



ELT Department Approach to Teaching & Learning

March 2024

We aim to provide the learner with the opportunity of practising their English in a constructive and supportive environment. We want them to enjoy a balance of receptive and productive skills, suitably scaffolded by the necessary grammar and lexis. We will actively encourage learners to develop their thinking skills through context and co-text and continue their development outside the classroom.

Morning Classes

Morning classes take place between 8.45 and 12.15 and will usually employ an up-to-date and commercially available course book. However, these course books are not the syllabus.

The ETC syllabus is built on a series of 'can do' competences inspired by the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR).

Each class, A1 – C2, has its own list of 'can do' competences, which is listed in the Student Portfolios.

The 'can do' competences are divided into eight areas, namely:

- Grammar
- Vocabulary
- Reading
- Listening
- Writing
- Orthography
- Speaking
- Pronunciation

The class teacher refers to these 'can do' descriptors when considering materials, planning lessons and assessing learners' progress. All learners get the chance to discuss targets.

For learners who stay at ETC for four weeks or more, there is the opportunity of discussing language targets in more detail on a monthly basis in their tutorials (under-18s on a weekly basis). The teacher is then in an excellent position to keep the learners informed of their progress.

We believe that if the learners are aware of what is expected, they have more autonomy and can organise their time outside the classroom more effectively.

We also believe that the CEFR competences allow the teacher and learner to have more control over what they choose to study, which makes the course less likely to be book-driven.

Afternoon Classes

Learners who commit to ELT afternoon classes (as opposed to the ESP afternoon classes), can expect to find a more skills-based approach to their studies. The main focus areas will be reading, writing, listening and speaking, together with their related sub-skills.

What the teachers will provide.

Grammar

Teachers will:

- Explore the areas of **tense, aspect** and **modality**
- Foster an appreciation of the tense system of English, emphasizing the existence of only two real tenses, **present** and **past simple**.
- Raise learners' awareness of **continuous** and **perfective aspect**.
- Consolidate **structure** and **function**
- Establish a distinction between **tense** and **time**
- Consider the non-factual, personal nature of **modal auxiliaries** and explore their relationship with 'semi-modals'.
- Consolidate the various **conditional sentences** and uses of **reported speech**
- Consolidate the rationale accompanying the use of the **passive voice**.

Vocabulary

Teachers will:

- Encourage learners to think in terms of **'lexical items'**, not 'words'.
- Raise awareness of **multi-word verbs**, **common collocations** and **polywords**, and encourage **'chunking'** to develop both **active** and **passive** vocabularies.
- Introduce a variety of techniques to aid development, retention and recycling.

Reading

Teachers will:

- Focus on the skills of **skimming**, **scanning**, **prediction**, **inference**,
- Encourage both **intensive** and **extensive** reading.
- Activate relevant **schemata** by helping learners to access visual clues and identify different genres.
- Encourage speed-reading by promoting the use of **masking devices**, **colour grounds** and **filters**.
- Use a variety of **authentic**, **semi-authentic** and specially prepared texts.
- Raise the learners awareness of **'top down'** and **'bottom up'** strategies

Listening

Teachers will:

- Focus on **gist** and **intensive listening**
- Emphasize the importance of using **context** and **co-text** and encourage them to access visual clues to activate schemata and facilitate better understanding.
- Raise awareness of the features of **connected speech**; catenation; elision; assimilation; and the existence of intrusive sounds; juncture and the glottal stop.
- Raise awareness of word and sentence **stress** and introduce **intonation** through the idea of referring and proclaiming tones.

Pronunciation

Teachers will:

- Raise awareness of **segmental phonology** by focusing on the place of articulation of sounds.
- Provide instruction on how to get the best out of the **phonemic alphabet** and chart.
- Work extensively with **suprasegmental phonology**, developing both the learners' receptive and productive skills.
- Raise awareness of the non-phonetic nature of English and its effect on spelling and listening.
- Be flexible with regard to 'Global English' and aim at 'practical intelligibility' rather than any one particular model of English.

Speaking

Teachers will:

- Raise awareness of **discourse markers**, **speech devices** and **pronunciation**. (See above)
- Build confidence by developing **breathing** and **projection**
- Emphasize the importance of **paralinguistic features** and voice tonality
- Encourage learners to **enunciate** clearly and ask for confirmation and clarification

Writing

Teachers will:

- Raise awareness of and provide practice in writing in different genres
- Improve text **organization**, **coherence** and **cohesion**
Adopt a visual approach to spelling