

Baroness WilcoxParliamentary Secretary for Business,
Innovation & SkillsBaroness Coussins
House of Lords
London SW1A 0PW

15 November 2010

Dear Baroness Coussins,

You tabled the Parliamentary Questions below, and I said that I would write with the substantive answer.

To ask Her Majesty's Government, how many students applying to university in each of the last three years had taken (a) French, (b) German, (c) Spanish, (d) Russian, (e) Polish, (f) Mandarin, (g) Arabic, and (h) Turkish, at GCSE and gone on to take that language at AS level; and how many who took each language at AS level went on to take it at A2. HL2127

To ask Her Majesty's Government, how many students applying to university in each of the last three years who had taken two languages at GCSE went on to take (a) one and (b) two languages at AS level. HL2128

To ask Her Majesty's Government, how many students applying to university in each of the last three years who had taken two languages at AS level went on to take (a) one and (b) two languages at A2. HL2129

The information is in the tables below

Table 1: UK domiciled applicants to Higher Education 2007– 2009 who had achieved specified languages at GCSE and progressed to the same subject at AS

Subject	Academic year of entry		
	2007	2008	2009
Arabic	164	202	235
Chinese	310	304	294
French	15,094	15,506	15,379
German	5,960	5,952	5,640
Polish	40	52	76
Russian	262	255	247
Spanish	6,071	6,367	6,980
Turkish	81	98	133

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Table 2: UK domiciled applicants to Higher Education 2007 – 2009 who had achieved specified languages at GCSE and progressed to the same subject at AS and A2

Subject	Academic year of entry		
	2007	2008	2009
Arabic	107	132	139
Chinese	196	207	195
French	9,303	9,676	9,553
German	3,683	3,673	3,412
Polish	30	36	58
Russian	206	202	190
Spanish	3,968	4,111	4,597
Turkish	63	75	99

Notes to tables 1 and 2:

In tables 1 and 2 above some applicants may be counted in more than one row as each applicant may take more than one of the specified languages
GCSE 'Mandarin' is matched to 'Chinese' at AS and A2 level

Table 3: UK domiciled applicants to Higher Education 2007/08 – 2009/10 who had achieved at least two languages at GCSE and progressed to take languages at AS

Number of Languages at AS	Academic year of entry		
	2007	2008	2009
1	9,669	9,634	9,688
2 or more	3,659	3,466	3,393
Grand Total	13,328	13,100	13,081

Table 4: UK domiciled applicants to Higher Education 2007/08 – 2009/10 who had achieved at least two languages at AS and progressed to take languages at A2

Number of Languages at A2	Academic year of entry		
	2007	2008	2009
1	1,022	974	939
2 or more	2,709	2,573	2,521
Grand Total	3,731	3,547	3,460

Notes to tables 3 and 4

For tables 3 and 4 the languages used to identify applicants are as follows: Arabic, Bahasa Melayu, Bengali, Chinese, Dutch, French, German, Modern Greek, Gujarati,

Hindi, Japanese, Modern Hebrew, Panjabi, Persian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Tamil, Turkish and Urdu.

Notes to all tables:

GCSE data was extracted from applicants' declared qualifications. AS and A2 data was extracted from the results provided by Awarding Bodies.

Unless an applicant has applied in an earlier cycle and UCAS had received results at that stage, only the examination results achieved in the 18 months leading to the end of the application cycle concerned have been included for AS and A2 qualifications.

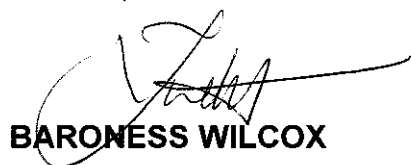
The figures suggest a slight increase in the number of University applicants who have taken a language at GCSE and progressed to the same language at AS and A2 level. They also suggest a slight decrease in the number of university applicants who had taken two or more languages at GCSE and progressing to study any language at AS and A2 level. This is not necessarily indicative of a declining trend in the take-up of modern language courses in HE. The table below gives the total numbers of accepted applicants to language courses over the last five years, covering students with any prior qualifications, and there is no clear trend evident:

UK domiciled accepted applicants to full-time undergraduate language courses 2005 – 2009

Academic year of entry	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Accepted	5,650	5,232	5,419	5,667	5,522

I will arrange for a copy of this letter to be placed in the Library of the House.

*Yours
with best wishes*


BARONESS WILCOX