

Organisation name	University of Liverpool English Language Centre
Inspection date	6–10 August 2018

Section standards	
Management The management of the provision operates to the benefit of the students, and in accordance with the provider's stated goals, values, and publicity.	Met
Premises and resources The premises provide students and staff with a comfortable and professional environment for work and relaxation. A range of learning resources is available, appropriate to the age and needs of the students. Guidance on the use of these resources is provided for staff and students where needed.	Met
Teaching and learning The academic staff team has a professional profile (qualifications, experience and continuing professional development) appropriate to the context. Teachers receive sufficient guidance to ensure that they support students effectively in their learning. Courses are structured and managed to provide the maximum possible benefit to students. The teaching observed meets the requirements of the Scheme.	Met
Welfare and student services The provision meets the needs of the students for security, pastoral care, information and leisure activities. Students benefit from well-managed student services, including, where offered, out-of-class activities and suitable accommodation.	Met
Safeguarding under 18s There is appropriate provision for the safeguarding of students under the age of 18 within the organisation and in any leisure activities or accommodation provided.	Met

Recommendation
We recommend continued accreditation.

Summary statement

The British Council inspected and accredited the University of Liverpool in August 2018. The Accreditation Scheme assesses the standards of management, resources and premises, teaching, welfare, and safeguarding under 18s and accredits organisations which meet the overall standard in each area inspected (see www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation for details).

The large English language teaching department of this university offers courses in general and academic English for adults (17+), and for professionals and closed groups of adults (18+).

Strengths were noted in the areas of strategic and quality management, student administration, publicity, premises and facilities, learning resources, academic management, course design, learner management, teaching, care of students, accommodation, leisure opportunities, and safeguarding under 18s.

The inspection report stated that the organisation met the standards of the Scheme.

Introduction

The English Language Centre (ELC) was established at the University of Liverpool in 1986 as part of the school of English. In 2011 it moved out of the academic structure to become part of university professional services. It is now located within the Directorate of Student Experience and Enhancement. The centre provides pre-sessional English courses for undergraduate and postgraduate international students who are planning to study at the university, as well as a general English course and commercial short courses when required. In addition, it provides in-sessional English language support for international students during their studies. A substantial element of this provision is discipline specific and involves ELC staff working in close collaboration with academic staff across the institution. The ELC also provides pre-sessional and in-sessional support for postgraduate programmes at the University of Liverpool in London (UoLiL) campus, which was established in 2014. The current director of the centre has been in post since January 2017.

The inspection lasted five days (four in Liverpool, one in London). Three inspectors were involved on the Liverpool site and two in London. The inspectors held meetings in Liverpool with the director of student experience and enhancement, the director of the ELC, the operations director of the ELC, the general English and short courses director, the interim director of pre-sessional English, academic year course co-ordinators, the teacher training co-ordinator, the marketing and international relations director, the learning and teaching resources co-ordinator, the manager of the ELC, the ELC social and welfare officer, the deputy head of the quality and standards division, the team co-ordinator for university-wide continuing professional development (CPD), the university safety advisor, the international advice and guidance team leader, the head of accommodation, and the sport development manager. In London, meetings were held with the head of operations, the ELC course co-ordinator, the student experience team leader, the student experience manager/deputy head of operations, and the librarian. Focus group meetings were held in Liverpool with three groups of teachers and three groups of students and with students and teachers in London. A total of 64 teachers was observed across the two sites. One inspector visited two university residences in Liverpool; no accommodation is offered in London.

Address of main site/head office

English Language Centre, University of Liverpool, 1–7 Abercromby Square, Liverpool L69 7WY

Description of sites visited

The ELC moved into its premises in Abercromby Square in April 2017. These consist of a row of seven interconnected Georgian buildings shared with the department of Modern Languages and Cultures and the Irish Studies institute. The ELC has a large reception area, five dedicated classrooms, large offices for administrative and welfare staff respectively, a large number of smaller offices for management and teaching staff, resources and materials development rooms, a staff lounge, and small kitchenettes. There is a café-style lounge for students, with a fridge and microwave, and the 'language lounge' doubles as a library shared with Modern Languages and a relaxation space. There are vending machines in reception and in the language lounge. Additional classrooms across the campus are used as need dictates.

The London campus (33 Finsbury Square, London EC2A 1AG) opened in 2014, following re-design of the building to make it suitable as an environment for teaching and learning. There are 13 classrooms, two of which are large enough to function as lecture theatres, four meeting rooms, which can also be used for group study, six interview rooms, three PC suites and a small library. Classrooms are available for pre-sessional and in-sessional use by the ELC. There are toilets on all floors, lift access, and a café on the ground floor.

Course profile	Year round		Vacation only	
	Run	Seen	Run	Seen
General ELT for adults	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
General ELT for juniors (under 18)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
English for academic purposes (excludes IELTS preparation)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
English for specific purposes (includes English for Executives)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher development (excludes award-bearing courses)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ESOL skills for life/for citizenship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments

The ELC offers courses throughout the year in general English, pre-sessional English programmes, in-sessional

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support, and courses for bespoke groups, including courses in English for Specific Purposes, with subject content contributed by academic departments. A general English (GE) course (15 hours per week, minimum enrolment two weeks) can be combined with cultural studies (six hours) or with IELTS preparation (six hours); IELTS preparation can also be taken as a stand-alone course. Pre-sessional English (PSE) courses, which constitute the main provision, are of 40/30/20/ten and six weeks' duration. During the ten and six week courses weekly teaching hours reduce from 21 to 18 to allow additional time for individual and class tutorials. General English and pre-sessional courses in Liverpool are open to students aged 17+; in London, PSE courses are designed for students progressing to postgraduate courses and under 18s are not admitted.

