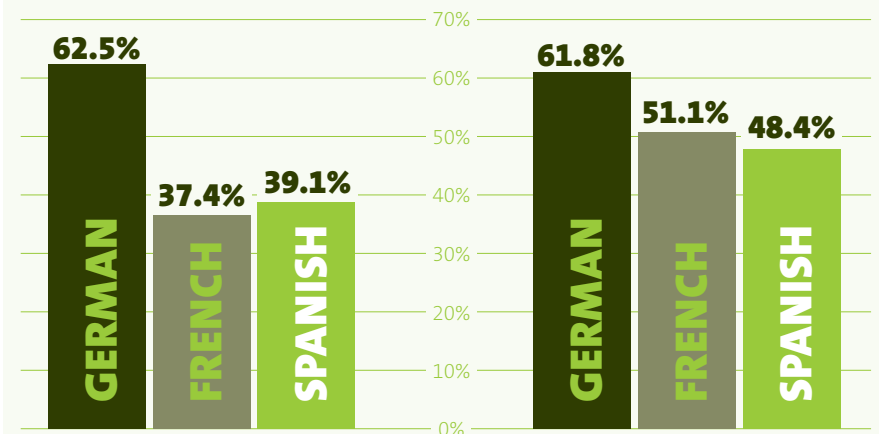
## STRONG ATTAINMENT

Data from SQA, 2023: German saw a **greater percentage of candidates progressing from a National 5 A grade to Higher A grade** with 78% when compared with French (62%) and Spanish (60%). When looking at progression from a National 5 grade A to a Higher A to C grade, German had a greater percentage with 99% in comparison with 93% for Spanish and 92% for French. A greater proportion of candidates progressed from a National 5 grade B to a Higher A to C grade for German (79%) than both French (40%) and Spanish (43%).

For both French and Spanish, **40% of candidates who attained a grade A at Higher went on to attain a grade A at Advanced Higher**, lower than the **64% for German**. For progression from grade A at Higher to an A to C grade at Advanced Higher, French had a greater percentage with 86% compared to the 84% for Spanish, but lower than German with 99%.

Pupils achieving an A in the Advanced Higher 2023

Pupils achieving an A in the Higher 2023





## GOOD REASON TO LEARN GERMAN NO. 5

# GERMAN BROADENS CULTURAL HORIZONS

Learning German fosters a deeper understanding of German culture, history, and contributions to the world. This cultural enrichment promotes **tolerance** and **cross-cultural appreciation**.

The relations between the UK and Germany are very close, politically, economically and culturally. There are many personal links between the British and the German people. Around 450 partnerships between British and German cities and towns foster direct contacts.

German is an official language in six European countries and is also used as an internal **working language in the European Union** alongside English and French. It is the most widely spoken native language in the EU.

German is also called ***The Land of Poets and Thinkers*** – its rich cultural, scientific, literary and musical history offers students and teachers a wide range of works to incorporate into their learning and teaching.



Berlin — Reichstag building



Hamburg — Seaport



Berlin Cathedral



## HIGH-QUALITY SUPPORT FOR TEACHERS AND SCHOOLS

The Goethe-Institut offers a wide range of support that makes it easier to offer German and to support your teachers. Programmes include:



- **Teaching support** during short-term staffing shortages and German courses for non-specialist teachers and students through Vorsprung Deutsch
- **Free professional coaching** and upskilling for your department through the German Expert Mentor (GEM) network
- **Grants and scholarships** for teachers, including for in-person professional development in Germany
- **German Clubs:** Engaging learning and teaching materials usable for afternoon clubs, student-led outreach, or traditional lessons
- Provision of current, **high-quality teaching materials** and lesson plans, including the Gimagine Award which is usable as a Duke of Edinburgh skill
- Various **competitions, events, career fairs, film screenings, youth exchange programmes**, and other motivational initiatives throughout the year including trips to Germany.

Schools can also benefit from offers by UK-German Connection, such as the joint programme “e-space” which offers virtual school exchanges and support for partnerships and exchanges.



[goethe.de/gimagine](https://goethe.de/gimagine)

## SOURCES





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Partners:



Federal Foreign Office

