5. Programmes of Education and Training

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5. Programmes of Education and Training

Introduction

The design, approval, delivery, and review of programmes are fundamental to ELI Schools' educational provision and quality assurance. This section establishes ELI Schools' comprehensive framework for ensuring all programmes of education and training are well-designed, properly approved, effectively delivered, and continuously reviewed and improved.

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this section is to:

- Establish systematic processes for developing and approving new programmes
- Define procedures for updating and modifying existing programmes
- Ensure fair and transparent access, transfer, and progression arrangements
- Provide detailed admissions procedures for all student groups
- Demonstrate ELI Schools' commitment to programme quality and continuous improvement
- Meet QQI's requirements for programme development, approval, and review

This section addresses:

- **Policy for Development & Approval of Programmes**
- **Procedure for Development & Approval of Programmes**
- **Policy for the Update of Programmes**
- **Procedure for the Update of Programmes**
- **Policy for Access, Transfer and Progression**
- **Procedure for Admission to English Language Programmes**

Types of Programmes Offered

ELI Schools offers a range of English language education programmes:

General English Programmes:	• General English Weeks 1 - 12 (CEFR Levels A1 – C1) • General English Weeks 13 – 25 • Academic Year – 25 Weeks • Intensive English
Examination Prep Programmes:	• IELTS Preparation • Oxford Test of English • Trinity ISE Examination
Junior Programmes (For students under 18)	• Junior Summer Programmes • Closed group programmes for schools • Erasmus

- All programmes are subject to the development, approval, and review processes outlined in this section.

Regulatory Context

ELI Schools' approach to programmes of education and training complies with:

- QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016
- QQI Sector Specific (Independent/Private) Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016:
- Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of English Language Education to International Learners

Principles of Programme Design

ELI Schools' approach to programme design is based on the following principles:

Learner-Centered:

- Programmes designed to meet learner needs, goals, and contexts
- Appropriate for learner age, level, background, and aspirations
- Flexible to accommodate diverse learner groups
- Support provided for learners to succeed

Clear Learning Outcomes:

- All programmes have clearly defined learning outcomes
- Outcomes aligned to CEFR levels (for language programmes)
- Outcomes achievable within programme duration and intensity
- Outcomes assessable and evidenced

Coherence and Progression:

- Programmes logically structured with clear progression
- Content builds systematically from simple to complex
- Vertical coherence (progression through levels)
- Horizontal coherence (integration across skills and components)

Evidence-Based:

- Programme design informed by research, best practice, and sector standards
- Content based on needs analysis and learner profiles
- Teaching methodologies evidence-based (communicative approach, task-based learning, etc.)
- Continuous improvement based on feedback and evaluation

Quality Assurance:

- All programmes subject to approval before delivery
- Ongoing monitoring and review
- Student feedback mechanisms
- External examiner input (where applicable)
- Regular programme reviews and updates

Inclusivity:

- Programmes accessible to diverse learners
- Reasonable accommodations for learners with disabilities
- Culturally sensitive and inclusive content
- Support for learners with additional needs

Relevant and Current:

- Content relevant to learners' real-world needs
- Materials current and up to date
- Responsive to changes in language use, society, technology
- Integration of digital literacy where appropriate

Transparent:

- Programme information clearly communicated to prospective learners
- Learning outcomes, assessment, and progression criteria explicit
- No false or misleading claims about programmes
- Accurate information on duration, intensity, fees, outcomes

Programme Documentation

All programmes at ELI Schools are documented systematically. Standard programme documentation includes:

Programme Specification:

- Programme title and Programme code (internal reference)
- CEFR level(s) or target level
- Target learner group (age, background, goals)
- Entry requirements (min level, qualifications, other requirements)
- Programme aims and objectives
- Programme learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, competence)
- Programme structure and content (modules, components, topics)
- Teaching and learning approaches
- Assessment strategy and methods
- Progression routes
- Programme duration and intensity (hours per week, total hours, weeks)
- Class size (typical and maximum)
- Resources required (materials, technology, facilities)
- Staff requirements (qualifications, experience)

Syllabus:

- Detailed week-by-week or unit-by-unit breakdown of content
- Topics, language points, skills focus for each period
- Learning activities and tasks
- Assessment points

Assessment Documentation:

- Assessment tasks and criteria
- Marking schemes or rubrics
- Sample assessments
- Moderation and verification procedures

Student Materials:

- Programme handbook or information sheet
- Textbooks and resources list
- Assessment schedule
- Timetable template

Programme Review Cycle All programmes subject to systematic review:

Ongoing Monitoring (continuous):

- Programme Boards meet twice per academic year
- Review programme delivery, student feedback, outcomes
- Identify issues and improvements
- Report to Academic Committee

Annual Review (every year):

- Comprehensive review of each programme
- Analysis of full year's data (enrolments, completion rates, student feedback, assessment outcomes, progression)
- Programme Leader prepares Annual Programme Review Report
- Submitted to Academic Committee
- Actions identified and implemented

Periodic Review (every 3-5 years)

- In-depth review of programme design, content, delivery, assessment, resources
- May involve external input
- Ensures programmes remain current and competitive

Trigger Reviews (as needed):

- If significant issues identified (complaints, poor feedback, low outcomes)
- If regulatory or awarding body requirements change

5.1 Policy for Development & Approval of Programmes

QA Area(s)	• Programmes of Education and Training • Governance and Management of Quality • Documented Approach to QA		
Applies to	☑ Staff only	☐ Learners only	☐ Staff and learners
Policy Owner	Senior Academic Manager		

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out the principles for the development and approval of all programmes at ELI Schools, ensuring systematic, quality-focused processes that involve appropriate consultation, expertise, and governance oversight.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All new programmes of English language education at ELI Schools
- All locations (Dublin Dame Street, Dublin Grand Canal, Drogheda, summer centres)
- All types of programmes (General English, Examination Preparation, Junior Programmes)
- This policy covers the development and approval process from initial idea through to programme launch.

Policy Statement

Commitment to Quality Programme Development:

ELI Schools is committed to the systematic development of new programmes through a rigorous process that ensures:

- Educational quality and integrity
- Alignment with organizational strategy
- Evidence of market demand and learner need
- Adequate resources for delivery
- Appropriate academic and corporate governance
- Separation of roles between programme developers and approvers

Strategic Alignment:

The development of new programmes at ELI Schools must align to:

Organizational Strategy:

- ELI Schools' mission: To provide high-quality English language education to international students in a supportive, culturally enriching environment
- Strategic objectives: Market growth, academic excellence, student satisfaction, financial sustainability, reputation enhancement
- Programme portfolio strategy: Balanced range of programmes meeting diverse learner needs

Evidence of Demand: New programme proposals must demonstrate evidence of demand from target market:

- Market research (agent feedback, competitor analysis, sector trends)
- Student requests or feedback (current or past students expressing interest)
- Institutional partnerships (universities, employers requesting specific programmes)
- Demographic trends (emerging student markets, changing needs)
- Strategic opportunity (gap in market, competitive advantage)

Social Need and Educational Opportunity: Proposed programmes must:

- Meet a legitimate social or educational need (not purely commercial)
- Provide genuine educational opportunities for learners
- Have clear educational value and intended learning outcomes
- Enable learners to progress (to further study, employment, personal goals)

Differentiation and Avoiding Duplication: New programmes must be:

- Sufficiently differentiated from existing ELI Schools programmes to avoid unnecessary duplication
- OR represent significant improvement or update to existing programme
- Clear about unique features, target audience, and purpose
- Complementary to existing programme portfolio

Compliance: New programmes must comply with requirements of:

- QQI Core and Sector-Specific Guidelines
- Code of Practice for English Language Education
- CEFR framework (alignment to appropriate levels)
- Awarding body requirements (if accredited programme - Cambridge, Trinity, etc.)
- Health and safety regulations (particularly for junior programmes or specialized activities)
- Safeguarding requirements (Children First Act if programme involves minors)
- Immigration regulations (if programme leads to visa eligibility)
- Any other relevant legislation or professional body standards

Separation of Responsibilities:

ELI Schools ensures clear separation between those who develop programmes and those who approve them:

Programme Development:

- Programme Development Subcommittee (PDS) appointed by Academic Committee
- PDS develops programme content, documentation, materials
- PDS comprises subject experts, experienced teachers, programme designers

Programme Approval:

- Academic Committee reviews and approves programme proposals and documentation
- Academic Committee members who are also PDS members must absent themselves from approval
- Academic Committee ensures independent, objective evaluation
- Academic Committee distinct from Board of Management

Academic and Corporate Decision-Making: Clear distinction maintained between:

Academic Decisions (made by Academic Committee):	• Educational merit of programme • Programme design quality • Learning outcomes appropriateness • Assessment strategy validity • Academic standards • Programme approval or rejection on academic grounds
Corporate Decisions (made by Board of Management)	• Business case and financial viability • Market demand and competitiveness • Resource availability and investment decisions • Operational feasibility • Strategic fit

Resource Considerations:

New programme proposals must address:

Human Resources:	• Teaching staff: Qualifications and experience required (alignment with Code of Practice requirements for teacher qualifications) • Availability of qualified staff or recruitment plan • Training needs for staff • Staff workload implications
Physical Resources:	• Classroom and facility requirements • Specialized facilities if needed (language laboratory, IT rooms, outdoor spaces for junior programmes, etc.) • Accommodation for residential programmes (if applicable) • Safety and accessibility of facilities
Learning Resources:	• Textbooks, materials, digital resources • Technology requirements (software, platforms, equipment) • Library or reference materials
Financial Resources:	• Development costs (staff time, materials, external expertise, piloting) • Delivery costs (teaching staff, resources, facilities, marketing) • Investment required (upfront costs before revenue generated) • Break-even analysis and financial sustainability
Support Services:	• Student services support (admissions, induction, pastoral care) • Administrative support • Marketing and recruitment support

Timeline for Development:

Sufficient time allowed for quality programme development:

- **Minimum 6-9 months** from initial proposal to programme launch for standard programmes
- **Minimum 12 months** for complex programmes (teacher training, new accredited programmes, programmes requiring significant investment or new partnerships)

Version	1.0
Date Approved	March 2026
Approved by	Board of Directors, Academic Committee
Next Review Date	June 2027 (Biennial Review)

Related legislation, regulation or guidelines:

- Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016
- Sector Specific (Independent/Private) Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI)
- Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of English Language Education to International Learners
- Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)

5.2 Procedure for Development & Approval of Programmes

QA Area(s)	• Programmes of Education and Training • Governance and Management of Quality • Documented Approach to QA		
Applies to	☑ Staff only	☐ Learners only	☐ Staff and learners
Policy Owner	Policy for Development & Approval of Programmes (5.1)		

Purpose

This procedure outlines the step-by-step process for developing and approving new programmes at ELI Schools, from initial idea through to programme launch.

Procedure

PART A: INITIATING A NEW PROGRAMME PROPOSAL

1. Identifying Need for New Programme

Who Can Propose:

- An idea or proposal for a new programme may be initiated by any member of staff at ELI Schools:
- Teaching staff (identifying gap in provision, student requests)
- Programme Leaders (seeing need for programme expansion)

Sources of Ideas:

- Student feedback or requests
- Agent requests ("Many of our students want IELTS preparation")
- Market research (competitor analysis shows gap, sector trends
- Strategic planning (Board identifies priority area for growth)
- Partnership opportunities (university or employer requests)

2. **Board of Management review the outline proposal**

Strategic Fit:

- Does programme align with ELI Schools strategy?
- Is it right time to develop this programme?
- Does it complement or compete with existing programmes?
- Strategic priority (high / medium / low)?

Market Demand:

- Is evidence of demand convincing?
- Are student number estimates realistic?
- Is market research robust?
- Are there competitors offering similar programmes successfully?
- What is our competitive positioning?

Operational Feasibility:

- Can we recruit or develop qualified staff?
- Do we have adequate facilities or can we obtain them?
- Can support services handle this programme?
- Are there operational risks or barriers?

Financial Viability:

- Are costings realistic?
- Is proposed fee competitive and acceptable to market?
- Is break-even achievable within reasonable timeframe?
- What investment required?
- Is financial risk acceptable?

Regulatory and Compliance:

- Are regulatory requirements clearly understood?
- Can we meet compliance requirements?
- Any regulatory risks?