Accommodation profile

In Liverpool accommodation is owned and run by the university. ELC students are offered residential accommodation in four halls of residence, all within easy walking distance of the main campus. Two of these halls of residence were visited. At peak times, students may be offered accommodation in two privately-owned student residences, also close to the main campus. The same terms, conditions and monitoring as university-owned accommodation, apply to these residences. No students were living in the privately-owned residential accommodation at the time of the inspection. In London no accommodation is offered. The university has referral agreements with two large private providers of student accommodation. Students are signposted to these and make their own arrangements. The university also partners with the University of London housing services to provide support and advice for students opting to rent in the private sector. All comments in the Accommodation section of the report relate to Liverpool only.

Summary of inspection findings

Management

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. There is a well articulated sense of direction underpinned by clear policies and well-designed systems for quality management and administration. The management of the provision operates to the benefit of the students, and in accordance with the provider's stated goals, values and publicity. *Strategic and quality management*, *Student administration*, and *Publicity* are areas of strength.

Premises and resources

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. The premises provide students with a well-maintained, comfortable and professional environment for work and relaxation. A range of tailor-made and commercial learning resources is available, appropriate to the needs of the students, together with a plentiful supply of supplementary teaching materials. Guidance on the use of resources is provided for staff and students where needed. *Premises and facilities* and *Learning resources* are areas of strength.

Teaching and learning

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. Teachers have a professional profile (qualifications, experience and continuing professional development) appropriate to the context, and the academic management team is highly qualified and widely experienced. Teachers receive good guidance to ensure that they support students effectively in their learning. Courses are carefully structured and well managed, thus providing the maximum possible benefit to students. The teaching observed comfortably meets the requirements of the Scheme. *Academic management*, *Course design*, *Learner management* and *Teaching* are areas of strength.

Welfare and student services

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. The needs of students for security and pastoral care are well met. The accommodation is of a very high standard and easily meets the needs of students. The leisure programme is varied, interesting and well run and provides excellent opportunities for students to get the most out of their stay in Liverpool and London. *Care of students*, *Accommodation*, and *Leisure opportunities* are areas of strength.

Safeguarding under 18s

The provision meets the section standard and exceeds it in some respects. The university takes safeguarding very seriously and a dedicated team of staff is responsible. Policies and procedures are in place and are known to all staff. All university staff coming into contact with under 18 students are trained at an appropriate level. Individual risk assessments are carried out before an under 18 is enrolled and frequent meetings take place with parents/guardians. Supervision arrangements are appropriate to the ages of the students. *Safeguarding under 18s* is an area of strength.

Evidence

Management

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Strategic and quality management	Area of strength
M1 There is a clear statement describing the goals and values of the organisation, which is made known to all staff.	Strength
M2 The management has clear objectives for the future of the organisation and has realistic plans to achieve them.	Strength
M3 There is a documented and clearly understood structure for the ELT operation. There are sufficient staff to manage and deliver the provision, and to ensure continuity at all times.	Strength
M4 There are effective channels of communication between all involved in the ELT operation, and between the ELT operation and any wider organisation of which it is a part.	Strength
M5 The provider regularly obtains and records feedback from students on all the services offered. Feedback is circulated to relevant staff and appropriate action is taken and recorded.	Strength
M6 The provider regularly seeks and records feedback from all staff on the services offered. Appropriate action is taken and recorded.	Strength
M7 The provider reviews systems, processes and practices with a view to continuing improvement. Appropriate action is taken and recorded in an annual self-evaluation.	Strength

Comments

M1 The ELC's vision derives from and is clearly aligned with that of the university. A new vision statement was published in 2017 and communicated through the ELC webpages and the ELC staff manual, and a mission statement and a set of values have been agreed through internal consultation.

M2 Strategic plans are detailed and very clear, and there was evidence that these have the full support of the university.

M3 Plans include capacity-building within the ELC which involves some rationalisation of responsibilities but also the creation of additional posts which will provide for greater continuity. The new structure is clear and has been well publicised.

M4 There are good systems for sharing information in place at all levels. The vice chancellor holds open meetings twice a year to update staff on developments and carries out annual departmental visits; and the director of student experience and enhancement has instituted a directorate-wide newsletter and lunch-time seminars. Within ELC there are regular all team meetings and management team meetings, and regular contact with the team on the London campus through visits, email and video link.

M5 There are admirably varied and thorough procedures for collecting student feedback and reporting on action.

M6 A range of different procedures is used to for collect feedback from staff, and there is evidence that this is taken seriously and acted on when at all possible.

M7 Review of systems, processes and practices is thorough and wide-ranging. Evidence was seen that recommendations for action – in relation to course design or materials, for example – are implemented, with development time allocated.

Staff management and development	Met
M8 The provider implements appropriate human resources policies, which are made known to staff.	Met
M9 The provider specifies the duties of all staff working with ELT students, and regularly reviews these.	Met
M10 There are effective procedures for the recruitment and selection of all staff.	Not met
M11 There are effective induction procedures for all staff.	Strength
M12 There are effective procedures for monitoring and appraising all staff, and for handling unsatisfactory performance or conduct. These procedures are made known to all staff.	Met
M13 There are effective procedures to ensure the continuing professional development of all staff to meet the needs of the individual, the students and the organisation.	Strength

Comments

M10 Copies of teachers' qualifications were missing in a substantial number of cases, and some qualifications had not been verified. Although a small number of summer teachers were unable to access their original documents, most of the missing documents had been supplied by the end of the inspection.

