



Guide for Elac Staff & Group Leaders

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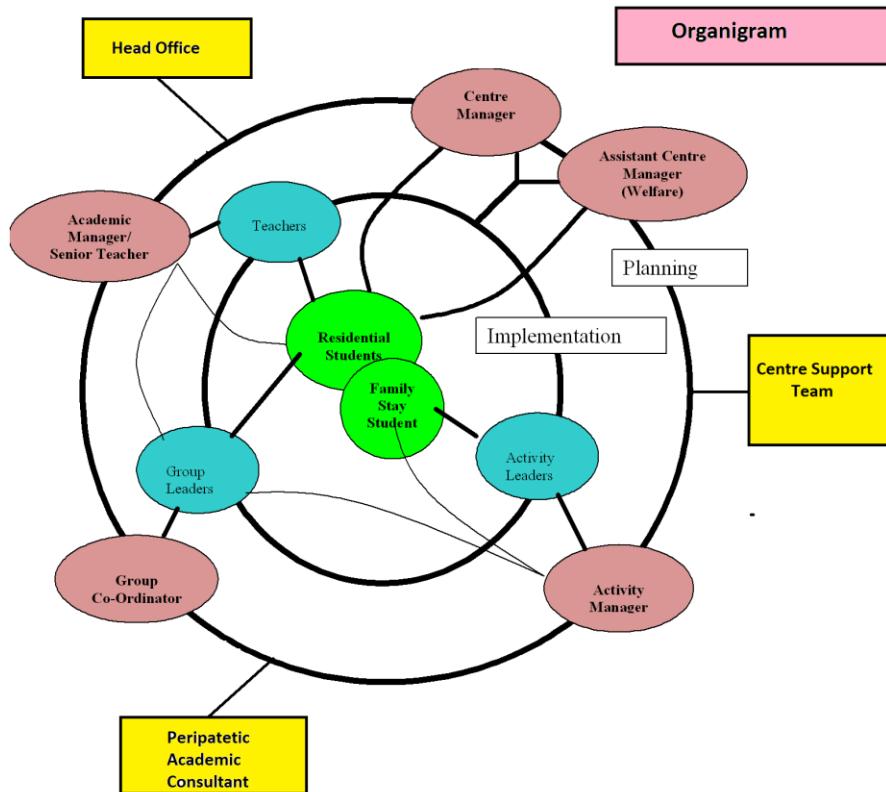
Elac Study Vacations: Background

Elac is a small organisation compared with others in the EFL world (see organisation chart below), though it is one that has grown gradually and consistently over recent years. In 2018 we will be running 7 residential centres and 2 homestay centres, welcoming over 3500 students from between the middle of June and the beginning of August. We also have a Study Centre & Offices located in Milsom Street, the prestigious main shopping street in the centre of Bath.

Our Residential centres are: Mayfield School (Mayfield, East Sussex), Nottingham University (Nottingham), Christ's Hospital School (Horsham), Ardingly College (Haywards Heath) and Cardiff Metropolitan University (Wales). Our Homestay Centre is St Andrew's School (Eastbourne). The courses we run at Bath Spa University (Bath) and Eastbourne College (Eastbourne) which are both residential and homestay centres. Each of these centres has its own particular style and 'feel', but we hope that visitors to a number of our centres would also recognise a shared ethos and many common features. The purpose of this handbook is to try to convey something of those shared values and common practices.

The Staff Team in Our Centres

The diagram below shows the usual staffing structure in our summer centres. We have presented it in this way for two reasons. The first is that the organisation is more like a web than any other kind of structure. We have only shown the key lines of communication so that the diagram is not too confusing, but imagine lines running from every point to every other point: communication in all direction is vital to the success of the course. The second reason is that this diagram puts the students at the centre of the organisation, rather than at the bottom of a typical top-down structure. It is a reminder of our goal to be student-centred.



Working for Elac: Expectations

What to Expect at Elac

What should you expect when you come to work for Elac as a teacher or activity leader in the summer? Some of you may have had experience of working with us before, or of other organisations, but if you haven't here are a few pointers as to what to expect

Do Expect

- To work hard...
- To be fairly rewarded...
- To learn and develop your skills...
- To be challenged on occasions...
- To have access to good equipment and resources...
- To get guidance and advice when you need it...
- To have fun...
- To make some good lasting friendships...

Don't Expect

- Everything to go smoothly on day one!

The nature of summer courses is that they are **fast-moving** and **dynamic** events. In our larger centres we may have as many as 400 students arriving in one weekend, all of whom need to be tested, interviewed, arranged into classes and inducted into the centre – as well as entertained!

Once the initial flurry of activity that accompanies the arrival of the students is over, the course can settle down into a more or less **regular pattern** – although there are plenty of other events that may upset this pattern during the stay! We work hard, with your help, to impose a structure and organisation which has been extremely effective over the years, but we have to remain flexible at the same time to deal with the particular issues that arise from year to year.

If this is your first experience of working on a summer course, then you will probably be surprised initially by the pace at which things happen. The timetable is very busy, and during the teaching day there is little down time. If you are an inexperienced teacher, then we will take this into account and try to build in more non-teaching time, so that you have a chance to catch your breath. If you feel slightly overwhelmed at first, then there is help and guidance on hand, whether it be academic support you need, or just a more general helping hand. Almost certainly after a few days you will become accustomed to the pace and will be able to start enjoying what you are doing – just check this out with some of the more experienced staff who are on their third or fourth summer.

