



Intensive Programme for the CELTA (Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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1. Is our CELTA different from other CELTA programmes?

Yes and no. All centres have the same internationally recognised Cambridge University approval and all teachers receive the same certificate that they would at any other CELTA centre in the world. Courses may vary from centre to centre but every trainer and every course is individually and externally assessed and accredited by the University of Cambridge to the same high international standard.

At International House Montañita and BSL Cuenca and now at UWI Trinidad, our objective is to offer the best teacher training course in the world. We are different from the vast majority of other centres. We've built several innovations into our course design that maximize the quality of the course and enhance your experience. We network you and your colleagues in the period leading up to the launch of the course so that you get to know one another. During the weeks before the course, our lead trainer will be in contact with all of you to help you prepare and provide support.

Our CELTA programme has several features that maximize the support you need to succeed on the course. There are language awareness development workshops on the course so that you learn how to research grammar and how to best present it in the classroom. On our CELTA, you receive double or triple the amount of time provided on a typical CELTA dedicated to professional coaching — one-on-one feedback from your trainers about your previous teaching practice and assistance with planning your next lessons. You submit a draft plan to your trainers for feedback the (course) day before you teach so you have plenty of time to rehearse any changes.

2. What's the difference between TESOL, TEFL, and CELTA?

One very important difference is that only the Cambridge CELTA and a few varieties of TESOL are recognised worldwide. We don't recommend teaching certification that isn't internationally recognised. For employment purposes, these globally recognised certifications are much better, and among them, CELTA is the most widely accepted by far. In particular, you want to avoid the purely online courses you see advertised everywhere. "Teaching certification" that does not involve assessed, live teaching practice is a waste of your time and money. The strong practical element of the CELTA is what makes it so well respected by employers. CELTA teachers know the theory but more importantly how to apply it in practice.

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3. Will I be able to find a job?

Yes, absolutely! Demand may fluctuate regionally but globally there has been sustained high demand for English language teachers — and the CELTA is the very best choice to enhance your employability.

4. How much money do CELTA qualified teachers make?

English teaching is not very well paid in most countries. However, there are some well paid jobs, just not many. By taking the CELTA you are improving your prospects of being recruited by the best language schools that pay the best salaries. You can expect to make enough money to live comfortably but you will not make your fortune. If you just want to make a lot of money go to the Far East or the Middle East where you will find very well-paid work.

5. Can I take the CELTA if I am not a native speaker of English?

Yes, you can. But you need to be able to demonstrate that you have an advanced level of English (C1 in the Common European Framework). If you do not have formal qualifications e.g. FCE Grade A, CAE, CPE, IELTS band 7 or above or TOEFL 110 or above, we will assess this ourselves in the application process, which includes a written component, language awareness tasks and a spoken interview.

6. I'm not too confident about my knowledge of grammar. Does that mean I can't take the CELTA course?

Not at all. The certificate is designed for people entering the field. A basic level of language awareness is fine. The CELTA Ecuador course includes dedicated advanced language awareness workshops where, with the assistance of your trainers, you work with your colleagues to learn how to research a language area and how to teach it effectively. In addition, we provide a free-of-charge self-study module before the course starts to prepare you for the CELTA language awareness requirements, which we strongly recommend all candidates do. We can also recommend other online courses and resources that will help you get up to speed with language and boost your confidence in the classroom on the course.

7. Do I need a degree to take the CELTA?

No, you don't. However, you should be aware that if you intend to travel and work as an English teacher some countries require a degree to get a work permit and some employers require you to have a degree as well as a CELTA.

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8. How do I apply? How do I know whether I am accepted?

The application process involves three easy steps. First, you write to John Warren j.warren@ihecuador.com who will send the application form which you will return to him by email. If approved, you'll receive the second part of the application by email. You complete that and send it to John. The third step, on approval of the second part of the application, is an interview with John, usually by Skype, but can be live or by telephone. You're told in the interview whether you've been accepted. The entire process can usually be got through in a few days. The final step is for you to pay the course fees to the Centre for Language Learning, The University of the West Indies. In addition, if you have already completed an application task (sometimes called a "pre-interview task") for another CELTA centre, you needn't do another one for us. Just send us the one you've already completed. If you've been accepted at any other CELTA centre in the world, you only need to send us your approval and your course preference. John will contact you for a chat to give you the opportunity to ask whatever questions you might have about the course.