M11 Three days are allocated for induction for summer teachers. In focus group meetings in Liverpool teachers new to the institution stated that this was appropriate but that more time was needed within the induction for familiarisation with materials and planning. The small team of teachers in London were very positive about their induction. Some teachers on both sites had taken advantage of opportunities to observe classes before they started teaching.

M13 There is a strong commitment to CPD for all categories of staff, which includes financial support for qualifications upgrading and attendance at external events. There have also been opportunities for non-academic staff in both centres to see how systems work in the other centre.

Student administration	Area of strength
M14 Staff are helpful and courteous to students and their representatives, and provide satisfactory levels of customer service.	Strength
M15 Students or their representatives receive sufficient information and advice on their course choices before arrival and during their stay.	Strength
M16 Staff carry out enrolment, cancellation and refund procedures efficiently, fairly, and with appropriate sensitivity.	Strength
M17 There are effective systems in place to maintain accurate and up-to-date records of student enrolment, payment and course details. These records are accessible at all times to authorised staff.	Met
M18 There are effective systems to maintain up-to-date and accessible records of local contact details for students, and their designated emergency contacts.	Met
M19 There is a clear and effective policy on student attendance and punctuality that is known to all staff and students and is applied consistently.	Met
M20 All staff and students are made aware of conditions and procedures under which a student may be asked to leave the course.	Met
M21 All students and, where appropriate, group leaders and parents/legal guardians, receive information in writing about how to make a complaint.	Met

Comments

M14 Students in focus group meetings in both centres were very positive about staff friendliness and helpfulness, a finding supported by written feedback data.

M15 Very clear information for PSE applicants, on the relationship between entry-level and course length, for instance, is available on the website and any general queries are dealt with in person, by telephone, or by email; pre-sessional applicants and offer-holders are managed through a central admissions inbox. The international team also disseminates information in Chinese through its agents and social media, and has organised an international webinar for agents and pre-sessional offer-holders.

M16 A pick-up service from university residences facilitates registration, and the admissions team conduct face-to-face interviews with students to check documents. Procedures in London mirror those in Liverpool. Student-friendly systems are in place to deal with requests for refunds from students on courses.

Publicity	Area of strength
M22 All publicity and information is accurate, and gives rise to realistic expectations about the premises, location, and the extent and availability of the services and resources.	Strength
M23 All publicity and information about the provider and the services it offers is in clear, accurate and accessible English.	Strength
M24 Publicity gives clear, accurate and easy-to-find information on the courses.	Met
M25 Publicity includes clear, accurate and easy-to-find information on costs.	Met
M26 Publicity or other information made available before enrolment gives an accurate description of the level of care and support given to any students under 18.	Strength
M27 Publicity gives an accurate description of any accommodation offered.	Met
M28 Descriptions of staff qualifications are accurate.	Met
M29 Claims to accreditation are in line with Scheme requirements.	Met

Comments

External publicity consists of the website, brochures and posters. IELTS and in-sessional provision are publicised internally. The same PSE publicity is used for Liverpool and London.

M22 Photographs, descriptions and a video for GE give an accurate and helpful representation of the student experience. The current leisure programme and cancellation arrangements are available on the website. Agency agreements stipulate that advertising can only be carried out with prior approval and action is taken in the event of any breach of this agreement.

M23 Website navigation is simple and the text of publicity, which has been written to be accessible to students at Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) level B1, is very clear.

M24 In general, information on courses is clear and accurate. Information on the PSE programme in London is, however, limited, and it is not made explicit that in Liverpool PSE disciplinary pathways only start from the ten-week programme. This latter point was clarified on the website in the course of the inspection, and the new content will be

included in brochures for 2018–19.

M26 Full and helpful information is provided on the level of care for students under the age of 18. Parental consent, accommodation and guardianship requirements are clearly set out; reference is made to the leaflet for students 'Being under 18 at the ELC' and to social and welfare drop-in arrangements; and relevant downloadable documents include both full and summary versions of the ELC framework for safeguarding, and policies on Prevent and care of under 18s.

Premises and resources

Premises and facilities	Area of strength
P1 Premises, including any external areas, are in a good state of repair, cleanliness and decoration, and provide a comfortable environment for students and staff.	Strength
P2 Classrooms and other learning areas provide a suitable study environment.	Met
P3 Students have adequate room and suitable facilities for relaxation and the consumption of food.	Strength
P4 Free drinking water is available. A choice of appropriate food at affordable prices is available to students on site, if not available locally.	Strength
P5 There is adequate signage to buildings, routes, rooms and exits, and there are facilities for the display of general information.	Met
P6 There is sufficient space for all staff, for meetings, relaxation and the storage of personal possessions, and for teachers to carry out their preparation and marking.	Met

Comments

P1 The premises in London are excellent in every respect, being fit for purpose both functionally and in terms of style. In Liverpool, where a great many buildings across the campus are used in summer, there is some variability, but the majority of teaching sites are in at least a satisfactory state of repair, cleanliness and decoration, and many, including the ELC's base in Abercromby Square, are very well maintained and provide a suitably comfortable environment for students and staff.