Both teachers and activity leaders will get involved in activities with the students. For activity leaders this is likely to be both morning and afternoon sessions as well as social events in the evening; for teachers it is most likely to be the occasional evening. You will also be asked to accompany students on excursions to local places of interest or on full-day trips to large cities. These activities allow staff to interact with students in a wider sense outside the classroom, and for the students they are good opportunities to continue developing their language skills.

Our hope is that at the end of the summer you will feel that you have been challenged and motivated, that you have experienced variety, that you have developed either your teaching repertoire, or your organisational skills, that you have had fun, and that you have been well rewarded for it.

What we expect of our staff

What we look for...

We will give you all the support you need to do your job effectively, and in return we are looking for you to do a really professional job for us. You don't have to be the most gifted teacher or activity leader in order to be a real success, but you do need to show an honest, hard-working approach. What the students and leaders appreciate more than anything else is staff who want to interact with them, who are friendly, interested, open and good-humoured. This is the case at all times on the course: on arrival, in the classroom, during activities, on excursions, in the dining hall and so on.

The face of Elac...

As Elac staff on our courses this summer you will be the 'face' of Elac as far as the students and Group Leaders are concerned, and so it is important to us that all staff members maintain the kind of professional standards that would be expected within any school organisation. In terms of dress, this means a smart appearance; it doesn't necessarily mean a shirt and tie, but on the other hand, denim jeans or shorts are not acceptable. For activity staff appropriate sportswear and Elac T-Shirts are best.

Be on time...

It is important also that our staff are punctual for classes or activities. It is a difficult job to keep the students up to the mark, if staff are arriving a few minutes late. At the beginning of the morning this is especially

important, as there may be important information to give to teachers prior to the first lesson, or even cover to organise; or equally there may be changes to activities, or equipment that needs to be set up. It is therefore essential that all teachers are in the staff room (or nearby) 15 minutes before the start of the first lesson, and that activity staff arrive for their briefing meeting 15 minutes before scheduled activities.

Absences...

If you have any dates on which you need to be absent during the course, then please let the Centre Manager know prior to the start of the course so that we can plan to cover your lessons or activity session. If the need for an unplanned absence arises, then please discuss with the Centre Manager beforehand where possible – if there is a good reason for the absence, then we will do everything we can to assist. In cases of illness, let the Centre Manager know as soon as possible in the morning. Generally speaking we would appreciate our staff soldiering on with the odd sniffle, but if it is a serious case of illness, and especially if it is infectious, it is better for you to rest and recover.

Courtesy and diplomacy...

All teachers will be assigned groups to welcome and guide through the initial induction and testing process. It is important that teachers exercise courtesy – and sometimes diplomacy – in dealing with the group leaders, especially on what can be a stressful first day. If you do have a difficult situation with a Group Leader or student always seek out the support and guidance of the Centre Manager or one of the other senior staff members.

Professional conduct...

You will want to enjoy yourself away from the course while you are with us, to relax and unwind with other staff. However, this must not conflict with your role as an Elac staff member on the course. If you are on duty on an evening activity, then you don't drink alcohol before or during that activity. Equally, if you are working in the morning, your Centre Manager will expect you to arrive in a fit state to carry out your responsibilities professionally.

Description of Roles and Responsibilities: Student Welfare

Please read our safeguarding policy on our website prior to starting work with us. The staff member with designated responsibility for student welfare is the Assistant Centre Manager. However, welfare issues don't necessarily conform to such formulations. You may be the person that notices something wrong: a student that seems to be upset, inappropriate behaviour from a staff member towards a student, or from one student towards another, or unusual behaviour from a student that gives you cause for concern. In all of these circumstances, that issue becomes your responsibility by virtue of the fact that you have noticed it. Do not ignore it. Your key decision is when and to whom to pass on your concerns:



- If you become aware of a welfare issue (homesickness, antagonism between students, lack of sleep, and lack of food) you may want to inform the Group Leader concerned, as well as the Student Welfare Officer (Assistant Centre Manager). If, however, it is a Child Protection issue (physical or sexual abuse, drug-taking) then you should direct your concerns in the first instance to the Student Welfare Officer (Assistant Centre Manager) alone.
- You may be unsure whether what you have witnessed or heard is a cause for concern or not. If it is appropriate you may want to ask a few questions (directly or indirectly) to confirm any concerns that you have, without involving yourself too much.
- If you are not convinced that there is a cause for concern, you should still pass on the information to the Student Welfare Officer (Assistant Centre Manager) and /or the students' Group Leader (as long as it isn't a child protection issue). She/He will not act on it unless they have information which supports yours, but they will make a note of it, so that if further instances come to light later on, they can refer back to it.
- If you are convinced that there is a cause for concern, you should pass it on to the Student Welfare Officer (Assistant Centre Manager) for further action as soon as possible. Decisions about who should be informed and involved will be taken by the Student Welfare Officer (Assistant Centre Manager), so please treat the information as confidential.
- If you become aware of a student welfare or child protection issue because a student takes you into their confidence, you must pass on this information. Make it clear to the student that if they confide in you, you will be required to pass it on to an appropriate person. Try to do so in a manner that does not prevent them from sharing their concerns.

