



## Curriculum Policy

### Course content and structure

LSI Portsmouth aims to provide the students with the kind of curriculum which they cannot easily follow in their own countries; namely a curriculum where there is a strong emphasis in the classroom in **oral practice** and plenty of exposure to **English** and **real, authentic situations**.

### General English Courses

#### The morning classes


These use grammar-led course books, designed to suit multi-national classes. Although the lessons are based on the syllabus of course books appropriate to the students' level, teachers personalise and adapt subject matter so that it is relevant, useful and interesting for our students. Teachers are encouraged to have a flexible approach to the course book in order to cater for the changing needs of the group, particularly necessary due to continuous enrolment.

#### The afternoon classes

At LSI/IH Portsmouth, the GE afternoon classes focus on the language functions and skills that our students need to be able to communicate in English in everyday situations in the UK and abroad. We help them to build confidence and develop effective communication skills and strategies focussing mainly on speaking and understanding, with regular functional writing practice (emails, CVs, blog posts etc.). These classes are characterised by their flexibility and creativity. Teachers are encouraged to devise their own weekly plans to meet the needs of their students and can draw on the in-house afternoon class syllabus as well as our well-stocked library of online and book-based resources to create engaging and dynamic lessons.

#### 30+ classes

Students tend to come for short stays of one to three weeks. Students may opt for the 15-hour "Core" morning component and in addition add one of a number of afternoon 1:1 or group option to the Core part. Due to the short nature of the course, lessons tend to be more "bookless" than GE; following a course book syllabus would produce learning outcomes too narrow in scope. Therefore a more functional approach is often taken, with students producing what they can on a subject at the earliest opportunity with the teacher repeatedly upgrading their language lexically and grammatically as he/she sees



fit. Should an afternoon “intensive” course be running, the morning and afternoon teachers liaise closely to ensure no repetition of material.

A book is issued for students staying two weeks or more. The student is given a choice of a traditional course book or grammar book, such as English Grammar in Use.

## **Exam Preparation Courses:**

### **Cambridge exam preparation courses**

LSI Portsmouth’s full-time Cambridge exam preparation courses are designed to help students learn and improve the language skills necessary to get the best possible grade in their chosen exam, but also to improve the general level of their English in all areas of communication. Courses cover the Cambridge syllabus by following Cambridge exam course books, which will be given as part of the course. Although it is a book-based syllabus geared towards the exam, teachers will also incorporate a wide range of other materials and activities appropriate to the level and aims of the lessons. Mock exams take place in the middle of the course, just before the exam entry deadline, to allow students to assess where they are in relation to the exam, and whether to register for it.

The ideal preparation for a Cambridge exam is to follow the full 10-12-week course. However, classes are not closed exam groups and are open to students at the same level who are studying for shorter periods (minimum 4 weeks) or not taking the exam. Priority is given to students following the full course. Students must be at the correct level to join these classes, and undertake a pre-test before being allowed onto the course


### **IELTS exam preparation courses**

The classes cover all four skills and there are practice tests each week. At the lower levels the classes are often more skills-based, with particular focus on reading and writing, in order to prepare students to tackle the demands of IELTS material at a later stage. Most IELTS classes use an IELTS course book as a basis, but teachers also produce significant amounts of their own material, in order to adapt to the differing needs of the students (some students, for example, may only come for three weeks, and therefore need supplementary materials).

Our IELTS classes are supplemented by access to the study centre, where students can borrow and take home reading and listening practice material, under the guidance of either their teacher, or the GE/Exams DOS. Cambridge exam students can also access self-study material in the same way.

### **OET Courses**

LSI Portsmouth offers closed groups (of up to approximately 10 students) OET courses: or flexible 1-1 lessons.



The full-time course is based on a 25 hour week, and is divided into skills; the morning classes look at writing and listening, and the afternoon classes cover reading and speaking. The course does not follow a set text book, but is based around the four modules of the exam, using practice test materials, and a range of supplementary materials. Students typically take practice papers on the Thursday of the full-time course, allowing time for additional work to be done on the Friday in the areas required.

1-1 OET lessons are based upon the needs of the student. This can be determined by previous OET scores, by an initial placement test if required, and in discussion with the student.

## **Executive Courses**

### **Morning Component**

The morning component of the course is usually 1:1 with the focus on improving the individual's structural English, general and business vocabulary, specific work-related vocabulary and pronunciation, intonation and stress. The afternoon component usually incorporates listening and speaking skills in the context of meetings, presentations, etc. in a small group.

