



English for Academic Purposes Academic Support and Welfare Provision

Introduction

Each year Cheltenham College admits some pupils for whom English is not their first language. Cheltenham College aspires to ensure that all international pupils are integrated fully into the College community. They experience an immersion technique through which they acquire English through their academic studies and through their social interaction with UK students, students of other nationalities and teachers in the classroom, in the boarding houses, on the sports pitch and in all of their everyday activities.

Admission to Cheltenham College

Prospective pupils who do not have English as their first language may apply for a place at the school in the usual manner. Their assessment will include a written test of English language administered by the Coordinator of English for Academic Purposes. In the event that they visit the College, they may engage in an informal interview with the Coordinator of EAP. The results of these English language tests may be added to those for other subjects, whether or not for Common Entrance. A decision is made, by teachers who have been involved with the testing, about whether he or she would be able to cope with studying in a second language.

Pupils who are admitted to Cheltenham College will be able to receive specialist help to enable them to access the mainstream curriculum. In addition, pupils may be prepared for *English as a Second Language* exams, where appropriate such as the Cambridge ESOL suite examinations and IELTS.

During new students' early EAP lessons further assessment, both overt and discreet, takes place. Subject teachers, tutors and House staff also monitor these students. The Coordinator of English for Academic Purposes may also carry out "shadowing" of new international pupils in order to better ascertain their English language needs in the mainstream classroom.

Pastoral and Social Welfare

In addition to receiving support for their language needs, it is the aim of Cheltenham College to ensure that all international pupils to feel integrated into the college community and to feel cared for pastorally. Pupils who have English as a Second Language will all have a Housemaster or Housemistress and Tutor who are responsible for their academic, pastoral and social welfare. The Tutor in charge of International Pupils and the Coordinator of EAP are points of contact for students for whom English is not the first language. It is our aim at Cheltenham College that all pupils, international or UK-based, will feel there is always someone they can turn to however small a perceived problem.

Induction Course

All overseas pupils are strongly encouraged to attend the Induction Course for international pupils, which takes place in the days immediately prior to the start of the Autumn Term. Parents/guardians are invited to an informal buffet meal that offers the opportunity to meet Heads of Academic Departments and other key personnel. Library, ICT and inductions on English education are included in the course. In addition, students are also taken on outings, and evening activities are organised to encourage social interaction. The new pupils are familiarised with Cheltenham College, its buildings, its timetable and its traditions in a sheltered environment.

The Academic Year

Lower College pupils (third, fourth and fifth form) for whom English is not their native language and who are deemed to need support have extra English for Academic Purposes lessons in year groups when their peers are learning French. The Third Form receive 3 lessons and the fourth and fifth form receive 5 lessons in the eight day cycle.

Lower Sixth students may follow an English for Academic Purposes course, which leads to taking the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). This examination is the internationally accepted university entrance qualification. The IELTS examination tests academic skills in listening, reading, writing and speaking. The examination is designed to grade students' level of English at a level of 1.0 – 9.0. The grade needed depends on the individual university but most require a minimum of 6.5 – 7.0. The EAP course also addresses, as its name implies, skills, which are important for study in higher education. For those Lower Sixth formers who do not need the IELTS qualification, another group course is available. This focuses on English for Academic and Professional Purposes. Both of these courses are taught in two classes per week (outside of the eight-day cycle, during Academic Enrichment time).

One-to-one Lessons

In addition to group lessons, students are offered one-to-one lessons and/or small group lessons, and those identified with particular needs are encouraged to take them. Where this is the case one lesson a week is the norm but more may be accommodated if there is a particular need. Each student is involved in planning his or her termly programme along with the EAP coordinator or EAP teacher and information provided by diagnostic testing. Work is regularly reviewed and together the teacher and pupil make suggestions and set targets for the term ahead. Students are committed for a term of one-to-one lessons at a time, so there is a chance for progress to be made and recognised. One-to-one lessons may also be used to prepare for supplementary ESOL examinations such as those offered by Cambridge ESOL or simply to have support with prep or coursework (bearing in mind, of course, the stringent rules regarding coursework support / assistance). There is a charge for one-to-one and small group tuition.

Syllabuses

The focus of lessons in the third form is on enhancing the four skills: listening, reading, writing and speaking. The detail of lessons depends on any group's particular needs, as identified through diagnostic testing. The department aims to support ESL pupils' learning, not only in terms of language, but also of what the students are covering in other subjects therefore there is a strong cross-curricular aspect to lessons. Other lessons may be focussed on areas of grammar still needing more practice.

The Fifth year, once again, follow lessons focussing on further developing the four skill areas and on perfecting more complex areas of grammar and improving written expression. The EAP department also keeps abreast of what is being studied in the mainstream English department so that support can be given in EAP lessons where necessary in the hope that students' understanding is on a par with their peers. Time is also created to look at ongoing coursework although keeping in mind the strict rules regarding coursework support / assistance.

The Sixth Form IELTS syllabus focuses on developing the skills required for the IELTS examination such as listening for detail, reading academic texts and writing academic essays with balance, justification of points made and successful structure. There is much exam practice offered ensuring that the pupils are adequately prepared for the examination. There is also an English for Academic Purposes aspect to the course and this focuses on skills such as research, note-taking, using secondary sources, vocabulary recording and learning.

The Sixth Form course, "English for Academic and Professional Purposes" focuses on skills for further and higher education in English such as research, note-taking, using secondary sources, vocabulary recording and learning, academic essay writing. It also looks at English for the professional world through activities such as CV writing, personal statement / letter of application writing, interview technique and giving presentations. It is hoped that these courses will prepare students for using English in their future professional lives.

Examinations

Together with the College Examinations Officer, the Coordinator of EAP makes decisions about whether students are eligible for bi-lingual dictionary use and/or extra time in public examinations, using rules laid down by the Joint Council for Qualifications. The above does not apply to English language / literature GCSE / A-levels or English language proficiency examinations.

Records

Records are kept of both class lessons and individual lessons. Each student receiving one-to-one lessons has a file on the school server (visible only by college staff), which holds this record and any other relevant documents. The student who has one-to-one lessons takes part in the process of designing a personal programme for the term, depending on his/her needs. There is also a database of EAL students published during the Autumn Term which advises all members of the teaching staff about the perceived levels of EAL students in the college; their needs in the mainstream classroom and the support they are receiving. This database is regularly updated. The EAP section of the staff server also contains useful information for members of the teaching staff regarding practical techniques for supporting EAL students in the classroom.

Conclusion

We are dedicated to internationalism at Cheltenham College and want to do all that we can to ensure that each student achieves their full potential both academically and socially during their time at the college. It is our belief that the English language support offered at Cheltenham College will maximise the chance of this.

Review: September 2011