Remember: student welfare is your responsibility, and is one you share with every other Elac staff member.

Responsibilities regarding Prevent Duty

Prevent is a government strategy to stop people becoming involved in violent extremism and/or in supporting terrorism. We have a legal duty to identify and safeguard children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation, and to challenge extreme views, whilst promoting the core British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and respectful tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. With training, we expect you to be observant and vigilant in noticing any signs of radical or extremist behaviour, and to report any concerns to the Centre Welfare Officer.

Description of Roles and Responsibilities: Teaching

The Elac Approach

At Elac we firmly believe that our students will learn English best by following a carefully planned course of study that involves them in a varied programme which they will find both stimulating and enjoyable.

Elac Courses are therefore designed to give young people from all over the world every opportunity to study and practise English. Our students learn to communicate in English while at the same time developing a sense of co-operation and responsibility towards their friends. We believe that in this way we can make a contribution to international understanding and harmony as our students make new friends and begin to learn about each other's countries and cultures.

The word "**opportunity**" figures prominently in the Elac vocabulary. We make it very clear to all our students that we will provide them with a series of wonderful opportunities while they are on our courses. Opportunities to develop and improve their English, opportunities to make new friends, opportunities to learn a lot about Britain, and very importantly, opportunities to have a lot of fun. However, we also make it clear that they must then **take those opportunities** in order to get the most from their courses; we cannot do this for them. We hope that this will teach them to be more responsible for themselves. We can provide the environment, but our students have to play their part in making it most effective. Clearly the most important effort that our students have to make is to **SPEAK ENGLISH AT EVERY OPPORTUNITY!** We must all ensure that they do so.

Aims of Our Programme

Learning: A positive attitude

We believe that attitudes to language learning play a significant role in the success or otherwise of the process. If a learner is relaxed, positive and motivated they are much more likely also to be successful, than a learner who is anxious, has negative feelings or is bored. We understand, therefore, that we have an important job to do in reinforcing those positive attitudes that have led that learner to pursue the development of language skills by coming to the UK. We aim to provide an experience that will benefit the student in the short term, but will also reinforce their longer term commitment to language learning.

Learning: Acquisition, consolidation, activation

Our aim is to provide an environment, both in the classroom, and in other aspects of our course where we facilitate the development of our students' English language skills. This will be through a combination of encountering new language, consolidating and practising language already encountered but as yet not a secure part of the students' language repertoire, and also activating and reinforcing the use of familiar language.

The balance of priorities between these three modes is one that will vary from class to class: we aim to be student-centred, to work at the pace that the students are able to progress. However, as a general principle, we believe that the main role served by short immersion courses such as ours is in the activation of language previously taught and learnt at home: the ability to use this language is where we can have a significant input.

More specifically, the ability to use language orally is where we can play the most valuable role in the students' language learning, and for this reason much of our skills development work will focus on or contain practice in speaking. This work will include not only the choice of suitable language, but appropriate intonation patterns and accurate pronunciation.

With this in mind we aim to provide opportunities in our programme for plenty of practice and also some student autonomy.

Key Information for Teachers

1. Teacher Support

Support will be available for all teaching staff, whether new or experienced, throughout the course. The majority of that support will come from the Academic Manager (AM), or Senior Teacher (ST), although this will undoubtedly be supplemented by a large amount of peer support. In addition, support and professional development will be provided by our visiting academic managers. The support will be available in the following ways:

- Pre-course briefing that explains how the teaching programme works, especially the first few days, familiarises teachers with the available material, and allows inexperienced teachers to prepare their first day of lessons;
- Regular (weekly) staff meetings for discussion of teaching issues;
- 'As and When' required support during staff drop in times (these will be published by the AM/ST);
- One-to-one support with AM/ST in a booked slot to assist with lesson planning or managing workload;
- Team teaching with the AM/ST in cases where a teacher is struggling to find their feet, and/or some peer observation.
- Lesson observation and detailed constructive feedback conducted by our Academic Manager or Academic Consultant

- Staff Development seminars every couple of weeks focusing on issues such as teaching speaking skills or helping students broaden their vocabulary – ideas that can be immediately put into practice.

2. How the teaching is organised

Our courses usually involve the students having 3 lessons in the day followed by activities or excursions in the afternoon and social events in the evening. When we are busy our courses are often organised in a zig-zag pattern - that is some students will have their classes in the morning and afternoon activities, while some students will have morning activities and afternoon classes.

This means that there is teaching going on both morning and afternoon, and this leads to a variety of patterns for teachers. Some teachers may only teach 3 lessons in the morning, and then get involved in activities in the afternoon or evening. Others may only teach 3 lessons in the afternoon, with morning and evening activities. **However**, it is more likely during the busy part of the summer in July that most teachers will teach both morning and afternoon (6 hours). Where we can offer flexibility, we negotiate the teaching load with the staff, but we need our teachers to be prepared to teach the full 6 hours if required when we are very busy with students.



The three lessons

We want the students to get some variety in the lessons, so it is important that you work closely with your swap teacher (see below). You will be asked (and assisted) to put together a weekly outline plan of lessons (see syllabus for examples). There is room within this plan for a wide variety of activity, including reviewing and practising grammar items appropriate to the level of the class; however, we would encourage a pronounced emphasis on practising communication skills, as this is where we feel our short courses can have the biggest impact in the students' learning process.