3. **Board of Management decide**

Option 1: Reject Proposal	• Management Team determines proposal does not merit further research • Reasons documented (e.g., "Insufficient evidence of demand", "Does not align with current strategic priorities", "Resource requirements exceed capacity", "Financial risk too high") • Senior Academic Manager informs proposer • Proposal filed • Process ceases
Option 2: Request Further Information	• Management Team requires additional information before decision • Specific questions or information needs identified • Proposer asked to gather information and resubmit • Process returns to step 3 once information provided
Option 3: Approve for Academic Development	• Management Team determines proposal has sound business case • Proposal proceeds to Directors for financial approval (if significant investment required.

PART C: ACADEMIC COMMITTEE REVIEW - INITIAL APPROVAL

4. **Academic Committee Evaluates Academic Merit:**

Academic Committee assesses proposal from academic perspective:

Educational Need and Merit:	• Does programme meet legitimate educational need? • Are aims and intended learning outcomes appropriate and worthwhile? • Is programme concept educationally sound?
Academic Profile Alignment:	• Is programme aligned to ELI Schools' academic profile and reputation? • Is programme appropriate for our institution? • Does it enhance our academic standing?
Quality Potential:	• Can we deliver this programme to high quality? • Is programme design sound? • Are resources adequate for quality delivery? • Any quality risks?
Learner Benefit:	• Will learners benefit from this programme? • Are learning outcomes achievable and valuable? • Does programme enable learner progression?
Academic Resource Implications:	• Are staff qualifications and expertise adequate? • Does programme require staff development or recruitment? • Are teaching loads sustainable? • Any additional academic resources needed?

5. **Academic Committee Decision:**

Option 1: Reject on Academic Grounds	• Academic Committee determines programme not academically appropriate or viable • Reasons documented (e.g., "Learning outcomes too ambitious for proposed duration", "Insufficient staff expertise", "Educational merit questionable") • Process ceases
Option 2: Request Revisions to Proposal	• Academic Committee has concerns but believes proposal could proceed with modifications • Specific revisions requested (e.g., "Clarify learning outcomes", "Extend programme duration", "Add assessment component") • Proposer revises and resubmits • Process returns to step 6 once revised
Option 3: Approve and Appoint Programme Development Subcommittee	• Academic Committee approves programme concept and determines it merits full development • Academic Committee moves to appoint Programme Development Subcommittee (PDS) to develop detailed programme
Option 4: Recommend Additional Resources to Board	• Academic Committee approves programme conditionally • Identifies additional resources required for quality delivery (e.g., "Programme viable if we recruit teacher with [specific qualification]", "Programme requires purchase of [specific equipment]") • Recommendation sent to Board for approval of additional resources

Note: Academic Committee can reject even if business case approved - academic quality not compromised by commercial considerations

PART D: PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT

6. Appointing Programme Development Subcommittee (PDS)

6.1. **Academic Committee Appoints PDS:**

- Academic Committee, in consultation with Senior Academic Manager, appoints PDS.

PDS Composition:

- **Chair:** Typically, Programme Leader

Members (2-4): Selected based on:

- **Subject matter expertise:** Knowledge of programme area (e.g., business English expert for Business English programme, IELTS examiner for IELTS preparation programme)
- **Target learner group experience:** Experience teaching relevant age group or learner type
- **Programme design expertise:** Curriculum development, syllabus design, assessment design skills
- **Availability:** Available to commit time over 3-6 months
- **Ongoing involvement:** Available to teach on programme once launched
- **Preference for internal staff** (institutional knowledge, continuity), but **external expertise** engaged if needed (specialized knowledge, objectivity, awarding body requirements).
- **Quality Officer assigned to support PDS** (administrative support, documentation assistance).

7. Programme Development Subcommittee Work

7.2. **Needs Analysis and Research:**

Learner Needs Analysis:

PDS conducts or reviews:

- Who exactly are target learners? (Detailed profile - demographics, backgrounds, goals, motivations, challenges)
- What are their learning needs? (Language skills, knowledge, competencies required)
- What do they want from programme? (Outcomes, learning experience, support)
- How do they prefer to learn? (Learning styles, preferences, constraints)

Benchmarking:

- Review similar programmes at other institutions
- Identify best practice
- Learn from others' successes and challenges

7.3. **Programme Design:**

PDS systematically designs programme:

Step 1: Define Learning Outcomes

- Develop clear, specific, measurable learning outcomes (what learners will be able to do on completion):
- Aligned to CEFR level (for language programmes)
- Aligned to examination specifications (for exam prep programmes)
- Aligned to professional standards (for teacher training programmes)
- Appropriate for target learner group and achievable within programme duration
- Cover knowledge, skills, and competence

Step 2: Design Programme Structure

Determine:

- Programme duration (weeks) and intensity (hours per week)
- Total contact hours
- How programme divided (modules, units, themes, weeks)
- Sequence and progression (what taught when, logical progression from simple to complex)
- Balance (appropriate time allocated to different skills, content areas)
- Coherence (how components connect and build)

Step 3: Develop Detailed Syllabus

Create week-by-week (or unit-by-unit) breakdown:

- Topics and themes
- Language points (grammar, vocabulary, functional language)
- Skills focus
- Learning activities and tasks
- Resources and materials
- Homework/independent learning

Step 4: Design Assessment Strategy

- Assessment points
- Outline syllabus for flexible programmes like General English where teachers adapt to learner needs).
- **Formative assessment:** Ongoing assessment for learning (teacher feedback, self-assessment, peer assessment, practice tests) - How often? What format?
- **Summative assessment:** Assessment of learning at end of programme or modules (tests, exams, projects, portfolios, etc.) - What types? When? How weighted?

Step 5: Identify Teaching and Learning Approaches	Specify pedagogical approaches: • Communicative language teaching • Task-based learning • Project-based learning • Blended learning (if online components) • Learner-centered, interactive, collaborative • Use of authentic materials • Integration of technology • Differentiation strategies (meeting diverse learner needs in mixed-ability classes)
Step 6: Specify Resources	Identify: • Core textbook (if using one) - evaluate and select appropriate textbook • Supplementary materials (readers, workbooks, online resources, teacher-created materials) • Technology (apps, platforms, software) • Audio-visual resources • Assessment materials
Step 7: Define Entry Requirements and Target Learners	Clarify: • Minimum CEFR level (or other entry requirement) • Age range • Any other requirements (prior qualifications, language certificates, etc.) How entry level will be assessed (placement test, interview, certificates
Step 8: Specify Progression Routes	Identify: • What learners can do after completing programme (next level at ELI Schools, university entry, employment, examination, etc.) • Pathways and articulation arrangements (if applicable) • Support for learners to progress (information, guidance, preparation)
Iterative Development and Refinement:	Programme development is iterative: • PDS develops draft • Reviews and discusses internally • Consults stakeholders • Receives feedback • Refines and improves • Repeats cycle until satisfied with quality Quality Officer provides critical friend role: Reviews documentation for clarity, completeness, compliance

Programme Documentation Package includes:

Detailed Syllabus	(20-50 pages depending on programme) Week-by-week or unit-by-unit breakdown with: • Week/Unit number and title • Topics and themes • Learning outcomes for this week/unit • Language points (grammar, vocabulary, functions) • Skills focus • Learning activities and tasks (outline) • Resources (textbook units, supplementary materials) • Homework/independent learning • Assessment (if any this week)
Assessment Documentation	• Assessment schedule (when each assessment occurs) • Sample assessment tasks (test papers, project briefs, presentation topics, etc.) • Assessment criteria and rubrics (how work will be evaluated) • Marking schemes (for tests, how points allocated) • Moderation procedures (how assessment quality ensured) • Feedback mechanisms (how feedback given to learners) • Record-keeping (how results recorded)
Student Materials	• Welcome and programme introduction • Programme aims and learning outcomes • Programme structure and schedule • Teaching and learning approaches (what to expect in classes) • Assessment information (what assessments, when, criteria) • Resources (textbook, online resources, library) • Expectations (attendance, participation, homework) • Support available (tutorials, student services, learning support) • Programme Board (learner representation) • Contact information (Programme Leader, teachers, support services) • Key dates (holidays, assessment dates, end date)

9.2. **Quality Officer Reviews Documentation:**

Quality Officer conducts final review of all documentation:

- Complete? (All required components present)
- Clear? (Well-written, understandable, no ambiguity)
- Consistent? (No contradictions between documents, consistent terminology)
- Compliant? (Meets regulatory requirements, aligned to CEFR, awarding body standards if applicable)
- Formatted? (Follows ELI Schools templates, professional presentation)
- Quality Officer provides feedback to PDS if improvements needed.
- PDS makes final revisions.

9.3. **PDS Submits Programme to Academic Committee:**

- Once satisfied, PDS (through Chair) submits complete Programme Documentation Package to Quality Officer for distribution to Academic Committee.
- Quality Officer includes on next Academic Committee agenda as decision item.

PART E: ACADEMIC COMMITTEE APPROVAL

10. Academic Committee Reviews Programme Documentation

10.1. **Academic Committee Meeting:**

Academic Committee meeting includes programme approval as agenda item.

Option 1: Approve Programme	• Programme documentation approved as submitted • Programme may proceed to implementation • Programme Leader appointed (if not already clear) • Programme Board established or planned • Academic Committee congratulates PDS on excellent work
Option 2: Approve with Minor Amendments	• Programme approved subject to minor changes specified by Academic Committee • Changes are minor and can be made quickly (e.g., "Clarify wording of learning outcome 3", "Add one additional assessment checkpoint", "Update textbook to latest edition") • PDS makes changes • Chair of Academic Committee (Senior Academic Manager) reviews changes and approves final version (no need for full Academic Committee to reconvene) • Programme then proceeds to implementation
Option 3: Defer - Request Revisions and Resubmission	• Academic Committee has significant concerns but believes programme can be approved with revisions • Specific revisions required (e.g., "Revise assessment strategy to include more formative assessment", "Reduce content in Module 2 as appears over-ambitious", "Provide clearer differentiation from General English programme") • PDS revises programme documentation • Revised programme resubmitted to Academic Committee at next meeting • Process returns to step 10
Option 4: Reject Programme	• Academic Committee determines programme not suitable for approval (rare at this stage - usually issues identified earlier in process) • Reasons documented • PDS and Management Team informed • Learning from rejection (if systemic issue with development process)

Most programmes approved at first submission (with or without minor amendments) because issues addressed during development through consultation and Academic Committee updates.

PART F: IMPLEMENTATION

11. Programme Implementation Planning

11.1. **Programme Leader Appointed:**

If not already clear from PDS membership:

- Academic Committee appoints Programme Leader for new programme
- Typically, PDS Chair or core PDS member
- Programme Leader responsibilities: Leading programme, chairing Programme Board, coordinating programme team, monitoring quality, reporting to Academic Committee

11.2. **Implementation Plan Developed:**

Programme Leader, in coordination with Senior Academic Manager, Operations Manager, and others, develops implementation plan:

Staff Recruitment and Training:	**Recruitment (if needed):** • HR Manager and Senior Academic Manager recruit teachers with required qualifications (Code of Practice compliance - see Section 6) • Garda vetting if programme involves children (Section 15) • Qualifications verified (Section 6)
Induction and Training:	Programme Leader provides induction to teaching team on new programme: • Programme aims, learning outcomes, structure • Syllabus walk-through • Assessment requirements and procedures • Resources and materials • Expectations and standards • Q&A • Teaching team receives all programme documentation • Collaborative planning sessions (if multiple teachers teaching different classes of same programme)
Materials and Resources:	**Procurement:** • Textbooks ordered (sufficient copies for students and teachers) • Supplementary materials purchased or created • Technology set up (accounts, licenses, access)
Organization:	• Materials stored accessibly (staff room, shared drive) • Students informed what to purchase (textbook) and what provided
Operational Arrangements:	**Timetabling:** • Programme scheduled (days, times) • Rooms allocated • Teachers assigned • Timetable published

12. Ongoing Monitoring During First Delivery

Ongoing Quality Monitoring:

- During first delivery of new programme, Programme Leader monitors closely:
- Teacher feedback (how is programme working in practice? any issues with syllabus, materials, timing?)
- Student informal feedback (how are students finding programme?)
- Assessment (are assessments working? appropriate difficulty? clear criteria?)
- Resources (are materials adequate? anything missing?)

