



ELT Conference

Friday 28 February &
Saturday 1 March 2025

Hilton London Canary Wharf



Welcome to the ELT Conference

It's great to welcome such a wide range of our industry's wonderful professionals to this event.

We're excited to welcome you to our 2025 English Language Teaching Conference.

This event is a chance to exchange ideas and explore innovative teaching strategies and management techniques that can be applied in the staffroom or classroom. By coming together as a community, we can encourage each other to improve student learning and drive positive change in ELT.

Over two days our speakers will present on topics such as recruitment, teacher training, AI, biases and wellbeing in the classroom. Plus we have our inspiring keynote speakers, Sarah Seaman and Michael Rosen, along with many other practical and inspiring sessions that we hope you will find helpful.

I want to thank our brilliant speakers for giving their time and sharing their expertise. And a special thank you to our sponsors and exhibitors whose support allows us to offer these events at an affordable price.

We are feeling positive and excited for 2025. We hope this event is enjoyable and useful for you, and you use this opportunity to catch up with your peers and learn from experts as well as each other.

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Huan Japes
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Trinity College London

Trinity College London is an international exam board and educational charity that has been providing assessments since 1877. Every year over 850,000 people take a Trinity exam in more than 60 countries world-wide.

Trinity's language exams are recognised for their unique approach to assessing communicative competence, and for the positive impact they have on teaching practice, and skills development.

Our qualifications - including, GESE, ISE, Trinity Stars and TESOL are widely recognised around the world.

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Pearson

At Pearson we provide English learning solutions to help educators teach English with confidence. From courseware to assessment and certification, we offer a comprehensive educational experience with materials and tools for every stage of the English learning journey. We have also developed the Global Scale of English (GSE) and Global Scale of Languages (GSL) to help learners understand their language abilities accurately. Both scales also help teachers to confidently place students at their level of progress and to create optimal personalised learning pathways.

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Macmillan Education

For over 180 years Macmillan's pioneering spirit and reputation for quality has enabled us to build lasting relationships with teachers and educators around the world.

Macmillan Education is a global publisher with a regional focus. We have a local presence in over 120 countries and work closely with students, teachers, institutions and educational authorities to advance learning. This includes extensive free teacher development resources, tailor-made training for your institution and highly responsive local customer service representatives.

Macmillan are delighted to be sponsoring the 2025 ELT Conference. Come and speak to Jo at the stand to look through our latest titles and hear more about what we are doing, and how we can support you and your school.

www.macmillanenglish.com

Timetable

Friday 28 February - academic management

09:30 – 09:45	Welcome from English UK	Quayside Suite
09:45 – 10:30	Access to the ELT industry with Huan Japes and panel	Quayside Suite
10:35 – 11:10	Defeating systemic bias in English language training with Meri Maroutian	Quayside Suite
11:10 – 11:20	Meet the exhibitors	Quayside Suite
11:20 – 11:50	Refreshments and exhibition	Quayside Lobby
11:50 – 12:20	Listening as a manager: going beyond “my door is always open” with Andy Jeffery	Quayside Suite
	From learning objectives to learning outcomes: tracking progress with purpose with Billie Jago	Room 3/4/5
12:30 – 13:00	Update on British Council inspections with Liz McLaren	Quayside Suite
	Managing conflict: prevention, reconciliation and resolution with Thom Jones	Room 3/4/5
13:00 – 14:10	Lunch break and exhibition	Quayside Lobby
14:10 – 14:40	Hear me out: how sharing true stories in reflective spaces can support cross-cultural understanding between staff and students with Lalith Wijedoru	Quayside Suite
	Different approaches to observations with Ben Butler	Room 3/4/5
14:50 – 15:20	Building inclusive workplaces: retaining and attracting staff in ELT with Ella Tyler	Quayside Suite
	AI and academic management: where are we now, where might we be going with Neil Harris	Room 3/4/5
15:20 – 15:50	Refreshments and exhibition	Quayside Lobby
15:50 – 17:00	Closing keynote with Sarah Seaman	Quayside Suite
17:00 – 18:00	Networking reception	Quayside Lobby

