

Terms of Reference

English Language Advisory Group

1. General

- a) The British Council builds connections, understanding and trust between people in the UK and other countries through arts and culture, education and the English language. To help us with the quality and independence of our thinking, we draw on the expert advice of our UK country advisory committees and sector advisory groups.
- b) There are four sector advisory groups to reflect the British Council's work in arts and the creative economy, digital, education and the English language.
- c) The sector advisory groups are forums for advice. They have no decision making or executive powers.
- d) The authority to form or disband a sector advisory group lies with the Board of Trustees.

2. Purpose

The English Language Advisory Group, ELAG:

- a) provides advice to the British Council English leadership team
- b) contributes to the development of the British Council's vision, strategic objectives and corporate priorities on behalf of the sector
- c) appraises the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) of matters within its remit which it considers significant. It does this through the Secretary, who, as Chief Customer Officer, English and Exams, is an SLT member.

3. Objectives

- a) Support the British Council in its mission to build connections, understanding and trust between people in the UK and other countries through arts and culture, education and the English language.
- b) Act as an advocate for the British Council's work.

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- c) Provide advice on the development of the British Council's strategy, with the Secretary ensuring that the group is consulted appropriately during the corporate strategic planning process.
 - d) Ensure that the British Council English leadership team is kept informed of major developments in the English Language and assessment sector.
 - e) Serve as a channel of professional advice within the areas of expertise represented in the group, offering fresh insights and identifying new opportunities and trends.
 - f) Create links between the British Council and the communities within the English language and assessment sector for whom the British Council's work has particular relevance.

4. Membership

- a) The English Language Advisory Group will consist of a maximum of fifteen members, including the Chair.
- b) The Chair and the members will serve a term of three years, renewable once for a further term of three years. In the event that a member of the English Language Advisory group is nominated as the Chair, their term will reset.
- c) Chief Customer Officer, English and Exams acts as Secretary to the group but is not a member.
- d) The Secretary may nominate another member of staff to assist them in carrying out their functions, with the exception of signing letters of appointment.
- e) The group will not include government representatives. The British Council has other mechanisms for gathering the views of the UK government and devolved administrations.
- f) Members are invited to join in a personal capacity rather than as a representative of their employer.
- g) The British Council seeks to secure a complementary range of experience, knowledge and backgrounds on the English Language Advisory Group and to ensure that the group reflects the diversity of the communities for whom our work has particular relevance.
- h) The members and Chair of the English Language Advisory Group are recruited through an open and transparent process and are not remunerated.

5. Meetings

- a) The English Language Advisory Group will normally meet three times per year and may also hold an away day. The number of meetings called is at the Secretary's discretion in consultation with the Chair.
- b) In the absence of the Chair, the members present at the meeting will elect one of their number to act as a Chair for that meeting only.

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- c) The group will be provided with a meeting schedule and a forward plan of agenda items prepared by the Chair and the Secretary.
 - d) The papers should be circulated at least one week before each meeting.
 - e) After each meeting of the group, minutes will be prepared by the Secretary and reviewed by the Chair before they are circulated to the members, no later than one month after the meeting.
 - f) Minutes should be sent as soon as possible after approval to the Secretary of the Board of Trustees to be shared with the Board of Trustees and the Senior Leadership Team.

6. Communication channels

- a) The Secretary is the principal recipient of the group's advice and is responsible for providing feedback to the group on how its input has influenced thinking on the British Council English strategy. The feedback will be captured in the minutes.
- b) The English Language Advisory Group has access to the British Council's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) through the Secretary who, as Chief Customer Officer, English and Exams, is an SLT member.
- c) The Chair and the Secretary are responsible for inviting relevant trustees to attend English Language Advisory Group meetings when warranted by the agenda.
- d) The Chair and the Secretary are responsible for maintaining links with the British Council's other advisory bodies and business units. It is expected that the Chairs or relevant members of other advisory bodies will be invited occasionally to join English Language Advisory Group meetings to contribute to appropriate agenda items.

7. Review

- a) The terms of reference of the English Language Advisory Group will be reviewed annually by the Secretary and the Chair of the group, in consultation with the Secretary to the Board of Trustees.

These terms of reference were approved by the English Language Advisory Group on 31 March 2026 and are due for review by 1 April 2027.