Cambridge English

CELTA

Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

An Introduction to CELTA
(Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults)

The certificate is **an online <u>initial</u> training course**. Its general aims are to develop basic practical awareness – a combination of language awareness and teaching skills – and to equip trainees with the confidence, resources and resourcefulness that they will need to standup in front of a class of EFL students – and then to continue learning how to teach.

The online course provides **a <u>practical</u> introduction** to the teaching of English as a Foreign Language. There is a limited amount of reading and written work involved, all of which is related to the practical classroom requirements of teaching practice (TP). TP is the central element of the course, on which the majority of the assessment is based, although written assignments are also compulsory.

The **full-time course is extremely <u>intensive</u>**. Trainees need to commit themselves full-time to the online course for the entire four weeks. Days are quite long. It is desirable, therefore, to have access to a laptop or pc and a high-speed internet connection.

Assessment

Assessment is continuous – there is no final exam. There is, of course, an expectation of overall progress through the course.

The grades awarded are: "Fail", "Pass", "Pass B" and "Pass A". On most courses, the majority of trainees receive a "Pass", some of which are in the "B" category. Very few trainees receive an "A" and very few fail.

Trainees should always have a clear idea of their progress throughout the course. In addition to regular feedback on performance in TP, there are usually two mid-course tutorials and in the event of a trainee being considered 'borderline', s/he would be given explicit indications of the areas in need of improvement.

Assessment is based primarily on performance in the classroom, but trainees are also required to pass three out of four written assignments. Other factors are taken into account and may be especially significant in the event of a borderline assessment. Trainees are also expected to develop self-awareness and the ability to assess their own performance in TP, as well as that of others.

Course Content

There are three main components: **teaching practice**, **observation** and **input**.

1. Teaching Practice

Each trainee will have approximately 6 hours of teaching practice (TP) over the duration of the course. At the beginning of the course the online lessons will be shorter: for example, in a 120-minute TP block 3 trainees will each teach a 40-minute lesson. Towards the end of the course, however, trainees will teach for 60 minutes.

There will usually be 12 trainees on a course, and TP is organized in two groups. The online classes of students are at different levels, in the range from elementary to upper-intermediate. TP is observed by a supervisor and by the other members of the TP group. The groups rotate during the course, so that teaching is assessed at two contrasting levels.

TP takes place 3 evenings a week on full-time courses and on most Thursday evenings on the part-time course. Online classes are relatively small (7 -16).

Supervised Lesson Planning takes place most afternoons and is an opportunity for trainees to talk to TP supervisors about the next lesson they intend to teach. At the beginning of the course, trainees receive detailed guidelines from their supervisors as to content and appropriate procedures for their TP lessons. This guidance gradually diminishes as the course goes on and in the final week TP groups are responsible for planning and preparing their own lessons.

Feedback on TP is given in the form of summary notes from the supervisor and in a post-lesson discussion with the supervisor and the rest of the TP group.

2. Observation

Each trainee will observe at least 3 hours of live teaching of regular classes in addition to observing fellow-trainees during TP and opportunities to see further classes on video.

Observation is organized so that trainees have the opportunity initially to see classes at the level that they are teaching in TP.

Observation is task-based and trainees are directed to focus on particular aspects of teaching / learning in each observed lesson. Notes written during / after observation also provide the Course Tutor with an indication of what is being learned from the experience.

3. Input

Input sessions tend to be seminars/workshops rather than lectures and cover three broad areas: **language awareness**, **phonology** and **methodology**.

The **Language Awareness** sessions are an introduction to the structure and meaning of English (centered on verb forms) from an English language teaching (ELT) perspective. They will relate to some extent to the needs of TP, but they are intended to provide trainees with a basis for developing their language awareness after the course.

The **Phonology** sessions are an introduction to the sounds of English – again from an ELT perspective. Sessions are devoted to word stress, sentence stress, pronunciation (vowels and consonants), rhythm, intonation and features of connected speech.

Methodology covers a wide range of classroom approaches, procedures and techniques. Topics include classroom management, the use of aids and resources, teaching and practicing new language, developing language skills, adapting lessons to suit learners from different backgrounds and lesson planning.

There will also normally be a session towards the end of the course on careers in EFL and suggestions on how to find employment.

Timetable

The timetable varies from course to course, but generally for the **full-time course** the day lasts from 13:00 – 21:30. There are 2 input sessions (1½ hours each) followed by lesson planning in the afternoon. Teaching practice usually lasts from 19:00 to 21:00 and with feedback given on the following day. The **part-time course** will run for 13-16 weeks on Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 18:00 to 21:30, with teaching practice and feedback taking place on Thursdays from 19:00 to 21:00.

Written Work

There will be four assessed written assignments, all of a practical nature. Assignments have a 750-1000 word limit and one resubmission is allowed for each assignment which is not of pass standard. In addition to these assignments, trainees are required to hand in their observation notes and lesson plans for TP and to do a variety of short written tasks (e.g. worksheets relating to input sessions).

There is very little time for extensive reading. Reading references will be given throughout the course, but these will tend to be articles or chapters from books rather than entire books. Reading on the CELTA is also of a practical nature – teacher's handbooks rather than theoretical material. However, trainees are strongly recommended to do as much reading (especially grammar books) before the course as possible.

The Assessor

Every CELTA course is moderated by a Cambridge Assessor. S/he joins the course and samples input, coursework and TP.

The Assessor is **not** a Cambridge official – s/he is a Course Tutor from another centre. The main role of the Assessor is to assess trainees' teaching practice, written work and contribution to the course, and to ensure that grading is in line with Cambridge requirements. In addition,

s/he is there to check overall course standards, to ensure that regulations are being met and to suggest ways of improving course quality.

There is no final examination, and the assessment system is a guarantee that trainees receive (broadly) the same course experience and are judged according to the same standards, wherever they may happen to be doing the course.

General

To get the most out of the course, trainees should be prepared to:

- Work intensively and consistently for the duration of the course.
- Collaborate with other members of the TP group.
- Accept and learn from constructive criticism.
- Look analytically at the structure of English.
- Pay attention to the needs of individual students.
- Assess their own performance objectively.

Please remember that:

- 100% attendance is required.

- Acceptance onto the course does not guarantee success: we screen applicants carefully, but inevitably some applicants do not meet the pass standard.