

Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (CertTESOL)

A summary of course content and key
information for course members

from January 2011

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Sixth impression, January 2011

Trinity Level 5 Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

Accredited by the Office of Qualifications and
Examinations Regulation at Level 5 of the UK
National Qualifications Framework

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Training for a career in TESOL

TESOL provides many thousands of individuals with a career that combines academic study, teaching and teacher management with the opportunity to develop an understanding of other cultures worldwide. The CertTESOL course provides a sound and stimulating start to what has become a flourishing and constantly developing profession.

The Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), also known sometimes as TEFL or TESL, has developed in range and complexity over the last 50 years. English is taught in state education systems and the independent sector worldwide. In more recent times, English has become the most widely used language for people with another first language. It is regarded as the most common language of international commerce, science, law and social communication. There are well-established varieties of English outside English-speaking countries. The CertTESOL courses are open to those who have English as a second or other language, provided their language skills meet Trinity's requirements for teacher training. Serious English language teachers will require strong professional commitment and the ability to gain new skills and knowledge. They will need to embark on a continuing programme of personal and professional development after their formal training.

Prospective teachers of ESOL, or English for Speakers of Other Languages, will find that there are shorter courses of training open to them, ranging from a single day to some two weeks. However, across the profession in and outside the UK it is widely accepted that teachers wishing to obtain a reasonable teaching post in a reliable organisation must have completed a course of no fewer than 130 hours, together with all relevant assignments to the required standard, with a minimum of six hours of teaching practice with genuine learners, and relevant input on grammar, phonology and lexis, as well as approaches and methods, learner motivation and classroom management. Such courses should be validated by an external and independent body (such as Trinity College London) and not simply by the organisation that provides training. These are the key features of the Trinity CertTESOL and its principal competitors.

Trinity also validates courses in the initial training of teachers of English to young learners, business English teachers and teachers who wish to make better use of technology in the classroom. At a later stage in their careers teachers with experience can take the Trinity DipTESOL course and examinations, following a rigorous programme of study validated by Trinity. Additionally, Trinity runs English language examinations in the UK and worldwide, including the Graded Examinations in Spoken English, and the Integrated Skills in English examinations incorporating reading and writing as well as speaking and listening.

Trinity is one of the principal awarding bodies that validates courses in TESOL. Trinity's TESOL Certificate and Diploma in TESOL have been accredited by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) at Levels 5 and 7 of the National Qualifications Framework respectively. They are accepted by the British Council as initial (Certificate) and full (Diploma) TESOL qualifications in the Council's teaching operations outside the UK and by Accreditation UK in their accredited English teaching organisations.

Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

Aims of the Trinity CertTESOL

The Trinity College London Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (CertTESOL) is designed for those with little or no experience of teaching English. It equips them with the basic skills and knowledge needed to take up a first post as an ESOL teacher and gives them a firm foundation for self-evaluation and further professional development. It is emphasised that this is intended as an initial TESOL training qualification.

Entry requirements

Trinity's essential entry requirements for applicants are:

- minimum age 18 on entry to the course (or to the pre-course distance learning phase if there is one)
- as a minimum, qualifications for entry to higher education in the UK or applicants' own education systems
- competence in written and spoken English appropriate to a teacher of English, whether English is applicants' first, second or foreign language: the varieties of written and spoken English deemed appropriate for a teacher of English include regional and world varieties as well as British Standard English, but successful applicants' levels of competence in English must be of a standard sufficient to enable them to perform the function of role models as language teachers
- an awareness of the significance of the structure and functions of English in teaching the language
- willingness to work cooperatively as a member of the whole training group and respond constructively to feedback on personal performance
- potential for combined study including language analysis and practical training that is rigorous and demanding of time, energy and emotional stamina: full-time intensive and part-time extensive courses make rather different demands on trainees in this respect

Applicants are assessed for suitability for the course on the basis of their CVs and a personal interview at which they are expected to be able to discuss their own previous learning experiences and their perceptions of language teaching.

Courses

CertTESOL courses are offered around the world, in both the independent and state sectors, including universities. Details of these are available from the Trinity website, and a brochure is available on request. Applicants should check that the course provider holds validation for their current TESOL course.

