

GENERAL METHODOLOGY IN THE CLASSROOM – OTC 01

2 weeks. Language level B2/C1

This 2-week course on General Methodology in the Classroom may be included in an application for Erasmus+ funding for training under Key Action 1 (KA1) – Mobility for School Education Staff

Objectives

The aims of this course on General Methodology in the Classroom are:

- To familiarise participants with recent pedagogical and classroom technology developments in ELT
- To provide opportunities for reflection on their own practice
- To develop and consolidate participants' own language skills
- To promote awareness of contemporary Ireland
- To establish contacts between teachers from a variety of European backgrounds and facilitate future networking among these professionals.

Through the realisation of these objectives we aim to assist schools in addressing identified needs as outlined in their European Development Plan; to produce high-quality learning outcomes for participants and to re-inforce the capacities and international scope of the participating organisations.

Format

This course on General Methodology in the Classroom is a 2-week course consisting of 40 contact hours plus an extensive cultural and social programme which is directly linked to the morning sessions.

Methodology

The input sessions are a blend of theory and practice in ELT using lecture format and practical activities based on Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) methodology. These sessions cover a wide spectrum of areas including

- the four language skills
- language analysis and awareness
- using internet tools
- developing materials
- promoting learner autonomy
- exploring aspects of contemporary Ireland.

Throughout the course, participants are encouraged to reflect on their own practice, consider alternative practices and try out a variety of classroom activities. The activities are matched to the linguistic level of the groups with a view to simultaneously developing their language skills.

The morning sessions are complemented and reinforced by a series of directly related afternoon activities where the participants are encouraged to develop their language skills in a more informal environment outside of the classroom and further enhance their knowledge of Ireland, with a focus on exploiting school trips in their own teaching environments to develop language skills of their students.

Follow-up

On the final day of the course, the participants engage in a reflection session in which they are encouraged to examine benefits gained from the course and complete a course evaluation form. Participants are encouraged to keep contact via email and private social networking. Regular follow-up contact is made with the participants after completion of the course. The Alpha trainers are available for follow-up advice and support at all times.

To apply for the General Methodology in the Classroom Course

To make application for Erasmus+ funding for this course or any of our other in-service training courses for teachers please visit your National Agency website for full information on the application process.

About Alpha College

Alpha College is an approved training centre for the ACELS/QQI Certificate in English Language Teaching (CELT) and has a staff of highly qualified, experienced and motivated teacher trainers who train prospective ELT teachers year-round. They are also practising teachers of English, experienced in using up-to-date methods with learners at all levels of language learning. In addition Alpha College has been providing in-service training courses for teachers from overseas for the last 16 years.

Course Programme

Day one

- On arrival participants meet their tutors and are given an induction covering information about the school and Dublin. They also receive out-of-hours emergency contact telephone numbers for key Alpha personnel. On completion of their induction they complete a needs analysis questionnaire. In some cases the schedule may be refined to adapt to specific requirements of a group.
- Details of the course are outlined including the content and methodology of individual sessions. Participants get to know each other through a communicative activity which reflects the general methodology of the course. The group discuss their professional backgrounds and some general principles of education.
- An afternoon orientation tour of Dublin provides participants with an opportunity to practise their English in a more informal setting outside the classroom, familiarise themselves with the geography and history of the city and allow participants to collect authentic materials for use in the classroom.

Day two

- Review of theory and methodology in language learning. Reflection on their development and relation to classroom practice. Implications for teaching. The role of learner autonomy in language learning.
- Early Irish history session, exploring use of reading text in the classroom through CLT and CLIL.
- Visit to the National Museum covering periods examined in the history session, exploiting and relating fieldwork to class work and collecting authentic materials.

Day three

- Language games and activities. Exploring and using communicative language games.
- Developing the speaking skill. Practical activities for promoting speaking in the classroom. Spoken interaction and the CEFR.

- Visit to Trinity College. Introduction to third level education in Ireland. Contribution of Trinity alumni to Irish and international academic affairs. Book of Kells and influence of early Irish missionaries in Europe. Collecting authentic materials. Developing speaking through short presentations on universities of participants.

Day four

- Using the internet. Basic browsing skills. The internet as a resource. Teaching websites. Introduction to concordancers and corpora in the classroom.
- Developing the reading skill. Alternative approaches to using written texts in the classroom.
- Visit to Guinness Storehouse. Collecting authentic texts describing processes.

Day five

- Developing the reading skill 2. Exploiting authentic materials in the classroom. Mirroring real-life reading skills in the classroom.
- Drama in the classroom. Using drama activities to develop communication skills.
- Visit to the National Gallery. Sourcing materials for developing speaking skills.

Day six

- Developing the listening skill. Difficulties of listening for students and how to reduce these. Songs in the classroom.
- Irish Literature. Introduction to modern Irish literature. Using literary texts in the classroom.
- Visit to the Dublin Writers' Museum. Audio tour to develop listening skill. Further input on Irish Literature and collecting authentic materials.

Day seven

- Web tools. Further uses of concordancers and corpora in the classroom. Designing materials using web tools. Using web tools to develop language skills and promote learner autonomy.
- Teaching pronunciation. Making pronunciation communicative and fun in the classroom.
- Visit to Cathedrals. History and influence of the main denominations in Ireland. Jonathan Swift.

Day eight

- Developing the writing skill. Process writing. Writing and project work.
- Language analysis. Raising language awareness. Types of grammar. A lexical approach to grammar teaching.
- Visit to the Chester Beatty Library. Materials for developing writing skills in the classroom.

Day nine

- Teaching vocabulary. The lexical approach to teaching vocabulary and collocations.
- Reflective teaching. Contributions from the field of general education. Reconceptualising the knowledge base of language teachers.
- Film in the classroom. Exploiting film in the classroom using a contemporary Irish film as an example.

Day ten

- The Irish education system. History and development of the system. Comparison with other European models.
- Course review and evaluation. Implications for future practice. Establishment of base and guidelines for future contact and networking.

Course Dates:

- 4th July 2016
- 3rd July 2017
- (or by arrangement for closed groups)

Course Fees:

Programme including materials, excursions and activities as outlined in the programme €750

Host Family Accommodation, single room, half board

€350 for 2 weeks (October – June)

€370 for 2 weeks (July and August)

Student Self Catering Accommodation, Shanowen Hall: July and August only

€390 for 2 weeks. Single bedroom, private bathroom, shared kitchen/living room

Airport Transfers (optional)

arrival €70; departure €70