P2 Although generally well equipped technologically, a minority of rooms on the Liverpool campus are not entirely suitable for language teaching for groups of normal size, because of their seating layout, size or lack of ventilation. In London, classrooms do not have whiteboards, and there are some problems with air conditioning.

P3 In Liverpool, there are ample and varied internal and external relaxation areas. In London, there are well-equipped relaxation areas on each floor, and a social space downstairs. There is a student common room in the ELC premises in Liverpool and the language lounge (resource centre) offers an additional social space.

P4 There is a variety of food outlets on the Liverpool campus and vending machines in the reception area of the ELC premises and in the language lounge. In London, there is a café on the ground floor of the building. Free drinking water is widely available on both campuses, and both are conveniently close to a range of commercial food outlets.

Learning resources	Area of strength
P7 There are sufficient learning resources for the number of students enrolled, appropriate to their age and the level, length and type of courses offered.	Strength
P8 There are appropriate resources for teachers, which are adequate in number, accessible, and well maintained and organised.	Strength
P9 Any educational technology inside the classroom and elsewhere is well maintained with adequate technical support. Staff receive appropriate training in using the available technology to support learning.	Strength
P10 Any facilities provided for additional or independent learning are appropriately equipped and organised.	Strength
P11 Students receive guidance on the use of any resources provided for independent learning.	Strength
P12 There is a policy for the continuing review and development of teaching and learning resources, and evidence of its implementation.	Met

Comments

P7 For the GE course, coursebooks are used, supplemented by teachers' own materials. For PSE, there are in-house booklets produced to a professional standard which cover all aspects of the course. There are additional student materials, differentiated from Liverpool to London, on the ELC area of the university's virtual learning environment. Students in focus group meetings were very positive about the PSE materials.

P8 PSE course materials for Liverpool include teachers' notes. In London, where the materials were being used for

the first time, teachers were sharing ideas on the use of materials. Resource rooms in Liverpool contain a good supply of well organised additional materials. Teachers on both site were appreciative of the materials.

P9 Classrooms are well equipped. Teachers in focus group meetings stated that in-house support was prompt and efficient, and that training was available. Laptops are available for teacher use.

P10 The language lounge (resource centre) in Liverpool has a range of clearly organised materials appropriate for the courses offered, and computer facilities are available across the university. In London, where provision is limited to pre-sessional courses and in-sessional support and students' primary need is for materials relevant to their subject disciplines, language learning resources are more limited, but adequate. Various study configurations are available, including quiet rooms, and students can borrow laptops.

P11 Student induction on both campuses includes an induction to resources (in the language lounge and the library respectively). Both libraries employ specialist staff. Teachers also recommend resources for independent learning.

Teaching and learning

Academic staff profile	Met
T1 All academic staff have a level of education normally represented by a Level 6 qualification on the Ofqual register of regulated qualifications.	Met
T2 The teaching team has ELT/TESOL qualifications relevant to the courses they are teaching.	Not met
T3 The teaching team has a range of experience, knowledge and skills appropriate to the courses offered and the needs of the learners.	Met
T4 The academic manager/academic management team has an appropriate professional profile to provide academic leadership.	Strength

Comments

T1 Rationales were submitted for two teachers without a level 6 qualification who had been employed to teach on the GE course. Teacher 1 has completed two years of a university degree. Teacher 2 has a level 5 diploma in Learning and Development. He has varied experience of management, including running his own company. Both rationales were accepted in the context of this inspection.

T2 Rationales were submitted for four teachers without a teaching qualification which meets Scheme requirements. One of these teachers has completed a course which does not fully meet Scheme requirements. However, he has relevant experience for the general English course he was teaching and support is available from academic managers. The rationale was accepted in the context of this inspection. Rationales were also submitted for three teachers without an ELT qualification who had been employed to teach on English for academic purposes (EAP) courses. The rationales were accepted in the context of this inspection on the grounds that all three teachers had other relevant qualifications and appropriate experience, and very good support is provided by the prepared materials and academic managers. Further rationales were submitted for four teachers who were teaching on EAP courses without ELT teaching qualifications of the required level. All four rationales were accepted in the context of this inspection on the grounds that the teachers have a TEFLI qualification and relevant experience, and very good support is provided by the prepared materials and academic managers. A final rationale was submitted for a teacher on an EAP course who, despite relevant experience as a postgraduate student in the UK, has neither an EFL teaching qualification nor sufficient relevant teaching experience. The rationale was not accepted.

T4 All members of the large academic management team are TEFLQ and widely experienced. Many also have relevant postgraduate qualifications.

Academic management	Area of strength
T5 Teachers are matched appropriately to courses.	Strength
T6 There are effective procedures for the appropriate timetabling of students, teachers, courses and classrooms.	Met
T7 There are formalised arrangements, satisfactory to students and staff, for covering for absent teachers.	Strength
T8 Where enrolment is continuous, explicit attention is paid to all aspects of academic management affected.	Met
T9 There are effective arrangements, led by an academic manager, to ensure appropriate day-to-day guidance and support for all teachers.	Strength
T10 There are effective arrangements for the observation and monitoring of teachers' performance by a TEFLQ academic manager.	Met

Comments

T5 Teachers are carefully matched to courses. For PSE and ESP courses, factors considered include qualifications, including experience of study at postgraduate level, disciplinary knowledge, and teaching and other work

experience. Many of the PSE teachers are returners and many of the staff working on GE courses, whose preferences as to level are also considered, work on these courses year round.

