



English Language Teacher's Handbook

January 2026

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1. Introduction

Trent Education Centre (TEC) is committed to fostering a culture of high-quality teaching and learning grounded in clear purpose, high expectations, and inclusive practice.

Our English teachers are expected to create and deliver engaging, student-centred learning experiences that promote curiosity, critical thinking, and measurable English language development.

Through good lesson planning, responsive differentiation, interactive instruction, ongoing assessment, and reflective practice, we aim to ensure that every student is supported, challenged, and empowered to reach their full potential.

2. Scope

The following handbook is specifically designed for TEC's English language teachers. It should be read in conjunction with TEC's General Staff Handbook which includes much more information about our expectations and obligations, and your obligations and rights as a TEC employee. The General Staff Handbook contains key information about staff grievances and complaints as well as staff conduct and discipline.

Teachers should also refer to the following policies on the TEC website:

- Staff Disciplinary Policy
- Staff Appraisal Policy
- Lesson Observation Policy
- Staff Development Policy

3. Key People

- Managing Director: zaheer@trenteducation.co.uk
- Executive Principal tony@trenteducation.co.uk
- Head of Compliance raana@trenteducation.co.uk
- Head of Quality & Director of Studies murray@trenteducation.co.uk
- Programme Leader mandy@trenteducation.co.uk
- Head of Health & Safety and Safeguarding sam@trenteducation.co.uk

If you have any questions or concerns, your first point of contact should be the Programme Leader for the English Programmes mandy@trenteducation.co.uk.

You may also raise any concerns you may have with the Director of Studies who has overall responsibility for the English programmes murray@trenteducation.co.uk

4. Teaching Ethics

Our English teachers must act with integrity and vigilance in relation to the welfare and wellbeing of all students under their care, making sure to provide equality and equity of opportunities, striving to prevent incidents of abuse, discrimination or harassment including sexual harassment, whilst also ensuring that freedom of speech and academic freedom are protected.

Expected conduct includes:

- Professional Integrity: being honest, upholding professional boundaries and maintaining academic honesty.
- Commitment to Students: fostering an inclusive environment, providing a safe place for students to learn and respecting diversity.
- Teaching with competence: delivering engaging classes and ensuring that students are given ample opportunities to achieve learning outcomes and academic success
- Collaborate with others at all times with respect and maintain confidentiality, adhering to TEC's policies.

5. Our Teaching Faculty

Our English language teachers are all qualified in teaching English as a second language and highly experienced in creating stimulating lessons which encourage interaction, critical thinking, creativity and independent inquiry.

Our teachers are expected to enhance the learning journey by offering personalised support through tutorials and additional workshops for students who may experience challenges. These additional support services help to empower students to achieve their full potential and develop the knowledge, skills, and confidence required to succeed in their chosen field.

6. Our English Courses

TEC currently offers two English language courses. These courses help students develop language skills in real-life context which may shape their professional and personal career.

- Ascentis English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Courses (Entry 1 to Level 2)
[Ascentis website](#)
- NCFE Functional Skills English (Level 1 and Level 2)
[Northern Council for Further Education \(NCFE\)](#)

The Ascentis ESOL course is designed for students who live in the UK, speak a language other than English, but need to learn or improve their English to remove barriers.

The NCFE Functional Skills English course is designed for students who need a qualification equivalent to a GCSE. Many of TEC's NCFE Functional Skills English Level 1 and Level 2 students are seeking to enter a foundation year at a university.

