

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a good C1 level on the Common European Framework?

If you are a non-native speaker of English, your English language competence will be scrutinised in your application and pre-interview task and in the interview, should you be offered one. Recently awarded English language qualifications like IELTS and TOEFL will also be considered.

C1 descriptor: Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Common_European_Framework_of_Reference_for_Languages

Can I apply without an English language qualification like the IELTS or TOEFL?

Yes, your English language competence will be scrutinised in your application and pre-interview task and in the interview, should you be offered one.

What if my application is unsuccessful?

If your application is unsuccessful, you will be notified by email. We will highlight our reasons for not taking an application to the interview stage. However, please understand it is not possible for us to enter into a correspondence to give detailed feedback on the reasons and appeals will not be considered. This is because of the large volume of applications received.

If my application is unsuccessful, can I reapply?

If your application is unsuccessful, you may reapply after 6 months. We feel it usually takes at least this long to make significant improvements in language awareness or language competence. If you reapply in six months, we will ask you specifically about the steps you have taken to address the issue highlighted in the original interview.

Do I need to attend everyday?

Yes, 100% attendance is a course requirement.

What are the course dates in 2013/2014?

We do not have the dates for 2013 and 2014 yet. These will be advertised on the website once we know them.

I am a native speaker. Do I still need to do the pre-interview task and go through the interview?

Yes, in order to be offered a place on the course, you need to have good language awareness. Being a native English speaker, doesn't make one an effective teacher. While you are not expected to have excellent language awareness before the course starts as this is an area that can be developed throughout the course, if you are unsure about answers we encourage you to check in resource books, the dictionary or the Internet as this is what you would be expected to do on the course. Our pre-interview task helps us to see whether you can instinctively analyse grammar, ie. whether you have a "feeling" for language so you can help students with their problems. Your learning of the grammar really takes place when you teach it, because you have to research it when planning a language lesson. But we also include some input sessions on the course to help you develop this area. The **pre-interview task** is not a test - obviously you don't know all the answers without having to think hard about them and even having to look them up in reference books (which is what teachers do all the time). It's more a test of your attitude and instinctive approach to teaching, your inner resources and, where language is concerned, how you would react if a student asked you this type of question. This gives us a good idea of your skills and qualities and, therefore, of how you will respond to only four weeks of training - whether it will be enough to bring you up to pass standard and allow us to award you the Certificate.

Do you offer discount or funding?

No, I am afraid we don't. There are no special rates or discount.

Do you provide free accommodation?

No, but we will try to assist you in finding accommodation by sending an email to all teachers to see if they have a spare room at the time of the course. If you are unwilling to share, you can rent a flat or stay in a hotel in Mohandsen, Dokki or Zamalik. Most teachers live in good-sized, furnished 2-bedroom flats about 5-10 minutes by taxi from the Council office (Agouza). Flats usually come with washing machines, telephones (though not usually with international dialling), televisions and fans or air-con. It is also common to have a cleaner once or twice a week to keep the dust down. The going rate teachers pay for a 2-bedroom flat is between LE 3000 and LE 4500. Some teachers find one-bed flats (c LE 2000 – 3000) but these are less common. The Council owns no staff accommodation and teachers. A DSL internet connection can be set up relatively easy through either TE Data or Link.net as long as your flat has a landline. Otherwise, mobile providers such as Etisalat, Mobinil or Vodafone now sell USB modems for mobile internet anytime, anywhere.

Can I get a job at the British Council once I finish the CELTA course?

Doing the CELTA course does not guarantee that you can automatically work for the British Council. You need to be an enthusiastic and motivated EFL teacher with a CELTA or Trinity Cert. TESOL and at least 2 years' experience of teaching EFL after training. **A UK or Egyptian passport is essential.** Awarded by Cambridge ESOL, part of the University of Cambridge, the CELTA can open up a whole world of exciting teaching opportunities around the world. Once you get enough experience (at least 2 years), you will need to keep an eye on the website <http://www.britishcouncil.org/learning-teachingjobs.htm> and if there are vacancies advertised at the British Council in Egypt, complete the application form (available on the website). If your application is successful, you will be contacted for an interview.

Teachers with under two years' experience

If you're a newly qualified EFL teacher looking for paid employment that will give you professional support through the first year of teaching, read on!

We have a training and development programme giving you high quality mentoring and support for your teaching while you develop and consolidate the skills required to take on the full duties of a teacher. On successful completion, you will move up to a full-time contract equivalent to other standard British Council teachers, with additional support if needed, for a further 12 months. The contract as a whole is for two years. For the training scheme you must have a Cambridge CELTA or Trinity Cert. TESOL and either a **UK or Egyptian passport.** You must be highly proficient in the use of English, with some experience of ELT, but not the two years we usually ask for. Local law stipulates you must be under 60 years of age to qualify for a visa.

Places on the training programme are usually advertised twice a year (September and January?) on the same website <http://www.britishcouncil.org/learning-teachingjobs.htm>. Places on the training programme are limited. We do not accept applications unless vacancies are advertised on the website.

What if I got accepted on a course and paid the deposit (2000 LE) then something came up and I could not do it?

As mentioned on the website, the deposit is non-refundable. You would be transferred to the next course on which there are available places as long as you notify the training team at least two weeks before the course starts. If the period between the two courses exceeded 12 months, you would need to do another pre-interview task and fill in a new application.

I got accepted onto another course in another approved CELTA centre. Does this mean that I will be offered a place on one of the courses in Cairo without having to do the pre-interview task and the interview?

No, you would still need to complete the application form, do the pre-interview task and get through the interview stage if you were offered one. CELTA courses are designed by individual centres, based on specifications produced by Cambridge ESOL. Acceptance or rejection is at the centre's discretion.

How much money do I need to bring with me to live for a month in Cairo?

The cost of living depends a lot on how you live. Fresh food and vegetables are incredibly cheap but pre-packed European-style food (becoming more and more common) is pricier as it is all imported.

Utilities bills are quite cheap (c LE 50 / month for electricity although this rises in the summer with A.C. use, LE 4 / month for gas)

Air conditioned taxis are easily affordable with most fares within Cairo not being more than LE 10.

Eating out you will be able to get perhaps the cheapest meal of your life (LE 5 in a local restaurant, although expect basic surroundings) as well as the most expensive (expect 5 star prices in 5 star hotels). As a rough guide you should expect a good meal in a fashionable restaurant to set you back about LE 100-125 incl. a drink.

Local beers (Stella, Saqqara, Heineken) cost about LE6 from an off-licence but up to LE 30 in a bar. The local wines (Omar Khayyam, Obelisk, Grand Marquis) wouldn't win first prize in many competitions but it is drinkable for many people and sells from LE 40 in alcohol stores. Recently, a few better wines have appeared on the market, which cost around LE 50-90. Expect to pay from LE90 –LE200 for a bottle in a restaurant.

Do you offer the YL Extension to the CELTA course?

We only run the course for our teachers for the time being but we might open it for external applicants in the future. It will be advertised on the website once we start accepting external applicants.