Frequently Asked Questions

Answers to the questions partners most often ask about our teachers, classes and lessons.

01 Our teachers

What qualifications do your teachers have?

We recruit teachers in line with the British Council Accreditation UK criteria for our courses and students. Relevant qualifications include CELTA, Trinity CertTESOL and appropriate school-teaching qualifications. We assess other qualification profiles individually, taking account of relevant experience, training and the ELT support required.

Are they from the UK?

We hire on merit, putting qualifications and experience before native-speaker status. Native and non-native speakers must meet the same standards of education, qualifications and experience. We are proud of our inclusive approach and do not accept the idea that only native speakers make competent teachers. Our teachers include:

- British teachers from a wide range of backgrounds
- Teachers from Europe and further afield who have the right to work in the country where they teach

Are they experienced?

We recruit in line with British Council criteria and requirements. We assess teachers' qualifications, experience and support needs together, and we do not discriminate on the basis of ethnicity, race, age, gender, colour, religion or belief, disability, sexual orientation or any other protected characteristic.

Do you hire non-ELT teachers?[1]

Yes, we do. We assess school-teaching qualifications against the British Council criteria for our courses and students. Primary QTS and teaching qualifications leading to QTS with an English or modern languages specialism are recognised profiles. QTS in unrelated subjects requires documented ELT/TESOL training and additional ELT support for our under-18 courses.

[1] Non-ELT here means teachers without a specialist ELT/TESOL qualification. Their role at PLUS is to teach English as a foreign language.

How can we check that teachers are qualified?	We follow the English UK safer recruitment process. Our records are also checked by the British Council: at our 2024 inspection, for example, the records of all our temporary staff, including teachers, were checked.
How are teachers prepared?	Every teacher receives a thorough one- or two-day induction covering our methodology, academic programme and syllabus, and everything else they need for the role, including schemes of work and materials.
How are teachers supported?	The Course Director meets teachers every day to answer questions about lessons and offer support. Teachers attend compulsory, practical CPD (continuing professional development) sessions to develop their skills and knowledge, and the Course Director carries out spot checks and scheduled lesson observations to help them improve. We also hold regular focus groups with teachers.
How do you ensure quality in lesson delivery?	Every centre has a Course Director and an Assistant Course Director, trained every year by our Director of Studies to support teachers. During the summer, every centre is also visited by a qualified roving Assistant Academic Manager, who supports teachers and responds to questions and complaints.

02 Classes and levels

How are students placed in classes?	All students take a placement test before arrival, so we know their level in advance and can place them in classes provisionally. On arrival, they take a speaking diagnostic test to confirm that they are at the right level.
What happens if a student disagrees with their level?	The student or their group leader tells the Course Director, who reviews the level with the teacher. If the level is not right, the student moves up or down.
How are classes formed?	We form classes by age (avoiding large age gaps), by level and by nationality mix, with a teacher–student ratio of 1:15–18. Because the make-up of groups varies every time, we cannot guarantee a perfect balance of nationality and level in every class.
How are classes shared between teachers?	Every class is taught by two teachers, for example one in the morning and the other in the afternoon. Depending on their contract, teachers teach two or three levels, so students benefit from a variety of teaching styles and experience.

03 Lessons

How many hours of lessons do students have?	As standard, students have 15 hours of English lessons per week.
What type of teaching do students receive?	We deliver communicative English language lessons, which means that students are there to practise their English speaking and listening skills: to improve their abilities in various aspects of oral communication for the real world, and to develop, through English language tasks, the collaboration, creativity, critical thinking and communication skills essential for life in the 21st century. The course includes vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation work to support communication in English.
Why are students sometimes asked to draw a kitchen, watch videos or design something?	These activities provide a context for practising English speaking and listening. The language task may involve describing a drawing, discussing a video or presenting a design.
What materials do students receive?	Teachers provide all the materials needed for each lesson, and students receive a personal diary for notes on the day's lesson. We do not give students coursebooks.
How will students know what is being taught?	The five-level course overview, the syllabus, and the scheme of work with can-do statements and expected outcomes for every level are displayed in every classroom, so students can check the topic of each day.
Will students use mobile phones?	Yes, for specific tasks, with the teacher in control. Teachers collect phones in a box at the start of the lesson, hand them out for set tasks and return them at the end. Using phones and drawing to present in class makes learning active and engaging, and students tend to remember what they have actively worked on.

04 Certificates

What do students receive at the end of the course?	Students receive a certificate of completion at the end of the course. A digital certificate is also available to download from our class app. Some students also receive positive recognition awards, which encourage progress and good behaviour. Awards give students a sense of pride and achievement, build their confidence and motivation, and show parents more of what their children have achieved.