

MML Faculty Board Rep Manifesto – Harry Ness (4th year German and ab-initio Russian student)



Since the age of 13 language learning has been an extremely important part of my life. I've dedicated hours of my time each day to what can only be described as my favourite hobby – acquiring and improving my knowledge of foreign languages in order to better communicate with people from other countries and gain a greater understanding of their cultures. Over the past 8 years I have learnt to speak over 10 languages at at least a conversational level (B1) and believe that I can help revolutionise the way language students at Cambridge learn. As an MML language faculty rep I would like to create a shared pool of the best resources for language learning, including vocabulary apps, sites to improve reading comprehension as well as the best places to find native speakers to practise with.

In addition to the shared resources, as faculty rep I would create an online forum in which methodology tips could be shared in order to improve the MML students of Cambridge's language learning efficiency. I believe that even with a few simple tips, anyone can reach an intermediate level in a very short amount of time; I will share the tips I have used over the past few years to reach a B1 level in 2 languages per year! I would also like to share video resources with all the students in the faculty online to highlight the key learning strategies, which I have already started on my YouTube channel (Harry Ness – Language Learning Tips).

If elected, I would also push for a larger number of speaking hours within the faculty as well as showing all students where they can find native speakers to work on their skills outside the classroom and how to use oral classes and speaking time more effectively! I also believe that the format of the additional language papers (Ukrainian, Greek, Portuguese, Catalan etc.) could be altered to allow the students taking those papers to acquire a much higher language level and not just focus solely or largely on literature and translation.

College based or even language specific group sessions would benefit students immensely: I wish to create a stronger network in the faculty to allow students with queries to overcome these problems as well as share strategies with each other to further our goal of bettering our language skills.

Finally, I would make my focus YOU. I want to hear any thoughts you have on how the papers, teaching or faculty in general could be improved! A vote for me is a vote for personalised improvement in language learning strategies – an area of our degree which does not receive enough attention – and a brighter future for the faculty and the language learners at Cambridge!