

AL-AZHAR

PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME

www.britishcouncil.org.eg

INTRODUCTION

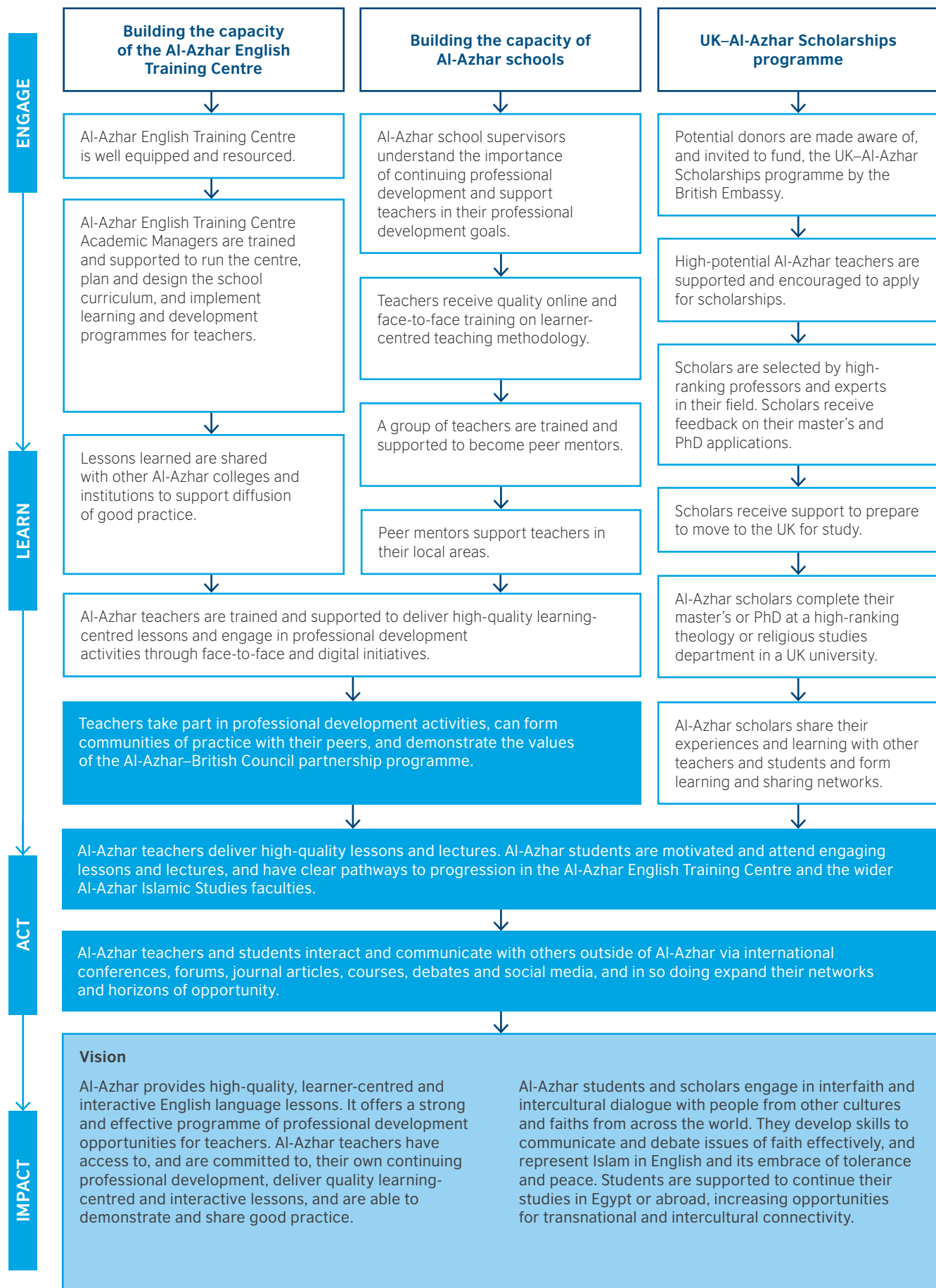
The Al-Azhar and British Council partnership started in 2007. The project was initiated at the request of the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, then President of the University, to support Al-Azhar University in setting up an English language training centre for students at the faculty of Islamic studies.