First Programme Board Meeting:

Typically, **mid-way through first delivery** (e.g., week 6 of 12-week programme):

- Programme Leader chairs
- Teaching team attends
- Student representatives attend
- Academic Manager attends

Agenda:

- Review of programme delivery to date
- Student feedback (from representatives and any surveys conducted)
- Teaching team feedback
- Assessment review (if any assessments conducted yet)
- Issues or challenges identified
- Actions to address issues
- Improvements for second half of programme
- **Minutes recorded** and submitted to Academic Committee.

End-of-Programme Review:

After first cohort completes programme:

- Students complete course review survey
- Teaching team debriefs (what worked well, what needs improvement)
- Assessment outcomes analysed (did students achieve learning outcomes? pass rates?)
- Programme Leader compiles feedback and data

14. First Annual Programme Review

Academic Committee Reviews First Annual Review:

- Academic Committee reviews report at next meeting:
- Programme Leader presents key findings
- Academic Committee discusses:
- Is the programme meeting expectations?
- Are learning outcomes being achieved?

Academic Committee Decision:

Continue Programme: Programme continues for next year

- Actions approved
- Minor updates approved

Continue with Conditions:

- Programme continues but specific improvements required
- Conditions specified and monitored

Discontinue Programme (rare):

- Programme not viable (insufficient demand, cannot maintain quality, unsustainable)
- Current students complete (teach-out plan)

- Progress review at next Academic Committee meeting
- Concerns about viability or quality
- May require more frequent monitoring
- May require external review or consultation
- Decision on continuation deferred pending improvements
- No new enrolments accepted
- Programme closed

Most programmes continue after successful first year with minor improvements.

14.4. **Documentation:**

- Academic Committee decision recorded in minutes.
- First Annual Programme Review Report filed in Programme File.
- Actions tracked for implementation.

15. Transition to Regular Monitoring Cycle

15.1. **After First Year:**

- Programme transitions from "new programme" to "established programme":
- Programme Board continues (twice per academic year)
- Annual Programme Review continues (every year for first 3 years, then every 3-5 years for established programmes)
- Ongoing monitoring through Section 12 (Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review)
- Updates managed through Policy and Procedure 5.3-5.4 (Programme Updates)

15.2. **Continuous Improvement:**

Programme continuously improved based on:

- Student feedback
- Teaching team feedback
- Assessment outcomes
- Programme Board discussions
- Annual reviews
- Sector developments
- Regulatory changes

PART G: DOCUMENTATION AND RECORDS

16. Programme Approval Records

16.1. **Quality Officer Maintains Programme Approval Records:**

For each programme, centralized records include:

Programme File Contents:

- Original programme proposal
- Management Team decision documentation
- Board of Directors approval (if applicable)
- Academic Committee approval of proposal to develop
- Programme Development Subcommittee Terms of Reference
- PDS membership
- PDS meeting notes (if documented)

- Consultation records (who consulted, feedback received, how addressed)
- Complete programme documentation (specification, syllabus, assessment, materials)
- Academic Committee approval of programme
- Implementation plan
- First and subsequent Annual Programme Review Reports
- Programme Board minutes
- Any programme updates or amendments (with approvals)
- External examiner reports (if applicable)
- Periodic review reports

Master Programme Register:

Quality Officer maintains register of all ELI Schools programmes:

Programme Code	Programme Title	CEFR Level	Type	First Approved	Last Reviewed	Next Review Due	Status	Programme Leader
GE-INT	General English - Intermediate B1	B1	General English	2015	2024	2027	Active	[Name]
IELTS-PREP	IELTS Preparation	B1-C1	Exam Prep	2018	2024	2027	Active	[Name]
CELTA	CELTA	N/A	Teacher Training	2016	2024	2025	Active	[Name]
[New Programme]	[Title]	[Level]	[Type]	2025	-	2026	Active	[Name]

16.2. **Accessibility:**

Programme Files available to:

- Programme Leader (for their programme)
- Senior Academic Manager (all programmes)
- Quality Officer (all programmes)
- Academic Committee members (as needed)
- External reviewers (QQI inspectors, ACELS inspectors, external examiners)
- Stored securely (digital and hard copy)

16.3. **Retention:**

Programme documentation retained for:

- **Active programmes:** Indefinitely (as long as programme operates)
- **Discontinued programmes:** Minimum 10 years after last cohort completes (for student transcript verification, appeals, legal purposes)

17. Learning from Programme Development

17.1. **Post-Development Review:**

After each programme development, brief review of process:

- PDS provides feedback to Academic Committee: "What worked well in process? What could be improved?"
- Quality Officer notes lessons learned
- Process improvements identified

17.2. **Annual Review of Programme Development Process:**

Quality Officer includes programme development process review in Annual QAF Report:

- How many programmes developed this year?
- Average time from proposal to approval?
- Challenges encountered?
- Successes?
- Process improvements needed.
- Recommendations for refining process

17.3. **Continuous Improvement of Process:**

Programme development policy and procedure reviewed and improved based on:

- Experience from programme developments
- Feedback from PDS members, Academic Committee
- Changes to regulations or requirements
- Sector best practice

Responsibility

Academic Committee:

- Approving proposals to develop new programmes
- Appointing Programme Development Subcommittees
- Monitoring programme development progress
- Approving final programme documentation
- Reviewing first annual programme review
- Decisions on programme continuation

Senior Academic Manager:

- Receiving and reviewing initial programme proposals
- Granting approval to develop formal proposals
- Presenting proposals to Management Team and Academic Committee
- Appointing PDS Chairs and members (with Academic Committee)
- Supporting PDS during development
- Coordinating programme approval process
- Overseeing programme implementation

Programme Development Subcommittee (PDS):

- Conducting needs analysis and research
- Designing programme systematically
- Consulting stakeholders
- Developing comprehensive programme documentation
- Presenting programme to Academic Committee
- Making revisions if requested

Quality Officer:

- Assisting PDS with documentation
- Reviewing documentation for completeness, clarity, compliance
- Coordinating consultation processes
- Managing programme approval workflow (scheduling Academic Committee reviews, distributing documentation)
- Maintaining Programme Files and Programme Register
- Monitoring programme approval process quality

Management Team:

- Reviewing business case for new programmes
- Assessing strategic fit, demand, operational feasibility, financial viability
- Recommending to Board whether to proceed
- Providing operational input to programme design (without compromising academic independence)

Board of Directors:

- Approving significant financial investment in new programmes
- Receiving reports on programme development
- Strategic oversight of programme portfolio

Programme Leader (once appointed):

- Leading programme implementation
- Coordinating teaching team
- Monitoring programme delivery quality
- Chairing Programme Board
- Conducting annual programme reviews
- Proposing programme improvements
- Ensuring ongoing programme quality

Operations Manager:

- Advising on operational feasibility of programme proposals
- Supporting programme implementation (timetabling, facilities, resources)
- Coordinating operational aspects of new programmes

Marketing Manager:

- Providing market intelligence for programme proposals
- Developing marketing materials for new programmes
- Recruiting students for new programmes
- Monitoring enrolment trends

HR Manager:

- Recruiting teaching staff for new programmes (with Senior Academic Manager)
- Ensuring staff qualifications comply with requirements
- Coordinating staff induction and training
- **Finance Manager:**
- Developing financial projections for programme proposals

- Advising on financial viability
- Managing programme budgets

Student Services Officer:

- Providing input on student support implications of new programmes
- Supporting students on new programmes
- Coordinating student representatives for Programme Board

Teaching Staff:

- Participating in PDS (if appointed)
- Providing consultation input during development
- Delivering new programmes according to specification
- Providing feedback on programme effectiveness
- Participating in Programme Board

Version	1.0
Date Approved	March 2026
Approved by	Academic Committee
Next Review Date	June 2027 (Biennial Review)

Related legislation, regulation or guidelines:

- Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI) - Section 2.3: Programmes of Education and Training
- Sector Specific (Independent/Private) Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI)
- Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of English Language Education to International Learners (IEM 02 ELE) October 2023 (QQI)
- Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)
- Cambridge Assessment English requirements (for CELTA and related programmes)
- Trinity College London requirements (for CertTESOL and related programmes)

5.3 Policy for the Update of Programmes of Education and Training

QA Area(s)	• Programmes of Education and Training • Documented Approach to QA		
Applies to	☑ Staff only	☐ Learners only	☐ Staff and learners
Policy Owner	Senior Academic Manager		

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out clear principles for what modifications can be made to existing programmes, distinguishing between minor updates that can be implemented efficiently and major changes that require full approval processes, ensuring programmes remain current, relevant, and responsive to evolving needs while maintaining quality and standards.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All existing programmes of English language education at ELI Schools
- Updates, modifications, amendments, or changes to programme content, structure, delivery, or assessment
- Updating of programme materials, syllabi, and resources
- All locations and all programme types
- This policy covers modifications to established programmes. New programmes follow Policy 5.1-5.2 (Development & Approval of Programmes).

Policy Statement

Commitment to Programme Currency and Responsiveness:

ELI Schools is committed to:

- Keeping programmes current, relevant, and responsive to learner needs
- Ensuring programmes reflect developments in language teaching methodology and best practice
- Maintaining programme quality through ongoing review and improvement
- Adapting programmes to changing contexts (social, technological, regulatory)
- Balancing stability (students know what to expect) with flexibility (responsive to feedback and change)

Need for Programme Updates:

Programmes may need updates for various reasons:

Responsive to Feedback:

- Student feedback identifies areas for improvement
- Teaching team identifies issues or enhancements during delivery
- Programme Board recommendations
- Annual programme review findings

Evolving Best Practice:

- Developments in language teaching methodology
- New research on language learning
- Sector innovations
- Technology developments enabling new approaches

Resource Changes:

- Textbooks updated or new editions published
- New supplementary materials become available
- Technology platforms change or improve
- Physical resources change (facilities upgraded)

Regulatory or Standards Changes:

- CEFR updates or clarifications
- Code of Practice requirements change
- Awarding body specifications change (for accredited programmes)
- Immigration regulations change affecting programme design

Operational or Contextual Changes:

- Student demographics change
- Market needs evolve
- Competitive environment changes
- ELI Schools strategy shifts

Quality Enhancement:

- Continuous improvement culture - always seeking ways to enhance quality
- Innovation - trying new approaches, activities, materials
- Differentiation - making programmes distinctive and excellent

Framework for Programme Updates:

ELI Schools recognizes two categories of programme updates:

Minor Modifications

Definition:

Minor modifications are changes to programmes that:

- **Do not impact module or programme learning outcomes** (learning outcomes remain the same)
- **Do not change CEFR level alignment** (programme still targets same CEFR level)
- **Do not change programme structure** (duration, intensity, components remain the same)
- **Are consistent with existing programme specification** (changes within scope of approved programme)

Examples of Minor Modifications:

Content Adjustments:

- Changing specific topics within existing content areas (e.g., changing from "Environmental issues - global warming" to "Environmental issues - plastic pollution" within same module on environment)
- Updating examples, texts, or contexts to be more current or relevant
- Reordering topics within a module or unit (adjusting sequence)
- Adding or removing specific vocabulary items or language points within existing categories

Assessment Adjustments:

- Changing specific assessment tasks while maintaining same assessment type and alignment to learning outcomes (e.g., changing essay topic but still assessing same writing outcomes)
- Adjusting weighting between assessments within approved assessment strategy (e.g., changing from 40% mid-term, 60% final to 35% mid-term, 65% final)
- Clarifying assessment criteria or rubrics (making criteria clearer without changing what's being assessed)

- Modifying assessment schedule within programme duration (e.g., moving test from week 6 to week 7)

Materials and Resources:

- Updating to new edition of existing textbook
- Substituting textbook with alternative of comparable quality and level (with rationale)
- Adding supplementary materials or online resources
- Updating handouts or worksheets
- Changing specific activities or tasks while maintaining pedagogical approach

Delivery Adjustments:

- Adjusting pace or timing within programme schedule (spending more time on one unit, less on another, within overall programme duration)
- Modifying specific teaching activities or methodologies within approved approach
- Incorporating new technology tools for same learning purposes
- Adjusting homework or independent learning tasks

Administrative Updates:

