

Elac

STUDY VACATIONS



Guide to Elac Courses

Accredited by the
 **BRITISH
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for the teaching
of English in the UK



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An Introduction to Elac Study Vacations

The founders of Elac have been organising and teaching English Language Courses since 1991. In this time we have earned a reputation for quality, but even more importantly, for the individual care and personal service that we offer everyone following our courses.

Elac runs a number of summer centres and each of these centres has its own particular style and 'feel', but we hope that a visitor to any of our centres would also recognise a shared ethos and many common features. One of the common features is a desire to deliver good quality courses - within the usual restrictions that summer schools work under. Our courses provide a good balance of structured and professional language tuition, and well-organised and varied activities. We have built up a very good reputation abroad as an organisation that cares about the quality of the experience we provide, and this is something that we strive to preserve.

Another shared value is our concern for the happiness and well-being of the students on our courses. Each year the number of students visiting England with Elac increases, and these students – especially in residential centres - are increasingly part of large groups. Nonetheless, our courses are made up of several hundred *individuals*. It is important to us that every student feels valued and recognised. This is a challenge that grows with the size of the centres, but it is important to us that we meet that challenge.

Elac Centres

We currently operate in the following locations during the summer:

School Campuses:

Eastbourne College, Eastbourne (Residential and Homestay)

St Andrew's School, Eastbourne (Homestay)

Christ's Hospital School, Horsham (Residential)

Mayfield School, Mayfield (Residential)

Ardingly College, Haywards Heath (Residential)

University Campuses:

Nottingham University (Residential)

Cardiff Metropolitan University (Residential)

Bath Spa University (Residential and Homestay)

For specific information about each of these courses, please see our brochure or download a Centre Guide and/or Factsheet from our website www.elac.co.uk.

The Elac Approach

At Elac we firmly believe that our students will learn English best by following a carefully planned course of study that involves them in a varied programme which they will find both stimulating and enjoyable. In this way we can engender a high level of motivation, which is so important for language learning, as well as providing an environment which optimises the opportunity for language acquisition. This is achieved by offering a course which combines formal classroom tuition with a programme of sports, excursions and activities, all of which are taught and led by our qualified and experienced EFL teaching and activity staff.

Elac Courses are therefore designed to give young people from all over the world every opportunity to study and practise English. Our students learn to communicate in English while at the same time developing a sense of co-operation and responsibility towards their friends. They do this by having to achieve goals and complete tasks through working together in English. We believe that in this way we can make a contribution to international understanding and harmony as our students make new friends and begin to learn about each other's countries and cultures.

The word "opportunity" figures prominently in the Elac vocabulary. We make it very clear to all our students that we will provide them with a series of wonderful opportunities while they are on our courses. Opportunities to develop and improve their English, opportunities to make new friends, opportunities to learn a lot about Britain, and very importantly, opportunities to have a lot of fun. However, we also make it clear that they must then take those opportunities in order to get the most from their courses; we cannot do this for them. We hope that this will teach them to be more responsible for themselves. We can provide the environment, but our students have to play their part in making it most effective. Clearly the most important effort that our students have to make is to *SPEAK ENGLISH AT EVERY OPPORTUNITY!* We must all ensure that they do so.

It is clear that the theme of friendship and international harmony is important in the Elac approach. With this in mind Elac strives to provide a secure and happy environment together with a carefully organised and professionally delivered teaching programme. We believe that for students to learn, and more importantly, to use English quickly and accurately, they must feel at ease and engaged in a course programme which they will find both stimulating and challenging. It is with these aims in mind that we approach the organisation of our courses.

Elac Course Organisation

Elac students are divided on arrival into 'Red' or 'Blue' Groups and will be given a wrist band in this colour. These groupings will help us to organise various aspects of the course such as lesson timings (morning or afternoon), excursions and social events.

Elac Meetings take place daily (see course programme) and they are the one time in the day when all students in a colour group are together and can be addressed by the Centre Manager. These meetings are held for the following reasons:

- a) To help create a community spirit amongst the students
- b) To make any important announcements
- c) To confirm the daily programme

- d) To reinforce information regarding excursions
- e) To present awards and prizes to the winners of the competitions

The Academic Programme

Key Features in Brief

- Communicative focus to teaching
- TEFL qualified teachers
- Two teachers share the teaching programme
- Placement test on arrival (ALTE Levels)
- 15 hours of lessons
- Class sizes of up to 15 (maximum)
- Student workbook linking classes to excursions & activities
- All necessary materials provided
- End of Course report/certificate

Learning with Elac

Our first priority in our summer programmes, and our main responsibility to students, is to provide a language learning experience that will help them to make good progress in English. Most students studying with us over the summer will be on courses of only 2 -3 weeks; time is short, but by focussing carefully on suitable goals we believe that a great deal can be achieved on a short immersion programme.

Language Activation

Although the course will naturally involve learning new language (especially new vocabulary and idioms) the area where we can really help is in activating the language that they have already used in their lessons at home, but which they are not yet comfortable in using. Activating the language means practising it so that they not only recognise it and understand it, but are also able to use it with confidence. There is therefore an emphasis in our courses on skills work, and particularly on listening and speaking skills.

Learning outside the classroom

It's not only in the classroom that students develop their language skills: there are communication opportunities during activities, excursions and in the social programme, both with other students and Elac staff; if students are staying with a homestay provider, they will have many opportunities to practise their English; and whenever they visit shops or places of interest, they are surrounded by English and English speakers. We will encourage students to make the most of every opportunity to speak English.

Taking it back home

Our aim is that students return home and to their language classroom with renewed enthusiasm and motivation and that they are inspired to continue their journey as a language learner. We will do our best to equip them for this ongoing work.

Finding your level

On arrival, students undertake a placement test and an interview, then are placed into a class suitable for their level of English. Elac uses the European-wide scheme for measuring language proficiency, established by ALTE, the Association of Language Testers in Europe. Levels run from A1 (the lowest) through A2, B1, B2, C1 and C2 (the highest), and correspond to a specified range of ability from Beginner to Advanced.

Weekly Programme

Students have 15 hours of lessons a week on the course; these lessons may be in the morning or afternoon depending on which week it is. Depending on the centre, there could be a full day excursion followed by a full day of lessons. All Elac teachers are TEFL qualified, and students have a main teacher for two lessons a day, and a different teacher for the other lesson. Class sizes are a maximum of 15. At the end of the course students will be presented with an Elac certificate with details of the level they have reached.

Trinity Examinations

Elac often runs sessions for the Trinity Spoken English examinations. These sessions are organised where we have a minimum of 15 students in a centre who want to take the test. The test is available at 12 levels, and Elac teachers will advise students of the correct level of entry. Students taking the exam will have three lessons to help them prepare and these lessons will be organised during the afternoon or evening sessions. If the student passes, they receive a Trinity Certificate. For more information and to find out the fee for this, go to the "dates & fees" section of our website: www.elac.co.uk.

Elac Student Workbooks

All students are issued at registration with their own workbook. This is a bound booklet containing information on their centre, excursions, evening activities, student welfare and a copy of the code of conduct that they will sign.

There is also space in the student workbook for students to undertake their own work in response to the excursions and activities, so that they have a 'working record' of their visit to show parents and family on their return. Their work will form part of the teacher assessment at the end of the course.

The Activity Programme

The activity programme is both an opportunity to take part in a range of interesting and fun activities and also an important opportunity to continue practising your English language skills. Each activity session is divided into two halves: during one half students will take part in a pre-arranged activity carousel of events in mixed-nationality groups; in the other half they will have a free choice of what they'd like to do.

The Carousel may include activities such as:

- Arts & Craft
- Rounders
- Dodgeball
- Fun Olympics
- Team Challenge
- Drama games
- Photo hunt

Free choice activities may include:

- A wide range of sports
- Dance/aerobics
- Music workshops
- Arts & Crafts
- Swimming

Club International

This is a chill out area where students can go if they don't want to take part in any further organised activities but would prefer to socialise, listen to music and play games. It is supervised by Elac staff who engage with the students and encourage mixing.

Sports

Elac will organise a wide range of sporting activities, based on the facilities available. These will include inter-group competitions as well as individual competitions. Trophies and prizes will be awarded at the end of the two weeks to the winners.

Special Interest Groups

Elac always makes a special effort to cater for any special interests that our students may have. We cannot always guarantee these, but if any students are especially interested in an alternative activity, please tell us and perhaps we can organise a workshop or other suitable event.

Evening Programme

There will be a wide range of evening activities to give the students the opportunity to have fun and make friends. These will include:

Discos: All these will be on campus in the college theatre. A full disco with light show will operate and the disco will be open to all students.

BBQ's: These will be held on the lawn outside the dining block, weather permitting.

Cinema: There is a large hall at St Andrew's where we can watch films in large groups. We will get the latest films and there will be a selection of different types.

Sports/Activities: On certain evenings we will hold more sports competitions, as well as other activities like treasure trails. Details will be clearly posted on notice boards.

Talent Show: This is self-explanatory and all students are invited to "show everyone their talents".

Quiz Nights: These involve international questions although there will be several designed to improve the students' cultural knowledge of Britain. It is organised in teams and there are prizes for the winners.

Karaoke: You don't have to be the greatest singer in the world to have a go, but you may be!

Murder Mystery Night: There's been a murder – students must interview some interesting characters to solve the mystery.

"Casino Royale": A fun night with roulette, playing cards, etc.

Nintendo Wii: Individual and group computer game competitions.

Drama Evenings: Get involved in acting, or behind the scenes on your class play.

Student Welfare

Over the years, Elac have acquired a first class reputation for the pastoral care and supervision that we exercise over all our students. We firmly believe that if a student is not happy and relaxed in their immediate environment, then (s)he will not learn. In this case, it does not matter how good the course is, there will be very little learning and our student will have a negative experience.