The DOS meets with the teachers individually to pass on detailed information regarding objectives, strengths, weaknesses, etc. based on the needs analysis and interview. The teachers will be guided towards materials and the approach most suited to the particular student's needs and approach to study. The student will be issued with a course book/grammar book to keep, relevant to their course/level. The teachers are trained and experienced in selecting the key units for the individual's needs, editing and supplementing units from a wide range of published sources and in-house material as well as using the student as a resource.

### **Afternoon Component**

The afternoon group component of the course is decided by the Director of Academic and Quality to match the required functions from the initial interview. From there, a class needs-audit is employed to help the teacher choose the most appropriate material (published or in-house) for the class to meet their needs during the week.

Throughout the week the teachers and the Director of Academic and Quality seek feedback from the students and from other teachers and adjustments are made as necessary. Near the end of the week, each student who will continue their course the following week has a tutorial with the Director of Academic and Quality to measure progress and decide on the content of the following week's course.



## **Pre-Sessional Courses**

The LSI Portsmouth Pre-Sessional English (PSE) course aims to make the transition to the British higher education system easier for international students and to give them the best chance of success on their course. It is a General Academic English course which aims to meet the broad academic needs of all of our students. Each group studies a similar syllabus which includes a wide range of general academic skills and language.

The aims and outcomes of the course are as follows:

### **Course Aims:**

- To provide students with the language and study skills they need to cope with the demands of an advanced degree course delivered through the medium of English.
- To familiarise course members with the expectations, culture and conventions of British universities.
- To increase students' ability to take responsibility for their own learning and to be able to become successful independent learners.
- To help students to adapt to living and studying in the UK.

### **Learning Outcomes:**

On successful completion of this course, participants will be expected to have:

- An ability to communicate successfully with speakers of English in a wide variety of contexts such as seminars, tutorials/supervisions, and private study groups
- An ability to function effectively in the context of lectures and seminars.
- An ability to deal with a range of written academic texts effectively, reading efficiently, extensively, intensively and critically.
- An ability to research and write well-structured and comprehensible academic essays and extended independent research reports which meet University standards in terms of presentation, referencing and evidence of research.
- An ability to give a well-structured and comprehensible oral academic presentation.
- An ability to demonstrate critical thinking skills in oral and written work.
- Demonstrated skills in time management, producing work within given timescales.
- Demonstrated an ability to take increasing responsibility for their studies and to engage in private study, working both independently and collaboratively.
- Demonstrated the ability to conduct independent academic research, using a wide range of reference material from libraries and online resources.
- IT skills which enable them to produce word processed documents, academic posters and presentation slides which meet University requirements in terms of formatting and presentation.

Courses can be 36, 20, 16, 11, 7 or 4 weeks depending on the student's IELTS score and the equivalent score required in their university offer letter.



## **Assessment procedures**

General English and exams students complete fortnightly tests, set by class teachers, which test understanding of the language covered over the previous two week period.

30+ and Executive students tend to take much shorter courses. Because of this, in order to maximise learning time, teachers rely more on continuous assessment and task-based assessment.

Pre-Sessional students complete numerous assessments throughout their course including assignments, projects, presentations, seminar simulations and note-taking tasks. These are marked using standardised mark sheets and contribute to the student's final exit level.

### **Certification**

All students receive a certificate on the final day of their course. For Pre-Sessional students, the certificate states that the student has completed a recognised Pre-Sessional course and that they have reached a minimum of CEFR B2 in all four skills. It also states the course duration. The certificates for all other students state the title of the course attended, the level reached, and the course duration. The level on the certificate generally reflects the level of the class that the student has attended.

### **Reports**

In addition to the certificate, Executive and Pre-Sessional students also receive a personal report on their final day. The reports for Pre-Sessional students include the title of the intended university course, the Pre-Sessional course dates, the IELTS requirement for their university course, their starting level (according to IELTS / TEOFL etc), their level in each of the four skills at the end of the course, a grade for attitude and commitment, whether they have met the 90% attendance requirement, their teachers' names and teachers' comments. This may also include notes about further support that may be needed when they continue their studies at university. Reports for Executive students include details of the type of course attended, the course dates, teachers' names, a grade (A-E) for performance in reading, writing, listening, speaking, effort and progress, the student's level in the four skills (IELTS equivalent), attendance level and a personalised description of course content and overall performance.

Reports for sponsors are written upon request. These reports state the student's level in each of the four skills, attendance percentage and a short description of performance on the course so far including areas of strength and weakness.



## **Review**

Each course is reviewed annually by the Director of Academic and Quality and teaching staff. Reviews are normally scheduled for September.