Timetable

Saturday 1 March - teaching and classroom practice

09:45 – 10:00	Welcome from English UK	Quayside Suite
10:00 – 10:40	The Future of English – where next? with Mike Solly & Steve Copeland	Quayside Suite
10:45 – 11:15	Experiences: creativity and innovation in ELT	Quayside Suite
11:15 – 11:40	Refreshments and exhibition	Quayside Lobby
11:40 – 12:20	Managing differentiation in the classroom with David Byrne	Quayside Suite
	Let's talk about it (developing the speaking skill) with Tery Lemanis	Room 3/4/5
12:30 – 13:10	Student wellbeing in the classroom: practical strategies for educators with Ruth Hughes	Quayside Suite
	Speaking without hesitation – using movement and character in the classroom with David Bedward	Room 3/4/5
13:10 – 14:10	Lunch break and exhibition	Quayside Lobby
14:10 – 14:50	Making learning meaningful: what are integrated skills and why are they important with Jo Krouso	Quayside Suite
	Mind the gap: bridging cultures in the classroom with Helen Lunney and Joanna Steiner	Room 3/4/5
15:00 – 15:40	From chaos to calm: tips and strategies for managing classroom behaviour with teens and young learners with Varinder Unlu	Quayside Suite
	Teaching in transition: adapting to changing learner needs and leveraging EdTech with Beatrice Segura Harvey	Room 3/4/5
15:40 – 16:00	Refreshments and exhibition	Quayside Lobby
16:00 – 17:00	Closing keynote with Michael Rosen	Quayside Suite
17:00 – 18:00	Networking reception	Quayside Lobby

Session and speakers

Friday 28 February

Quayside Suite

09:45 – 10:30

Access to the ELT industry

This panel discussion will focus on staff retention, development and professionalism. We will pose questions to the panel such as how can we bridge the gap between certificate and diploma level qualifications? How can teachers working variable hours across a number of schools take charge of their professional development and how can the ELT industry best support them in developing a careers as an ELT teacher? And what happens next for teachers who have passed their diplomas?

Panellists will discuss how well qualifications are working in the current market, how they could develop, and consider whether we are reaching all the people we can reach and what barriers need to be overcome to make the industry more attractive to a diverse range of people.

Huan Japes, English UK
 Joel Cutting, Cambridge University Press & Assessment
 Gill Davidson, EC English
 Ben Beaumont, Trinity College London
 Beatrice Segura Harvey

10:35 - 11:10

Defeating systemic bias in English language teaching

There are persistent biases within ELT that hinder equitable opportunities for non-native and marginalised teachers. Drawing from research and personal experience, Meri will highlight how biases based on nationality and linguistic background affect professional growth, recognition, and advancement. Participants will explore actionable strategies for promoting inclusivity and rethinking outdated standards that define a “qualified” teacher. Through dialogue and practical examples, this session aims to inspire educators and institutions to actively dismantle systemic barriers, fostering a more diverse and equitable ELT profession.

Meri Maroutian

Sessions and speakers

Friday 28 February | 11:50 - 12:20

Quayside Suite

Listening as a manager: going beyond “my door is always open”

In this session, we will discuss what true listening as a manager looks like. With some practical audience participation and discussion, we will consider how we can and should actively seek feedback from our staff and discover opportunities to praise them.

We will also highlight the common ways that staff can feel ‘not listened to’ and explore the easy fixes for this issue.

We encourage participants to help guide the session by sharing their ideas and experiences. By the end of the session, participants will be better able to listen as a manager, make others feel listened to, and foster an environment where staff feel comfortable coming to their manager.