Our students' welfare is therefore the number one priority for all of us. All our staff are trained to be caring and friendly towards our students. This begins before the course with the online induction and Child Protection training they undertake, and is further reinforced by the induction training in the centre.

Our staff are fully briefed to notice if a student is not performing well in class, or appears unhappy. They will report such occurrences immediately to the Welfare Officer, who can then investigate and take the appropriate care and action.

Students on Elac courses are supervised by our staff in conjunction with Group Leaders. We maintain a good supervision ratio of staff to students, both during activities on site and excursions off site. There are three occasions every day at which a roll call is taken: at the start of lessons, at the start of activities and in the accommodation in the evening. Students accommodated with local homestay providers are required to sign at the start of the day and sign out when they leave. Our hosts are instructed to contact the duty mobile if any homestay students do not arrive home when expected.

Elac has a safeguarding policy (download from our website: www.elac.co.uk) which specifies procedures to ensure the safety and well-being of all students, including safer recruitment. All staff are aware of this policy. Staff who are directly responsible for students will have appropriate suitability checks. We also have a legal duty to identify and safeguard children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation (the Prevent duty). Staff are trained appropriately and will report any concerns to the Centre Welfare Officer/Safeguarding Officer.

Students are expected to sign a code of conduct which indicates the kind of behaviour we wish to promote and also covers unacceptable behaviours such as bullying and stealing. It sets out clearly what sanctions will be taken in cases of unacceptable behaviour and what process will be followed.

Medical Care

Each centre has a standard procedure for dealing with a student who is unwell. This includes provision on site (e.g. first aid) and the location of the nearest medical facilities, depending on the severity of the situation.

Homestay Accommodation

Students can choose homestay accommodation at the following centres: Eastbourne College, St Andrews School, Eastbourne, and Bath Spa University, Bath.

Placement

All our hosts have been visited and their accommodation approved. Our homestay co-ordinator will place students according to their preferences, e.g. No pets, sharing with a friend or a student of another nationality. Students normally stay in twin rooms, some with bunk-beds, and share bathroom facilities with their host. Our hosts are informed in advance of a student's dietary and medical needs. Elac operates to British Council criteria of no more than four students in one house.

Once a student is placed, Elac will send a host profile with name, address and email if possible, which will give details of the host, the accommodation and location.

On arrival, students are met by their hosts, and given relevant information regarding transport to the centre, etc. They will also receive a map and bus pass where relevant, and an Emergency Contact card.

Hosts provide breakfast and evening meal, and students eat lunch in the centre, although a packed lunch is provided by the homestay provider for excursions.

Host will also take care of students' laundry and will provide towels and bedding.

Supervision

The Assistant Centre Manager will be responsible for students and together with the Group Leader will meet with them regularly to discuss any issues. The Homestay Co-ordinator is also on hand to deal with issues relating to the family.

Students' responsibilities

Being welcomed into the home of a homestay provider is a great way to learn English, and we expect students to respect the host and their property. For more information, see: "What to Expect When Staying with a Homestay Provider" (download from our website: www.elac.co.uk).

Students need to sign in and out of a register every morning and evening to ensure Elac keeps an accurate record of attendance. Students must return to their hosts in the evenings unless there is an organised activity or alternative arrangements have been made. It is important that hosts are kept informed if students are going to be late for any reason. Sundays are normally spent with the homestay provider; again, they must be informed if this changes.

Residential Accommodation

Elac offers two types of residential accommodation: School accommodation and University accommodation.

SCHOOL ACCOMMODATION

Rooms

Students can choose to share with friends or with students of other nationalities. We will try to meet your request. Males and females have separate areas within each boarding house. Bathroom facilities are shared with other students, with separate facilities for males/females, children and adults. Students need to bring their own towels but bedding is provided.

Meals

Meals are buffet style and comprise breakfast, lunch and evening meal. There is a choice of food to cater for vegetarians, religious diets, etc. Please let us know of any dietary condition prior to arrival so we can cater for your needs.

Supervision

The Assistant Centre Manager is responsible for students and together with the Group Leader will meet the students regularly to deal with any issues that arise.

UNIVERSITY ACCOMMODATION

Rooms

Rooms are usually single study bedrooms with en-suite facilities. However, sometimes there are some opportunities to share with friends or students of other nationalities. Towels and bedding are provided.

Meals

Meals are buffet style and comprise breakfast, lunch and evening meal. There is a choice of food to cater for vegetarians, religious diets, etc. Please let us know of any dietary condition prior to arrival so we can cater for your needs.

Supervision

The Assistant Centre Manager is responsible for students and together with the Group Leader will meet the students regularly to deal with any issues that arise.

Students' responsibilities

We expect students to respect others, by following the rules about bedtime, noise and avoiding prohibited areas. We also expect them to treat the accommodation and others' property well.