In the first lesson, the teacher may elect to focus on introducing some new language, or on developing some language skills work; in the second lesson when the teachers swap classes, there should always be a focus on oral skills; in the last lesson when the teacher returns to their own class they may choose to review and consolidate work begun that morning or earlier in the week; The third lesson is also the time for students to do written work in their Student Workbooks and/or to do preparation work on upcoming excursions. Some teachers may want to develop some project work in this lesson that spreads over several lessons. For some examples of how this might be put together see the Elac syllabus.

How our teachers swap

Each teacher will have their own main class of max 15 students, for whom they will be primarily responsible (and for whom they will write a short report at the end of the course). However you will also have a “swap” class which you will teach for 1 lesson. This enables the students to have a “fresh face and voice” and get to know two teachers during their course. It also enables you to be able to share teaching issues arising from the classes and not to have to work in isolation. Most importantly during a busy summer, it sometimes allows you to use the same material with more than one class, as, where possible, we pair the classes according to ability.

	Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3
Teacher A	Class 1	Class 2	Class 1
Teacher B	Class 2	Class 1	Class 2

3. IMPORTANT: Weekly Teaching Blocks

The teaching programme must be divided into weekly teaching blocks. This is because students from different countries are subject to various holiday dates and therefore cannot come at the same time. As a result, you will find that the composition of your class may change on a weekly basis.

4. Integrating New Students

Although the majority of the students in your class will arrive at the same time, there may well be a few students joining after the class is established, either because they have changed level, or because they have different arrival dates to the main group. You need to be aware of these students and to facilitate their integration into the class. You do have one advantage in that you will now know a little about the other students in your class. Consider the following:

- Where to place them in the class – make sure they are not left out on the edge just because this is the only available seat;
- Think about who you place them next to in terms of working relationships – when you are doing pair work, is their partner going to be supportive/domineering;
- Perhaps a recap of some of the things you have done would be helpful, especially if it will inform work to come – get the other students to tell the new arrival about the work covered, this will be excellent revision for them;

- In your questioning involve the new arrival as soon as you can – offer up a few easy questions for them to break the ice – avoid involving them immediately with a question that they may actually not know the answer too!
- You may well have had name holders on the desk for everyone to get to know each other at the start of the class – put them back for the morning/afternoon;
- Perhaps you could get all of the students to introduce somebody else in the class (the person on their right?) briefly;
- Find time at the end of the lesson to have a word with the new student and check that they feel comfortable in the class.

5. Student Reports

A short Progress Report and Certificate of Attendance is given to every Elac student on departure. You will be asked to complete this by the penultimate day of the course.

6. Weekly Progress Tests

It's a good idea to review student progress (and thereby remind them of what they have done!). You may construct a short Progress Test for your class which can be set towards the end of the weekly block of work during the third lesson; however, the review doesn't need to be a written test, it could be managed as an oral exercise.

7. Trinity Spoken English Examinations

Many students will want to take the opportunity while they are on our course of taking the Trinity Spoken English Examination. This is a short (5 – 25 minutes) test of their oral English in a one-to-one interview with the examiner. In preparation for this, they will naturally have plenty of practice in speaking skills in your lessons, but the main preparation will be undertaken outside class, in 3 special preparation classes held during the activity session time. If you have helped prepare students for these exams previously, or would like to find out more and get involved, then speak with the Academic Manager/Senior Teacher.

8. Registers

In each classroom there will be a register which teachers must fill out daily. A tick must be placed for each lesson attended, so there should be three ticks in the morning box for each student who attends a full morning. The register should be left in the classroom, so that the swap teacher can also mark attendance when they come to teach that group.

If a student is absent for any lesson, mark this with a cross. If a student is late for a lesson, mark this with a capital letter "L". The duty receptionist or AM/ST will come to every class within the first 20 minutes of the first lesson to check absentees so please be ready to give this information. Reception will then take responsibility for finding out why the student is absent.

9. Daily Meeting Prior to Activities

Every student will attend the morning/afternoon meeting (depending on when they have activities/classes). During this time we make announcements, award prizes, give out information etc. If staff are timetabled into activities that session they should also attend the meeting and should be prepared to start the activity immediately after, as at the end of the meeting all students will go straight to their designated activity.

10. Teaching materials: Course Books and supplementary books

Course books are available for those teachers that would like to make use of them. You may also make use of the supplementary photocopiable material, or use material of your own. Whichever material you use, it is important to remember that on a course like ours, the goal is to promote interaction and communication, and the material should be chosen to support this goal.

11. CD Players

There will be a number of CD players available for use during the course. Please look after them carefully at all times. All machines must always be taken back to the staffroom at the end of every lesson. On no account leave them in the classroom unattended. Audio CDs are also supplemented by a USB stick (except at Newland Park).

12. Photocopying

A photocopier will be available in all centres for your photocopying needs. Please attempt to keep photocopying to a minimum, printing on both sides of the paper when possible and photocopying one sheet between two students. Whenever possible, dictate a task, or project questions on the board.

13. Work Discipline

Insist that students are tidy and organised with their work. They will be given A4 document wallets and file paper, and they will each have a student handbook in which they will also be doing some written work. Please ensure that their record of work reflects well on the student, you the teacher and Elac as an organisation. Loose photocopied sheets must always be filed and never left lying around in the classroom.