T7 Cover arrangements in both Liverpool and London are very good. In addition to rotas based on teaching slots when teachers would not be teaching, academic managers with a co-ordinating role provide a second level of cover.

T9 Support for teachers on PSE courses in both centres is provided through induction, detailed materials, and, in Liverpool, notes for teachers. Additional support is provided in both centres by the team leaders and co-ordinators, and most teachers on both campuses stated that day-to-day support was both readily available and very helpful. There is a year-round ELC-specific CPD programme, one element in which is a journal club organised by teachers. Weekly teachers' meetings during the summer focus on topics such as standardising assessment and giving feedback to students. Peer observation is encouraged, with cover provided. During the summer period, there had been little take-up of this in Liverpool and none in London.

T10 All the records sampled contained detailed comments and constructive suggestions on the lessons observed, but points for development were not always identified.

Course design and implementation	Area of strength
T11 Course design is based on stated principles. There is a coherent and appropriate course structure described in writing for teachers' guidance.	Met
T12 Course design is regularly reviewed in light of the different and changing needs of students and feedback from teachers and students.	Strength
T13 Written course outlines and intended learning outcomes, appropriate to the course length and type, are available to students.	Strength
T14 Any activities additional to English classes, and which form part of the language curriculum, encourage the acquisition of language and the development of relevant language skills.	Met
T15 Courses include study and learning strategies that support independent learning and enable students to benefit from their programmes and continue their learning after the course.	Strength
T16 Courses include strategies which help students to develop their language skills outside the classroom and benefit linguistically from their stay in the UK.	Met

Comments

T11 There is a detailed rationale for the design of the PSE programme in the teachers' handbook. The GE syllabus takes too little account of students' need for speaking skills and skills development more broadly.

T12 Feedback from students, teachers and, in the case of EAP provision, from academic departments is used to inform course review. Several examples were seen of the changes made.

T13 A great deal of information on course outlines, learning outcomes and assessment is made available in printed materials and on the virtual learning environment (VLE).

T15 Encouragement and support for autonomous learning form part of all courses, and printed course materials and course handbooks contain helpful advice.

Learner management	Area of strength
T17 There are effective procedures for the correct placement of students, appropriate to their level and age.	Strength
T18 There are effective procedures for evaluating, monitoring and recording students' progress.	Strength
T19 Students are provided with learning support and enabled to change courses or classes where necessary.	Met
T20 Where relevant, students are guided to select the examinations and examination training best suited to their needs and interests.	Met
T21 Academic reports are made available to students on request and, in the case of under 18s, to their parents/guardians.	Strength
T22 Students wishing to progress to mainstream UK education have access to relevant information and advice.	Met

Comments

T17 Placement takes thorough consideration of all relevant factors. On PSE, these include IELTS scores, target mainstream programme, nationality and gender. On GE, results of a pre-arrival test are supplemented on arrival by short speaking and writing assessments.

T18 Monitoring of progress and associated record keeping is very thorough. PSE students in both Liverpool and London have weekly tutorials. Online records are kept of these and students' performance on a series of assessed tasks. GE students have tests every three weeks and monthly tutorials, records of which are also kept. Tutorials

typically contain feedback on formative assessment.

T21 A principled approach is taken to the provision of reports, with all PSE students, under 18s, and students on bespoke courses receiving reports at the end of their courses. Sponsored students receive regular reports; students on 40-, 30- and 20-week courses receive a report at the end of each ten-week stage; and reports are issued to other students on request.

Classroom observation record

Number of teachers seen	64
Number of observations	64
Parts of programme(s) observed	All

Comments

Two further teachers were available to teach in the week of the inspection. One provided cover for an absent teacher on one day; the other was on cover duty.

Teaching: classroom observation	Area of strength
T23 Teachers demonstrate sound knowledge and awareness of the use of English and the linguistic systems underlying it, and provide appropriate models of both spoken and written English.	Strength
T24 The content of the lessons shows that the course objectives, the learning needs and cultural backgrounds of the students have been taken into account.	Strength
T25 Lessons lead to relevant learning outcomes, made known to students and achieved through a coherent sequence of activities.	Met
T26 Teaching techniques are appropriate to the focus of the lesson and to the needs of the group and individual learners.	Strength
T27 Teachers promote learning by the effective management of the classroom environment and resources.	Met
T28 Students receive appropriate and timely feedback on their performance during the lesson.	Met
T29 Lessons include activities to evaluate whether learning is taking place.	Met
T30 Teachers demonstrate the ability to engage students and create a positive learning atmosphere.	Strength

Comments

T23 Teachers showed a very good knowledge of language overall and most provided appropriate models of English. In many lessons, new vocabulary was written on the board and students' attention was drawn to spelling and word class. In the best lessons, teachers also checked awareness of pronunciation and register and took opportunities to extend students' linguistic repertoires.

T24 Lesson plans, which in most cases included student profiles, were clear and detailed, and in PSE classes content and topics were relevant to students' disciplinary areas. PSE plans also demonstrated a strong awareness of group (and in some cases, individual) strengths and needs linked to course aims and current and future academic needs.

T26 In general, teachers made confident use of a range of appropriate techniques. The best lessons included well-prompted elicitation, review, and checking of meaning. Teachers mixed open questions and nomination appropriately; they challenged students; they varied tasks; and they provided opportunities for personalisation. There was also some good drilling.