Course providers receive detailed guidelines (known as the Validation Requirements) from Trinity on course structure, entry requirements, assessment procedures, staffing and resources, and they are permitted to adapt these within agreed guidelines to meet the needs of their own course members or trainees. All course details must be approved by Trinity, and a senior member of Trinity's professional staff inspects the organisation and the premises where courses are held. The validation or approval process for a first-time course provider normally takes some three months. The minimum length of a validated CertTESOL course is four weeks full time. The longest part-time courses are normally nine months, except where they are integrated into a university BA programme and may run over two years. There are many courses of between four weeks and nine months.

Each course runs for a minimum of 130 timetabled hours. Every trainee has to attend a full course and complete all assignments, including teaching practice, to the required standard in order to qualify for the award. A minimum of 15 hours' private study is usually also required.

Learning objectives

Successful trainees will be able to demonstrate the following on completion of the course:

- a) knowledge of the main phonological, lexical and syntactic features of contemporary English
- b) awareness of the learning needs of individuals or groups of learners, and of the motivation of learners in a variety of cultures and environments
- c) ability to establish rapport, create and maintain learners' interest
- d) ability to draw up a range of lesson plans with clear and achievable aims, using appropriate methods for learners with various needs
- e) ability to manage and stimulate active participation among a class of learners and provide a relevant learning context and learning opportunities in relation to their learning objectives
- f) ability to evaluate, use and adapt published material and create simple teaching materials, which may include visual aids, audio, video and information/communications technology
- g) broad understanding of the main advantages and disadvantages of various language teaching approaches
- h) ability to evaluate their own effectiveness as teachers and to work cooperatively as members of a teaching team or group
- i) awareness of the need to continue their professional development as ESOL teachers after training in a teaching post and through private study, further training or participation in professional networking events
- j) awareness of the means of identifying a TESOL post after training, including using the media and professional associations, and of the main issues relating to employment in this area that may affect their future security and further professional development.

Course content

Each programme will include the following components to be formally and individually assessed.

Unit 1: Teaching skills

Trainees develop:

- an understanding and ability to put into practice basic TESOL methodologies and approaches, in a manner appropriate to course and lesson aims, and the learners' background and learning objectives
- the ability to use a variety of teaching materials and an awareness of the key features required of coursebooks and printed materials
- the ability to balance the requirements of accuracy and fluency in teaching English
- the potential for self-evaluation and professional development through further training.

All trainees will complete a minimum of:

- six hours' teaching practice with genuine classes of no fewer than six learners, observed and assessed by experienced tutors
- eight hours' observation of experienced teachers teaching genuine learners (four hours of English classes and four hours of other language classes)
- the preparation of a teaching journal to include lesson plans, self-evaluation and comment by tutors that records trainees' progress and consolidates their perceptions of effective teaching strategies.

Unit 2: Language awareness

Trainees develop:

- an understanding of the basic relationship between linguistic form (phonological, lexical and syntactic), function and meaning in standard English and the principal concepts and terminology used to describe the structure and use of English
- the ability to describe and teach the above in terms of language skills and sub-skills and to develop them in a language learning syllabus
- the ability to teach the above in a communicative context and assess their learners' competence in these areas
- an understanding of the practical application of phonetics and phonology.

Reference will be made to spoken and written English, and to the relative roles of British Standard English and other varieties of English, UK and worldwide.

Unit 3: The learner profile

Trainees address the needs of an individual learner through the preparation of a linguistic profile and needs analysis for one learner of English and the preparation of a one-to-one lesson. The analysis will focus on the learner's cultural background, previous language-learning experience and aims, linguistic strengths and weaknesses and the main features of their mother tongue.

Unit 4: The materials assignment

Trainees plan, produce, use and evaluate a selection of classroom teaching materials of principally their own design and prepare a written rationale and evaluation describing the following: the materials and the learners for which they are intended, the ways in which they are to be used, ways in which they might be adapted for other learners and the ways in which they were and were not successful when used in teaching practice. (See also under Assessment below.)

Unit 5: The unknown language

Trainees receive four hours' tuition with an oral/aural bias in an unknown foreign language through the medium of that language only, to gain first-hand experience of a learner's difficulties and to see in practice some of the methods and approaches introduced to them elsewhere. They record their perceptions of their experiences as learners through a written journal which will form part of the final assessment.