Our partnership has evolved since the project started. Today our work together involves three strands:

- supporting the Al-Azhar English Training Centre to provide quality English language lessons
- building the capacity of Al-Azhar to support the professional development of their primary and secondary school teachers
- managing a master's and PhD UK-scholarship programme for Al-Azhar teachers and students with the British Embassy.

Each strand enables Al-Azhar students and scholars to confidently engage in interfaith and intercultural dialogue with people from other cultures and faiths from across the world.





AL-AZHAR–BRITISH COUNCIL PARTNERSHIP BEGAN IN 2007

Al-Azhar English Training Centre



Al-Azhar English Training Centre established



1,200+ students
have studied or are studying at the centre



700+ students
have graduated



600 students
are currently studying in the Al-Azhar English Training Centre



Students study for **four years** in the Al-Azhar English Training Centre

73 per cent of students
graduate at B1 or above



On average students improve English language skills by **two CEFR levels**

All 32 teachers

from Al-Azhar English Training Centre have completed the Teacher Knowledge Test



Al-Azhar Institutes – Schools Training Programme



120 school teachers
have received English language methodology training

Developing **school leadership skills** of supervisors



Building skills of teachers to be **peer mentors**

Working together to develop innovative **professional development systems** for teachers



UK–Al-Azhar Scholarships

Started in



Set up by the Grand Imam and the British Ambassador for Egypt



Six Al-Azhar scholars

studying in the UK for master's and PhD at top-ranked UK university in theology and religious studies departments

THE AL-AZHAR ENGLISH TRAINING CENTRE

In 2007 we helped establish a modern English language centre at Al-Azhar University in Cairo. The Al-Azhar English Training Centre opened in February 2008 and currently has over 600 students and 32 teachers.

We support the centre by providing advice on training centre policy, and running professional development programmes for teachers and managers at the centre.

The centre offers a range of general English classes, cultural awareness programmes, debating skills programmes and an English for Religious Purposes course, which enables students to discuss their beliefs in English.

The centre provides an English language programme which encourages participants to become critical thinkers and independent learners, enabling them to engage in interfaith and intercultural dialogue.

AL-AZHAR INSTITUTES – SCHOOLS TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMME

We are working with Al-Azhar school institutes to provide effective and sustainable continuing professional development programmes for teachers.

We are supporting school supervisors to develop skills in educational project management to help them plan teacher development programmes. We have trained teachers in using communicative teaching methodologies and techniques in their classes and supported them to cascade

training to other teachers. We are supporting the implementation of a peer mentoring programme and setting up teacher support networks so that teachers have access to ongoing professional development opportunities.

UK–AL-AZHAR SCHOLARSHIPS

The UK–Al-Azhar Religious Studies Scholarship funds Al-Azhar University graduates to take up to four years of PhD study in Islamic and religious studies at leading UK universities. It was established in 2015 by the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, Sheikh Ahmed El-Tayeb, and the British Ambassador to Egypt, John Casson.

The programme aims to build the academic skills, leadership abilities and international connections of a new leadership generation at Al-Azhar, to support the renewal of Al-Azhar's role as a source of open, confident and credible religious voices which foster a constructive role for religion in a global world and promote more positive interpretations of faith.

'Religious ideas are reshaping our world. Now more than ever we need strong and respected Islamic institutions like Al-Azhar. I'm proud that the UK plays a role with Al-Azhar to raise up a new generation of leaders who will deepen our understanding of Islam, and reject extremism and prejudice, instead promoting the values of peace, openness and tolerance.'

