



Learn English in the United Kingdom

Whatever your plans for the future, there's no doubt that being able to speak English will give you a major advantage. Where better to learn the most widely spoken language in the world, than in the country of its birth?

There are more English language courses to choose from in the United Kingdom (UK) than anywhere else in the world so you're almost certain to find one that fits your exact needs.

Checklist: Why study English in the United Kingdom?

- All parts of the UK are English speaking. There are different regional accents throughout the UK and you will soon adjust to these.
- You will be able to use your English in everyday life, through film and television, newspapers and books, shopping and entertainment.
- The British Council and English UK manage the Accreditation UK scheme that guarantees the quality of English courses at 397 private language schools, state colleges and universities.
- There is a vast range of courses at all levels from beginners to advanced.
- The UK has a long tradition of excellence in teaching English as a foreign language.
- UK qualifications in English language are internationally respected.
- You can choose where, when and how you study.

1 What can I study?

You can study at all levels; from basic general English to advanced English for specific or academic purposes. You will not usually need academic qualifications unless you are also studying another subject (an English Plus course).



Course	Purpose	Subjects and curriculum
General English	For students from complete beginners upwards.	General English
English for Academic Purposes	To help students learn the English they need for academic study.	Essay-writing, note-taking, listening to lectures, taking part in seminars, academic reading, library work, computer skills, general and social English. Sometimes vocabulary and terminology for the student's subject.
Pre-university English courses (also called Pre-sessional courses)	For students who plan to study in the UK, and who have been asked for a minimum level of English. These courses can last from three weeks to a year.	As above
Support/in session English courses	These are like the courses above, but are usually free. They are to give extra help after the main academic course has started.	Usually three hours a week at the most. Students should already have enough fluency to study their subject.
English for specific purposes	For people who want to learn English to further a career in areas such as business, travel and tourism, and catering.	Courses concentrate on the vocabulary and skills needed for jobs. This could be telephoning, writing reports or making presentations.
English Plus combined courses	English language is only one part of a course. The other part – the 'plus' – could be training for a career or a professional qualification.	The 'plus' part of the course could be anything from pottery to politics.
Seasonal or vacation courses	Summer and Easter courses, available for juniors (aged under sixteen) and adults.	These courses often include holiday activities, such as sport or sightseeing.

Can I study English at the same time as another subject?

Yes. This can be a practical or an academic subject. It is usually called English Plus.

Will I find studying in the United Kingdom very different from studying in my own country?

You may find that the teaching style is different from your own country. In British Council teaching centres in your own country, or in the UK itself, you will be encouraged to use the language as well as study it. It is a practical style of teaching and you should expect to play an active part in lessons. Whatever your level of English, you will be placed in a class to meet your needs.



How can I be sure that the course is good quality?

The British Council and English UK run the Accreditation UK scheme. This is the only internationally recognised accreditation scheme for private schools in the UK and the only scheme for short courses for children. Accredited centres have been inspected by the British Council and meet a set of quality standards. (For more information see www.britishcouncil.org/accreditation) All the English language courses listed in the English language section of the EducationUK web site (www.educationuk.org/english) are accredited courses.

If the course is running at a college of further education or a university, it should have been checked by government inspectors as part of a routine inspection.

Where can I study?

There are accredited institutions throughout the UK, from the south coast of England to the north of Scotland and also in Wales and Northern Ireland. This means that you can choose the region that best suits your needs.

You can also choose the type of language institution you want to study at: a specialised language school, a college of further education or a university. State and private institutions offer different advantages. In a state institution you will have the chance to mix with UK students studying other subjects. In a private language school there are usually smaller classes and more individual attention and less UK students.