14. Punctuality

If a student is more than 10 minutes late for class, then you have the right to exclude him/her from that lesson. All such exclusions must be reported to the Academic Manager immediately so that a member of staff from the office can collect the student from the class. Consistent lateness must always be reported. We always encourage you to deal with it in your own way first, but if this fails the student will be dealt with by the Academic Manager.

N.B. Lateness is something that must be dealt with firmly, yet appropriately. There may be a legitimate reason for a student's lateness, but if not, the student must be made to recognise his/her responsibility to his/her peers. You can be sure that the majority of students want to work constructively, and if one or two are being "negative" then the others will look to you to sort it out.

15. Behaviour and Discipline

Our students are here to work constructively and in doing so, have a great time. The maintenance of discipline is an essential element in achieving these two aims. We must be sensitive yet firm, and instil in our students a sense of responsibility towards themselves and others. A "quiet word" is always preferable, but if this falls on deaf ears do not hesitate to take appropriate further action, or, if necessary, report the situation to the Academic Manager, who will always be available to assist.

Furthermore, if students are noticeably tired in class, or if the same student is often tired, please report this to the Academic Manager, as the reasons for the tiredness may need to be addressed and discussed with the Group Leader and student e.g., the student is staying up too late.

N.B. We regard ourselves as "guests" of the centres we use, and as such it is our responsibility to take care of their premises and property as if it were our own, and to ensure that our students do so. Please therefore make sure that classrooms are left tidily at the end of the teaching day.

16. Student Safety

Although the Centres that we operate are all safe environments for the students, they nonetheless need to take care when moving around the centre, and especially when leaving the centre on excursions. We have a duty of care as an organisation, and that is exercised through our staff. As the students are unfamiliar with their surroundings they are more vulnerable, and we have to assume the minimum levels of initiative and independence. Staff need to be vigilant when accompanying students across roads etc., and need to impress safety messages on the students through constant reminders.

17. Learning outside the classroom

The amount of time you have with the students in the classroom for language learning will be quite limited. You will be able to provide good opportunities to encounter new language, and to activate existing language. However, you will also have a great opportunity to affect their learning outside your classroom, both during the course and in the future. Think about the following:

- Can you get them to engage linguistically with their environment? Set them a task to bring information back to the classroom: if they are family stay students, ask them to find out something about their hosts; if they are residential, ask them to bring back information about students of other nationalities in their accommodation block. Get all of them to look out for signs around the college or on excursion, and ‘collect’ new language to share with the class.
- Can you help them towards more learner independence? Perhaps you could schedule a lesson where you can access the internet, if it is available in your centre, and show them some of the learning resources available online; you could help them to develop ways of dealing with new vocabulary they encounter, showing them what is important to know about new lexical items and how they might be recorded.
- Can you help them to identify their strengths and weaknesses? Set up a writing task leading to some self-evaluation and peer evaluation: perhaps they could set themselves some goals before they leave the course for future development.

FAQ

Who are our students?

In most centres, our students range in age from 12 to 17 (although in some centres there may be younger ones). They come from a variety of countries although there is likely to be a preponderance of Italians in certain centres. Students will, also, be from other European countries as well as China, Israel, Russia & Japan. The ability range is likely to be from Elementary (with, possibly, a few ‘false beginners’) to Upper-Intermediate. There is usually a large grouping of students at the Intermediate stage.

What do we expect of our students?

We appreciate that the students are visiting England during their school vacation and so are looking for a ‘holiday’ experience as well as a language learning opportunity. Nevertheless, we do expect our students to take the lessons seriously – in terms of attendance, punctuality, mutual respect and attention. They will be spending a certain amount of time practising and consolidating language with which they have some familiarity but students who are not ‘stretched’ can quickly become disinterested. We aim to pace lessons to retain involvement and to introduce students to some new and more challenging language during their course.

How are our students placed in a class?

All students are given a written test and an oral assessment at the beginning of the course. The written test has been designed specifically for ELAC use, and contains one hundred multiple-choice questions, both at sentence level, and in longer connected texts. It can be used by teachers for diagnostic purposes and, also, contains an additional 'freer' section which helps us to differentiate skills amongst students who achieve the same 'raw' score. Students are also given an oral assessment (conducted by a teacher with students in pairs to help obviate nervousness). The placement of students in classes is carried out by the Academic Manager/Senior Teacher. Wherever possible, they will take into consideration such factors as nationality, age and gender mix when constructing the classes.

How do we respond to disputed placements?

We are confident that our testing procedure results in a correct placement for the vast majority of students. A variety of factors will, however, result in a few students on a large course finding themselves initially placed in an inappropriate class. We ask teachers to be especially alert to this possibility during the first lessons. We also welcome urgent feedback from students and group leaders. The Academic Manager will liaise with students, group leaders and teachers with the intention of moving students to the correct class for their level at the earliest possible time. This is, obviously, of great importance on a course of short duration.

What material is available for teachers?

There will be a range of popular published material available, including short course books at all levels, as well as supplementary skills books, communication activities and games. Teachers will have access to the internet, a printer and can make use of the wide range of EFL resources available. Sample of materials includes:

Clockwise Series, Oxford University Press.
Language to Go Series, Longman.
English in Mind Series, Cambridge University Press.
English Result Series, Oxford University Press.
(New) English File Series, Oxford University Press.
New Inspiration Series, Macmillan Education.
Speak Out Series, Pearson Longman.