- Updating staff names, contact information in programme documentation
- Correcting typos, formatting, or minor errors in documentation
- Updating cross-references within documentation
- Clarifying wording that is ambiguous without changing meaning

Operational Changes:

- Adjusting class schedule or timetable (within agreed hours per week)
- Changing classroom allocation
- Administrative process improvements

Minor modifications:

- Implemented by Programme Leader with approval of Senior Academic Manager
- Do not require Academic Committee approval
- Streamlined process enabling responsiveness
- Documented and reported to Academic Committee for information

Major Modifications

Definition:

Major modifications are changes to programmes that:

- **Change module or programme learning outcomes** (what learners will achieve is different)
- **Change CEFR level alignment** (programme targets different level)
- **Change programme structure** (duration, intensity, components, modules added or removed)
- **Change programme title or identity**
- **Significantly alter programme content, pedagogy, or assessment strategy**
- **Represent substantial departure from approved programme specification**

Examples of Major Modifications:

Learning Outcome Changes:

- Adding, removing, or significantly modifying programme learning outcomes
- Changing level or scope of outcomes (e.g., from "understand main ideas" to "understand complex academic texts" - level change)
- Adding new competency areas not in original programme (e.g., adding intercultural competence outcomes where not previously included)

Level Changes:

- Changing CEFR level (e.g., programme originally B1, now targeting B1+/B2)
- Changing target learner group to different proficiency level

Structural Changes:

- Changing programme duration (e.g., from 12 weeks to 10 weeks, or from 20 hours/week to 25 hours/week)
- Adding or removing modules or major programme components
- Changing programme title (e.g., "General English" to "English for Social Integration")
- Splitting one programme into two or merging two programmes

Substantial Content Changes:

- Complete redesign of syllabus content
- Fundamental shift in content focus (e.g., from general English to English for Specific Purposes)
- Adding significant new content areas not in original specification

Assessment Strategy Changes:

- Changing assessment methods substantially (e.g., from exams to portfolio assessment)
- Adding or removing major assessment components (e.g., adding oral examination where not previously included)
- Changing assessment philosophy or approach (e.g., from summative to formative-dominant)

Pedagogical Approach Changes:

- Fundamental shift in teaching methodology (e.g., from classroom-based to blended learning with significant online component)
- Complete change in pedagogical approach (e.g., from traditional to project-based learning)

Target Learner Group Changes:

- Changing age group (e.g., from adult to junior programme, or vice versa)
- Changing entry requirements significantly (e.g., from open access to requiring specific qualifications)

Major modifications:

- Require full approval process similar to new programmes
- Proposal, development, consultation, Academic Committee approval
- Ensures quality and standards maintained
- Not implemented until approved

Rationale for Distinction:

Clear distinction between minor and major modifications ensures:

Efficiency:

- Minor improvements implemented quickly and responsively
- Programme Leaders empowered to make day-to-day adjustments
- No bureaucratic delays for routine updates

Quality Assurance:

- Significant changes subject to rigorous review
- Academic standards protected
- Stakeholder consultation for major changes
- Academic Committee oversight of substantive modifications

Clarity:

- Staff know what they can and cannot change without approval
- Transparent decision-making
- Consistent application across all programmes

Responsiveness with Stability:

- Programmes can evolve and improve continuously (minor modifications)
- Core programme identity and quality maintained (major modifications controlled)
- Students experience stable programme while benefiting from incremental improvements

Decision-Making Authority:

Senior Academic Manager:

- Evaluates whether proposed modification is minor or major
- If minor: approves modification (or refers to Academic Committee if uncertain)
- If major: directs to full approval process (Policy 5.1-5.2)
- Final arbiter if Programme Leader disagrees with classification

If Uncertainty:

- Senior Academic Manager may consult with Quality Officer or Academic Committee Chair
- Principle: If in doubt, treat as major (better to be cautious)
- Academic Committee can always decide modification is actually minor and streamline

Consultation and Communication:

Minor Modifications:

- Programme Leader consults teaching team before implementing
- Students informed of changes that affect them (typically communicated at start of next intake, or during current programme if mid-programme change)
- Changes documented in programme file
- Reported to Academic Committee for information (in Programme Leader's report)

Major Modifications:

- Full consultation required (similar to new programme development)
- Academic Committee approval required before implementation
- All stakeholders informed once approved

Documentation and Tracking:

All programme modifications documented:

- Minor modifications: Logged by Programme Leader, approved by Senior Academic Manager, filed in programme file
- Major modifications: Full documentation as per policy 5.1-5.2
- Programme documentation updated to reflect changes
- Version control maintained (e.g., Programme Specification v1.0, v1.1, v2.0)
- Changes tracked over time for programme review purposes

Cumulative Minor Modifications:

Multiple minor modifications over time may cumulatively represent major change:

- Programme Leader and Senior Academic Manager monitor cumulative effect of minor modifications
- If programme has changed significantly through multiple minor modifications, may trigger major review
- Annual programme review considers cumulative changes
- Principle: Programme should not drift substantially from approved specification through incremental changes without oversight

Student Protection:

Current Students:

- Changes during programme minimize disruption to current students
- Significant changes typically implemented for new intakes, not mid-programme
- If mid-programme changes necessary, students informed and consulted where appropriate
- Students' reasonable expectations protected

Example:

- Minor modification (updated textbook): Can be implemented for current students if new edition very similar
- Major modification (adding new module): Implemented for next intake, current students complete original programme

Consistency:

- If multiple parallel classes of same programme, changes implemented consistently across all classes (or clearly differentiated if piloting)

Monitoring:

Programme modifications monitored through:

- Annual programme reviews (all modifications during year reported and evaluated)
- Programme Board discussions (modifications discussed, effectiveness evaluated)
- Student feedback (impact of modifications assessed)
- Quality Officer oversight (ensures modifications documented and process followed)

Continuous Improvement Culture:

Programme update policy supports culture where:

- Teaching staff empowered to suggest improvements
- Student feedback valued and acted upon
- Programmes continuously enhanced
- Innovation encouraged (try new approaches, evaluate, refine)
- Quality maintained through appropriate oversight

Responsibility

Senior Academic Manager:

- Overall policy ownership
- Evaluating whether proposed modifications are minor or major
- Approving minor modifications
- Directing major modifications to full approval process
- Monitoring cumulative effect of modifications
- Ensuring policy applied consistently

Programme Leaders:

- Proposing modifications based on feedback, review, experience
- Consulting teaching team before proposing modifications
- Presenting modification requests to Senior Academic Manager
- Implementing approved minor modifications
- Updating programme documentation
- Communicating changes to teaching team and students
- Monitoring effectiveness of modifications
- Reporting modifications in annual programme review

Teaching Staff:

- Identifying needs for programme modifications during delivery
- Providing input to Programme Leader on proposed modifications
- Implementing approved modifications in their teaching
- Providing feedback on effectiveness of modifications

Academic Committee:

- Approving major modifications to programmes
- Receiving reports on minor modifications (for information and oversight)
- Monitoring overall programme update activity
- Ensuring quality maintained through modifications

Quality Officer:

- Advising Programme Leaders and Senior Academic Manager on modification process
- Ensuring modifications documented appropriately
- Maintaining programme documentation version control
- Monitoring compliance with policy
- Reporting on programme modification activity in QA reports

Programme Board:

- Discussing proposed modifications and providing input
- Reviewing effectiveness of implemented modifications
- Ensuring student voice in modification decisions (through student representatives)

Students (through representatives):

- Providing feedback that may lead to modifications
- Providing input on proposed modifications that affect them
- Being informed of approved modifications

Version	1.0
Date Approved	March 2026
Approved by	Board of Directors
Next Review Date	June 2027 (Biennial Review)

Related legislation, regulation or guidelines:

- Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI)
- Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI)
- Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of English Language Education to International Learners
- Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)

5.4 Procedure for the Update of Programmes of Education and Training

QA Area(s)	• Programmes of Education and Training • Documented Approach to QA		
Applies to	☑ Staff only	☐ Learners only	☐ Staff and learners
Policies this Procedure relates to	Policy for the Update of Programmes of Education and Training (5.3)		

Purpose

This procedure outlines the step-by-step processes for proposing, evaluating, approving, implementing, and documenting programme modifications, providing clear workflows for both minor and major modifications.

Procedure

PART A: IDENTIFYING NEED FOR PROGRAMME MODIFICATION

1. Sources of Modification Proposals

1.1. **Programme modifications may be proposed through:**

Formal Channels:

- **Programme Board:** Recommendation from Programme Board meeting (student feedback, teaching team input, identified issues)
- **Annual Programme Review:** Programme Leader identifies modifications needed based on review data
- **Academic Committee:** Academic Committee identifies need for modification based on oversight or external factors
- **Management Team:** Strategic or operational reasons for modification

Informal Channels:

- **Teaching Team:** Individual teacher identifies improvement opportunity during delivery
- **Programme Leader:** Observes need for modification through monitoring
- **Students:** Individual student feedback or suggestion
- **External Stakeholders:** Agent feedback, employer feedback, awarding body changes

Reactive Triggers:

- **Incident or Problem:** Specific issue arises requiring modification (assessment task unclear, content outdated, timing problematic)
- **Regulatory Change:** Change to CEFR, Code of Practice, awarding body requirements requires programme update
- **Resource Change:** Textbook discontinued, technology platform changes

Proactive Enhancement:

- **Innovation:** Staff member wants to try new approach or incorporate new material
- **Best Practice:** Sector development suggests improvement opportunity
- **Continuous Improvement:** Ongoing refinement based on experience

1.2. **Documentation:**

Regardless of source, modification proposals should be documented (even if briefly):

- What is proposed?
- Why is it needed?
- What evidence supports need (feedback data, incident report, regulatory requirement, etc.)?

PART B: MINOR MODIFICATIONS PROCESS

2. Proposing Minor Modification

2.1. **Programme Leader Identifies or Receives Proposal:**

- Programme Leader may identify need for minor modification, or receive suggestion from teaching team, students, Programme Board.

2.2. **Programme Leader Evaluates Proposal:**

Programme Leader considers:

- Is this truly a minor modification (per Policy 5.3 definition)?
- Will this improve programme quality, relevance, or effectiveness?
- Are there any negative implications or risks?
- Is this consistent with programme specification and learning outcomes?
- Is timing appropriate (implement now or wait for next intake)?

2.3. **Programme Leader Consults Teaching Team:**

Before proceeding, Programme Leader consults teaching team:

- Share proposed modification
- Gather input: "Do you think this will work? Any concerns? Any suggestions?"
- Build consensus and buy-in
- May be formal meeting or informal email consultation depending on significance and urgency

2.4. **Programme Leader Prepares Modification Request:**

Programme Leader documents proposed modification

3. Senior Director of Studies Review and Approval

3.1. **Programme Leader Submits Request:**

- Programme Leader emails Minor Programme Modification Request to Senior Academic Manager.

3.2. **Senior Academic Manager Reviews:**

Senior Director of Studies evaluates within **5 working days** (typically faster):

Questions Considered:

- Is this truly a minor modification? (Does it meet criteria in Policy 5.3?)
- Is rationale sound?
- Has teaching team been consulted?
- Are there any concerns or risks?
- Is this consistent with programme quality and standards?
- Is timing appropriate?

3.3. **Senior Director of Studies Decision:**

Option 1: Approve Minor Modification

- Senior Academic Manager agrees modification is minor and appropriate
- Approval granted
- Programme Leader notified: "Approved - please proceed with implementation"

- Approval documented (Senior Academic Manager signs form or confirms by email)

Option 2: Reject or Request Reconsideration

- Senior Director of Studies has concerns about modification
- May reject with explanation, or request Programme Leader reconsider or provide additional information
- Reasons documented
- Programme Leader may revise proposal and resubmit, or accept decision

Option 3: Reclassify as Major Modification

- Senior Director of Studies determines modification is major, not minor
- Explains why (e.g., "This change would affect learning outcomes, so it's major")
- Directs Programme Leader to full approval process (Part C below, or Policy 5.1-5.2)

Option 4: Refer to Academic Committee

- Senior Director of Studies uncertain whether minor or major, or modification raises policy questions
- Refers to Academic Committee for discussion and decision
- Academic Committee may decide modification is minor (approve), major (full process), or inappropriate (reject)
- **Most minor modifications approved** - streamlined process.