7. Course Structure

7.1. ESOL Courses

ESOL courses are offered at five stages from Entry 1 to Level 2 as follows:

| Adult ESOL Core Curriculum | Common European Framework Reference | Language Control Stage |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Entry 1 | A1 | Beginner |
| Entry 2 | A2 | Elementary |
| Entry 3 | B1 | Pre-Intermediate/Threshold |
| Level 1 | B2 | Intermediate/Upper Intermediate |
| Level 2 | C1 | Advanced |

For ESOL courses at all 5 stages, students study 3 units including Speaking & Listening Communication (SLC) for 15 weeks, Reading for 6 weeks and Writing for 9 weeks as follows:

| Days Per Week | 2 | Hours Per Day | 4 |
|------------------------------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------------------|
| Unit Title | Unit Reference | Credits | Guided learning hours/weeks |
| Speaking & Listening Communication | J/506/1563 | 12 | 120 (8hrs x 15 weeks) |
| Reading | H/506/1571 | 6 | 60 (10hrs x 6 weeks) |
| Writing | R/506/1629 | 9 | 90 (10 hrs x 9 weeks) |
| Total | | 27 | 270 (30 weeks) |

7.2. Functional Skills English Courses

The NCFE Functional Skills in English is offered at Level 1 and Level 2 as follows:

| Functional Skills | Equivalent to | Language Control Stage |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Level 1 | GCSE grades 1–3 | The student can use English independently in familiar, predictable situations |
| Level 2 | GCSE grade 4 (a standard Pass) | The level employers, colleges, and universities require. |

The Functional Skills courses are taught over 6 weeks, 2 days per week and 5 hours per day, which is a total of 60 guided learning hours of teaching.

8. Academic Resources

TEC provides you with resources for teaching both the ESOL and Functional Skills English courses at all levels. We make use of materials that the awarding body provides and materials we have adapted ourselves. We also use course books and encourage teachers to incorporate your own materials and preferred coursebook materials where relevant. Please see the Library and ask the Programme Leader for more details about teaching resources.

9. TEC's English Language Teaching Approach

TEC's approach to English Language teaching consists of seven key elements that teachers are expected to apply in their teaching practice. Teachers should strive to ensure that the content and activities of their lessons are:

- Authentic
- Differentiated
- Contextualised
- Student-centred
- Integrated
- Process-driven
- Skills-focussed

10. Applying the Teaching Approach

Authentic

Always try to use authentic materials and scenarios that are relevant and meaningful to the students and related to real-world activities and needs.

Differentiated

Always consider how you will support students who struggle with something and challenges students who find it easier. Also, make sure that lesson and course content is based where possible upon the needs and interests of each student.

Contextualised

Put language in context so that it is meaningful and realistic. Students should have a meaningful reason to communicate. Every lesson or day should be based around a main topic such as 'the world of work' or 'eating out'. Try to limit the amount of time you spend asking students to communicate out of context just to teach a discrete language item. They should learn to communicate not communicate to learn.

Student-centred

Teachers are facilitators and students take control of their own learning becoming independent students as much as possible. Consider ways of reducing Teacher-Talking-Time. Encourage students to ask and answer real questions, not just display questions. Try inductive guided discovery teaching methods when you can and not just deductive teaching. Consider mixed teaching methods such as flipped classroom.

Integrated

Try to ensure that all skills and sub-skills of language are taught collectively to reflect the way that language is used. Make sure that you cover key language elements such as pronunciation, relevant vocabulary and grammar each day.

Process-driven

Shift the focus from getting students to produce something to teaching them how to produce something. This is what we mean by process rather than product driven. When teaching writing, for example, rather than expecting students to produce a piece of writing during the lesson, teach them the writing process: planning, , drafting, and proof-reading. Show students how to organise writing into paragraphs with topic sentences. Show them the features of writing according to genre and register.

Skills-focussed

Emphasise developing language skills rather than passing tests or giving the correct answers to questions. Students need to develop speaking, listening, reading and writing skills including all the sub-skills such as reading and listening for gist, predicting and hypothesis testing. Make sure students practice a range of skills during lessons and give targeted support that will help them develop their language skills.

11. Main Principles of Instruction at TEC

Clear Learning Objectives

Students learn best when they are aware of academic expectations and how their success will be measured.