Other published EFL resources

Communication Games, Nelson.
Discussions A-Z, Cambridge University Press.
A Way with Words, Cambridge University Press.
Inside Out Resource Pack, Macmillan Education.
Reward Resource Pack, Macmillan Education.
Play Games with English, Macmillan Education.

Description of Roles and Responsibilities: Activities

The Activity Programme is an integral part of our courses, and we therefore expect students to take an active part in it (as will their parents). All students will be required to attend the pre-activity meeting, where group leaders will take their own roll call. They will also be required to engage in some activity on certain days, on

other days they may be allowed some supervised free time, but it will not include permission to return to their house or go into town, unless this is agreed with and supervised by their Group Leader.

Activity sessions take place morning, afternoon and evening. The person responsible for organising the programme of activities and excursions is the Activity Manager, but all staff, teachers and activity leaders will be involved in putting the programme into action.

The Activity time will involve a mixture of pre-arranged, compulsory activities (The Carousel) and time when they can choose what they want to do. The compulsory activities will be organised around class groups. This will ensure that students

- are encouraged to use English outside the classroom;
- mix with a wider range of fellow students;
- experience a broader range of activities

In the morning and afternoon sessions the activity choices will include sports: basketball, football, volleyball, swimming, badminton, cricket, tennis; as well as some non-sporting alternatives, such as dance, drama, arts and crafts. In the evening, the activities are of a more social nature and include quizzes, discos, talent shows, karaoke etc.

Any programme of activities, no matter how good it looks on paper, can fall flat if those people involved in supervising and facilitating it approach it in the wrong way. We want the activity programme to be full of life, energy and fun – and more importantly so do the students and leaders. It is not therefore something that you can do half-heartedly in order to earn a little extra money. This is always noticed and commented on by the leaders. **Put yourself forward for extra activities by all means, but only if you are prepared to give your time and energy to that session.**

The students on our courses are typical teenagers. When it comes to activity time this may often mean that they will be quite lukewarm about trying something different or unusual. Sometimes you will need to try to ‘sell’ the choices on offer, because our experience is that students who try things out and get involved generally enjoy it, and go home much happier.

The activities often require some preparation beforehand, and much of this will be done by the Activity Manager. However, all staff involved in activities will be expected to pitch in, and so it is important to make sure that you are at activity briefings before the activity sessions, so that you know what is expected of you. Please remember that the activity programme is designed to give further practice in English and to give students every opportunity to develop English Language Communication Skills. Please teach/input/correct/shape language as you deem appropriate without disturbing the flow of the activity to any significant degree.

Please make sure when you are responsible for an activity that involves equipment or apparatus belonging to Elac or the college that the students use it sensibly. If something is damaged accidentally, then make sure that you let the Activity Manager know as soon as you can. At the end of the session make sure that all equipment is accounted for and returned to the appropriate place for storage.



Description of Roles and Responsibilities: Excursions

Students on our courses will have the opportunity to go on several full day excursion during their course. In addition they may choose to go on an optional excursion on their free day with their group. Our staff accompany the groups on all of these trips out and act as escorts, guides and facilitators.

It is important for the staff accompanying groups on excursions to have as much information as possible. This includes details of the travel and timings, as well as any information that has been provided with regard to the destination. We do not expect our staff to be tour guides – many will be unfamiliar with the course centre – and we impress this on the group leaders. Nonetheless, staff will be expected to absorb the information that is provided for the excursion, and where appropriate explain it, or bring it to the attention of the students.

The excursions are an important part of the course not just for the entertainment they provide, but because they offer further opportunities for learning and for practising English. One complaint from group leaders is that the excursion staff don't talk with the students while they are on the excursion. At the end of a busy week, there is a temptation to see the excursion as an opportunity to have a sleep on the way, and once the students are organised, to go off and do your own thing at the destination. However, it is important to recognise that you are working on the excursion, and being paid for doing so. Occasional exchanges with students and leaders, pointing out things that they may have missed, these things are always warmly appreciated.

Below are some guidelines to follow when preparing for and leading an excursion:

Make sure that you attend the **Excursion Briefing Meeting** which will take place on an evening prior to the excursion. At this meeting you will have the opportunity to meet with the Group Leader that you will be accompanying, and to discuss with him or her any special arrangements that the group want to include in their itinerary. You will also be asked to read/sign the risk assessment form (if you have not already done so).

Before leaving...

Be ready to leave 15 minutes before the scheduled time – don't make the groups late, as it creates a very bad impression and may well spoil your day with the group. Before leaving on the excursion make sure that you have all of the information and things that you need, including:

- what the itinerary and timings of the excursion are;
- whether there are any minors that need to be accompanied;
- details of any students with medical conditions
- whether there are individuals (Elac responsibility) to be accounted for at various check points;
- Emergency procedure instructions and contact numbers;
- Packed lunches or lunch vouchers (for residential students)
- Any worksheets or quizzes that have been prepared;
- Any cheques, cash or letters of authorisation for entrances (PLEASE BRING BACK RECEIPTS)
- First Aid Pack

During the excursion...