9. Just how intensive is your CELTA course?

Wherever in the world you decide to do it, the CELTA is a very intensive experience. This is also why it proves to be such a positive and rewarding experience for the people who take it. We have done everything we can to make our course less stressful, but you still need to come psychologically prepared to work hard, be organised and stay focused. In real terms you can expect to work 6 full days a week for the duration of the course.

One of the things that can make the CELTA stressful is the teaching practice. But this practical side to the CELTA is precisely what makes it a worthwhile qualification to have. However, you should know that while you are teaching, your tutor and some of your colleagues will be observing. After teaching practice there is feedback. All CELTA tutors are trained to deliver this clearly and sensitively in a supportive atmosphere. Feedback will be given by both your tutors and your peers and you too will be asked to provide feedback about your own and your colleagues' lessons. Feedback is extremely important because it should help you to develop an increasing awareness of your strengths and areas to develop as a teacher.

10. What is the schedule for a typical day?

The course is divided into (Input) and teaching practice (TP) with feedback.

- Input 1: 11:00 - 12:30

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- Input 2: 12:40 - 14:00
- Lunch: 14:00 - 15:00
- Feedback: 15:00 - 16:00 *
- ALP: 16:00 - 17:00
- Break: 17:00 – 17:30
- Teaching Practice: 17:30 - 19:30

* on Fridays hot feedback will be held after teaching practice from 19:30 to 20:30.

Sessions typically focusing one of the following; teaching methodology, language awareness, or professional development.

11. Do I have to attend all the course hours?

In short, yes. Cambridge regulations state that if applicants are unable to attend all of the course, they cannot be accepted. Since it is an intensive course, every day counts and you risk not being awarded the certificate if you miss significant parts of the course. Therefore we strongly advise all candidates to have no other commitments outside the course during its duration.

12. What are the key Cambridge criteria I need to meet in order to pass the CELTA?

The Cambridge criteria states you must do the following:

Teaching practice: you will complete a total of 6 hours of assessed teaching practice. Cambridge states that this time must be divided into no less than 8 classes. So, on our course you will teach 6 x 40 minute classes and 2 x 60 minute classes. You will also teach a further two 20 minute classes but these are not assessed and are designed to allow you to get to know your students the first time you meet them without the pressure of assessment.

Observation of experienced teachers: you will observed a total of 6 hours of teaching conducted by an expert teacher. On our course, you will see your tutors teaching the same students you will teach, using the same sources for materials for 4 of those hours and the remaining two will be made up with specially selected teacher training DVDs.

Written assignments: there are four written assignments. We set them at the weekends. They are very practical in nature and relate directly to what you will learn in the input sessions. You

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will be given a lot of support in the week leading up to the setting of them so that you know exactly what to do.

13. How will I be assessed on these things?

Teaching practice: Tutors make an overall assessment of each lesson in relation to the criteria relevant to the stage of the course. The criteria can be found on pages 15-16 of the CELTA Syllabus and Assessment Guidelines at www.cambridgeenglish.org/celtasyllabus but in short, it includes the delivery of the lesson itself, planning and evaluation. Your progress over the course is charted in a progress record, which is called the CELTA 5. Candidates also receive written feedback after each teaching practice session. In addition, you receive at least one individual tutorial during the course. As the course progresses, your tutors will indicate what you need to do to achieve the standard expected at the end of the course.

Written assignments are graded Pass/Fail. You must meet all the criteria for written work during the course. The assessment criteria for each written assignment are also detailed on pages 17-18 in the CELTA Syllabus and Assessment Guidelines at www.cambridgeenglish.org/celtasyllabus

The CELTA uses a system of continuous assessment of teaching which takes place throughout the course. Effective teaching is the result of a combination of skills which are acquired over time. In the early stages of the course, you are assessed against specific assessment criteria and partial performance related to what can be expected at that stage of the course. Towards the end of the course, while continuing to assess individual lessons with reference to specific criteria, tutors take a 'holistic' view of your performance which takes account of:

- your development over the course
- the consistency of your achievement in relation to all the assessment criteria
- your ability to manage the whole learning process
- the range of lesson types in which you have demonstrated competence
- your ability to cope with learners at different levels
- the amount of support given by the trainer (As with any kind of training more autonomy is expected at the end of the training process.)