Activation of Prior Knowledge

Students 'understanding and memory is strengthened by reviewing previous lessons and related content, as well as using real-life connections.

Modelling (Demonstration)

Teachers need to clearly show or model for students how to do a task before undertaking it, prompting for clarity and understanding.

Guided Discovery

Students practice with support before working independently. This is provided with close teacher monitoring and reactive correction.

Independent Practice

Students are encouraged to apply learning on their own to build confidence, develop critical thinking skills and strengthen cognitive processing and memory retrieval, essential for long-term academic success. These can be assignments, projects, case studies and so on.

Feedback

Timely, constructive feedback improves performance and builds confidence.

Active Engagement

Students learn more when actively involved. They take ownership of their own learning when they are involved in activities, such as discussions, role-plays, debates, and group presentations. Passive listening or reading leads to lower interest and retention. Even listening and reading activities can be active if you ensure that students have a purpose and task to complete while listening.

Differentiated instruction

This is instrumental when teaching as it tailors teaching to the diverse needs, strengths and learning styles of each individual student. In doing so ensures that students are kept engaged and challenged and prevents knowledge gaps. Not all people learn at the same pace and they have different levels of comprehension.

12. Teaching Practice Involves

Course and Lesson Planning and Delivery

- Schemes of work are provided for every course
- Lessons are effectively planned and include a set of strategies such as scaffolding and retrieval practice.
- Differentiated tasks ensure all types of students, including those with special needs, are accommodated and challenged effectively.

Feedback and Assessment

- Teachers provide high-quality feedback, both verbal and written, to promote academic progression and develop student self-reflection
- Assessment feedback informs lessons, teachers address inaccuracies, skills gaps, misconceptions and consolidate understanding.

Classroom Environment

- Classrooms are open and engaging, with SMART screens and ample space for students to interact through use of flexible furniture. Students have access to IT and audio equipment for optimum delivery of content.
- Class management and behaviour management strategies are encouraged and supported by the management team. Teachers who are dealing with behaviour concerns disrupting their lessons should immediately inform the Programme Leader and action will be taken.

Student Engagement

- Digital interaction activities, Quizzes, Kahoot. Spaced learning which helps students strengthen memory and regular retrieval practice.
- Lessons aim to encourage students to become accountable and take ownership of their own learning, building confidence and subject knowledge.

Lesson Observations

- Peer Observations where teachers observe each other and formal observations conducted by the Director of Studies ensure that teaching and learning aligns with TEC's teaching approach (see above) and complies with TEC's expectations for standards and quality.
- Observations are developmental and help teachers identify areas for improvement with action plans to work on. They also help to ensure consistency and that all students experience high-quality teaching and learning.

13. Lesson Planning

Please see the TEC Lesson Plan Template in Appendix 1. This is what you need to use whenever you are being observed.

Whilst English language teachers should adhere to the key elements of the TEC English language teaching approach as explained above, teachers are encouraged to apply a range of methods and should not feel confined to only one method of teaching. The following steps provide a set of guidelines you can follow when planning your lessons:

Start

- **What happens:** Welcome students at the door with positivity and professionalism.
- **Objective:** Set the tone for a focused learning environment

Warm up

- **What happens:** Quick question, poll, scenario. Teacher can ask for their opinion about something relevant to the lesson topic.
- **Objective:** Prompts a discussion, breaks the ice.

Clear Learning Objectives

- **What happens:** Learning objectives are shared at the beginning of the lesson, highlighting what students will learn and achieve.
- **Objective:** Students gain clarity on the scope of the lesson and its aims.

Guided Discover

- **What happens:** Teacher sets up tasks for students to work through alone or in groups, supporting and scaffolding when needed.
- **Objective:** Enhances Students' understanding and develops communication skills.