His Excellency Ambassador to Egypt John Casson

'I look forward to this project being the way to wider academic co-operation with British universities, which will achieve Al-Azhar's global mission in supporting peace and coexistence among nations. The co-operation between Al-Azhar and European universities and research centres is the way to contain radicalism and terrorism, and to propagate the values of human comradeship and global fellowship.'

Grand Imam of Al-Azhar Sheikh Ahmed El-Tayeb



'Through this partnership the British Council and Al-Azhar University have provided nearly 1,000 young Egyptians with life-changing opportunities to learn English, contributing to the promotion of intercultural understanding around the world.'

'Learning English can have a transformational impact on students' lives, opening up opportunities to study and work internationally. Having a revered Islamic institution like Al-Azhar using English is invaluable and the British Council is extremely proud of our partnership.'

Sir Ciarán Devane, Chief Executive, British Council



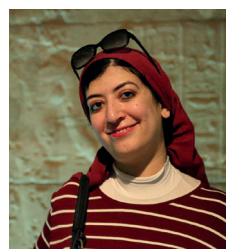
'Our partnership with Al-Azhar has had a positive impact in building the English language, debating and leadership skills of teachers and students. Our aim is to help Al-Azhar graduates and scholars engage in interfaith and intercultural dialogue with people from other countries, cultures and faiths, all of which aligns with the British Council mission of promoting cultural relations.'

David Townhill, Director English, British Council



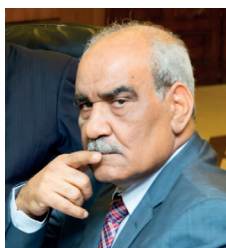
'In May 2015, I joined the AAETC and it was the first time to work as a teacher of English. Now, with only two years of experience, I feel positive and passionate to learn more and gain a deeper and richer experience.'

Fathiyya Refky, Teacher



'The Egypt 2030 vision highlights the need for improved quality of education and training systems that promote critical thinking and empowerment of students. Through our partnership, we support Al-Azhar university and schools to adopt a more learner-centred approach that supports students to be responsible learners, acquire problem-solving and critical-thinking skills and actively engage in life-long learning.'

Soha Sayed, Al-Azhar Programme Manager



'I believe that our partnership with the British Council is a great model of successful co-operation. The English Training Centre creates a perfect environment for learning and culture bridging. I have observed a clear positive impact on our students few months after the centre opened. We count on this project as one of the means of modernisation of our institution in order to fulfil its role worldwide. The Grand Imam of Al-Azhar strongly supports this project and often describes it as heavy industry. I am really proud to be a part of this project.'

Dr Nasseir, Advisor to the Grand Imam



'English has changed the way I conceptualised the world. I used to see the world only from an Islamic perspective but as I developed my English ability, I began to ponder what non-Muslims in English-speaking countries thought of Muslims. English has helped me understand the Western mindset. For instance, many conservative Muslims usually think of England as a Christian country (I used to think this way too). And yet when I went there I was astonished by the religious pluralism that Britain enjoys. Similarly, many Westerners think of Muslims as 'hardliners', but when I had proper contact with many of them in England and elsewhere, I felt I could bridge the gap between these two cultures.'

Mohamed Gamal, Al-Azhar UK scholarship programme



'In 2014, I joined the Al-Azhar English Training Centre. For me it was the perfect world which is totally different from schools as everything is well-organised, good training and excellent supplementary material.'

Hossam Salah Ali, Teacher from Al-Azhar English Training Centre

CONTACT DETAILS

British Council in Egypt
192 El Nil Street, Agouza, Cairo, Egypt
T +20 (0)2 19789
F +20 (0)2 3344 3076
www.britishcouncil.org.eg/en
information@britishcouncil.org.eg

Al-Azhar English Training Centre
Darrassa campus, Al Azhar Street
Cairo, Egypt
alazharetc.com@gmail.com
www.alazharetc.com/en/

Photography

Front cover © mirror-studio, Page 2 © Wupy photography

© **British Council 2018/H190**

The British Council is the United Kingdom's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities.