



D U N B O Y N E
C O L L E G E
O F F U R T H E R E D U C A T I O N

English as a second language policy

ESL (English as a Second Language) is used to refer to situations in which English is being taught and learned in countries, contexts and cultures in which English is the predominant language of communication.

ESL policy includes the following:

1. Statement of policy

Dunboyne College of Further Education confirms in spirit and action a commitment to support equality and diversity within our student body. The College recognises that language and literacy issues are linked to equality and inter-culturalism.

2. Aim of Policy

The objectives of Dunboyne College of Further Education are:

- To accommodate diversity
- To ensure equality for all learners
- To promote and implement positive action to ensure the success of the learner's progression route to continuing education and training or employment
- To ensure that no learner is discriminated against by virtue of their language proficiency

3. Scope of the policy

Areas covered by this section are:

- Admission interview
- Provision of Language Support
- Learner's participation

Admission Interview

ESL learners are currently assessed by informal interview and where deemed necessary, a further educational assessment to ascertain the applicant's competency in English. To facilitate the provision of language proficiency support the interview and initial assessment for placement purposes should aim to establish a learner's:

- Current competence in the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing)
- A more detailed assessment of a learner's language skills, needs, goals and objectives with a view to planning a learning programme will have to be carried out within the tutor/group once the learner has been admitted
- Previous education in own country including language of education (this may differ from the learner's first, spoken language)
- Work experience
- Present circumstances (including family commitments)
- Education; training; language learning in Ireland
- Long and short term goals and perceived needs
- The amount of information gathered will obviously depend on the learner's level of English
- Should the learner's level of proficiency in English provide a challenge to success at QQI Level 5, Dunboyne College of Further Education will direct and assist the learner to access accredited courses in language proficiency
- Where possible, setting up progression routes and systems of referrals to other centres or accredited courses to enable learners achieve the required standard of English to successfully complete a QQI Level 5. A process of tracking learners and the offer of admission to their chosen course on completion of the language course will exist

Provision of Language Support

- The learner's right to attend and to set his/her own goals will be supported by the College
- An ethical code of confidentiality, respect and trust will inform all aspects of the College
- Cultural differences will be respected at all levels of the College
- Learners will be enabled to participate in attending Language Support programmes
- Programmes are learner-centred and needs based with attainable short-term goals preparing learners for independent learning. ESL takes account of educational and employment aspirations. ESL also incorporates communicative language techniques for mixed levels and cross-cultural approaches which recognise learners' other languages and culture
- Resources permitting, ESL provision could also be extended to include QQI accredited Level 3 and 4 pre-vocational English; computers (ICT skills) and other courses accredited through the Further Education framework within the courses offered by Dunboyne College of Further Education This language support will enable learner's successfully join other mainstream courses (e.g. QQI Levels 5 & 6) and training routes

Learner's participation

- Learner's may voluntarily attend ESL classes
- If the learners has been initially assessed at interview or advised by their class tutors as requiring language support, it is the responsibility of the learner to attend ESL classes
- Learner's must attend for a time to thoroughly establish levels of competence in speaking; listening; reading and writing, follow a learning programme and take part in summative assessment of progress
- Programmes can be aimed at learning English for specialised needs, based around specific language and vocabulary for vocational areas

The White Paper on Adult Education: Learning for Life (2000) sets the policy context for the development of ESL provision.

The White Paper recommends that adult education should be underpinned by three core principles:

- (a) A systemic approach
- (b) Equality of access
- (c) Inter-culturalism

In particular, the White Paper underlines the need to encourage the participation of immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers in education and states that there should be "free access to adult literacy, English language and mother culture supports" for these groups.