T27 Use of classroom technology and course materials was good overall. However, task instructions were not always checked and in the weaker segments observed too little attention was given to the quieter students. More thought was needed in relation to seating arrangements, especially in lecture theatres used for language classes.

T28 Many teachers gave feedback on language while monitoring pairwork and groupwork, and some lesson plans provided for peer- and self-correction or included delayed feedback phases. However, in PSE classes much of the plenary feedback observed was on students' response to academic content.

T29 Lesson activities allowed for the staged evaluation of learning and some plans contained a final stage in which students would themselves evaluate what they had learned. In many PSE classes, however, there was an insufficiently explicit focus on the evaluation of language development alongside or as a facilitating contribution to academic skills development.

T30 Classroom interactions were generally relaxed but purposeful. In most classes, teachers balanced teacher and student talking time well, the classroom atmosphere was positive, and students were attentive and showed a readiness to participate. In the best segments, teachers promoted interaction by reconfiguring pairs and groups, but also by setting tasks that encouraged genuine communication and not just checking of each other's answers. Clear instructions, good voice projection, appropriate pacing, humour, a sense of direction, and appropriate use of nomination were also features of the best lessons observed, as were energy, expressiveness, and alertness to

individuals.

Classroom observation summary

The teaching observed met the requirements of the Scheme, ranging from very good to less than satisfactory, with the majority being good or better. Teachers showed good analytical knowledge of the language and provided appropriate models. Lesson plans were clear and coherent and closely aligned with course aims. Teachers made use of a range of techniques and deployed classroom technology and teaching materials confidently. They also established a classroom atmosphere that was conducive to learning. However, a more consistent focus on feedback and evaluation in relation to language is needed in EAP classes, and more attention to seating arrangements, especially in lecture theatres.

Welfare and student services

Care of students	Area of strength
W1 Providers ensure the safety and security of students on their premises by measures appropriate to their age and background, and the location.	Strength
W2 There is a comprehensive plan to respond to any emergency. This plan is known to all staff, and relevant elements are known to students.	Strength
W3 Students receive pastoral care appropriate to their age, background and circumstances. All staff and students know the name(s) of the person or people who deal with students' personal problems.	Strength
W4 There are policies to promote tolerance and respect, and procedures for dealing with any abusive behaviour. All staff and students are aware of these.	Strength
W5 Where relevant, students receive a 24-hour emergency contact number for the provider, in writing.	Met
W6 Students receive in advance information on the most appropriate forms of transport between the point of entry to the UK and the provider or accommodation, including approximate costs.	Met
W7 Students receive advice on relevant aspects of life in the UK.	Met
W8 Students have access to adequate health care provision.	Strength

Comments

W1 There are impressive levels of safety and security on both campuses. A round-the-clock security service operates on both sites, and CCTV cameras are deployed throughout. All students and staff receive the emergency contact number to activate security, and the number is displayed prominently on both campuses. Students and staff on the Liverpool campus can call on the services of a 24-hour chaperone service. Comprehensive records were seen of security checks, risk assessments and fire drills.

W2 A major Incident and evacuation procedure is in place on both campuses and evacuation procedures are explained to students at induction. Clear arrangements to locate and contact students on excursions are written into risk assessments.

W3 The ELC has a dedicated and highly visible social and welfare team on both campuses. The role of the team is to take a proactive approach to providing support and pastoral care to all ELC students. On the Liverpool campus the head of this team provides specific pastoral support for all students under 18. Students on both campuses knew the staff well and spoke very highly of the level of support they received.

W4 Tolerance and respect for others are part of the ethos of the university, displayed on eye-catching posters and messages throughout both campuses. Students sign a student charter before they register which explains clearly the policies of respect, tolerance, anti-bullying, expected standards of behaviour and what to do if they feel threatened in any way. They also have to sign an ELC code of conduct, re-introduced to students at induction, with quizzes and questions used to check comprehension.

W8 Students are given detailed information about their rights regarding medical and dental treatment, on posters and in student handbooks. Help to register with a medical practice and, where necessary, with booking appointments, is offered by the social and welfare teams on both campuses. Names and photos of first aiders on duty, and how to find them, are displayed in all buildings.

Accommodation (W9–W22 as applicable)	Area of strength
<i>All accommodation</i>	
W9 Students have a comfortable living environment throughout their stay.	Strength
W10 Arrangements for cleaning and laundry are satisfactory.	Met
W11 A responsible representative inspects all accommodation (for safety and suitability) before students are placed, and at least every two years after that.	Strength

W12 Students receive written confirmation of accommodation booked, giving clear and accurate information.	Strength
W13 There are effective procedures for identifying and resolving any problems students have with their accommodation.	Strength
W14 Accommodation providers receive written confirmation of the rules, terms and conditions applied by the provider with respect to the provision of accommodation services.	N/a
W15 Students receive meals as agreed; these offer a well-balanced diet, taking into account any reasonable dietary requirements students may have.	Strength

Comments

W9 Accommodation visited was of a very high standard. All residential accommodation is ensuite, beds are either double or three-quarter sized, and storage space is generous. Bedding packs, towels and kitchen utensils are provided free of charge to newly-arriving international students.

W11 Inspection is rigorous and frequent. All checks were up to date and records of inspections were clear and easily accessible.