Professional awareness and development

Successful trainees demonstrate their professional awareness of the needs of other colleagues in the team, teaching and non-teaching, and the value of mutual support within the teaching-learning-training environment. They must demonstrate a commitment to further professional development through a combination of reflective practice, and informal and formal discussions and training. They must also have an awareness of the principal employment sectors in their field and sources of information on employment and employers.

Assessment

Assessment procedures: Assessment for the CertTESOL can be provided only at those organisations whose courses are currently validated by Trinity. Trainees are given clear guidance at the start of every course as to how their written and practical work is to be assessed. All Trinity validated courses are visited at the end of the course by an independent moderator appointed and trained by Trinity. The moderator talks to all trainees in groups and then individually.

Independent assessment: All trainees are interviewed by the moderator for a period of 15 minutes to discuss their work for the Materials Assignment (Unit 4). The moderator assesses them as Pass or Refer on this unit. Trainees must prepare carefully for the interview.

Moderation of other written work: Moderators read a representative sample of all written work by trainees, including journals for teaching practice, guided observation, unknown language and the learner profile, together with any other assignments including tests of grammar and phonology. Work is assessed for quality of content and relevance, and also for spelling, punctuation and grammatical expression.

Entries and fees

Individual course providers set their own course fees. A moderation fee payable to Trinity is charged to every trainee by the training organisation in addition to, or combined with, the course fee. An entry made in the name of one trainee may not be transferred to another trainee. It should be noted that course and moderation fees are charged for training and moderation, whether or not trainees are actually awarded a Trinity Certificate in TESOL.

Certification

Trinity awards its certificate to all trainees who have met the required standard on the appropriate assignments (including teaching practice), who have attended the full course and who have shown their commitment to the training process. Trainees must pass all five main course units at the end of the course or following referral (re-submission of some assignments), if this is thought appropriate, in order to be awarded the Trinity Certificate. Trinity does not award individual grades at this level of training although some course providers do so. This grade does not appear on the certificate.

The following is a small selection of websites useful in obtaining employment. Trinity does not take any responsibility for the accuracy of information provided on these sites but to the best of Trinity's knowledge, they are reliable.

- Cactustefl.com
- Jobs.guardian.co.uk/jobs/education
- Jobs.EduFind.com
- Saxoncourt.com
- Teachabroad.com
- Tefl.com

Provision for trainees with special needs

Trinity course providers welcome applications from prospective trainees with special needs. Before a trainee is accepted on a CertTESOL course, the course provider discusses in detail with them the nature of any special needs, including mobility difficulties. The trainee discusses with the course provider the means by which course provider or trainee can ensure that the trainee can follow the course and have a reasonable opportunity to complete all assignments to the necessary standards. These details are communicated to Trinity by the course provider before the candidate is accepted on the course.

Trainees should note that the same standards of assessment apply to all trainees. Only in the conduct of the course or assessments is allowance made, where appropriate, for a trainee's special needs.

Trainees who have special needs (in particular those registered blind, partially sighted, deaf or hearing-impaired, or those with other physical disabilities) must demonstrate that they can handle, supplement or provide effective substitutes for the usual range of language-teaching equipment in the classroom (such as board, audio and video equipment). All trainees must be able to identify individual students and correct their work on the spot.

If a trainee suffers from dyslexia or has difficulties with reading or writing, they must supply a report from an educational psychologist (a chartered educational psychologist, a full or affiliate member of the Association of Educational Psychologists or a person employed by a local education authority as an educational psychologist). Reports from psychologists of other disciplines (e.g. clinical) or non-psychologists are not acceptable.

There is no fixed extra-time allowance for teaching practice or for the completion of assignments for trainees with special needs. This must be agreed between individual trainees, course providers and Trinity where necessary.

Further advice on trainees with special needs is available from Trinity's London office on request.