Andy Jeffery, EC English

Room 3/4/5

From learning objectives to learning outcomes: tracking progress with purpose

Effective progress tracking - whether teacher or student-led - is essential for ensuring continuous improvement and meaningful learning outcomes. This session will explore practical methods for implementing reflective practices and using benchmarking assessments. Building a structured approach to progress tracking empowers both learners and educators.

This session offers practical insights to make progress visible and achievable, aligning with institutional goals and enhancing learner confidence.

Billie Jago, OtterEducation

Sessions and speakers

Friday 28 February | 12:30 - 13:00

Quayside Suite

Update on British Council inspections

The updates and changes to inspection criteria for the 2024-27 inspection cycle (CRG Dec 2024 and subsequent 2nd edition) have been well received by providers. New documentation and guidelines for the academic staff profile and an increased focus on academic management support for the teaching team were introduced to help language centres meet the challenges of strengthening their ELT provision.

This session will explore the results of inspections in the first full year of the cycle, highlighting outcomes in areas of strength or need for improvement. It will provide a reminder of the main changes, including updates, and look at emerging trends.

Liz McLaren, British Council

Room 3/4/5

Managing conflict: prevention, reconciliation and resolution

The problem with working with people, is that we are all different. Work is a meeting of minds and kinds, few of which will always agree. And that's okay, it's healthy, it's normal, it's often the mix that creates success. But to make the cocktail of staff palatable to everyone, managers have to get three things in place: rules, environment and direction.

This session will talk about the setting up and ongoing delivery of actions that give parameters and ways for managers to deal with problems when they arise. We'll look at how to have hard conversations, positive behaviour management and what to do when there is, inevitably, grit in the oyster. And how we rebuild post-oyster-grit.

Thom Jones, Brock Solutions Agency

Sessions and speakers

Friday 28 February | 14:10 - 14:40

Quayside Suite

Hear me out: how sharing true stories in reflective spaces can support cross-cultural understanding between staff and students

Racial discrimination. Regional accents. Food etiquette. How can institutions and ELT staff support new students with such cultural challenges in a human and compassionate way?

Imagine psychologically safe reflective spaces with a facilitator where both staff and student can share true stories of their cross-cultural highs and lows.

Key session takeaways include:

- how sharing personal stories can kickstart courageous conversations on delicate and sensitive cultural topics
- how listening to such stories can educate, engage, and connect staff and students
- how the facilitation of such reflective spaces can create an open, inclusive, and humanised learning culture

Lalith Wijedoru, *Behind Your Mask*

Room 3/4/5

Different approaches to observations

What is the value in observations? How developmental are they? How much are they to keep the British Council happy? Quality assurance observations are valuable to any academic manager, but do they really develop your teachers, or do they simply demonstrate that a teacher can plan and deliver a lesson when someone is watching? What happens when you take away the admin and the proof of planning?

This talk discusses an alternative approach to conducting classroom observations that takes the focus off planning and puts it on reflection, with the added bonus of reducing everybody's admin.

Ben Butler, *The London School of English*

Sessions and speakers

Friday 28 February | 14:50 - 15:20

Quayside Suite

Building inclusive workplaces: retaining and attracting staff in ELT

This session explores how diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I) strategies, coupled with effective leadership training, can address the recruitment and retention challenges in ELT.

Attendees will gain actionable insights into building inclusive workplaces that foster belonging, improve staff engagement, and reduce turnover.

Using case studies and solutions from Lead5050, we'll demonstrate how DE&I practices empower organisations to attract and retain talented teachers, activity leaders, and administrative staff in order to create a sustainable, thriving workplace culture. The session will also offer practical steps for integrating inclusive leadership practices to align with your organisational goals.

Ella Tyler, Lead5050

Room 3/4/5

AI and academic management: where are we now, where might we be going

Much has been said about generative AI and language learning, much of it relating to the classroom. Less seems to be said about its use in the wider school setting. I have seen (though struggled to understand) how AI can be leveraged for data-driven educational marketing. But what about the academic manager, and the complexities of that role? (How) can AI help?