W12 Booking and confirmation procedures are clearly explained in accessible language. Students can opt for longer or shorter contracts, but are not locked in to contracts or penalised financially if they want to change their accommodation.

W13 Effective procedures are in place to encourage student feedback on all aspects of accommodation. Initial feedback is collected and evidence was seen of it being acted upon quickly to resolve problems. Students are encouraged to raise any issues at the accommodation main reception desks or online.

W15 One residence is catered and is a popular option for international students. Details of menus and student feedback showed varied and appetising meals on offer.

Accommodation: homestay only

W16 Homestay hosts accommodate no more than four students at one time.	N/a
W17 Homestay hosts do not accommodate more than one student with the same language, unless the students, their agents, parents or legal guardians specifically request this in writing.	N/a
W18 No more than two students share the same bedroom, unless the students, their agents, parents or legal guardians specifically request this in writing.	N/a
W19 English is the language of communication within the homestay home.	N/a
W20 Hosts ensure that there is an adult available to receive students on first arrival.	N/a

Comments

No homestay accommodation is offered.

Accommodation: other

W21 Students receive information about the implications of their living in private rented accommodation and advice in case of difficulties.	Met
W22 The provider monitors any other accommodation recommended, and booking and payment arrangements are clear.	Met

Comments

W21 Most students choose to live in the university-owned student residences, but information and advice is available to those opting to live in privately rented accommodation. The university offers a free contract-checking service.

W22 All other privately-owned residential accommodation recommended is monitored and inspected in the same way and to the same standards as university-owned residences.

Leisure opportunities

	Area of strength
W23 Students have appropriate information about and access to social, cultural and sporting events and activities which enhance their experience of studying in the UK.	Strength
W24 The content of any leisure programme is appropriate to the age and interests of the students.	Strength
W25 Any leisure programmes are well organised and sufficiently resourced.	Strength
W26 There are effective systems to ensure the health and safety of students on all on-site and off-site activities.	Strength
W27 Staff supervising sporting and leisure activities on or off-site have appropriate experience and training.	Met

Comments

W23 Part of the remit of the social and welfare team is to promote social, cultural and leisure opportunities. Involving students in the wider life of the university and encouraging them to get the most out of their time in Liverpool/London is central to the work of the team. Information is made available to students on both notice boards and digital screens, and alerts are sent to their phones.

W24 The social and welfare team organise a free, comprehensive leisure programme for ELC students. All students in both focus groups had participated in the programme, and were very appreciative of the variety of trips and activities offered, and the fact that it was free of charge. Activities range from sports activities, to craft workshops, full-day excursions to places of interest and tours of the local area

W25 A dedicated and well-resourced team is responsible for the leisure programme on both campuses. Feedback from students informs the future development of the programme, and the variety of activities on offer ensures that there is something of interest for everyone.

W26 Thorough risk assessments, completed and up-to-date, were seen for all activities. These are revisited and refreshed after each activity. Risk assessments created by the venues being visited are used to inform the creation of the ELC risk assessments. Students are given helpful maps, instructions, meeting points and other relevant handouts before the trips and activities.

Safeguarding under 18s

Safeguarding under 18s	Area of strength
S1 There is a safeguarding policy which specifies procedures to ensure the safety and well-being of all students under the age of 18. A named member of staff is responsible for implementing this policy and responding to child protection allegations.	Strength
S2 The provider makes the policy known to all adults in contact with under 18s through their role with the organisation, and provides guidance or training relevant to its effective implementation.	Strength
S3 The provider has written parental/guardian consent reflecting the level of care and support given to students under 18, including medical consent.	Strength
S4 Recruitment procedures for all roles involving responsibility for or substantial access to under 18s are in line with safer recruitment good practice and the organisation's safeguarding policy.	Strength
S5 There are suitable arrangements for the supervision and safety of students during scheduled lessons and activities.	Strength
S6 There are suitable arrangements for the supervision and safety of students outside the scheduled programme.	Strength
S7 There are suitable arrangements for the accommodation of students.	Met
S8 There are suitable arrangements to ensure contact between the provider and parents, legal guardians or their nominated representatives concerning the welfare of students.	Met

Comments

The ELC accepts students aged 17+. At the time of the inspection there were no under-18 students. Seven under 18s had been enrolled in the previous academic year.

S1 A clear and comprehensive safeguarding policy is in place giving details of the designated safeguarding lead and all other named staff who have safeguarding responsibilities. Every university department has its own safeguarding lead and the role is written into that person's job description.

S2 All staff undergo safeguarding training to at least the basic awareness level; this includes the casual pool of student helpers. All staff working in accommodation receive regular safeguarding training and updating. At induction all students are briefed on UK law regarding under 18s and it is explained to them that there may occasionally be under 18s in their classes.

S3 A clear and well-thought-out parental consent form is in place that states the limits of the care and supervision provided by the university. A mandatory meeting or telephone call takes place with all parents/guardians of under 18s as part of the individual risk assessment undertaken before under 18s are accepted. At this point, the limits of the care and supervision offered by the university are reinforced, to ensure parents/guardians fully understand what they are consenting to, and details of the conversation are noted.

S4 All staff who work with under 18s have suitability checks. Under 18s are only assigned to classes with teachers who have been checked. Reference requests for the social and welfare team and all accommodation staff ask specifically about the candidate's suitability to work with under 18s. Academic staff references do not ask this specifically for all staff, but references are requested for any members of staff who will be working with under 18s.