Summary of appeals and complaints procedure for trainees

Procedure for appeals by trainees

1. Grounds for appeal

- 1.1 Trinity considers appeals only against overall awards of Fail, but not against awards of Refer, or against overall grades or marks where the trainee is deemed to have passed the course. Trinity does not itself award levels of pass (e.g. merit or distinction) but simply Pass, Refer or Fail.
- 1.2 Trinity considers appeals against overall awards of Fail only where trainees provide information or evidence to indicate that courses were possibly not delivered in line with the course provider's publicity and course information and/or Trinity's Validation Requirements and that therefore they were deprived of appropriate training and/or an appropriate assessment procedure. Such an appeal may relate to the assessment system in place and the way in which it was operated.
- 1.3 In handling appeals against a Fail, Trinity does not re-mark assignments or teaching practice. Trinity obtains information from the appellant, the course provider and the course moderator in order to reach a judgement as to whether the course has been appropriately delivered and the assessment system fairly implemented.
- 1.4 Trinity does not enter into disputes between trainees and course providers relating to payment or refund of fees or other charges, or financial compensation for delivery of services.
- 1.5 If an appeal is accompanied by a written or verbal proposal of legal action, then Trinity does not pursue the normal appeals procedure but refers the matter to its solicitors.

2. First level of appeal

- 2.1 A fee of £25 is payable at the first level of appeal, by the appellant. If the appeal is granted the fee will be refunded. Trainees wishing to appeal against an overall fail mark must write to the Head of TESOL at Trinity's London office setting out the following clearly and on numbered pages:
 - the grounds for appeal which must be consistent with section 1.1 above
 - the range of grades or marks that they believe they have been awarded for individual assignments including teaching practice
 - any other relevant evidence, including any assignments that they have failed where the course provider's grades, marks or written comments are included
 - a note of the date when their fail was confirmed, and by whom, and in what mode – e.g. meeting, telephone, letter, email, etc.
 - written confirmation that their letter of appeal may be shown to the course provider and the moderator for an investigation to take place.
- 2.2 The letter must be postmarked or fax dated not later than 14 days after trainees have received official confirmation from the course provider or from Trinity that they have failed. Appeals are not accepted by email.
- 2.3 It must be noted that the course moderator, following consultation with the course provider, makes recommendations as to whether trainees have passed, been referred on or failed the course. Trinity determines the final award and this is confirmed in a pro forma letter to the course provider from the Head of TESOL. Occasionally the Head of TESOL will ask the course provider in that pro forma letter to provide additional information before Trinity confirms the award of Fail.
- 2.4 On receipt of an appeal, Trinity normally acknowledges the appeal in writing within seven days of its receipt. If the appeal is under the terms of the appeals procedure, Trinity forwards the relevant material to the course provider and course moderator with a view to investigating the grounds for appeal. If the appeal is not accepted as being consistent with Trinity's terms of appeal, the Head of TESOL writes to the appellant to explain the reasons for this decision. Rejection of the appeal terminates the first level appeals procedure but does not remove the appellant's right to pursue a higher level appeal.

- 2.5 The Head of TESOL reaches a decision after receiving the comments of the course provider and course moderator and replies to the appellant as appropriate. The target time for resolving appeals at first level is 28 days maximum from the date of receipt, depending on the completeness of information from the appellant and on the availability of relevant course tutors and the moderator to comment, and on that of the Head of TESOL.

3. Second level appeal

- 3.1 Appellants whose appeal at first level is not granted and who are not satisfied with the decision of the Head of TESOL may if they wish proceed to a second level of appeal. Appellants must write directly to the Head of Academic Governance giving their grounds for their continuance of the appeals procedure and their written permission for their second level appeal letter to be copied to the course provider and course moderator.
- 3.2 The letter must be postmarked or fax dated not later than 14 days after the date of the letter from the Head of TESOL confirming that their first level appeal is not granted. Second level appeals are not accepted by email.
- 3.3 Appellants need not enclose a further fee.
- 3.4 If the appeal is accepted under the terms of the appeals procedure, the Head of Academic Governance – Language normally acknowledges the appeal in writing within seven days of its receipt, copies the second level appeal letter to the Head of TESOL for information and forwards the relevant material to the course provider and course moderator with a view to investigating the grounds for appeal. This material includes the original appeal documentation and any additional documentation received.
- 3.5 The Head of Academic Governance – Language reaches a decision after receiving the comments of the course provider and moderator and replies to the appellant as appropriate. The target time for resolving appeals at second level is 28 days maximum from the date of receipt, depending on the completeness of information from the appellant and on the availability of relevant course tutors and the course moderator to comment, and also on that of the Head of Academic Governance.

