

CASE STUDY:

PROFESSIONAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE TRAINING FOR JOURNALISTS

Every year the Federation of Finnish Journalists (FFJ) sends a cohort of journalists to take part in a bespoke 2-week immersive English for Specific Purposes training at our Holland Park Gardens centre. The training began in 2015 and offers FFJ members the opportunity to reinforce their English skills and confidence in a journalistic context, learn about the British media, and experience the many cultural and leisure activities that London has to offer.

The training programme includes external visits and guest talks by professionals relevant to the field of journalism. Previous visits have included the Press Association, Global Radio London, the Daily Telegraph, and previous guest speakers have included Editors of national newspapers and experienced columnists.

MEETING PARTICIPANTS' NEEDS

Our participants come from a wide range of journalistic and specialist backgrounds. The main objectives of the training are to boost participants' confidence in their professional English skills and address areas of weakness. The specialised training content is further tailored to each cohort in a pre-course questionnaire. Examples of objectives for participants include:

'To become more fluent and secure in speaking English and to get more self-assurance concerning grammar.'

Mira, subeditor

'Most challenging for me is asking questions unprepared and getting personal views or memories out of the person I interview, not just facts.'

Seija, journalist

'I would like to learn how to master [English] in a working environment as I need to use English to do background research for my articles.'

Elisa, editor

COURSE CONTENT

Training is divided into morning and afternoon sessions, with some evening homework.

Morning sessions

During the morning the journalists join our scheduled open General English courses based on their level of English, working in mixed nationality groups. With a maximum of 8 participants per class, they focus on speaking practice, pronunciation, reading and listening and grammatical accuracy. The morning sessions provide 15 hours per week of training.

Afternoon sessions

During the afternoon the journalists work together as a closed group and sessions include visiting speakers and visits to relevant organisations. The afternoon sessions provide between 10 and 15 hours per week of training.



The London School of English is the UK's number 1 English language training provider. We have a 100 year history of delivering language training to well-known international organisations.

We design and deliver a full range of flexible learning solutions in:

- English language, all levels from beginner to advanced
- Business and Professional English
- Legal English
- General English
- English for Specific Purposes
- Intercultural training
- Leadership training

Each of our corporate training package is bespoke and designed in consultation with the organisation. We train individuals and groups, and you can choose to mix and match face to face sessions, virtual lessons, and our online Learning Management System.

Our training is built on the three key principles of:

- Expertise
- Excellent client experience
- Clear outcomes

Our corporate training includes free online language assessments for employees.

Contact us

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The structure of the programme develops participants' skills in:

- Interviewing people
- Spoken and written forms of communication
- Meetings
- Presenting information
- Reading and discussion

The course is structured around the following activities:

- Discussions
- Visiting speakers
- External visits
- Project work
- Written exercises
- Role play
- Reading comprehension

Trainers use published and authentic materials such as newspapers, video clips and texts. Participants are given direct input, which focuses on increasing language awareness in terms of grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation, while also developing the core speaking, reading, listening and writing skills. Feedback is also given on soft skills and intercultural communicative competency.

Sample timetable

Week 1					
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Morning	Introduction Course overview Professional themes Interviewing techniques	Discussion: mainstream UK media under the microscope	Visiting speaker: Animaya Grant Cultural issues between Finland and the UK	Practical project: Interviewing for article	Visit to The Press Association Talk by Pete Clifton, Editor-in-Chief Tour of the newsroom
	Listening skills Hard/soft interviewing techniques and styles	Discussion: sources, how reliable are they?	Intercultural skills: cultural communication The language of diplomacy	Practical project: interviewing for article	Visit to The Press Association continues
Week 2					
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Morning	Visit to the Finnish Embassy	Professional themes Writing techniques: creating impact and the importance of the introduction Analysis of broadsheet and tabloid styles	Visiting speaker: Adam Tinworth Digital Journalist Audience development	Visiting Speaker: Andrew Johnson Deputy News Editor of the Independent Is there a future for journalism?	Discussion: ethics of journalism Course review
	Visit to the London Design Museum	Role play: news conference	Visit to Global London	Discussion: new media, fake news	Visiting speaker: Robert Nurden Journalist Journalists' London The church and the pub

RESULTS

The English level of participants can range from B1 to C1, but typically clients are at least level B2. On average at the start of the training in London journalists have a confidence score of 6-7, which increases to 8-9 by the end of the course. Participants are asked to score their satisfaction with the training out of 5: the average score is 4/5 and we have received many comments from happy participants. They are each given a written personalised post-course final assessment, as a way of checking learning against the course objectives and assessing the increased competence acquired. Clients receive guidance on how to maintain their fluency and confidence and on suggested areas for improvement. Each course participant also receives a course completion certificate.



I need to be fluent and confident in interviewing experts in various fields. My experience was both useful and enjoyable. Our tutors were dedicated and skilled professionals who took good care of us. The media programme was well planned and interesting also from the professional point of view.'

Elisa, Managing Editor

I participated in The London School of English for two weeks and had a great experience. The teachers are skilled and inspirational. They have modern methods of teaching.'

Tuula, journalist

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