

English as a Second Language at CCSS

Guidance and outline of available programmes

This information may be used by tutors, among others, in guiding students into appropriate courses at CCSS.

Currently there are 94 international students whose first language is not English. Of these 53 are following an ESL course and 14 participated in an ESL course the previous year. The remaining 27 either have reached the required score in their IELTS exam or have another suitable qualification.

At CCSS, all international students whose first language is not English are expected to participate in an ESL programme unless they can show a high level of proficiency in English and provide proof of a suitable, recognised qualification such as an IELTS score of 6.5. The aim of the ESL course is to develop students' ability in English so that they can:

- (i) gain an English qualification (usually IELTS) which is recognised by UK universities or IGCSE for GCSE students.
- (ii) deal effectively with their GCSE, AS and A2 subjects, which require a good standard of academic English.

The following study programmes are offered at CCSS:

IGCSE ESL

International students receive a minimum of 4 hours of group time and more if students require it. Class teaching prepares them by dealing with a variety of topics. Students are also given systematic grammatical and vocabulary support so that they can communicate effectively both orally and on paper. The IGCSE ESL exam, which takes place in May, covers reading/writing, listening and speaking skills. Students are also encouraged to take the General IELTS exam in June, which gives them further practice of English and a brief introduction to the IELTS exam which they will prepare for in more depth when they reach the sixth form.

Lower Sixth and One Year

Class teaching involves 5 hours of group time and includes grammar, vocabulary and practice in the four basic language skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing. One of the group sessions (1½ hours) follows the **Academic Writing Course**, which aims to familiarise students with the nature of academic writing, training them to write proficiently in a manner appropriate for academic communication. In particular, students are expected to acquire and develop the academic writing skills needed for:

- a. the A-level subjects they are studying at CCSS.
- b. the IELTS examination.
- c. university studies.

In addition to this, students also receive ½ hour individual tuition per week, concentrating on individual language problems and support for vocabulary-building and essay writing in ESL and other subjects. The spring term focuses on intensive revision and practice for the IELTS exam as most students take their exam in May. At CCSS, the majority of students aim to achieve an overall IELTS score of 6.5 or 7 in order to satisfy the requirements of most UK universities. Many universities are interested in the individual component scores for the test consequently it is important to reach a high standard in all aspects.

Upper Sixth

Students who have not achieved a score of 6.5 – 7.0 in their IELTS are expected to retake the exam, usually in the summer of their Upper Sixth Year, depending on their progress. In the Upper Sixth, students will generally receive 3 group hours and 15 minutes of individual tuition per week. As with the Lower Sixth and One Year, the course covers all four skill areas, with a focus on grammar and vocabulary. The overall aim is to help students gain confidence in all the language areas, and to raise their level of English to a standard which will not

only satisfy university requirements, as measured by IELTS, but will also meet the academic and social demands of university life.

Advanced English Support (AES)

Students who wish to improve on their current IELTS score, typically students who gained a score of 6.5, may join an AES group, a bespoke course which focuses on students particular needs. Students receive 1 hour of group tuition per week plus 15 minutes one to one. These sessions provide intensive IELTS practice.

English for Academic Purposes (EAP)

Students who already hold an ESL qualification which is acceptable to a UK university can further enhance their English by enrolling for EAP. The aim of EAP is to ensure a greater competency and fluency in English. Students receive 1 hour of group tuition per week plus 15 minutes one to one. These sessions concentrate on the study of grammar, vocabulary building, essay writing, and discussion of articles and current affairs. Students can also receive assistance with writing for their A-level subjects, and help with preparation for university interviews.

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