



# Excel English

## Academic Policy Statement

Excel English has a learner-centred approach to all aspects of our students' experience, with managers, teachers and all other staff committed to providing high quality language learning opportunities in a warm, friendly and professional environment. We understand that everyone has unique needs and different goals, and from their first contact with us, we aim to provide individual attention in order to support each student in achieving those goals.

### Selection & Assessment

All students are assessed on and/or before arrival at the school. Students are selected on the basis of their ability to successfully complete the courses they enrol on and to make a positive contribution to the courses they wish to join. The information gathered at initial assessment is shared with the relevant teacher to enable the teacher to accommodate any particular needs into the programme for the learner or group.

Assessment on arrival consists of a written test (grammar, vocabulary and writing), as well as an interview to assess the student's communicative ability. The students' relative abilities in each aspect of the language are considered in selecting the appropriate class to place them in.

We teach all levels from Elementary to Advanced. However, we do not teach beginners, so if a prospective student indicates a low level of English we will ask them to complete a pre-course online test to ensure we have a course at the right level for them. If students have a very high level of English (C2) or Cambridge Proficiency, we would strongly recommend a telephone interview to ensure that there is a course suitable for their needs.

Students wishing to enrol on an FCE, CAE or IELTS course must complete a barrier test. If they are not at the level required, we recommend an alternative exam course or a suitable period of general English study to raise their level to that required. All students who enrol on an examination course will be tested again on arrival. Some 'borderline' students will be accepted onto an exam course even if we feel they have a reduced chance of passing the exam, as long as, in our judgment, they will not adversely affect the other members of the class and it will be of benefit to them. All 'borderline' students will be informed of their chances of success after their placement test.

If there are not enough students to run a course (minimum of 3), students will be offered the following alternatives (at least 6 weeks before the course start date):

- Reduced hours
- Alternative course
- Refund

Students wishing to enrol on an IELTS preparation course must have a minimum B2 (Upper Intermediate) level of English. If they do not have the required level, we advise them to take a general English course before starting their IELTS course.

Students wishing to enrol on Business English/ Professional English, or any other one-to-one course will be sent a specific pre-course questionnaire prior to arrival, and a full needs analysis will be conducted by the teacher in the first session.

### **Individual Counselling Sessions and Progress Review**

All students have an individual counselling session with their main teacher every two or three weeks (depending on course length). These sessions have the dual purpose of both discussing learning and progress, and also checking that the student is happy and comfortable in other aspects of their stay in London (especially with accommodation) and with the school. The feedback from students is shared with the appropriate school staff.

While the counselling sessions are held, a progress test is set which, along with incremental assessment carried out by teachers, is used to decide whether a student is ready to move to a higher class or needs to continue work at their current level. However, if it is apparent that a student may need or wish to change level at any other time, the teacher and Director of Studies will discuss this with the learner and conduct an assessment at any time if appropriate.

### **Attendance and Punctuality**

Students on all courses are expected to attend all of their classes on time. If a learner is unable to attend classes they should contact the school as soon as possible to inform us of this.

For the benefit of the whole class, any student who is more than 5 minutes late for a lesson is asked to wait until after the break before joining the class so that the lesson is not disrupted.

If a student is regularly late or absent from class, they will be subject to the school's disciplinary and absenteeism procedure as outlined in the relevant policy statement.

All students who attend a minimum of 80% of their lessons will automatically receive a certificate of attendance. Students with less than this level of attendance will be given a letter which will state the actual level of attendance.