

Corporate Social Responsibility

Cambridge ESOL is a global operation with a major role as a world-leading expert in English language assessment. As a result we have a wide-ranging set of responsibilities to the world's English learners, teachers, governments, exams administrators and academics, as well as our own employees. Cambridge ESOL works to:

- encourage learning and access to opportunity;
- share expertise;
- support professionals;
- and minimise its impact on the environment.

Encouraging learning and access to opportunity

Cambridge ESOL has an explicit educational mission to produce high quality exams that both meet the needs of English language learners and teachers, and support and encourage further learning.

Through our large dedicated research team and extensive pretesting programme, Cambridge ESOL provides rigorous quality assurance at every stage of the assessment process to ensure exams are a true measure of abilities. Special provisions are made available for test takers who would otherwise be disadvantaged by a disability or other adverse circumstances. As an organisation, we are also committed to studying the 'washback' impact of our exams. Regular studies are made to test the effects of exams on candidates, teachers, those who base decisions on exams results and those who shape educational policy.

The purpose of Cambridge ESOL qualifications is to help people achieve their life goals. Thousands of education institutions, employers, professional bodies and immigration authorities around the world recognise the Cambridge ESOL exams, and there is a constant effort to ensure recognition is as widespread as possible.

Sharing expertise

Each year the Research & Validation team shares its findings at dozens of conferences internationally, through the quarterly publication *Research Notes* and the *Studies in Language Testing* series, and by providing support to PhD and other research students. The organisation is also a member of the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE), which provides a forum for the development of assessment standards for European languages and works to set common standards for all stages of the language-testing process. Cambridge ESOL also provides support to Governments around the world in benchmarking, teacher development, skills transfer and high quality examination development.

Supporting professionals

The teaching profession is seen as an important partner to Cambridge ESOL's activities. A range of support services is provided: hundreds of free professional development events; the Cambridge ESOL Teaching Resources website with extensive advice and support for teachers preparing learners for exams; and a site giving exam details including syllabus information, sample papers, reports on candidate performance and access to past papers and video packs for preparation.

Cambridge ESOL recognises the importance of maintaining quality relationships with all its external stakeholders and we are dedicated to improving stakeholder engagement practices through a systematic and comprehensive approach to stakeholder management. It focuses not only on staying connected to our stakeholders but also ensure that we support our stakeholder network wherever possible.

Cambridge ESOL employs 300 permanent staff, mostly in the UK, but also in Argentina, Brazil, China, France, Germany, Greece, India, Italy, Mexico, Poland, Russia, Spain, Turkey, USA, Taiwan and Vietnam. We employ an equal opportunities policy as part of recruitment practices which is reviewed regularly. The key aim is to enable all employees to enjoy opportunities in the workplace regardless of characteristics such as gender, ethnic origin, age, disability or religion. We are also committed to the ongoing development of our staff in line with business objectives. The training and development needs of staff are identified in relation to the skills required to carry out the duties of their post and achieve their objectives as identified from the Business Plan. All managers are expected to give regular attention to the training and development of their staff which is discussed and agreed between the manager and staff member during the performance review process.

Minimising impact on the environment

An increasing number of environmentally-friendly initiatives have been incorporated into everyday operations in order to minimise our carbon footprint. These include:

- computer-based versions of tests;
- introducing paperless administration systems with exam centres;
- improving the accuracy of our question paper print ordering procedures to minimise stock surplus;
- re-using existing question paper stocks where possible to minimise wastage;
- ensuring that surplus and old question papers and media materials are securely disposed of and recycled;
- encouraging exam centres to destroy surplus exam papers locally to make savings on returned paper postage and energy costs;
- implementing a policy of confidential waste and paper recycling within Cambridge ESOL offices.