Independent Learning

- **What happens:** Students work independently on tasks that consolidate their learning with the teacher providing constructive feedback when required.
- **Objective:** Students foster independent learning

Conclusion and Review

- **What happens:** The teacher concludes the lesson by reviewing all key learning points, verifying understanding and addressing any misconceptions.
- **Objective:** Reviewing reinforces all key concepts and students leave the lesson with a clear understanding.

14. Trent Education Centre Approach to Feedback

Feedback on assessments is important for helping students improve and develop their knowledge and skills. Feedback can be provided generally to the whole class without single out individuals. If you provide individual feedback, you need to make sure that every student is treated fairly and has an opportunity of individual verbal feedback.

15. Feedback Methods

Verbal Feedback

Teachers give students real-time feedback during the class or straight after a class if necessary. This allows students to understand what they have done well and what they can do to improve whilst it is still fresh in their mind.

Written Feedback

Teachers give written feedback on assessments according to the requirements of the awarding body. See the relevant website and document for the course you are teaching whether [Ascentis](#) or [NCFE](#)

16. Monitoring Teaching Performance

English teachers are observed a minimum of once per annum by the Director of Studies. The observer will be looking for evidence of the following when observing your lesson:

Lesson Planning: How effectively does your lesson plan in ensure that you achieve the lesson aims and that students achieve the learning outcomes

Differentiation: How effectively do you ensure that all students are challenged according to the abilities and interests

Independent students: How effectively do you ensure the students develop strategies, confidence and habits that will help them to become independent students

Contextualising language: How effectively do you contextualise the language you are teaching so that it is meaningful, engaging and useful for students

Student-centred: How effectively do you control the Teacher Talking Time and ensure that students are fully engaged, interacting and have agency over their learning

Integrated: How effectively do you integrate the different elements of language and language skills into the lesson

Skills: How effectively do students demonstrate language and other embedded skills

After the observation you will receive written feedback on each of the items above and an overall comment on the lesson as follows:

- **Outstanding**
- **Very good**
- **Good**
- **Another observation required**

Appendix 1



Lesson Plan

| Course Title | | | Start Date | End Date | | |
|---------------|-------------|-------------|--------------------|----------|-----------------|-----------|
| Topic | Teacher | Week Number | Lesson Date | | | |
| Group Profile | | | Targeted Features | | | |
| Stage | Interaction | Mins | Activity Procedure | Aim | Differentiation | Resources |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
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Appendix 2

Weekly English Language Teaching Record

Course: NCFE Functional Skills Level 2 / Ascentis ESOL Level 2

English Teacher:

Week Number..... Week Start Date



| Day | Planned Lesson Content/Topic | Language item(s) Vocabulary – V; Grammar – G; Skills; S/L/R/W; Materials - M | | Actual lesson content | Reason for any differences |
|--------------------------------|--|--|---|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Monday AM (1.5 hrs) | <i>e.g. why people travel to foreign countries and problems they face. Ss discuss their own travel experiences</i> | V | <i>Immigration, culture, types of transport and travel.</i> | | |
| | | G | <i>Present Perfect Vs Simple Past Tense</i> | | |
| | | Skills | <i>S & L</i> | | |
| | | M | <i>Cutting Edge Unit 2 'Travel and Adventure'</i> | | |
| Monday PM (1.5hrs) | <i>e.g. Create a poster with a holiday travel plan and pitch it to the class</i> | V | <i>Holidays, hotels, recreation, food, places of interest, prices</i> | | |
| | | G | <i>Future tense, first conditional, persuasive language</i> | | |
| | | Skills | <i>Speaking and presentation skills</i> | | |
| | | M | <i>Handout with task instructions, A1 poster and stationery</i> | | |
| Monday Final Task (1hr) | <i>e.g. Listening comprehension on travel promotions</i> | L | <i>e.g. listen to a travel podcast and answer questions in a worksheet</i> | | |
| | | M | https://www.youtube.com/@TravelWorldPodcast <i>Comprehension questionnaire</i> | | |