This session asks the audience to reflect and think of ideas for busy academic managers, underpinned by the need for a principled, school-wide AI policy.

Neil Harris, CELT

Closing keynote

Friday 28 February | 15:50 - 17:00

Quayside Suite



Sarah Seaman, The Muddy Puddle Teacher

Sarah stands as a beacon of innovation and inspiration in the educational sector, particularly for neurodivergent children. Her pioneering outdoor teaching approach has redefined traditional classroom settings and empowered over 23,000 teachers across the UK to embrace the outdoors as a vibrant classroom.

Sarah's work is a beacon of hope and a source of practical strategies for educators, parents, and advocates looking to enrich the educational experiences of neurodivergent children.

Embracing inclusivity: practical strategies for supporting neurodivergent students in English language centres

In this empowering and practical session, Sarah will guide English language centre managers through the transformative journey of fostering inclusivity for neurodivergent children. With her signature blend of insightful advice and actionable strategies, Sarah will highlight the strategic importance of creating learning environments that celebrate neurodiversity, fostering a culture of understanding, innovation, and inclusion.

The audience will leave this session with:

- a deeper understanding of neurodiversity and its value in the classroom
- actionable steps to implement inclusive practices within their centres
- inspiration to lead the charge in transforming their centres into havens of equity, innovation, and compassion

The talk will discuss at the following points:

- understanding neurodiversity
- the strategic case for inclusivity
- practical strategies for inclusion
- inspiring cultural change
- real-world success stories.

Sessions and speakers

Saturday 1 March

Quayside Suite

The Future of English – where next?

10:00 – 10:40

Last year we introduced the British Council Future of English programme and summarised the findings of our book *The Future of English: Global Perspectives*.

Speaking to teachers afterwards, there were two areas we touched on that they most wanted to talk about: native-speakerism and the use of students' home languages in the EFL classroom.

Our presentation this year will focus on those two important ideas, with personal perspectives on each and details of how the British Council is engaging with these in its teaching centres worldwide and from a policy perspective.

We also want to hear from you about how your institutions include aspects of multilingualism into their policies and practices, and how you consider them in your teaching.

Mike Solly & Steve Copeland, British Council

10:45 – 11:15

Experiences: creativity and innovation in ELT

In this session your fellow delegates will share inspiring case studies, positive developments or unique initiatives in their language centres.

These informal 'fireside chats' will give you the opportunity to learn from each other and get inspired with your own ideas on how to shape the future of ELT.

Sessions and speakers

Saturday 1 March | 11:40 - 12:20

Quayside Suite

Managing differentiation in the classroom

One of the challenges facing many teachers these days is how best to manage mixed levels within the same group. Whether this is a mixed-level group or just spikey profiles within the same group, it can be a daunting prospect. Do we need to have separate lesson plans?

In this session, we will explore practical steps to managing differentiation. We will look at how to set up a lesson so that every student in the class can be moving towards the same objective but achieving success appropriate for their own level and ability.

David Byrne, EC English

Room 3/4/5

Let's talk about it (developing the speaking skill)

Speaking remains one of the most challenging skills to develop in English, even after years of learning. Why is it so difficult for students—and even for us? This session explores the key components of speaking in conversation and structured tasks, identifying common barriers learners face.

We will examine the role of grammar versus usage, the importance of communicative, grammatical, and pragmatic competence, and challenges related to language and pragmatic transfer. By understanding these factors, we can better support learners in achieving fluency and proficiency.

Tery Lemanis, Hamilton House Publishers

Sessions and speakers

Saturday 1 March | 12:30 - 13:10

Quayside Suite

Student wellbeing in the classroom: practical strategies for educators

As educators, we understand that language acquisition is deeply intertwined with emotional and social wellbeing. This session explores actionable strategies to foster a supportive classroom environment where students thrive linguistically and emotionally. You will leave with evidence-based practices you can seamlessly integrate into your teaching to enhance student engagement, resilience, and success.