3.4. **Documentation:**

- Approved Minor Programme Modification Request signed by Senior Director of Studies and Programme Leader
- Filed in Programme File
- Logged in Programme Modifications Register (Quality Officer maintains)

4. Implementing Minor Modification

4.1. **Programme Leader Implements Modification:**

Once approved, Programme Leader coordinates implementation:

Actions (as specified in request):

- Order resources if needed
- Update programme documentation
- Brief teaching team (meeting, email, or one-to-one depending on complexity)
- Inform students (if affects current students or next intake needs to know)
- Update systems (schedules, records, etc.)

Example Implementation (Textbook Update):

- **Week 1:** Order 50 copies of new textbook (liaise with Operations Manager or supplier)
- **Week 2:** Receive textbooks, distribute to teaching team
- **Week 3:** Conduct 1-hour teaching team meeting:
- Highlight changes in 4th edition
- Review new units and online resources
- Discuss any implications for teaching or assessment
- Answer questions
- **Week 4:** Update Programme Specification (change textbook reference)
- **Week 4:** Update Programme Handbook (textbook details, ISBN)
- **Week 4:** Update Syllabus (unit references if changed)

- **Week 4:** Update pre-arrival information sent to students (what textbook to purchase)
- **Before Next Intake:** Ensure all documentation updated and new textbook ready

4.2. **Communication:**

Senior Director of Studies communicates changes to Teaching team and Students.

To Current Students (if mid-programme change):

Typically avoid mid-programme changes where possible

If necessary: Clear explanation of change, rationale, what students need to do, support available

4.3. **Timeline:**

Implementation timeline depends on modification:

- **Immediate:** Some modifications can be implemented right away (e.g., adding practice test, adjusting timing within current programme)
- **Next Intake:** Most modifications implemented for next cohort (e.g., new textbook, syllabus adjustments)
- **Phased:** Some modifications may be phased in gradually

5. Monitoring and Evaluation of Minor Modification

5.1. **Programme Leader Monitors Effectiveness:**

After implementing modification, Programme Leader monitors:

- Is modification working as intended?
- Has it achieved desired improvement?
- Any issues or unintended consequences?
- What is feedback from teaching team and students?

Methods:

- Teaching team feedback (formal at Programme Board, informal ongoing)
- Student feedback (course reviews, student representatives)
- Observation (Programme Leader observes classes if pedagogical change)
- Assessment data (if modification affects assessment)

5.2. **Adjustments:**

If modification not working as intended:

- Programme Leader can adjust or reverse modification (minor modification approval process is flexible)
- Consult with Senior Academic Manager
- Inform teaching team and students

5.3. **Reporting:**

Modification reported in:

- **Programme Board:** Discuss implementation and effectiveness
- **Annual Programme Review:** All modifications during year listed, effectiveness evaluated

PART C: MAJOR MODIFICATIONS PROCESS

6. Identifying Major Modification

6.1. **Programme Leader or Senior Academic Manager Identifies Need for Major Modification:**

Major modification may be needed when:

- Annual programme review identifies significant weaknesses requiring substantial redesign
- Programme Board recommends major changes
- Regulatory or awarding body changes require major programme restructure
- Strategic decision to significantly change programme
- Cumulative minor modifications suggest programme has drifted and needs major review

6.2. **Initial Assessment:**

Senior Academic Manager (in consultation with Programme Leader) assesses:

- Is this truly major modification?
- What is scope of change required?
- Is this essentially a new programme, or substantial update to existing programme?

Decision:

- If substantial update to existing programme: Follow major modification approval process (steps 7-11 below)
- If essentially new programme: Follow new programme development process (Policy 5.1-5.2) and potentially discontinue or phase out existing programme

7. Proposing Major Modification

7.1. **Programme Leader Prepares Major Modification Proposal:**

Similar to new programme proposal (Policy 5.2) but focused on changes:

8. Academic Committee Review of Major Modification Proposal

8.1. **Proposal Submitted to Academic Committee:**

- Senior Academic Manager includes major modification proposal on Academic Committee agenda.
- Programme Leader presents proposal at meeting.

8.2. **Academic Committee Evaluates:**

Similar criteria to new programme proposals:

- Is modification educationally sound and necessary?
- Is rationale compelling?
- Are expected benefits realistic?
- Are resources adequate?
- Will modified programme meet quality standards?
- Are risks acceptable and mitigated?

8.3. **Academic Committee Decision:**

Option 1: Approve - Proceed with Development

- Academic Committee approves proposal to develop major modification
- Appoints Programme Development Subcommittee (if complex) or authorizes Programme Leader and team to develop (if straightforward)
- Sets timeline and milestones

Option 2: Reject

- Modification not appropriate or necessary

- Current programme continues without major changes
- May recommend minor modifications instead

Option 3: Request Further Information or Reconsideration

- Proposal needs refinement
- Additional information required
- Programme Leader revises and resubmits

9. Developing Major Modification

9.1. **Development Process:**

Similar to new programme development (Policy 5.2):

Programme Development Subcommittee (if appointed) or Programme Leader and Team:

- Conduct needs analysis
- Consult stakeholders (teaching team, students, external stakeholders)
- Design modified programme (updated learning outcomes, structure, content, assessment as appropriate)
- Develop updated programme documentation:
- Updated Programme Specification
- Updated Syllabus
- Updated Assessment documentation
- Updated Student Materials
- Present to Academic Committee for approval

Timeline: Typically, 3-6 months depending on complexity

9.2. **Consultation:**

Comprehensive consultation required for major modifications:

- **Teaching Team:** Deeply involved in design, consulted throughout
- **Current Students (if affects them):** Consulted on changes, informed of implications, preferences considered where appropriate
- **Student Representatives:** Input through Programme Board
- **External Stakeholders (if relevant):** Awarding bodies, employers, partner institutions

10. Academic Committee Approval of Major Modification

10.1. **Modified Programme Documentation Submitted:**

- Once development complete, updated programme documentation submitted to Academic Committee.

10.2. **Academic Committee Reviews and Approves:**

Academic Committee reviews updated documentation:

- Is modification well-designed and comprehensive?
- Will modified programme meet quality standards?
- Are all issues from proposal addressed?
- Is documentation complete and clear?

Decision:

- **Approve:** Modified programme approved for implementation
- **Approve with Amendments:** Minor changes required

- **Defer:** Revisions needed, resubmit
- **Reject:** (Rare) Modification not suitable, current programme continues

10.3. **Documentation:**

- Academic Committee decision recorded.
- Programme file updated with all major modification documentation.
- Programme Specification version updated (e.g., v1.5 becomes v2.0 to reflect major modification).

11. Implementing Major Modification

11.1. **Implementation Planning:**

Programme Leader develops implementation plan (similar to new programme - see Policy 5.2):

- Staff training
- Resources procurement
- Documentation updates
- Marketing and recruitment
- Student communication
- Systems updates

11.2. **Teach-Out Plan (if current students affected):**

If major modification means current students cannot continue on modified programme:

- **Teach-Out Plan** developed ensuring current students can complete under original programme specification

Current students informed clearly of options:

- Complete current programme as originally designed (teach-out)
- Transfer to modified programme if appropriate and beneficial
- Withdraw with refund if modification fundamentally changes programme they enrolled in
- No disadvantage to current students from programme modification

11.3. **Communication:**

Clear communication to all stakeholders:

- **Current Students:** If and how affected, options available, support provided
- **Prospective Students:** Accurate information about modified programme
- **Teaching Team:** Training on modified programme, expectations clear
- **Operations Team:** Operational implications understood and managed
- **Agents and Partners:** Informed of programme changes

11.4. **Launch:**

Modified programme launches:

- Typically for new intake (not mid-programme)
- Close monitoring during first delivery (as with new programme)
- Programme Leader monitors quality and addresses issues promptly

12. Post-Implementation Review

12.1. **Intensive Monitoring:**

First delivery of major modification monitored intensively:

- Programme Leader closely monitors teaching, learning, assessment, student satisfaction
- Regular check-ins with teaching team
- Mid-programme review (Programme Board or informal)
- End-of-programme review

12.2. **Evaluation:**

After first delivery:

- Programme Leader evaluates success of modification
- Has modification achieved intended improvements?
- Any issues or unintended consequences?
- Further refinements needed?

12.3. **Reporting:**

Evaluation reported to Academic Committee:

- "Major modification to [Programme] implemented [date]. First delivery evaluation: [summary]. Modifications successful / require further refinement."
- Academic Committee receives update, discusses, may recommend further actions

PART D: CUMULATIVE MINOR MODIFICATIONS REVIEW

13. Monitoring Cumulative Changes

13.1. **Annual Review - Cumulative Assessment:**

- During annual programme review, Programme Leader assesses cumulative effect of all minor modifications over past year (or multiple years):
- Have multiple minor modifications cumulatively changed programme significantly?
- Is programme still recognizable as originally approved programme?
- Has programme drifted from approved specification?

13.2. **Trigger for Major Review:**

If cumulative minor modifications substantial:

- Programme Leader or Senior Academic Manager may recommend major programme review
- Academic Committee may decide programme requires formal re-approval (essentially treat as major modification)
- Ensures programme doesn't drift too far from approved specification without proper oversight

- **Example:**
- Year 1: Minor modification - updated textbook
- Year 2: Minor modification - adjusted content in Module 2
- Year 3: Minor modification - changed assessment weighting
- Year 4: Minor modification - updated technology used

Cumulative assessment: Programme has evolved significantly through minor changes. Academic Committee decides: "Time for major programme review and formal re-approval to ensure programme still meets standards and remains fit for purpose."

PART E: DOCUMENTATION AND VERSION CONTROL

14. Maintaining Programme Documentation

14.1. **Version Control:**

All programme documentation uses version control:

Version Numbering:

- **Major version (X.0):** Major modifications, complete redesigns, or major re-approvals
- Programme Specification v1.0 (original approved)
- Programme Specification v2.0 (after major modification)
- **Minor version (X.Y):** Minor modifications
- Programme Specification v1.1 (after minor modification 1)
- Programme Specification v1.2 (after minor modification 2)

Example Version History:

Programme Specification for General English - Intermediate B1:

- v1.0 (September 2015): Original approval
- v1.1 (January 2016): Updated textbook (minor)
- v1.2 (September 2016): Adjusted assessment weighting (minor)
- v1.3 (January 2018): Updated content in Module 3 (minor)
- v2.0 (September 2019): Major modification - restructured to 3 modules (was 4), updated learning outcomes (major)
- v2.1 (September 2020): New textbook edition (minor)
- v2.2 (September 2022): Added online component (minor)
- v3.0 (September 2024): Major modification - moved to blended learning with significant online component (major)

14.2. **Change Log in Documentation:**

Programme Specification includes change log

CHANGE LOG

| Version | Date | Type | Changes Made | Approved By |

|---------|------|------|--------------|-------------|

- | 1.0 | Sept 2015 | - | Original approval | Academic Committee |
- | 1.1 | Jan 2016 | Minor | Updated textbook to 4th edition | Sr Academic Manager |
- | 1.2 | Sept 2016 | Minor | Adjusted assessment weighting (40/60 to 35/65) | Sr Academic Manager |
- | 2.0 | Sept 2019 | Major | Restructured to 3 modules, updated learning outcomes | Academic Committee |
- | 2.1 | Sept 2020 | Minor | New textbook edition | Sr Academic Manager |

14.3. **Document Management:**

Current Version: Clearly marked as "CURRENT" and dated

Previous Versions: Archived but accessible (for reference, audit trail)

Distribution: Current version distributed to all staff, available to students

14.4. **Quality Officer Maintains:**

- Programme Files with all versions and modification documentation

- Programme Modifications Register
- Oversight of version control compliance

15. Reporting Programme Modifications

15.1. **Programme Leader Reports:**

Programme modifications reported in:

Programme Board Minutes: Modifications discussed

Annual Programme Review Report: All modifications during year listed, effectiveness evaluated

15.2. **Quality Officer Consolidates:**

Quality Officer prepares annual summary of all programme modifications across all programmes:

- How many programmes modified?
- How many minor modifications, how many major?
- Common themes (e.g., many programmes updating textbooks, several moving to more formative assessment)
- Process effectiveness (are modifications improving programmes?)
- Included in Annual QAF Report to Board.

