

**SPECIAL ISSUE:  
LANGUAGES FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES  
IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

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WORD OF INTRODUCTION

The annual Languages for Specific Purposes in Higher Education conference (LSPHE) was launched in 2015 with a view to bring together LSP practitioners from the United Kingdom and beyond. It aimed to allow for better collaboration and dissemination of best practice in a field that had seemingly not benefited from such a platform, with the notable exception of some dedicated ESP events. With an open door to teachers of all languages and all areas of specialty, LSPHE set out to showcase the existing diversity of LSP courses offered in UK universities, and to create or strengthen links with EU institutions at a time when international collaboration could rightly be perceived as under threat.

Through its annual conference (Manchester 2015, Cambridge 2016, Oxford 2017, Leeds 2018), LSPHE has broken the isolation of the LSP practitioner and has created a vibrant network of innovative teachers and course leaders. It has begun paving the way for centres and institutions seeking to offer a sharper, more specialised language teaching provision, meeting the increasingly diverse needs of 21st century language learners. The event has strived to promote the latest developments in language teaching pedagogy, looking at learner-centred approaches, teacher specialist knowledge, LSP didactics for beginners' and intermediate levels, among others.

LSPHE has also sought to recognise the multi-layered diversity of LSP, bringing representation to nine languages and over a dozen speciality areas. It has welcomed delegates and contributors from Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Russia, Serbia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey as well as the UK.

In an effort to build upon this European and international dynamic and to facilitate international collaboration in the field, LSPHE has also been maintaining a web page listing LSP conferences being advertised worldwide.

Through the present special issue of the Journal for Teaching English for Specific and Academic Purposes, we welcome the opportunity to share the outcome of some of the work produced by LSPHE contributors. In spirit with the series of events, this includes contributions covering a range of languages and disciplines, originating from six different European countries. Covering themes including EAP corpora, task-based assessment, soft skills, reading skills, history of arts, pharmacy, student work experience and other STEM- and business-related topics, this issue should be of interest to LSP practitioners from a wide variety of areas.

We hope that you will find this publication relevant and enriching, and that it will inspire you to engage in future collaborations through the LSPHE network.

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