Your window to the world
The Language Centre

Communicating successfully starts with language. If you can speak the language of your discussion partner well you can significantly increase your opportunities and widen your horizons – whether you have a conference in Atlanta, a business meeting in Beijing, a work placement in Rio de Janeiro or a reception in Groningen.

The Language Centre of the University of Groningen is specialized in language and in language proficiency – in writing and speaking, and in understanding each other.

We organize language training and communication courses of many different types – from individual to group-style teaching. They can be given in-house and are usually tailor-made. Courses are designed in consultation because language is linked to context. In addition, the Language Centre has a Translation and Correction Service, designs and offers language tests and assessments and provides individual language advice.

The Language Centre works for students and staff of the University of Groningen as well as anyone, anywhere in the world: managers doing business with Germany; municipal officials who regularly receive visitors from China; students who are planning a work placement in Argentina; researchers who travel to Sydney or communicate daily by e-mail with colleagues in Indonesia. Many foreigners who are in the Netherlands for study or work also make use of the services of the Language Centre.

The Language Centre is the world in miniature. More than one hundred teachers and translators, from twelve different countries, together make up the Language Centre.

Language courses
From Dutch to Italian
From English to Chinese

‘Very practical, could be used immediately’

Geir Jordet, a movement scientist from Norway, followed a group course and an individual course in Dutch at the Language Centre.

‘The individual course was tailored to my situation. I had to teach in Dutch, and during the course I was actually starting to prepare my classes. It was very useful. And it’s a great feeling to be able to put what you learn immediately to use.’

The Language Centre can offer the following types of language training:

- Open courses – open to anyone whose starting level matches the level of the course in question.
- Dutch for non-native speakers – intended for people who have followed higher education and may want to prepare for the National Examination Dutch as a Second Language.
- Tailor-made language courses – you learn the language within the context you need; this can be either individually or in a group.
Good English is essential
Berry Middel, departmental head of Care Sciences, is a regular customer of the Translation and Correction Service and has also taken several writing and presentation courses in English.

‘If you can’t express your message in good English nowadays, you might as well forget it. However good your story, you won’t get your article published in internationally renowned journals unless the English is word perfect.

If the university, or a faculty, wants to be an international player, then they have to invest in language teaching. That’s why our policy is first follow a course at the Language Centre, then write something in English and send it to the translation department.’

Jan Kees Kleuver works for the Groningen municipality in the Spatial Planning and Economic Affairs department. Together with colleagues, he took a tailor-made course in Chinese; he previously completed a course in Business English.

‘We wanted a course that was tailor-made for our situation. From earlier experience I already knew that the university Language Centre would be able to provide just that. They really listen to what the customer wants – a crucial precondition for a useful course.’

Our communication training is tailor-made, usually given in Dutch and is intended for people who have a good command of the language but want to improve their skills in certain aspects of their work. It is also possible to follow communication training in English, French or Spanish.

You can also contact the Language Centre for individual communication advice. If you wish, you can give a test lecture in Dutch (or the language relevant for you) and receive specific feedback.

The courses listed below are just examples. If you have other requirements, please do not hesitate to contact us to discuss them.

Tailor-made communication training
Written
› Effective minute-taking
› Making invoices, writing notes
› Writing policy advice
› Writing academic texts
› Writing job application letters
› Career development interviews
› Expressing yourself clearly

Oral
› Presentations
› Meetings
› Job interviews
› Arguing and debating
› Individual help with presentations

Tailor-made courses
Learn just what you need
‘The right level, the right note’

‘Presentations in English’ is just one of the specific tailor-made courses the Language Centre offers. You give presentations on your own field, with the other students acting as your audience. The homework assignments are simultaneously preparation for your lecture series.

The discussions you hold with your fellow students are usually extremely profitable. You receive feedback on your pronunciation, and also on matters such as word choice and grammar.

For our clients we design specific one-to-one or small group courses which reflect the exact needs of the students. Special attention is often paid to use of vocabulary.

Examples of specific training courses
› English for P&O officers
› Writing letters in English for secretarial staff
› Presentations in English
› Publishing in English
› Conversational German
› E-mailing in French
› Writing policy documents in Dutch

Communication training
Write better, formulate more precisely
**Translation and correction**

What is a flawless text worth

Flawless texts are a top priority for the staff of the University Translation and Correction Service. They translate into and out of English, German, French, Dutch and Spanish and many other languages on request. Whether your text is for academic, legal or publicity purposes, it will always be checked by at least two people, one of whom is a native speaker of the target language. During the work, the translators enter the jargon used into a translation database, thus ensuring that your key concepts will be translated in exactly the same way in subsequent texts. The University Translation and Correction Service also has a rush-job service.

‘I sometimes call about one sentence’

Gerrit Voerman is Director of the Documentation Centre for Dutch Political Parties. Over the past eight years he’s regularly made use of the translation department.

‘Swift response, clear agreements and a great translation. I have an excellent relationship with the translation department. We often have to use jargon that’s very difficult to translate so I always check the translations and sometimes I ring them up. That contact and availability is worth its weight in gold.’

**Testing and assessment**

Assessing language proficiency

Prof. Bert Creemers, former Dean of the Faculty of Behavioural and Social Science at the University of Groningen, made use of the Language Centre’s testing and assessment service.

‘They never say no’

The Language Centre delivers both tailor-made and standardized language tests which are used to assess the language skills of a wide variety of people. On request, the Language Centre can test the language proficiency of students and lecturers at teaching institutions, and it has also designed tests for people working for the police or hospitals, checking whether their proficiency in English, Dutch, Spanish or another language is sufficient to perform the tasks expected of them. Meanwhile, the digitized Language Centre English Test is used regularly to assess the English of students, prospective students and researchers who need to take a language test to join a particular programme or to study or carry out research abroad. The scores produced by the test are reported in terms of the Common European Framework, an internationally recognized frame of reference for language testers.
Further information

This brochure is designed to provide you with an overview of the services and products offered by the University of Groningen Language Centre. Please visit our website for more information: www.rug.nl/languagecentre or phone us with your questions about tailor-made courses or translation work. You can also send us an e-mail including a brief summary of your request and contact details. We will then contact you as soon as possible.