

Global Educational Concepts (GEC)
Accredited Teaching English Online Course
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Introduction

Welcome to your accredited Teach English Online Course.

This GEC course will prepare you well for becoming a competent and effective online teacher.

1. Accreditation

We are delighted that our course has been accredited as a high-quality course by ACCREDITAT (<https://www.accreditat.com/>), a leading independent accreditation body. Their accreditation confirms that our course, our tutors, our assessment instruments and our company processes and procedures are all of high quality and are fully geared to helping you succeed.

2. British/American English

You may or may not be aware of some differences between British English and American English. It's not that one variation is better or superior to the other. It's just the way it is. This course is written in American English.

Often, the focus is on differences in nouns, the names of things. British native speakers of English talk of *pavements*, *petrol stations* or *garages*, and *trousers* whereas American native speakers of English talk of *sidewalks*, *gas stations* and *pants*, respectively.

Or it could be spellings. For example, in British English, almost all words that end in *-ise* are spelt with *-ize* in American English, e.g. *realise/realize*.

But some grammar differences also occur. There aren't that many. Here are a few examples that **generally** occur:

British English

Tense – when an action is taking place

*I don't feel so good. **I've eaten** too much.*

***I've got** it.*

Collective nouns – e.g. groups of people

*My team **is/are** leading.*

American English

Tense – when an action is taking place

*I don't feel so good. **I ate** too much*

***I've gotten** it*

Collective nouns – e.g. groups of people

*My team **is** leading.*

The key point is that in this course you may see some word or grammatical structure that doesn't seem quite right to you. It's probably because of the differences between British and American English.

Let's get started!

Unit 1: Teaching English Online

1. What do we mean by the term 'teaching online'?

Simply put, teaching online is teaching/instruction delivered via the internet, using a variety of computer-assisted methods.

There are two main approaches to delivering this learning:

1. Synchronous learning

This is where the teacher delivers her instruction, collaborates with her learners, and the learners learn in 'real time'. Various computer platforms have been developed to enable this to happen. Skype is a common and well-known example. But there are also some high quality, tailor-made platforms and facilities which have been developed by course providers purely for this purpose.

In a real-time synchronous event, the teacher and her learner(s) may use a range of tools specifically designed to enable the teaching and learning to take place. Many of these tools mirror activities and techniques which take place in the traditional classroom-based, brick and mortar environment. There may be tools such as:

- live, real-time chat by typing instant messages
- live, real-time audio and video conferencing
- live, real-time data and application sharing
- live, real-time drawing on a whiteboard

These are only a few examples of tools for the moment. Don't worry if you are unfamiliar with any of these terms – we will explain them a little bit later.

For the moment, the critical point is that these tools and activities are all being used in real time by the teacher and her learners in precisely timed and coordinated sessions, no matter what the time is in the country or countries where the teacher and the learners are based.

2. Asynchronous learning

This learning is **not** conducted in real time. The courses are still teacher-facilitated, but the teacher and learners engage in course activities at their convenience and not during precisely timed and coordinated class sessions. Again, the teacher and her learners may use a range of tools specifically designed to enable the teaching and learning to take place. You will be familiar with most of these:

There may be tools such as:

- e-mail

- threaded discussions
- newsgroups
- bulletin boards
- file attachments

In this course, our focus will be on real-time, synchronous teaching and learning.

But remember this: on some occasions, there may be some asynchronous activity in a synchronous course. For example, Skype is used for real-time synchronous teaching and learning but, later, after the live session, the teacher may send her learner some files by email.

2. Critical benefits for YOU from teaching English online

What's in it for you and your learners? Well, there are lots of personal and work benefits.

Here are the numerous benefits for YOU:

1. You can become a digital nomad.

Make your dream of traveling into reality. Imagine teaching in Vietnam one month and then in Thailand the month after. Our Teaching English Online course offers you flexibility - and sustainable income while you are traveling.

A digital nomad uses telecommunications technologies (e.g. Skype) to earn a living in any place and at any time. The technologies provide convenience and flexibility. You don't need an office or a boss (unless you choose to work as an independent contractor for an online provider), and you don't need to confine yourself to your homeland. But you can if you wish to.

All you need is a computer, a webcam, a headset with a microphone, a stable internet connection and the drive to be competent in the role. How simple is that?

2. You can start your own teaching English online business.

You can start your own teaching English online business, either as your primary income or to supplement your existing main income. It can be your full-time career or a part-time career fitting around your other personal and/or work commitments.