S5 Robust arrangements are in place to ensure the supervision and safety of under 18s during scheduled lessons and activities. Under 18s wear lanyards to make them easily identifiable, they are highlighted in class registers, on excursion lists, and have a mandatory weekly welfare session with the social and welfare officer. The duties of the

social and welfare team include supervision of under 18s. Any absences are followed up within half an hour of an under 18 not showing up to class. Teachers in the focus group knew the procedure, even though most of them never have under 18s in their classes.

S6 Rules about what under 18s students may and may not do outside of the scheduled programme are made clear to parents/guardians and reinforced to students at the weekly welfare meeting with the social and welfare officer. Careful checks are kept on attendance by the social and welfare team, and clear procedures are made known to all adults for responding to missing students. All under 18 students are required to have a UK-based guardian, even if the students live in university residences.

S7 Under 18 students must either live with parents /guardians or in university residences where there is 24-hour supervision from the hall residential advisors. All residential advisors have undertaken safeguarding training and suitability checks and are carefully selected to work specifically in residences where under 18s are placed, with additional duties to monitor their welfare.

S8 Alongside the initial contact with parents /guardians before under 18 students are accepted on to a programme, regular meetings and phone calls take place until students are 18. Contact details are therefore always up to date and used regularly.

Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance

D1 The organisation certifies that it operates at all times in accordance with the declarations in the *Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance*.

The Accreditation Scheme requires accredited providers to comply with all applicable laws and regulations. Providers must take steps to ensure that they are aware of, and comply with, all existing and new legal requirements.

On initial application and annual renewal of accreditation, providers are required to confirm that they are complying with all applicable laws and regulations.

Inspectors will check a random sample of items during inspection, in relation to criterion D1; if they find evidence of a breach of statutory or other legal requirements, the provider will be required to submit evidence of compliance confirmed by the appropriate regulatory body.

Any breach of the law or regulations will be viewed seriously by the Scheme and may result in the withdrawal or withholding of accreditation.

Any sustained breach of the law or regulations which an accredited provider fails upon reasonable notice to remedy will result in accreditation being withdrawn.

Comments

D1 The items sampled were satisfactory.

Organisation profile

Inspection history	Dates/details
First inspection	2014
Last full inspection	2014
Subsequent spot check (if applicable)	September 2015
Subsequent supplementary check (if applicable)	N/a
Subsequent interim visit (if applicable)	July 2017
Current accreditation status	Accredited
Other related non-accredited activities (in brief) at this centre	International Summer School, Teacher Training courses
Other related accredited schools/centres/affiliates	N/a
Other related non-accredited schools/centres/affiliates	University of Liverpool in London campus

State sector

Type of institution	Higher Education Institution
Other accreditation/inspection	BALEAP

Premises profile

Details of any additional sites in use at the time of the inspection but not visited	N/a
Details of any additional sites not in use at the time of the inspection and not visited	N/a

Student profile	At inspection	In peak week: August (organisation's estimate)
ELT/ESOL students (eligible courses)	At inspection	In peak week
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) 18 years and over	702 (incl. 51 UoLiL)	702
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) aged 16–17 years	0	0
Full-time ELT (15+ hours per week) aged under 16	0	0
Part-time ELT aged 18 years and over	1	1
Part-time ELT aged 16–17 years	0	0
Part-time ELT aged under 16 years	0	0
Overall total ELT/ESOL students shown above	703	703
Junior programmes: advertised minimum age	N/a	N/a
Junior programmes: advertised maximum age	N/a	N/a
Junior programmes: predominant nationalities	N/a	N/a
Adult programmes: advertised minimum age	17	18+
Adult programmes: typical age range	18–36	18–36
Adult programmes: typical length of stay	11 weeks	11 weeks
Adult programmes: predominant nationalities	Chinese, Saudi Arabian, Japanese, Turkish, South Korean	Chinese, Saudi Arabian, Japanese, Turkish, South Korean

Staff profile	At inspection	In peak week (organisation's estimate)
Total number of teachers on eligible ELT courses	64	64
Number teaching ELT 20 hours and over a week	36	
Number teaching ELT under 19 hours a week	28	
Number of academic managers for eligible ELT courses	9	9
Number of management (non-academic) and administrative staff working on eligible ELT courses	13	
Total number of support staff	5	

Academic manager qualifications profile

Profile at inspection	
Professional qualifications	Number of academic managers
TEFLQ qualification	9
Academic managers without TEFLQ qualification or three years relevant experience	0
Total	9
Comments	
In-sessional English co-ordinator has 7.5 hour teaching load.	

Teacher qualifications profile

Profile in week of inspection	
Professional qualifications	Number of teachers
TEFLQ qualification	45
TEFLI qualification	11
Holding specialist qualifications only (specify)	0
Qualified teacher status only (QTS)	0
Teachers without appropriate ELT/TESOL qualification	9
Total	65
Comments	
Figures include teachers on London campus.	

Accommodation profile

Number of students in each at the time of inspection (all students on eligible courses)		
Types of accommodation	Adults	Under 18s
<i>Arranged by provider/agency</i>		
Homestay	0	0
Private home	0	0
Home tuition	0	0
Residential	410	0
Hotel/guesthouse	0	0
Independent self-catering e.g. flats, bedsits, student houses	0	0
<i>Arranged by student/family/guardian</i>		
Staying with own family	0	0
Staying in privately rented rooms/flats	293	0
Overall totals adults/under 18s		
Overall total adults + under 18s	703	0