

Biographies of English Advisory Group members

Steve Brent

Director, International House

Steve Brent has worked as a teacher or manager in education since 1976 with the exception of an 18-month spell as an accounts investigator in the Inland Revenue. Steve has had experience of teaching in both the state and private sectors and has held posts in the UK and overseas (France, Malaysia and Oman). His first management post was Regional Project Manager with CfBT in Malaysia. Steve worked for the British Council as a teaching centre manager in Oman (1990–94) and then in Manchester and London where he was involved in a number of projects for Enterprises. Following five years as Principal of Eurocentres, Lee Green, Steve took up his current position as Director, International House, London, in January 2000.

Professor Chris Kennedy

Director
Centre for English Language Studies
University of Birmingham

Chris Kennedy has worked as teacher, trainer, adviser (as a British Council KELT officer), researcher, and manager in Africa, Europe, the Middle East, South-East Asia, and South America. His research and publications focus on language policy, curriculum innovation, and English as a global language, with interests also in primary ELT, professional communication and applied corpus linguistics. He is a past President of IATEFL, and was for many years Chair of the British Council's English Teaching Advisory Committee. He is Director of the Centre for English Language Studies at the University of Birmingham, UK, which runs in-house and distance Master's and PhD programmes in ELT, applied linguistics, and translation studies.

John McGovern

Director, Marketing and Recruitment
Director, International Office
Lancaster University

John McGovern is Director of Marketing and Recruitment and Director of the International Office at Lancaster University. Prior to taking up these positions in 1999, John had been Director of the University's Institute for English Language Education. Prior to that, he held the post of English Language Officer in a number of countries while serving as a member of the British Council's overseas Careers Service. He was a member of the English Teaching Advisory Committee from 2000 to 2007. He also sits as a member of the Consultancy Panel for the BRIDGE programme with Russia.

Peter Mothersole

Peter Mothersole graduated from the London School of Economics and taught in London and Sheffield before joining the Publishers Association as Director of the Educational Publisher's Council. In 1977 he joined the Oxford University Press, and over a career spanning 26 years he was variously Managing Director of the Educational Division, the International Division, and the English Language Teaching Division. From 2004 to 2005 he was the Managing Director of Macmillan English

Campus, an online publishing unit, which included onestopenglish.com. Currently Peter serves as Chairman of the Industry Advisory Board for the Publishing Department of Oxford Brookes University, as a Director of the Publishing Training Centre, and as a member of the Supervisory Board for the Centre for Publishing Studies at Stirling University.

Professor Alison Phipps

Head of Graduate School for Education
University of Glasgow

Alison Phipps' research interests focus on languages and intercultural communication, with a particular concern for the ways in which people learn to live and communicate together. Her work is interdisciplinary and draws on the resources of social and cultural anthropology, folklore and cultural studies, theology and education. Her early research focused on an ethnography of the fascinating phenomenon of outdoor community theatre in Germany. More recently she has been working on tourist language learning and the role of tourism in cultural change, in an attempt to address the question of how it is that people of different languages and cultures encounter each other and how the contexts of their everyday encounters - formal education, tourism, theatre, environment - shape these encounters. She is a passionate linguist and is keen to explore creative ways of addressing the complex and changing landscape in modern languages and applied cultural studies. She has an allotment, loves and publishes poetry, engages in voluntary work and translation with asylum seekers and is a member of the Iona Community.

Dr Philida Schellekens

Consultant and Researcher
The Schellekens Consultancy

Philida Schellekens is an independent consultant, researcher and teacher trainer in the field of language learning and teaching, particularly for migrants and refugees. More widely, she also provides consulting in EFL, foreign languages, interpreting and translation, and the communication skills of first language English speakers. Philida is an associate inspector in adult and further education, and teaches English part-time at Greenwich Community College, both of which roles enable her to maintain her perspective on – and direct contact with – language learning at all levels. Philida is author of the Oxford ESOL Handbook (2007). Other recent publications include: English Language as a Barrier to Employment, Education and Training (2001), DfES; Language in Construction (2004), CITB; and Full on English: The English language needs of ethnic minority people born in the UK (2005), Birmingham & Solihull LSC.

Andrew Thompson

Head, BBC Learning English
BBC World Service

Andrew Thompson is head of BBC Learning English, a department of World Service which focuses on helping millions of English language learners around the world with high quality multi-media support. He took up a career in journalism having graduated in 1975 from the University of Oxford, where he studied Politics and Economics. He worked for Inter Press Service in Rome, and became a foreign correspondent for The Guardian in Mexico and later The Times in Argentina, where he covered the

South Atlantic conflict in 1982 and its aftermath. He joined the BBC in 1984 but remained focused on South America, becoming Head of the Spanish American services. As Business Development manager for the Americas region he set up the BBC's Miami bureau. After becoming Commissioning Editor for Education in 1999 he was involved in projects on human rights, sex education, health, and migration. He also helped set up the in2english.com.cn website in China in partnership with, amongst others, the British Council and the Chinese Open University. He has been head of BBC Learning English since 2004. Andrew speaks Spanish and Portuguese and is (still!) trying to learn Mandarin.

Professor Brian Tomlinson

Reader in Language Learning and Teaching
Leeds Metropolitan University

Brian Tomlinson is Head of the ELT Postgraduate, Research and Consultancy Unit. He has worked as a teacher, teacher trainer, curriculum developer and university lecturer in Indonesia, Japan, Nigeria, Singapore, the UK, Vanuatu and Zambia and has given presentations in over 40 countries. He has also led ELT projects and consultancies in Bulgaria, China, Ethiopia, Iran, Morocco, Namibia, Oman, Singapore and sub-Saharan Africa. He is the Founder and President of MATSDA (the Materials Development Association) and has published many articles and books: Discover English, Materials Development in Language Teaching; Developing Materials for Language Teaching; Developing Language Course Materials; and Openings (Penguin). His book Language Acquisition and Development: Studies of Learners of First and Second Languages was published by Continuum Press in January 2007 and his new book, English Language Teaching Materials, will be published in January 2008.

Dr Catherine Walter

Lecturer, School of Language, Culture and Communication Institute of Education

Catherine Walter lectures on the MA programme in Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages at the Institute of Education, University of London, where she also supervises doctoral students and does research into second language reading, instructed language learning, and how teachers' groups contribute to educational and social reform. Catherine is perhaps best known as the co-author, with Michael Swan, of books such as The Good Grammar Book and The New Cambridge English Course. She is active in IATEFL, and was its President from 1993 to 1995. Catherine has given lectures and workshops on applied linguistics and ESOL topics in over 30 countries worldwide. Another interest is first language education, and Catherine is Chair of the UK Committee on Linguistics in Education. Previous collaboration with the British Council has included leading an evaluation of English language teaching projects in Russia; and organising a five-site video-conference day from IATEFL, Brighton.