The money you earn can supplement your income when studying, traveling, when off on maternity leave etc. or it can be the primary income coming in. You choose.

Once you start teaching English online as a private tutor, you might find other ways to use your platform and skills. It will allow you to become an independent teacher, which you will find very useful over the years to come. It will open your mind to how you can run your online business in other ways. For example, you may move on to teaching Business English online.

3. You will have an ever-increasing client base due to the power and attraction of English.

You will be moving into a work area where the client base expands from moment to moment. You will not have any concerns about a declining client base as often happens in other work areas.

English language learning has become one of the most significant global events of all time. So, why is this? Why are English language learning and the teaching of English online in such high demand? Here are just a few key reasons:

- Overwhelmingly, English is at the core of international communication. It is now the language of global business. International communication is critical in many fields, and in many roles, and skilled and confident users of the English language are increasingly sought. Thus, being able to speak and write English puts an individual at a clear advantage in many ways.
- English is now the lingua franca of global business. A lingua franca (or working language, bridge language, or vehicular language) is a language used to make communication possible between people not sharing a mother/native language. For example, a Chinese person who does not know Spanish and a Spanish person who does not know Chinese may be able to communicate if they both use English. In this case, English is called the lingua franca.
- Also, most software programs are written in English. Those seeking to communicate electronically will find the ability to read and write the English language invaluable.
- In addition, the ability to speak the English language fluently is exceedingly beneficial if a person is seeking job opportunities with international companies. Often, English is a prior condition in the selection process.

You can play a significant part in this global and unstoppable wave of learning.

4. You will derive tremendous and continuing pleasure.

Immense pleasure awaits you from helping non-native English-speaking learners to learn/improve their English and achieve their language, study and work goals. They will never forget the help and guidance you gave them.

Unlike many other occupations, where you may simply be a cog in the wheel and are unaware of the part you play in the whole, you can immediately identify what you and your learners need to achieve and will achieve.

5. It will be a rewarding and enriching experience.

You can reach out to learners where there was no chance to do so before, because of technology and the global need for learning English. These collaborations and learning events, and the diversity of learners you will now be in contact with, will significantly enhance your learning and teaching experiences.

6. It will be an enjoyable career.

You will have the opportunity to build a long-term career, where every day is different, fun and exciting. Contrast this with some work roles which are repetitive and lack fun and excitement.

7. No more admin headaches

Unlike the classroom-based, brick and mortar environment, online course administration is more seamless, organized and efficient, with the system automating processes and rote tasks. Thus, you have more time to focus on helping your learners achieve their goal.

8. No more discussion gaps

As a competent online teacher (using your well-structured course), you will propel discussion and feedback from all learners in a group. Every learner is expected to post a response to the discussion board and participate in discussion activities when asked to do so.

As a result, you will recognize immediately whether a learner understands a word/concept/idea or not. Where a learner is having difficulty, you can help him quickly and privately. In classroom-based environments, learners with language difficulties may slip through the net.

9. There will be greater engagement, interaction and learning.

Also, for the same reason as above, i.e. the requirement for learners to post a response to the discussion board and participate in discussion activities, learner engagement and learning increases. There is no hiding place in the online environment. If only classroom-based classes were like that!

10. You will become a genuinely modern teacher.

The days of the 'sage on the stage' are, thankfully, fast disappearing. The contemporary teacher aims for a more communicative, facilitative and learner-centered approach. Online teaching with the appropriate tools and platform will ensure you act as a genuinely modern teacher. Allowing for a few cultural differences, e.g. where a learner expects you to be a teacher-centered 'sage on the stage', most learners will welcome your modern approach.

3. Critical benefits for YOUR LEARNERS from being taught English online

Here are the vital benefits for your learners from being taught online:

1. Much better availability of the teacher they want

Learners often find it challenging to find a local teacher of English. Even where this is possible, the teacher may not be able to help with the learners' niche requests, e.g. English for Young Learners, Business English (and relevant business experience).

The online environment provides the solution.

2. Frequent and immediate feedback

Learners want to reap the benefits of their learning. A key success factor for this is the amount of feedback they receive from their teacher. The online environment lends itself to frequent and immediate feedback.

3. Learner-centered learning

Allowing for a few cultural differences, e.g. where a learner expects you to be a teacher-centered teacher, most learners are seeking a more communicative, facilitative and learner-centered approach, addressing their individual needs. Online teaching provides this.