You will be responsible with the Group Leader for the conduct of the students. This begins with their behaviour on the coach/train and towards the driver if travelling by coach. Although the Group Leader knows the students well, and can be relied on to shout instructions in their own language from time to time, you cannot rely on them entirely, as there may be different cultural expectations that they are unaware of regarding safety, noise, conduct etc – use this as a teaching opportunity. Don't shout, but be prepared to point out (firmly if necessary) to students the expectations that we need them to conform to. It is particularly important when travelling by coach that we retain the goodwill of our coach providers.

Always be aware of how many students are in your group and continually look out for stragglers if you are taking them on a walking tour. Do frequent headcounts. If there are two Elac staff members, then don't walk together: one near the front, one near the back.

When students have free time in a particular location, then before they are allowed to go off make sure they understand the instructions, and allow the Group Leader time to translate if appropriate:

- The students should only be allowed to go off on their own with the permission of you and the Group Leader;
- They must always be in groups of at least 3 rather than alone; groups should not be too big either as this can cause problems (max 8);
- They should be told to meet back at a clearly defined spot at least 25 minutes before you need to move on.
- You must have a mobile number for at least one of the group, and they must have your number.
- They must be carrying their Elac Identity Card.

What to do in an emergency...

If you are unsure then phone for advice.

Missing Student: this is the most frequent cause for concern. This is usually because they are late back to the meeting point, and this is usually because they have lost track of the time. If they are very late, and the coach/train is leaving, one member of staff will need to remain behind (with money to travel back). Keep in contact with Elac until the student is found and then travel back independently.

Accident: deal with the accident as appropriate, either yourself if it is minor, or by recourse to the emergency services. Contact Elac as soon as possible to inform us of the situation.

Incident (e.g. shoplifting): Contact Elac for instructions.

Whatever the emergency, assistance is at hand. Be ready to give your on-the-spot assessment of the situation and proposed course of action. You are in the best possible position to know this and your Centre Manager will take your advice and support you. It is essential that these matters are reported however, because ultimately the Directors have to take responsibility.

Roles and Responsibilities: Group Leaders

The role of the Group Leader is a vital one in several important regards. It is vital to the students: you know the students better than we do, you may even know their families, and you certainly understand their cultures more precisely than we do. It is most likely that if they are unhappy they will share it first of all with you. It is also vital to us: some of our students may have the confidence to express to us concerns or complaints, or praise (!), but most won't, especially the younger ones. They will, however, talk to you in the expectation that you will represent them to our organisation. It is vital to the centre staff, too, for them to have this link to the students so that they can be made aware of issues, as well as get information across to the students.

You are central to the way in which our organisation operates. In our view the most important elements of your role are as follows:

- 1) **Welfare.** You are the first person your students will turn to if they have a problem, especially if it concerns health. You will understand it and will solve it where possible. Where the solution requires Elac input, it is your job to ensure that we are aware of and fully understand the problem so that we can help and take any action necessary.
- 2) **Academic progress.** All students will be carefully assessed before being placed in classes appropriate for their level. However no test can adequately assess a student's language competence in one or two hours, and so inevitably there may be errors. It is essential that all students are in the correct class quickly, so please inform the Academic Manager/Senior Teacher immediately if you think that someone has been incorrectly placed. Similarly, if anyone is not happy with their class for any reason, please inform us promptly so that we can investigate. In most cases, before we make any changes we usually wait for 24 - 48 hours to see that the changes that we are planning are the right ones, and that they will complement any other changes we have planned.
- 3) **Attendance.** Course attendance is compulsory, and there are no exceptions apart from genuine illness. Students are expected to participate in all aspects of the course and will not be allowed to stay in their rooms; they must also be punctual.
Like you, we want to devote our time to those students who genuinely wish to get the most from their courses and are participating enthusiastically. For the very few that do not fall into this category, we expect your help in instigating the necessary discipline to bring them into line.
Our teachers will take a roll call during classes; but at Activity Meetings and in the House in the evening you will be responsible for signing a form to confirm your students are all present.
- 4) **Behaviour.** We expect a high level of social behaviour from all our students. For the very few that let down the majority, again we expect your help in advising them of the "more appropriate path".

- 5) **Bedtime.** We rely on you to check that all your students are in bed on time and that the ‘lights out’ rules are observed. It is absolutely forbidden for students to go out after bedtime and there will be serious penalties for any students who break this rule, and we ask your help and support in ensuring this rule is kept absolutely.
- 6) **Excursions.** There will always be an Elac member of staff present on all excursions to organise and explain the itinerary, but we rely on your assistance to check attendance at all times. This is especially important in London and other city visits.
- 7) **Access to residential accommodation.** Students must not be in their rooms or in accommodation blocks unsupervised. Therefore, if you are not on campus during the day, please inform your students and explain that they cannot return to their accommodation during break time.

Obviously, your role extends beyond the points above and we realise and appreciate this. We very much want to integrate you into our team so that we communicate clearly, and work together positively.

Sharing Responsibility with Elac Staff

There are a number of areas where responsibility for the supervision of the students is shared between Elac Staff members, and Group Leaders, and for this reason it is very important to be clear about what those responsibilities are.