4. Third level appeal

- 4.1 Appellants whose appeal at second level is not granted and who are not satisfied with the decision of the Head of Academic Governance – Language may if they wish proceed to a third level of appeal. Appellants must write directly to the Director of Academic Governance giving grounds for their continuance of the appeals procedure and their written permission for their third level appeal letter to be copied to the course provider and course moderator.
- 4.2 The letter must be postmarked or fax dated not later than 14 days after the date of the letter from the Head of Academic Governance – Language confirming that their second level appeal is not granted. Third level appeals are not accepted by email.
- 4.3 Appellants need not enclose a further fee.
- 4.4 The Director of Academic Governance normally acknowledges the appeal in writing within seven days of its receipt, copies the third level appeal letter to the Head of Academic Governance – Language and the Head of TESOL for information and reaches a decision in association with an independent member of the ESOL and TESOL Review Board after receiving the comments of the course provider and moderator. They then reply to the appellant as appropriate. The target time for resolving appeals at third level is 28 days maximum from the date of receipt, depending on the completeness of information from the appellant and on the availability of relevant course tutors and the course moderator to comment, and also on that of the Director of Academic Governance and the independent assessor.

5. Possible outcomes of appeal where granted

In the event of an appeal against fail being granted, it is possible for Trinity to take any of the following actions:

- require course providers to re-assess a specific written assignment and give their written comments as to the reason for the final grade or mark, which may, but need not necessarily, differ from the original grade or mark
- require moderators to re-assess the materials assignment
- require course providers to give trainees a further opportunity to repeat the entire course and all assignments at the course provider's whole or part expense (i.e. a referral)
- require course providers to give trainees a further opportunity to repeat one or more assignments including all or part of teaching practice, and with appropriate support and input from the course provider, at the course provider's whole or part expense (i.e. a referral)
- require the course provider to make changes to their course design or delivery, including assessment systems, against a specific deadline in order to retain validation by Trinity. Trinity does not reimburse trainees with all or part of their training fees or moderation fees. In the event of a first or second level appeal not being granted, Trinity reminds appellants that they have the possibility of proceeding to a second or third level appeal respectively.

Procedure for complaints by trainees

1. Grounds for complaint

- 1.1 Trinity will consider serious complaints by trainees who have in fact met all course requirements and been awarded a Trinity CertTESOL, as well as by those who have failed, if they can demonstrate that courses were not delivered in line with the course providers' publicity and course information and/or Trinity's Validation Requirements and that therefore they were deprived of appropriate training. Please note the outcome of complaints where substantiated under section 2.3.
- 1.2 It must be noted that Trinity does **not** enter into disputes between trainees and course providers relating to payment or refund of fees or other charges, or financial compensation for inadequate delivery.

2. Complaints procedure

- 2.1 Trainees must write to the Head of TESOL at Trinity setting out the precise reasons for their complaint and include any relevant evidence, together with written confirmation that their letter of complaint may be shown to the course provider and the moderator for an investigation to take place.
- 2.2 If the complaint is accepted as a complaint under the terms of the complaints procedure, Trinity normally acknowledges the complaint in writing within seven days of its receipt and forwards the relevant material to the course provider and course moderator with a view to investigating the grounds for complaint.
- 2.3 Trinity reaches a decision after receiving the comments of the course provider and replies to the appellant as appropriate. The target time for deciding the outcome of complaints is 28 days maximum from the date of receipt, depending on the completeness of information from the complainant and on the availability of relevant course tutors to comment, and on that of the Head of TESOL.

3. Possible outcomes of complaint where substantiated

- 3.1 It must be noted that if the complaint is found to be substantiated, Trinity may require the course provider to make changes to their course design or delivery, including assessment systems, against a specific deadline in order to retain validation by Trinity.
- 3.2 Trinity does not reimburse trainees with all or part of their training fees or moderation fees.

Obtaining more information

For further information on any aspect of Trinity's TESOL or ESOL qualifications, contact:

Trinity College London
89 Albert Embankment
London SE1 7TP UK

T +44 (0)20 7820 6100

F +44 (0)20 7820 6161

For TESOL information, including a list of CertTESOL course providers, contact Trinity by email on tesol@trinitycollege.co.uk

For ESOL information, contact Trinity by email on esol@trinitycollege.co.uk

Information, including contact details of CertTESOL course providers, is also available on the Trinity website at www.trinitycollege.co.uk