15.3. **Academic Committee Oversight:**

Academic Committee receives:

- Information on all minor modifications (as part of Programme Leaders' reports)
- Approval requests for all major modifications
- Annual summary of modification activity
- Ensures oversight and quality maintenance

Responsibility

Programme Leaders:

- Identifying needs for programme modifications
- Consulting teaching team on proposed modifications
- Preparing minor modification requests
- Preparing major modification proposals
- Implementing approved modifications
- Updating programme documentation
- Monitoring effectiveness of modifications
- Reporting modifications in Programme Board and Annual Review

Senior Academic Manager:

- Evaluating whether proposed modifications are minor or major
- Approving minor modifications
- Supporting Programme Leaders in modification process
- Presenting major modification proposals to Academic Committee
- Monitoring cumulative effect of modifications
- Ensuring policy consistently applied

Academic Committee:

- Approving major modification proposals
- Appointing Programme Development Subcommittees for major modifications (if needed)
- Approving modified programme documentation
- Receiving information on minor modifications
- Oversight of all programme modification activity

Teaching Staff:

- Identifying needs for modifications during delivery
- Providing input on proposed modifications
- Implementing approved modifications
- Providing feedback on effectiveness

Quality Officer:

- Advising on modification process
- Maintaining Programme Modifications Register
- Ensuring version control
- Consolidating annual modification data
- Reporting on modification activity

Programme Board:

- Discussing and recommending programme modifications
- Evaluating effectiveness of implemented modifications
- Student voice in modification decisions

Students (through representatives):

- Providing feedback leading to modifications
- Input on modifications affecting them
- Being informed of approved modifications

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Date Approved	March 2026
Approved by	Academic Committee

Related legislation, regulation or guidelines:

- Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI)
- Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of English Language Education to International Learners
- Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)

5.5 Policy for Access, Transfer and Progression

QA Area(s)	• Programmes of Education and Training • Learner Support		
Applies to	☐ Staff only	☑ Learners only	☑ Staff and learners
Policy Owner	| Senior Academic Manager		

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out the principles underpinning Access, Transfer, and Progression at ELI Schools, in alignment with the requirements of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012, as per QQI's 2015 policy restatement, ensuring fair, transparent, and consistent arrangements for learner access, transfer between programmes, and progression to further learning or employment.

Scope

This is an overarching policy that establishes principles applied to all programmes of education and training at ELI Schools across all locations.

Policy Statement

Commitment to Fair and Transparent Access:

- ELI Schools is committed to providing fair, equitable, and consistent access to all applicants
- Education is a right and opportunity that should be accessible to all who can benefit
- Clear and transparent entry arrangements enable informed decision-making
- Fair access processes build trust and confidence
- Appropriate entry requirements ensure learners can succeed
- Access arrangements must comply with equality legislation and promote inclusion

Definitions:

Access

- refers to the process by which learners may commence a programme of education and training, having received recognition for the knowledge, skill, or competence required.

Access comprises two types:

- **Initial Access:** Refers to a learner commencing at the initial stage of a programme (starting at the beginning, at the intended entry point)
- **Advanced Access:** Refers to a learner commencing at a post-initial stage of a programme (joining partway through or at advanced level based on prior learning)

Transfer

- refers to the process by which learners may transfer from one programme of education and training to another programme, having received recognition for knowledge, skill, and competence acquired.

Transfer may occur:

- Between CEFR levels and programmes at ELI Schools (internal transfer - e.g., from General English to Business English)
- From programmes at other institutions to ELI Schools (inbound transfer)
- From ELI Schools programmes to programmes at other institutions (outbound transfer - guidance and support provided)

Progression

refers to the process by which learners may progress from one programme of education and training to another programme, typically at a higher level or of greater complexity.

Progression includes:

- Vertical progression (moving to next level - e.g., from Intermediate B1 to Upper-Intermediate B2)
- Horizontal progression (moving to related programme at similar level - e.g., from General English B2 to IELTS Preparation)
- External progression (moving to programmes at other institutions - universities, colleges, employment)

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) refers to the acknowledgement of knowledge, skills, and competence acquired through prior learning (formal, non-formal, or informal) for the purposes of access, transfer, or progression.

Access

Principles of Access:

Fairness and Equity:
- All applicants treated fairly, without discrimination
- Access decisions based on transparent criteria applied consistently
- Equal opportunity regardless of gender, age, disability, race, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, membership of Traveller community
- Compliance with Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015 and Disability Act 2005

Transparency:
- Entry requirements clearly stated for all programmes
- Application and selection processes transparent and communicated clearly
- Decision-making criteria explicit
- Appeals process available

Consistency:
- Access arrangements applied consistently across all applicants
- Decisions based on objective criteria
- Record-keeping ensures accountability

Appropriate Entry Requirements:
- Entry requirements based on what learners need to succeed on programme
- Requirements proportionate and justified
- Requirements clearly linked to programme demands and learning outcomes

Inclusivity:
- Access as open as possible while maintaining programme quality and learner success
- Barriers to access minimized
- Reasonable accommodations provided for learners with disabilities
- Support available to help learners meet entry requirements where appropriate

Entry Requirements:

ELI Schools establishes clear entry requirements for each programme based on:

Language Level:
- Minimum English language level (typically expressed as CEFR level) required to access programme
- Ensures learner has foundation to engage with programme content and achieve learning outcomes
- Example: Intermediate B1 programme requires minimum A2+ level; learner with A1 level would struggle and not benefit

Age:

Minimum age requirements based on:
- Programme design (content, pedagogy appropriate for age group)
- Legal requirements (child safeguarding, parental consent for under-18s)
- Social and developmental appropriateness

Examples:
- Adult programmes: 16+ or 18+ (typically 16+ unless programme involves activities suitable only for adults)
- Junior programmes: Specific age bands (e.g., 12-14, 14-16, 16-17) ensuring peer groups

- Visa/immigration status (international students require appropriate visa for programme duration and intensity)

Assessment of Entry Requirements:

Entry level assessed through:	• **Placement Test:** ELI Schools' placement test assesses reading, writing, listening, grammar (for language level) • **Oral Interview:** Short interview assesses speaking and understanding • **Certificates:** Recognized English language certificates (IELTS, TOEFL, Cambridge, etc.) accepted as evidence of level
Initial Access (Standard Entry):	Most learners access ELI Schools programmes through initial access: • Apply to programme at advertised entry point • Meet minimum entry requirements (language level, age, qualifications as specified) • Complete admissions process (Section 5.6) • Commence programme at beginning **Process:** • Applicant inquiries about programme • Provided with programme information including entry requirements • Completes application • Entry level assessed (placement test, certificates, interview as appropriate) • If meets requirements: Offer of place made • If does not meet requirements: Advised of options (lower-level programme, preparatory programme, pathway to meet requirements) • Accepts offer, pays fees, enrols • Commences programme at start
Advanced Access (Entry with Credit for Prior Learning):	**Scenarios Where Advanced Access May Be Appropriate:** • **Learner with Higher Level:** Learner's assessed level higher than programme entry level, could benefit from starting at more advanced point • Example: Student placed at B1+ level applies to General English programme, could start in later weeks or move directly to B2 level • **Recognition of Prior Learning:** Learner has completed equivalent learning elsewhere and can demonstrate achievement of early programme learning outcomes • Example: Student completed first 4 weeks of programme at another school, transfers to ELI Schools and could potentially join in week 5 rather than starting again at week 1
ELI Schools' Approach to Advanced Access:	**General English and Standard Programmes:** • Flexible rolling enrolment for General English programmes (students can join most Mondays) • Placement test determines appropriate level • Students placed in level matching their ability (effectively advanced access if they place higher than beginner level) • Flexibility in moving between levels during programme if student progressing faster or slower than expected

Allocation of Places:

Open Access:

- Most ELI Schools programmes operate open access - all who meet entry requirements offered places (no competitive selection)
- Places allocated on first-come, first-served basis if programmes become full

Limited Places:

- Some programmes have limited places (e.g. IELTS Preparation)
- If applications exceed places: Selection based on transparent criteria
- Date of application (first-come, first-served)
- Strength of application (for programmes with selection criteria)
- Selection criteria stated in programme information
- Waiting list maintained if programme full

Appeals:

- Applicants who are not offered a place or disagree with access decision may appeal:
- Appeals handled through ELI Schools Complaints and Appeals procedures (Section 3)

Applicant may appeal on grounds of:

- Procedural error (process not followed correctly)
- Discrimination
- Disagreement with assessment (e.g., believes placement level incorrect)
- Appeal reviewed independently
- Decision communicated with rationale

Transfer

Principles of Transfer:

Recognition of Learning:

- Learning achieved in one context recognized and valued in another

Facilitating Mobility:

- Learners able to transfer between programmes to meet changing needs, goals, or circumstances

Quality Assurance:

- Transfers only granted where prior learning equivalent and learner will benefit

Transparency:

- Transfer processes and criteria clear and consistently applied

Student-Centered:

- Transfer decisions made in best interests of learner (will transfer benefit them? are they ready?)

Internal Transfer (Between ELI Schools Programmes):

Learners may request transfer from one ELI Schools programme to another:

Reasons for Transfer:

- Learner's goals or needs change (e.g., enrolled in General English but needs IELTS for access to Higher Education)
- Learner finds current programme not suitable (too easy, too difficult, wrong focus)
- Learner's level changes significantly during programme (placed incorrectly initially, or progressing rapidly)
- Personal circumstances change (need to shorten or extend programme, change schedule)

Process for Internal Transfer:

Learner Requests Transfer: Discusses with teacher, Programme Leader, or Student Services Officer

Assessment of Suitability:	• Is transfer in learner's best interests? (Will new programme better meet their needs?) • Does learner meet entry requirements for new programme? • Is space available on new programme? • What is timing? (Can learner transfer now or need to wait for next intake?) • **Academic Approval:** Programme Leaders of both programmes (current and destination) consulted • **Administrative Processing:** Transfer processed (fees adjusted if applicable, records updated, learner informed) • **Support for Transition:** Learner supported to settle into new programme (briefing on differences, materials, expectations)
Financial Implications:	• Transfer between programmes of equal duration and fee: No fee adjustment • Transfer to longer/more expensive programme: Pay difference • Transfer to shorter/less expensive programme: Refund or credit difference (subject to refund policy
Timing:	• Transfers ideally at natural break points (end of module, end of week, start of new intake) • Mid-programme transfers minimized where possible
Inbound Transfer (From Other Institutions to ELI Schools):	**Process:** • **Applicant Applies:** States they have studied elsewhere and requests credit or advanced access **Assessment:** • Placement test determines current level (most important factor) • Review of prior programme (if learner provides information or certificates) • Interview if needed • **Placement:** Learner placed in appropriate level based on current ability (effectively recognition of prior learning) • **Credit:** For General English, placement determines starting point (implicit credit for prior learning)
Outbound Transfer (From ELI Schools to Other Institutions):	Learners leaving ELI Schools to continue studies elsewhere: **ELI Schools Support:** • Provide completion certificates or transcripts documenting level achieved and programme completed • Provide reference letters if requested • Provide information to receiving institution if learner consents • Guidance on progression options **Transfer Agreements (if established):** • ELI Schools may establish formal transfer agreements or articulation arrangements with other institutions (universities, colleges, pathway providers) • Agreements specify recognition of ELI Schools programmes or levels for access to partner programmes • Documented in programme information and partnership agreements

Progression

Principles of Progression:

Clear Pathways:	• Progression routes identified and communicated to learners
Achievement-Based:	• Progression based on achievement of learning outcomes, demonstration of readiness for next level
Support for Success:	• Learners supported to progress successfully (guidance, preparation, transition support)
Realistic and Achievable:	• Progression expectations realistic; learners not progressed prematurely (set up for failure)
Transparency:	• Progression criteria and processes clear

Internal Progression (Between Levels at ELI Schools):