Up to the age of sixteen, you will probably learn English in a language centre which runs summer courses. Independent schools also run these courses. You can also learn English at a British Council teaching centre in many countries around the world. If you are over sixteen, you can study at one of the following institutions:

Type of centre	Description of what it offers
Private language schools	Full-time and part-time courses at all levels. Short and long courses. English language only courses will be in the majority.
Private and state language centres	Only short-term courses, normally in the summer, often including social activities and cultural visits. English language courses only.
Independent schools and tutorial colleges	You could study a range of subjects at these schools and colleges, and all your activities would involve using English.
Further education institutions	Full-time and part-time courses from beginners to advanced. They also offer career-based training and academic courses in classes where many students speak English as their first language. If you learn English language with another subject, the course will sometimes be called English Plus.
Higher education institutions	Full-time and part-time courses. Students would be of intermediate level, or better. Many of these institutions specialise in teaching English for Academic Purposes.
British Council teaching centres in your own country	You should check whether your country has a British Council teaching centre and what types of course are on offer at www.britishcouncil.org/learning-learn-english-your-country.htm



Where will I live?

Although you can stay with friends or relatives it is probably better to live somewhere where you have to use your English on a daily basis. Almost all institutions running English language courses will help arrange accommodation for their students. There is a wide range of accommodation types available from staying with a family, in college halls or student flats to hotels and hostels. Think about what type of environment you would prefer to stay in.

What are the main English language qualifications?

The British Council works in partnership with a number of UK exam boards to help them promote their qualifications overseas. Examples would be the Cambridge and Trinity College English courses. The British Council does not recommend any particular English qualification but you can find more information about the range of qualifications available and contact details at:

www.britishcouncil.org/home/learning/learning-exams/learning-exam-boards-english.htm

2 Entrance

Are there any restrictions on my studying in the United Kingdom?

If you need a visa to enter the UK, you will need to make sure that your course consists of at least fifteen hours of organised, day-time study per week and that you are able to meet the cost of your fees, living expenses and accommodation.

You should bear in mind immigration requirements when considering whether to study in the UK. Requirements vary according to your nationality or citizenship and the length of time you want to spend studying. You will not be allowed to extend your permission to stay in the UK for more than two years on courses that are below degree level and are of less than one year's duration. The UKCOSA website will give you further information on this topic – www.ukcosa.org.uk/pages/guidenote.htm

Note in particular that you will not be given permission to enter the UK as a student if the school, college or university that you want to study at does not appear on the UK Department for Education and Skills Register of Education and Training Providers. You can check the register by clicking on 'Browse the Register' at www.dfes.gov.uk/providersregister/

For practical advice on living in the UK download *Studying and living in the UK* from www.educationuk.org/bc_img/body/articles/pdfs/stud_live_uk.pdf



Next steps

Checklist: Your next steps

- 1 First, select the courses or schools/colleges that interest you. Your local British Council office will be able to provide you with full details of English in Britain accredited institutions in the UK. Or you can search the English language section of the EducationUK website at www.educationuk.org/english
- 2 Contact the school or college for a prospectus and application form, or visit their website.
- 3 Find out key information such as number of teaching hours each week, class size, course fees (what is included and what extra costs might be), type of accommodation offered/costs and if you can gain a qualification if you want to.
- 4 Send the application form to the school or college. You can apply directly or use an educational agent.
- 5 Wait for the letter of acceptance, which will usually come within two weeks. This will confirm what accommodation you require, and will also ask for a deposit.
- 6 Pay the deposit. The school or college should send a confirmation letter.
- 7 If you need to apply for a visa, the confirmation letter can be used to support your application. For further information about visa applications please consult your local British Embassy or British Council office.



3 Where can I find more information?

British Council education information

For a searchable database of accredited English language courses go to www.educationuk.org and www.educationuk/scotland. Choose the option, 'Search for English language courses'.

For further information, you can find details of your nearest office at www.britishcouncil.org/home-contact-worldwide.htm which includes links to all our country web pages and a worldwide address book giving contact details for all

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E-mail accreditation.unit@britishcouncil.org

Website www.britishcouncil.org/accreditation

(Includes complete listing of accredited institutions)

Wales International Consortium

Website www.walesinternationalconsortium.com

English UK

56 Buckingham Gate
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Learn English in Wales

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