4. Collaborative learning

Learners benefit from becoming more active participants in the learning process. Online group work promotes this, through ensuring they understand what is being discussed and what is needed, via various tools which will confirm their understanding.

5. Accessible for all learners

Online teaching has provided great learning and work possibilities for learners who might otherwise have suffered from geographical, personal or time-scheduling restraints.

6. Helping shy learners to open up

Learners who might be 'lost' in a classroom-based environment due to their shyness find more comfort in the online environment. The environment encourages them to participate in course activities and discussions. This has been witnessed time and again.

As a result, there are no 'missing' persons as might be the case in a classroom-based course; everyone is encouraged to give their perspective and to participate.

4. Influencing learners' intrinsic motivation and lifelong learning

You can also play a substantial role in increasing your learners' intrinsic motivation and desire for lifelong learning. This is a massive benefit for both your learners and you.

Intrinsic motivation

Generally, this is the urge to engage in a learning activity for its own sake, for the enjoyment it provides, or the feelings of accomplishment it evokes. This type of learner is driven by personal achievement.

Your aim is to add to their already embedded intrinsic motivation and help to strengthen it further.

Lifelong learning

Generally, this means a desire for continual learning throughout life.

Your aim here is to inspire your learners to independently learn so that when they leave your teaching sessions, they have a desire to keep searching and finding out additional information to enhance their English skills.

Motivation and dedication to lifelong learning are, of course, inextricably linked.

Helping your learners to enhance both their intrinsic motivation for learning and their desire for lifelong learning will be an enriching experience for you.

Here are some practical ways in which you as a teacher can influence and drive motivation, and inspire lifelong learning:

1. Make them aware of their own and other learners' success.

A straightforward yet effective way a teacher can motivate her learners is to make sure that learners are aware of their own success. This message can be conveyed by a nod, a tick, a smile/smiley face or by a comment in the learners' reports.

Also, share with them the experiences and successes of intrinsically motivated learners in your previous classes. They'll want to strive to match these.

2. Help them achieve the goal.

You want your learners to succeed. By scaffolding your lessons (a staged process with one stage carefully building on the next, which you and they adhere to) and introducing modelling processes they need to follow, your learners will achieve success. Their success will be evident to them and will drive them to more success.

3. Build a 'We're all in it together' atmosphere.

Aim to build a tight, cohesive learning community in your online class:

- Employ lots of warmers/ice-breaking activities, with a bit of fun (but not too much).
- Aim to include lots of pair and small group learning activities where they work together.
- Demonstrate how the learners can help each other to learn.
- Emphasize the need and importance of everyone's contribution.

Community learning enhances motivation.

4. Demonstrate how they can learn.

Demonstrate and give them advice on how to learn effectively. Share learning strategies with them. This will enhance their motivation.

Language learning strategies are the conscious steps or behaviors used by language learners to enhance the acquisition, storage, retention, recall, and use of new information.

Research shows that the most successful learners tend to use learning strategies that are appropriate to the material, to the task, and to their own goals, needs, and stage of learning.

Use specific strategies or clusters of strategies that are linked to language skills or tasks. For example:

- Second-language speaking demands strategies such as risk-taking, paraphrasing, circumlocution, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation.
- Second-language listening comprehension gains from strategies of elaboration, inference, selective attention, and self-monitoring.
- Second-language L2 writing, like L1 writing, benefits from the learning strategies of planning, self-monitoring, deduction, and substitution.
- Second-language reading comprehension uses strategies like reading aloud, guessing, deduction, and summarizing.

5. Set clear goals.

Learners should be aware of the objectives of the task – both language-learning and content, set in meaningful contexts. Tell them, for example, that a guessing-game may have the language-learning goal of practicing questions, and the content goal of guessing answers.

Remember: Some learners, particularly adult learners, may not want too many fun activities. If you tell them the purpose of the game before you start, then they will be more accepting of the fun element and will be motivated to participate.

6. Explain purpose and usefulness.

It may seem obvious, but learners sometimes need to know why they must learn something. For example, learners may wonder why they must learn prepositions.

If you explain to them that preposition errors are the most frequent errors in non-native English learner writing, your learners will be more motivated to pay closer attention to the material.

At the very least, they won't think that they are wasting their time learning something they think they don't need.

Well done! In the next Unit we will consider the typical queries you may have about Teaching English Online Employers/Providers.