- Most common progression: Learners completing one level progress to next level

Example Progression Pathway:	• Beginner A1 → Elementary A2 → Pre-Intermediate A2+ → Intermediate B1 → Upper-Intermediate B2 → Advanced C1
Progression Criteria:	Learners progress to next level when they: • **Complete current programme** (attend required hours, complete assessments) • **Achieve current level learning outcomes** (demonstrated through assessment, teacher judgment, participation) • **Are ready for next level** (will be able to engage successfully with next level content)
Assessment of Progression Readiness:	• End-of-programme assessment results • Teacher recommendation (based on ongoing assessment, participation, progress) • Consideration of any extenuating circumstances affecting performance • May include exit test or re-assessment of placement
Automatic Progression:	• For most programmes, learners who successfully complete one level automatically progress to next level if continuing studies at ELI Schools • No need to re-apply or re-test (unless significant time gap between programmes)
Progression Challenges:	**Slower-Than-Expected Progress:** • Some learners may need to repeat level or take longer to achieve outcomes • Not failure - learning pace varies Options: • Repeat level or specific modules • Extended programme (more weeks at same level) • Additional support (tutorials, study skills guidance) • Decision made in consultation with learner, considering their goals, progress, and wellbeing **Faster-Than-Expected Progress:** • Some learners progress more rapidly Options: • Skip level or accelerate (if teacher confident learner ready) • Move to higher group mid-programme • Challenge or enrichment activities within level • Ensuring learner not held back inappropriately

Programme-Specific Progression:

Different programmes have different progression arrangements:

General English:	• Clear progression through CEFR levels (A1 → A2 → B1 → B2 → C1 → C2) • Flexible - learners progress when ready • Level changes possible during programme if placement reconsidered
Examination Preparation:	• Progression from lower-level exam to higher-level exam • Example: Cambridge First (FCE B2) → Cambridge Advanced (CAE C1) → Cambridge Proficiency (CPE C2) • Progression based on readiness for next examination level

External Progression (To Universities, Colleges, Employment):

ELI Schools programmes enable learners to progress externally:

University Entry:	• Many learners study English at ELI Schools to meet university English language entry requirements • ELI Schools provides: • Preparation for IELTS as part of the 15-hour program • Completion certificates documenting level achieved (some universities accept ELI Schools certificates alongside or instead of IELTS if partnership exists) • Guidance on university application through workshops and presentations
Employment:	• English language proficiency enables employment opportunities • Completion certificates document professional English competence
Further Education:	• Learners may progress to further English language study at higher levels or specialized areas • Or progress to other education (professional courses, training, etc.) enabled by English language competence

Information and Guidance:

ELI Schools provides clear information on progression:

Programme Information:	• States progression routes and next steps for each programme
Guidance:	• Student Services Officer, teachers, Programme Leaders provide guidance on progression options
Partnerships:	• Information on university partners, pathway programmes, articulation arrangements (if established)
Support:	• Assistance with applications, references, documentation for progression

Progression Support:

To support successful progression:

- **Academic Preparation:** Programmes designed to prepare learners for next level
- **Study Skills:** Development of autonomous learning, study skills, strategies for success
- **Transition Support:** Induction to new level, materials to bridge transition, early support in new programme
- **Monitoring:** Early identification of learners struggling in new level, intervention and support

Documenting Achievement for Progression:

ELI Schools provides learners with documentation supporting progression:

- **Completion Certificates:** Certify successful completion of programme, level achieved
- **Transcripts:** Detailed record of programmes completed, assessments, grades, levels achieved
- **References:** Letters of recommendation for university applications or employment (on request)
- **Examination Certificates:** Official certificates from awarding bodies (Cambridge, Trinity, IELTS, etc.) for examination preparation programmes

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Approved by	Academic Committee
Next Review Date	June 2027 (Biennial Review)

Related legislation, regulation or guidelines:

- Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI)
- Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of English Language Education to International Learners
- Disability Act 2005
- Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)

5.6 Procedure for Admission to English Language Programmes

QA Area(s)	• Programmes of Education and Training • Learner Support • Public Information and Communication		
Applies to	☐ Staff only	☑ Learners only	☑ Staff and learners
Policy Owner	Policy for Access, Transfer and Progression (5.5)		

Purpose

This procedure details the step-by-step processes for admitting students to ELI Schools English language programmes, ensuring fair, consistent, transparent, and efficient admissions across all student categories and all locations.

Scope

This procedure covers:

- All admissions to English language programmes at ELI Schools
- All student categories (EEA passport holders, non-EEA passport holders, walk-ins, agents, direct bookings)
- All locations (Dublin Dame Street, Dublin Grand Canal, Drogheda)
- All programme types (General English, Examination Preparation, Teacher Training, Junior Programmes, Business English, etc.)

Key Principles

- **Student-Centered:** Admissions process designed to be straightforward, welcoming, and supportive for applicants
- **Efficiency:** Timely responses and processing (target: respond within 48 hours of inquiry)
- **Accuracy:** Complete and accurate information collected and verified
- **Compliance:** Full compliance with immigration regulations, child safeguarding requirements, data protection (GDPR), and Code of Practice requirements
- **Communication:** Clear communication with applicants, agents, parents at all stages

Procedure

Part A: Definitions And Roles

1. Definitions

Key Terms:

Prospective Student/Learner:
- Any person who has communicated with ELI Schools or its agents regarding becoming a student, but who has not yet submitted an application or made a fee payment.

Applicant:
- A person who has applied for enrolment. May or may not have made a fee payment.

Registered Student/Learner: A person who has:
- Submitted a completed application for enrolment
- Is in compliance with all conditions and regulations for enrolment to a programme
- Has made payment of fees due (or has approved payment plan)
- Is enrolled on programme and ready to commence or has commenced

EEA Passport Holder:	• Student holding passport from European Economic Area (EEA) country or Switzerland. Does not require student visa for study in Ireland.
Non-EEA Passport Holder:	• Student holding passport from country outside EEA. May require student visa for study in Ireland depending on nationality and programme.
Agent:	• Education agent or agency acting as intermediary between ELI Schools and prospective students. Agent recruits students, provides information, assists with applications, may handle bookings and payments on student's behalf.
Direct Booking:	• Student applying directly to ELI Schools (not through agent).
Walk-In:	• Prospective student who arrives at ELI Schools premises in person (without prior booking) and wishes to enrol immediately.
Closed Group:	• Group of students from same organization (school, company, etc.) booking programme together.

2. Responsible Persons and Roles

Prospective Student/Applicant:	• Providing accurate and complete information • Submitting required documentation • Making fee payment • Responding to communications from ELI Schools
Agent (if applicable):	• Providing accurate information to students about ELI Schools and programmes • Assisting students with application completion • Submitting applications and documentation to ELI Schools on students' behalf • Collecting and forwarding fee payments (if net agent arrangement) • Acting as communication channel between student and ELI Schools
Office Staff / Reception / Admissions Team:	• Primary point of contact for applicants and agents • Responding to inquiries • Processing applications • Collecting and verifying documentation • Entering student details into booking system • Generating confirmations and invoices • Collecting payments • Communicating with applicants and agents • Maintaining visitor logbook (for walk-ins)
Office Manager / Operations Manager:	• Oversight of admissions processes • Handling complex or problematic applications • Managing relationships with agents • Ensuring compliance with procedures • Escalating issues to Senior Operations Manager or Managing Director as needed
Student Services Officer:	• Providing pre-arrival information and guidance to students • Assisting with banking, immigration, or other student welfare issues before arrival (particularly for non-EEA students) • Coordinating student induction

Accommodation Officer:	• Assigning students to host families or residential accommodation (where applicable) • Coordinating accommodation arrangements
Academic Manager / Programme Leaders:	• Addressing programme-specific queries from applicants • Reviewing applications for specialized programmes (e.g., teacher training) • Conducting placement tests • Determining student placement in appropriate level/class
Finance Manager:	• Oversight of fee collection and refunds • Managing escrow accounts and financial protection arrangements • Ensuring PEL insurance compliance

Part B: Pre-Application - Inquiry and Information

3. Initial Inquiry

Sources of Inquiries:	• Prospective students may contact ELI Schools through: • Website inquiry form • Email (hello@elischools.com or specific school email) • Phone • Social media (Facebook, Instagram) • Walk-in to school premises • Education agents • Referrals (from current or former students, partners)
Receiving and Logging Inquiry:	**Office Staff:** • Receive inquiry through any channel • Log inquiry in CRM system or inquiry register (name, contact details, programme interest, source, date) • Respond promptly (target: within 24 hours, maximum 48 hours)
Follow-Up:	If no response within 1 week, Office Staff may send gentle follow-up: • "Just checking if you received our information and if you have any questions?" • If still no response after second follow-up (1 week later), inquiry closed (but remains in system for future reference)

Part C: Application Process - General English and Standard Programmes

4. Application Submission

Application Methods:	Students may apply: • **Online Application Form:** Preferred method - form on ELI Schools website • **Email:** Completed PDF application form emailed to ELI Schools • **Through Agent:** Agent submits application on student's behalf • **Walk-In:** Complete application form in person at school
Application Form Contents:	Standard application form collects: • **Personal Information:** • Full name (as on passport) • Date of birth • Gender • Nationality • Passport number • Email address • Phone number (mobile) • Current address • Address in Ireland (if known)
Programme Information:	• Programme requested (General English, Exam Prep, etc.) • Level (if known, or "To be determined by placement test") • Start date (preferred) • Duration (number of weeks) • Intensity (hours per week)
Accommodation (if required):	• Accommodation type requested (host family, residence, none) • Dietary requirements • Allergies • Preferences (if any) • Start and end dates for accommodation
Airport Transfer (if required):	• Arrival flight details (date, time, flight number, airport) • Departure flight details (if booking return transfer)
Emergency Contact:	• Name • Relationship • Phone number • Email
Medical Information:	• Medical conditions (relevant to studying or accommodation) • Allergies • Medications • Dietary requirements
Declarations:	☐ I confirm the information provided is accurate ☐ I have read and agree to ELI Schools Terms and Conditions ☐ I consent to ELI Schools processing my personal data in accordance with GDPR (link to Privacy Policy) ☐ [If under 18] Parent/Guardian consent and signature

5. Application Processing - EEA Passport Holders (Direct Booking)

Application Received:

- Office Staff receives completed online application form via email notification from website system

Check Application Completeness:

- Office Staff reviews application:
- All required fields completed?
- Contact information provided?
- Programme details clear?
- Declarations signed?

If **incomplete:**

- Email applicant: "Thank you for your application. We need additional information: [specify]. Please provide by [date]."
- Application placed on hold until complete

If **complete:**

Enter Student Details into Booking System:
Office Staff enters all student details into ELI Schools booking/student management system:

- Personal information
- Programme details (programme type, level TBC, start date, duration, intensity)
- Accommodation request (if applicable)
- Transfer request (if applicable)
- Emergency contact
- Medical information
- Source (how they heard about us)
- Agent (if applicable - mark as "Direct booking")
- Generate **Student ID number** (automatic in system).

Generate Booking Confirmation and Invoice:
System generates: **Booking Confirmation:**
Invoice:

- Itemized invoice with all fees
- Payment instructions (bank account details for transfer, credit card payment link, etc.)
- Payment due date
- Terms and conditions reference

Office Staff:

- Saves all documentation in student's electronic file (student ID folder)
- Updates booking system status: "Confirmed - awaiting payment"

6. Application Processing - Non-EEA Passport Holders (Direct Booking)

Process Similar to EEA But with Additional Steps:

- Steps 5.1 through 5.3 same as EEA process above.

Additional Note in Confirmation:

Booking confirmation includes additional section for non-EEA students notifying them of extra requirements.

Payment Requirement for Letter of Acceptance:

For non-EEA students:
Letter of Acceptance issued only after full payment received

- This is because Letter of Acceptance is required for visa application, and ELI Schools must ensure genuine enrolment
- Stated clearly in booking confirmation: "Letter of Acceptance will be issued upon receipt of full payment"

Issue Letter of Acceptance (After Payment Received):
Once non-EEA student makes full payment (see Section 7):
Office Staff prepares **Letter of Acceptance:**

Send Letter of Acceptance:
Office Staff sends Letter of Acceptance to student:

Copy for Records:
Copy of Letter of Acceptance filed in student's file
Noted in booking system: "Letter of Acceptance issued [date]"

Follow-Up on Visa Status:
Student Services Officer or Office Staff follows up with student periodically:

- 4 weeks after Letter of Acceptance sent: "How is your visa application progressing?"
- 2 weeks before programme start: "Has your visa been approved? Do you have your travel plans?"

