ISMLA

Independent Schools' Modern Languages Association

National Annual Teachers Conference

Saturday, 6 February 2027 – St Alban's High School

From 09:30	**Registration** Exhibition open – Tea, Coffee and refreshments served
10:30	**Welcome** Mrs Ann Massey – Head of St Alban's High School
10:40	**ISMLA AGM Vision and Announcements** Adèle Venter, Chair of ISMLA, Caroline Murie, Secretary of ISMLA
10:50	**Culture and Creativity in the Modern Languages Curriculum** Charlotte Ryland and Juliette Claro
11:30	*Comfort break*
11:45	**MFL Results in Context: Understanding the Evidence, Shaping the Conversation, Making the Case** Helen Myers and David Blow
12:30	**Lunch and Exhibition**
13:30	**Subject-Specific Teach-meet** Discussion of current innovations and preoccupations in: French • German • Spanish • Mandarin • Italian • Russian • Junior
14:40	**Addressing our shared A-Level problem: from ideas to outcomes** Adèle Venter and Max Hartle
15:40	Conference Close

Adèle Venter • North London Collegiate School • Email: adeleventer.ISMLA@outlook.com

Patrons

A.S. Pettitt Esq. MA (Oxon) • H. Myers, BA (London), MA (Open University)
D.J. Byrne, M.Am M.Ed (Cantab) • Sara Davidson, MA (Edinburgh), MEd (Birmingham)

Speaker Profiles

Charlotte Ryland founded the Queen's Translation Exchange (QTE) in 2018. She is also Director of the Stephen Spender Trust (SST), a charity that promotes language learning and literary translation. Through both organisations, she aims to engage people of all ages and backgrounds in literary translation and to bring creative translation into UK schools. Charlotte is a committed advocate for modern languages and Chair of The Languages Gateway, a national platform promoting collaboration and advocacy across the languages sector. She also leads the *Collaborating for Change* initiative, which brings universities together to strengthen partnerships with schools, share effective practice and develop collaborative approaches to languages outreach and advocacy. Until 2019, Charlotte ran *New Books in German*, a UK-based project promoting German-language literature internationally, and was a Lecturer in German at Queen's College, Oxford.

Juliette Claro is a Senior Lecturer in Education at St Mary's University, with over 20 years' experience in modern languages teaching and educational leadership, including roles as Head of Faculty and senior leader responsible for teaching, learning and professional development. She co-chairs the Association for Language Learning's Creativity Special Interest Group and is actively involved in advocacy and initiatives supporting language teachers, teacher recruitment and professional development. Juliette is the author of the *Head of Modern Languages Handbook* for the Association for Language Learning and *Success Stories in the MFL Classroom*. She is a Fellow of the Chartered College of Teaching in recognition of her contribution to secondary education.

Helen Myers has recent experience of teaching and senior management in a large 11-18 comprehensive school, and continues to work in schools supporting ML Depts. She is an ALL Trustee and member of ALL's management board, and Chair of the ALL London branch. She has been involved over many years with GCSE examination and curriculum issues, including severe grading and the new GCSE specifications. She makes her analyses available on her blog: helenmyers.blogspot.com, volunteers her support for members of ALL, and contributes to national debates on ML.

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David Blow has continued as Executive Head of SESSET (a multi-academy trust of three secondary comprehensive schools in Surrey) after retiring as Headteacher. For many years, he has been involved with understanding data through his work for the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) and the Confederation of School Trusts (CST) with the DfE, Ofqual and Ofsted. He is a Fellow of ALL and has had a particular interest in severe grading in Modern Languages exams for the past 20 years, working to improve the situation at both A level and GCSE. He has contributed to the national debate around the introduction of the new GCSE specifications and analysing the first results.

Adèle Venter is Head of Modern Languages at North London Collegiate School and Chair of the Independent Schools Modern Languages Association (ISMLA). A specialist in German and French, she has 22 years of teaching experience, including 17 years leading departments in a range of schools, with the last five spent at NLCS. As Chair of ISMLA, she seeks to strengthen the Association's role as a representative voice for modern languages in the independent sector, fostering dialogue and partnerships across schools, universities and the wider educational community, while championing the enduring value of languages and their vital relevance in a rapidly changing world.

Max Hartle is a teacher of Spanish, French and Russian at Warwick School, having spent the first three years of his career at Bristol Grammar School. As Vice-Chair of ISMLA, Max works with Adèle to shape the strategic work of the association and leads on communications, amplifying our message to our members and producing our half-termly bulletin which reaches some 450 teachers and other stakeholders. Max is particularly interested in creative thinking about the future of languages in the UK and ensuring the subject can survive and thrive in an ever-changing and rapidly developing 21st century context.

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