

Teaching and Learning Methodology Policy

General English Class Teaching and Learning

At LSI we are up-to-date with current thinking on best teaching practice. Generally speaking, we are advocates of The Communicative and Lexical Approaches, but we draw upon a host of other methodologies depending on the make-up of the class (level, nationality mix, type of learning style etc.). Thus other approaches such as Task-Based Learning, aspects of The Audio-Lingual and Natural Approaches, The Dogme Approach etc. will be in evidence.

In the classroom we expect:

- high levels of student interaction and participation
- enjoyable, practical and challenging lessons
- a learner-centred approach
- presentation and practice of language in real contexts
- a focus on collocation and 'chunks' of language (level permitting)

Lessons are expected to meet the students' needs. The majority of our students are aiming primarily to improve their speaking and listening skills and thus lessons may involve a lot of controlled to freer oral practice, fluency work, as well as authentic listening activities to improve understanding of native speakers.

Lesson elements often include:

- warmers or revision
- activation of schemata (arousing interest in the topic and related lexis)
- guided discovery and noticing activities
- open-class feedback
- error-correction
- controlled oral practice
- freer practice (role play, tasks and projects)

Fortnightly tutorials encourage students to assess their own progress, identify areas of weakness and set further goals.

Students are encouraged to complement their lessons with self-study – a range of materials can be borrowed from our General English and IELTS self-access centres.

Executive Class Teaching and Learning

LSI's policy on teaching and learning on Executive courses is as follows:

- Courses are tailored and adapted to the student's specific needs based on a detailed Day One needs audit (see Curriculum Policy - Executive Courses) for details
- There is differentiated methodology for 1:1 and small group teaching. This includes individualised approaches to suit the student's preferred learning styles and a focus on developing learner autonomy
- Course programmes are devised by experienced staff accustomed to developing courses for middle and senior managers and staff from a wide range of international companies
- Courses are taught by experienced teachers many of whom have had previous professional careers in business, i.e. finance, marketing and human resources

- Learner progress is monitored regularly and it often includes assessment through task-based learning
- Regular opportunities for students to discuss and adapt course content both formally and informally take place every week
- Materials are drawn from a wide range of published, in-house and primary sources and are regularly developed and updated with a focus on standard English for general and business situations as well as aspects of International or World Englishes for business and professional situations
- MP3, book and DVD self-access resources are made available to all Executive students and an extra-curricular social programme is organised to complement and enhance speaking, listening and learning opportunities

From the commencement of the course to the end, LSI staff work alongside their students helping them to acquire the most useful language and skills relevant to their needs and their abilities.

Pre-Sessional Class Teaching and Learning

Much of the course is classroom-based and students are expected to attend lessons every day from Monday to Friday (not including Friday afternoon). The lessons generally follow a set scheme of work which has been designed to equip students with the skills, language and competencies they will need to succeed at university.

In order to familiarise students with the culture and conventions of UK universities, much of the course also aims to mirror the situations and systems they will encounter there. Tutorials, for example, when students have the opportunity to engage in a personal meeting with their teacher, give students the chance to practice the language and interaction patterns of this kind of situation. It is for the same reason that we emphasise the importance of research, referencing, group work, punctuality and deadlines, and the reason why we organise activities such as full-length lectures and seminars.

Reading skills are developed in class by helping students to develop strategies and techniques that help them to read in a way that suits their purpose and uses their time effectively. They get the chance to put these skills into practice at weekends when they research their weekend assignments. Communication skills are taught in class through awareness-raising exercises and practiced in discussion activities, seminars and role-plays. Strategies for developing listening and note-taking skills are developed in stages, gradually exposing students to longer texts and more challenging note-taking tasks. Towards the end of the course, students attend full-length lectures in which they are expected to be able to take extensive notes. Writing skills are developed both through classroom-based activities that raise awareness and provide structured practice of skills such as planning, drafting, summarising, paraphrasing and referencing, and through extended writing tasks completed over the weekend which allow students to independently demonstrate the skills developed. Presentations skills are developed in class through awareness-raising activities and structured practise tasks during the last twelve weeks of the course. Students get the opportunity to practice and demonstrate these skills during the two 15-20 minute presentations given alongside each project. Student autonomy and independence should be developed steadily and regularly throughout the course through activities such as guided research, scaffolded tasks, critical thinking, reflective tasks and self-assessment, and encouraging students to answer their own questions which encourage autonomy and build confidence. Significantly, there are also the final projects, for which students must design, plan, research and write a project of their own choosing.

In general, reading and writing are covered in the mornings while listening, speaking and project work are covered in the afternoons.

When designing and planning lessons, we ask teachers to aim for:

- High levels of student interaction and participation
- Classes that are purposeful, focused, enjoyable and challenging

- A learner-centred approach
- An atmosphere that is supportive, collaborative, disciplined and positive
- Tasks that are authentic, meaningful and achievable
- Lesson aims that take account of students' future target situation

Assessment

As this is such a high-stakes course, on which our students' futures depend, it is essential that progress, attitude and performance are monitored effectively and regularly. Assessments are indicated on the scheme of work and include listening and note-taking tests, weekend assignments, projects, and presentations. There is also a short exam in the final week of the course which tests a broad range of skills including exam skills.