If visa refused:

- Student contacts ELI Schools
- Refund processed according to refund policy (see Terms & Conditions and Section 17 Financial Management)
- Typically: Full refund minus administration fee, provided refusal notification and evidence provided

7. Payment Processing

Payment Due Date:

- Payment due date specified in invoice (typically **2 weeks before programme start date**).
- Confirmation states: "Your place on the programme is not confirmed until full payment is received."

Payment Methods:
ELI Schools accepts:

- **Bank Transfer:** IBAN and BIC provided, student reference number to be included
- **Transfermate:** Escrow payments for visa students
- **Agent Payment:** If booking through agent, agent may pay on behalf of student (gross or net arrangement depending on agent agreement)

Monitoring Payments:	• Finance team or Office Staff monitors payments daily: • Check bank account for incoming transfers • Check payment gateway for card payments • Match payments to student bookings (using student ID or name)
Payment Received:	When payment received: **Office Staff:** • Confirms payment received and amount correct • Updates booking system: "Paid - €[X] received [date]" • Changes student status from "Applicant" to "Registered Student" • Sends payment confirmation to student: • Subject: Payment Received - ELI Schools
Late Payment or Non-Payment:	If payment not received by 2 days before programme start: • Office Manager or Operations Manager contacts student by phone (if possible) to determine status • If no response and no payment: Booking cancelled • Student notified: "Unfortunately, as payment was not received, your booking has been cancelled. If you wish to rebook for a future date, please contact us." • Accommodation and transfers cancelled (if booked)

8. Accommodation and Transfer Arrangements

Accommodation Booking (if requested by student):	If student requested accommodation on application: **Accommodation Officer:** • Receives accommodation request from booking system (once payment confirmed) Assigns student to host family or residence based on: • Availability • Student preferences (if stated) • Suitability (age, gender, dietary requirements, etc.) • Safeguarding (if student under 18 - additional vetting and suitability checks) • Confirms dates with accommodation provider • Updates booking system with accommodation details • See Section 15 (Child Safeguarding) for host family vetting and inspection procedures.
Send Accommodation Details to Student:	Accommodation Officer sends accommodation details **approximately 1 week before arrival** (or earlier if student requests):
Send Transfer Details to Student:	Approximately **3-5 days before arrival**

9. Pre-Arrival Information

Send Pre-Arrival Information Pack:

Student Services Officer	sends comprehensive pre-arrival information **1-2 weeks before programme start:** Link to Online Level Test (writing, listening, reading) Link to Online Student Guide FIRST DAY ARRANGEMENTS: What to Bring: • Passport or photo ID • Notebook and pen • Accommodation address and contact number • Emergency contact details • [Any programme-specific items] First Day Schedule: 08:30 - Arrival and registration 08:45 - Oral interview and speaking test 09:00 - First class 12:30 - Welcome and induction 14:00 - Tour of school and local area

Part D: Agent Bookings

Bookings Through Education Agents	**Agent Relationship:** ELI Schools works with approved education agents worldwide: • Agents recruited and vetted (Section 16 - Marketing and Student Recruitment) • Agents have contract with ELI Schools • Agents have access to agent portal or booking system • Agents receive discounts for bookings (net or gross arrangements)
Agent Booking Process:	**Process differs slightly from direct bookings:** **Agent:** • Recruits' student • Provides information about ELI Schools and programmes • Assists student with application completion • Submits application to ELI Schools (via email, agent portal, or online system) • May collect payment from student (depending on arrangement)
Office Staff at ELI Schools:	• Receives application from agent • Reviews application (as per Section 5 above) • Enters details into booking system (noting agent name and reference) Generates confirmation and invoice: • **Net arrangement:** Invoice sent to agent, agent pays ELI Schools (net of any wholesale discount), agent has already collected from student • Sends confirmation and invoice to agent (not directly to student, unless requested) • Agent forwards to student

Communication via Agent:	• Primary communication through agent (agent acts as intermediary) • ELI Schools may communicate directly with student for important matters (accommodation, transfers, pre-arrival info) with copy to agent
Letter of Acceptance (for non-EEA students via agents):	Process same as Section 6 above: • Issued after payment received • Sent to agent • Agent forwards to student • Copy sent directly to student (with copy to agent) to ensure student receives it
Agent Monitoring:	Office Manager or Marketing Manager monitors agent bookings: • Quality of applications (complete, accurate?) • Payment timely? • Communication effective? • Any issues with specific agents? • Feedback to agents on performance • See Section 16 for full agent management procedures

Part E: Walk-In Enrolments

Walk-In Students	**Definition:** • Walk-in: Prospective student who arrives at ELI Schools premises in person (without prior booking) and wishes to enrol and start immediately or very soon. **Common scenarios:** • Tourist in Ireland decides to take English course • Student arrives in Ireland without booking and seeks school • Student referred by friend/hostel/tourist information • Student booked elsewhere but unsatisfied, looking for alternative
Reception of Walk-In:	**Reception Staff:** • Greets walk-in warmly: "Welcome to ELI Schools! How can I help you today?" • Establishes interest: "You're interested in studying English with us?" Assesses situation: • When do you want to start? • How long do you want to study? • What is your English level (approximately)? • Do you need accommodation? • What is your nationality? (Visa implications) **Provide Information:** Reception Staff: • Explains programmes available, start dates (typically can start next Monday for General English) • Provides programme information, fees • Explains enrolment process • Answers questions • Shows school if time permits (brief tour)

Decision to Enrol: If walk-in decides to enrol:

Reception Staff:

- **Visitor Logbook:** Walk-in signs in as visitor initially (for fire safety - see Section 18 Safe Centre Management)
- **Application Form:** Walk-in completes application form (paper form or on computer/tablet at reception)
- **ID Verification:** Reception Staff requests photo ID (passport, driving license, student ID) for verification
- Make photocopy of ID photo page
- Attach to application form
- **Enter into System:** Enter student details into booking system (as per Section 5 above)
- **Generate Confirmation and Invoice:** Print confirmation and invoice

Payment: Request payment:

- Payment required immediately for walk-ins (to confirm place)
- Bank transfer (if bank transfer, may start provisionally subject to payment confirmation within 1-2 days)
- **Payment Receipt:** Issue payment receipt
- **Student Card and Welcome Pack:** Issue Student Card and Welcome Pack (containing Student Handbook, school map, local area information, class timetable template)

Placement Test:

- Walk-in completes placement test immediately (if time available and staff available to administer)
- Or scheduled for next day or Monday (if enrolling for Monday start)

Level Determination:

- Placement test corrected by qualified staff (teacher or academic manager)
- Oral interview conducted
- Level determined
- Student informed of level and class
- **Timetable:** Student given timetable showing their class times, teacher name, room number
- **Start Date Confirmed:** Typically, next Monday (or current week if spaces and appropriate)

Accommodation (if needed):

- If student needs accommodation urgently: Accommodation Officer contacted (if available) or student provided with accommodation options (host families, residences, hotels, hostels)
- Emergency accommodation arranged if necessary and possible
- Otherwise: Student finds own accommodation and provides address once secured
- **Sign Out:** Walk-in signs out of visitor logbook (now a Registered Student, not visitor)
- **Welcome:** Student welcomed, encouraged to ask any questions, reminded of start date/time, given contact details

Documentation:

- Application form (with ID copy) filed
- Booking confirmation and receipt filed
- Student file created
- Placement test attached

13. Junior Programme Admissions (under 18s)

Additional Requirements for Junior Programmes:

Junior programmes (for students under 18) have additional requirements due to safeguarding (Children First Act):

Application Requirements:

- Parental/guardian consent (parent must sign application form)
- More detailed medical information (allergies, conditions, medications)
- Dietary requirements
- Behavioural or learning needs disclosed
- Emergency contact (parent/guardian contact details essential)
- Travel arrangements (supervised arrival? collected by whom?)

Accommodation:

- If host family: Enhanced vetting and inspection of host families (Section 15)
- If residence: Appropriate supervision arrangements
- If staying with family in Ireland: Details and confirmation

Supervision:

- Junior programmes have enhanced supervision ratios
- Welfare officer assigned
- Safeguarding procedures apply (Section 15)

Application Process:

Similar to standard process (Section 5) with additions:

- Application form includes parental consent section (must be signed by parent/legal guardian)
- Additional information required:
- Detailed medical and dietary information
- Any behavioural, learning, or additional needs
- Parent contact details (phone numbers, email - multiple contacts)
- Who will collect student? (If not staying full programme duration)
- Insurance details

Parental Communication:

- Confirmation sent to both student and parent
- Parent receives all important information
- Parent consent required for activities, photographs, etc.

Safeguarding:

- All staff working on junior programme Garda vetted (Section 15)
- Host families (if applicable) Garda vetted and inspected
- DLP oversight

Arrival:

- Supervised arrival required (parent accompanies, or airport transfer arranged, or designated person collects)
- Unaccompanied minors: Special arrangements made

Ongoing Communication:

- Regular updates to parents on student progress and welfare
- Parent contact for any issues
- See Section 15 (Child Safeguarding) for full safeguarding procedures for junior programmes.

14. Closed Group Bookings

Definition:

- Closed group: Group of students from same organization (school, company, government agency, etc.) booking programme together.

Characteristics:

- Group size typically 10-30+ students
- Group stays together (taught separately or integrated with other students depending on arrangement)
- Customized programme possible
- Single point of contact (group leader or organization representative)

Application Process:

Different from individual applications:

- **Initial Contact:** Organization contacts ELI Schools (directly or through agent)

Requirements Gathering:

- How many students?
- Age group?
- Level(s)?
- Dates?
- Programme type? (General English, themed programme, combination with activities, etc.)
- Accommodation needed?
- Special requirements? (Cultural activities, specific content, supervision, etc.)

Proposal Development:

- Operations Manager or Senior Academic Manager develops customized proposal
- Programme outline
- Schedule
- Accommodation options
- Activities
- Fees (group discounts typically available)
- **Negotiation:** Back-and-forth with organization to finalize details
- **Contract:** Formal contract or booking agreement signed by both parties

Group Application:

- Organization provides list of all participants (names, DOB, nationalities, passport numbers if non-EEA, medical information, etc.)
- Individual application forms may be simplified for group bookings
- **Payment:** Typically, organization pays for entire group (single invoice)
- **Pre-Arrival:** Group leader liaison, pre-arrival information sent
- **Arrival:** Group arrival coordinated, group induction
- **Ongoing:** Group leader as point of contact, regular communication

Responsibility:

- **Operations Manager:** Coordinating logistics
- **Academic Manager:** Academic content and delivery
- **Closed Group Coordinator (if designated):** Day-to-day management

Part G: Placement And Induction

Pre-Arrival Test	• Students are invited and required to complete an online level test using their unique Student ID Number at https://elischools.com/level-test/
Pre-Arrival Welcome Pack	• Students are sent a Pre-Arrival Welcome Pack by email and WhatsApp • Student Handbook • Class timetable • Class level and teacher confirmed on day 1 post speaking test • Student services information and any programme-specific materials
First Day - Student Arrival:	• Students arrive on first day at scheduled time (typically 08:30) **Reception Staff:** • Welcomes students and checks student off arrival list • Directs students to registration area **Registration:** **Office Staff or Student Services Officer:** **Verify Identity:** Check passport or ID against booking **Confirm Details:** • Any changes to information on application? **Provide Welcome Pack** (if not already provided): **Explain Schedule for Day:** • Induction presentation at [time] • Placement test at [time] • Results and timetable at [time] • Classes start at [time] **Health and Safety Briefing:** • Fire exits and assembly point (show on map) • First aid (where first aid room is, who first aiders are) • Emergency contact numbers • **Questions:** Answer any immediate questions **Induction Presentation:** **Academic Manager or Programme Leader** conducts induction presentation (30-45 minutes):
Communicating Placement:	**Student informed of level and class:** • Director of Studies or Academic Manager meets with student (individually) • "Based on your placement test, we've placed you in our [Intermediate B1] class." **Explain:** • What level means (CEFR level description) • What will be covered in class • Teacher name • Classmates (approximate number, nationalities if known) • Timetable
Induction Contract	Non-EEA students are issued with an Academic Year contract which they sign and commit to understanding the rules of the program, their visa requirements and their minimum entry and exit level and end of course exam. These contracts are signed in person, scanned and saved in a digital file.