This session will:

- enable you to highlight the connection between student wellbeing and learning outcomes
- equip you with tools to identify and address student stressors
- share practical techniques to promote a culture of wellbeing in the classroom

Ruth Hughes, Curious Human

Room 3/4/5

Speaking without hesitation – using movement and character in the classroom

The session will act as guide for teachers who want to explore ways of teaching English through movement and character. This way of learning allows learners of English to grow in confidence and develop their vocabulary. The session will include activities and techniques that encourage students to discover new vocabulary and put it into action.

David Bedward, Twin English Centre

Sessions and speakers

Saturday 1 March | 14:10 - 14:50

Quayside Suite

Making learning meaningful: what are integrated skills and why are they important?

Real-world communication rarely consists of only one language skill. To create authentic and meaningful communication in the classroom, we need to find ways to meaningfully combine the four skills. An integrated skills approach reflects the way that people use language in real-world contexts, maximises learning opportunities and allows students to practise their language skills in an authentic and meaningful way.

This session will explain the concept and benefits of an integrated skills approach to language learning and explore how we can integrate skills in our language classrooms, enabling our students to successfully apply their language learning to different communicative contexts.

Jo Krousso, Macmillan Education

Room 3/4/5

Mind the gap: bridging cultures in the classroom

In this session Helen and Joanna will share some innovative and interactive classroom activities, awareness-raising discussions, and examples of best practice from the intercultural awareness course (Global Up™) that Celtic follows.

The aim is to give teachers tools and information to guide their students to identify and consider elements of their own and other cultures, and to share these insights with classmates. The session will focus on:

- understanding and challenging stereotypes
- exploring what culture and identity mean when cultures collide and how to respond to visible and less visible cultural behaviours

Helen Lunney and Joanna Steiner,
Celtic Academy of English

Sessions and speakers

Saturday 1 March | 15:00 - 15:40

Quayside Suite

From chaos to calm: tips and strategies for managing classroom behaviour with teens and young learners

We've all had those days. You walk into class with a solid plan, ready to teach something amazing... and five minutes later, the room is in total chaos. Someone's shouting, someone else is out of their seat, and you're wondering if they've all forgotten they are at school.

Managing behaviour in a classroom full of teens or young learners can feel like an impossible task, but it doesn't have to! This session will share practical tips, strategies, and mindset shifts that will help you take back control of your classroom and create a more focused learning environment without losing your mind or your sense of humour.

Whether you're just starting out or you've been teaching for years, you'll leave with tools you can use immediately to transform the chaos into calm and create an environment where learning (and teaching!) can actually happen.

Varinder Unlu, Stafford House

Room 3/4/5

Teaching in transition: adapting to changing learner needs and leveraging EdTech

In an era of rapid technological advancement, it can be hard to keep up or even pinpoint what to spend time on when learning new tools and developing digital-pedagogical understanding.

This session explores how EdTech can enhance teaching while respecting personal teaching philosophies and styles. We'll examine how EdTech can enhance accessibility, engagement, and efficiency in learning and teaching with practical examples and useful takeaways that can be adapted to an array of contexts.

Whether you're tech-savvy or cautious about digital shifts, this session will invite inclusive discussions from the audience about their experiences and provide ideas on mindsets, strategies and activities that can outlast the fads and crazes of apps that fly by in a flash.

Beatrice Segura Harvey

Closing keynote

Saturday 1 March | 15:50 - 17:00

Quayside Suite



Michael Rosen

One of the best known figures in the children's book world, he is renowned for his work as a poet, performer, broadcaster and scriptwriter. As an author and by selecting other writers' works for anthologies he has been involved with over 140 books. He lectures and teaches in universities on children's literature, reading and writing.

In this talk, Michael Rosen will talk about his experience of having learnt (and still learning) Latin, French, German, Old English and Yiddish. He will draw on the way in which songs and poems play a key part of this. He will also explore his own own poems, sharing how he came to write them.

Organised by