14. What are the possible final grades?

Pass, Pass B and Pass A. Most candidates achieve a Pass grade and while a small number of candidates fail the course or withdraw, we have a competitive record of helping trainees achieve above Pass grades on our courses. However, you will be made aware of your progress throughout the course. The final grade is a holistic assessment rather than an average of grades

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and will take into account the factors outlined above. Weak lessons early in the course do not count against you if sufficient progress is achieved. Lessons in the early part of the course will be graded in relation to the stage of the course and your lessons in the second half of the course need to show that progress has been made and that you are able to plan and teach more independently. A satisfactory final lesson does not automatically indicate an overall pass. An overall pass will depend on whether you have been able to achieve the main assessment objectives in the course as a whole.

15. When will I know if I've passed or not?

You will be sent a provisional certificate and end of course report no more than 3 days after the course ends. This will enable you to start searching for jobs immediately.

16. When will I get the official certificate from Cambridge?

This usually takes between 6 weeks and 3 months. This is to allow for any grade disputes, extra assessment of portfolios, etc.

17. Who will train me?

Our CELTA trainers have many years' experience, have trained worldwide, and bring a wide range of experience, qualifications, and knowledge to the course. All CELTA trainers undergo a rigorous selection and training process monitored by Cambridge University. In addition to our resident staff, we also recruit top trainers from other centres around the world to work at our various CELTA Training centres. We see this as part of our quality enhancement programme — guest trainers bring fresh perspectives and new skills to our training staff.

18. What will I spend most of my time doing during the course?

You can expect to spend about six and a half hours daily, Monday to Friday in 'contact time' (with your tutors). As you can see from the schedule above this is divided into input (seminars), planning, teaching and receiving feedback about teaching. Planning lessons will involve some contact time and some self-study time. In both you will work closely with colleagues in your teaching practice group, liaising about the planning of lessons, observing each other teach and sensitively providing each other both positive and constructive feedback. Most trainees find they spend around 3-4 hours preparing for each lesson. At the weekends you can also expect to work on assignments.

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19. When does teaching practice start and how often will I be teaching on the course?

You start teaching on the second day of the course although that is not an assessed lesson. It is a 20-minute lesson incorporated to allow you to get to know the students you will be teaching subsequently. You will be given support in the design of this and all your lessons. After that you will teach no more than 2 assessed lessons per week. We have done everything we can to spread out the lessons so as to maximise your time for reflection and planning, which we hope improves performance.

20. What are the classes like I'll be teaching?

Groups vary in number between 8-16 students. They will be drawn from the university and they come from the local area. The key thing to remember is that they know you are trainee teachers and they are on your side!

21. What is the CELTA methodology for teaching?

The CELTA draws on many current methodologies. It is not referred to as the 'CELTA methodology'. You will be introduced to tried and tested methods to supportively develop students' reading, writing, listening and speaking skills as well as enhance and extend their knowledge of vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. You will be shown how to maximise the time students spend using English in the classroom to complete meaningful, real-life tasks. There are many different ways to teach English and different learners respond to different types of lessons. This course will provide an introduction to many of them.

22. Under what circumstances can I get a refund?

- Withdrawal after confirmation of enrolment payment incurs a penalty of **USD150**
- Withdrawal after June 12, 2020 (one week's grace after final payment) invokes the following:
 - The first payment of **USD1150** is forfeited.
 - Should the withdrawing party successfully recruit a participant to replace him/her for the same year's programme, a refund of the second payment less an administrative fee of **USD100** will be processed.

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23. What if I have to defer?

If, at the last minute before a course begins, you are forced to defer and we are able to fill the place you are vacating you will be able to defer to another course we offer using the fees you have already paid. If you have to defer during a course, you will have to pay the fees again to join another course.

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