Accommodation

With the exception of houses where there are students for whom Elac is directly responsible, the responsibility in the accommodation is with the Group Leader. You will only be expected to be responsible for your own students. Responsibility in the houses encompasses the following:

- Ensuring that the students behave themselves well and respect the building;
- Ensuring that they are in the house in the evening AT 10.30 (roll call) and that they don’t make unreasonable noise;
- Ensuring that they are in bed at 11.00;
- Ensuring the students follow the security procedures in locking windows and doors when they leave the house.
- Carrying out a Fire Drill with the assistance of Elac Staff

Activity Sessions

Elac staff will generally assume responsibility for the Activity Programme in the morning and afternoons, but they will need your support in the following way. Group leaders are responsible for

- Ensuring all students attend the pre-activity briefing sessions (you will sign a sheet at the beginning of the meeting to confirm all your students are present or inform the Activity Manager of any absences).
- Ensuring that students don’t return to their houses without permission or supervision, when they should be engaged in activities.

Excursions

The responsibilities on excursions are shared, but the overall responsibility is with the Elac member of staff. Group Leaders are responsible for

- Ensuring that the students are at the departure point at the required time;
- Ensuring that the students are all present at each check point (head count or roll call);
- Collecting mobile numbers from groups of students who are allowed free time on an excursion.

The itinerary will have been discussed with the Elac staff member beforehand, and any deviation from it can only be with the agreement of the Elac staff member, who may consult with the Course Manager

Our aim is to work together with you in partnership. Our overall aim is exactly the same as yours – to ensure the success of our courses and a happy stay for all our students. By working hand-in-hand with you, we are confident that this will be achieved.

Elac Study Vacations & L'Astrolabio

In certain centres, we work together with an organisation called L'Astrolabio. This is one of the largest educational and language course organisers for young Italian students. Based in Milan, it has representatives throughout Italy and sends teenage students to schools and colleges all over the world.

L'Astrolabio has several centres throughout Great Britain and a number of them are run by Elac Study Vacations. It is the responsibility of Elac to run all aspects of the course from the time their flights land to the time they depart. In centres operated by Elac for L'astrolabio, there will also be an Italian Group Leader Co-ordinator as part of the management team. Elac also has students from other parts of the world and we add these in order to internationalise the courses.

You will see as the course progresses that the L'Astrolabio students are made up of many groups and they all come with their own L'Astrolabio leader. Very often these leaders will be professional state school teachers in Italy. They are therefore very experienced in dealing with and teaching young people and it is our responsibility to welcome them and co-operate with them in every way we can. They are especially important with regard to welfare so if you suspect something amiss with any of your L'Astrolabio students, please report it to our Welfare Officer and we will work with the L'Astrolabio leader to solve the problem.

One of the objectives of the L'Astrolabio leaders is for their students to mix with other nationalities as far as possible. Clearly their students are in the majority and so this won't always be easy. However, we would ask you to encourage this whenever you have the opportunity.

Elac and L'Astrolabio have been working together for many years. We know them to be a thoroughly professional organisation and we are sure you will enjoy teaching their students and working with their leaders.

Preparations for the course: Induction, Testing, Orientation

Induction

Prior to the beginning of the course all staff will undergo an induction process the aim of which will be to familiarise them with our organisation, the staff team, the course centre, the students on the course, our goals, important principles and practical information. The process of induction will begin before the staff arrive at the centre via our Online Induction Programme. This will then be augmented by a two day induction process in the course centre, at the end of which we expect all staff to feel equipped to undertake their roles. They will be asked to sign a form to confirm that they have undergone the induction and are aware of their responsibilities. There will be plenty of opportunities during the induction and subsequently if staff need further clarification.

First Day Procedures

Colour Groupings: RED & BLUE

Students at our centres are usually organised into 2 colour groupings depending on the size of the course. These colour groupings relate to the teaching zig-zag programme, to excursions, and also to the induction on the first day.

Welcome Letters

Groups and individuals will be given welcome letters on arrival giving their programme for the following day. This will tell them which colour group they are in, and how the induction will be organised.

The aim of the first day

On day one of the course we aim to make the students feel relaxed and excited; to introduce them to the course centre, and to the local town; to test their ability in English; tell them about our expectations of them; and warm them up with a few activities. A typical of programme of activities is set out below:

Sample Induction Day Procedures

TIMINGS MAY VARY BETWEEN CENTRES

	Red Group		Blue Group
09.15 – 10.15	Written & oral tests in class	09.15 – 12.00	Orientation Visit to Local Town
10.45 – 11.45	Tour of campus & Welcome Talk		
11.45 – 12.45	Induction and warm up in class	12.00 – 13.00	Lunch

13.00 – 14.00	Lunch	14.15 – 15.15	Written & oral tests in class
14.45 – 17.15	Orientation Visit to Local Town	15.45 – 16.45	Tour of campus & Welcome Talk
		16.45 – 17.45	Induction and warm up in class

Teachers will supervise tests in their classrooms with groups of around 15 students, and supported by the Group Leaders. While the tests are being written, teachers will bring students in pairs to the front for a brief (5 minute interview) and note down a few comments and an approximate level. A handout with suggested questions and a guide to levels will be provided.

During the second classroom hour, teachers will talk through the student workbook with the students, making sure that they are familiar with the information in there, especially the Student Welfare section, and that they recognise that this is a document that they will also do work in during the course- there will be a prize for the best diary entries at different levels.

Teachers will also distribute a second copy of the Student Code of Conduct (also printed in the workbook). Once it has been read, the students will sign and return it to the teacher.