

## BEFORE THE COURSE

### Do you need to have teaching experience to enrol?

CELTA is an initial teacher training qualification and is suitable for people with little or no teaching experience. Having said that, many people who **do** have some teaching experience take the CELTA course, both for reasons of professional development and in order to have a recognised qualification in the field of English Language Teaching. Even those with quite substantial teaching experience often comment that they have learnt a great deal and that the course has significantly improved their teaching.

### What's the difference between CELTA and TEFL / TESOL?

TEFL stands for Teaching English as a Foreign Language and TESOL stands for Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages. These terms are often used to describe teaching qualifications but a 'TEFL course' could be anything from an online course or weekend course involving no teaching of real students, to a 4-week intensive course with assessed teaching practice. Employers have no way of knowing what the course consists of or what standard of teaching is required to pass the course. In contrast, all CELTA courses are externally assessed by an assessor appointed by the University of Cambridge, and have a practical focus with grades being awarded on the basis of 6 hours of teaching real students, as well as 4 written assignments. Because CELTA is standardized on a worldwide basis, employers see this qualification as a guarantee that the applicant possesses the skills required to be a competent teacher and capable colleague. CELTA qualified teachers can therefore generally be quite choosy about the job they accept.

### What is the application procedure?

The first stage is completion of an application form, an application task and an extended writing task. The application task is used to assess your language awareness (although you are not expected to know the names of different verb tenses at this stage) and your aptitude for teaching. The extended writing task is intended to ensure that you will be able to meet the demands of a course at this level, both in terms of the standards of written work required and your own use of English. This is the case for both native and non-native speakers of English. Applicants whose application is of the required standard will be invited to an interview, either in person or by telephone, which takes between 45 minutes and an hour. The interview is carried out by one of our CELTA trainers, who will discuss with you your general background, your experiences as a language learner and teacher (if applicable) and some aspects of your application task. The interview is also an opportunity for us to ensure that you fully understand the quantity of work involved in the course, and for you to ask us any questions you have.

### What is the deadline for enrolment?

The deadline for enrolment is often determined by the availability of places. However, applying well in advance for the course will ensure that you have plenty of time to prepare and do the recommended pre-course work.

### What level of knowledge of English grammar is required?

You should know what grammatical terms like noun, verb etc. mean. However, you are not required to know the names of different grammatical tenses before the course. In the pre-interview task we are really looking for a 'feel' for language so that you can help students with their problems. There are some sessions on the course which focus on grammar, but most of the input sessions are focused on teaching methodology. You really learn about the grammar of English by doing the necessary research as you prepare to teach it, and even highly experienced teachers often have to refer to grammar reference books when preparing to teach a complex language point. In this way, grammar is to some extent a self-study aspect of the course, and it is unrealistic to expect to have a comprehensive knowledge of English grammar after a 4-week course, especially given everything else that has to be covered.

### Will Hyland help me to find accommodation?

We use an agency, AccomMadrid, which can find you a room in a shared flat near the school for 450 Euros a month (all bills included) plus a 65 Euros fee. Their website is: <http://www.accommadrid.com/>. We sometimes also know other people, such as Hyland teachers, who may have a slightly cheaper room to rent and will let you know if this is the case once you are accepted on the course.

## What is the pre-course task?

The pre-course task is designed to get you thinking about some of the issues involved in teaching, and to improve your language awareness before the course starts. Candidates who do not complete the pre-course task often find it more difficult to assimilate the large quantities of new information at the beginning of the course. You should set aside around 12 – 15 hours to complete the pre-course task. We send the pre-course task and commentary to candidates once they are accepted on the course.

## What's the difference between the full time and the part time course?

There is no difference in the content of the full and part time course. The part-time course is spread out over 10 weeks instead of 4 weeks and so is obviously less stressful and allows participants more time to assimilate the course content and do some background reading. It is also possible to combine the part time course with other commitments e.g. some part time teaching or studying Spanish, while on the full time course it is absolutely impossible to have any outside work or study commitments.

## I'm not a native speaker of English? Can I still take CELTA?

You are required to have a minimum level of C1 / C2 in the Council of Europe levels. This is equivalent to a strong CAE pass or a Proficiency (CPE) Pass in the Cambridge exams, or a band 8 overall in the IELTS. However, this does not necessarily mean that you need to have a certificate to prove your level of English. We use the application form and written task, as well as the interview, to evaluate the language of ALL candidates, whether or not they are native speakers. If we are in any doubt, we may ask you to do another piece of written work.

## What do I need to bring with me?

We recommend that you complete the pre-course task in conjunction with two books, *Practical English Usage* by Michael Swan and *Learner English* by Jim Scrivener, and it will also be useful to bring these books with you. We do have copies here, but these are shared between everyone so you may not have access to them when you need them. You may also wish to bring items which you could use in the classroom, such as photos of your family & your home town, tourist information leaflets etc. Basic stationery supplies are provided by Hyland, and you can buy anything else you need here. However, we do recommend that you bring a ring-binder (lever-arch file), dividers to organise your notes, a notebook and pen. A laptop computer is also useful, although you can use the computers in our teachers' room. If you do bring a laptop, you may also wish to bring a pen drive so that you can work at home and print your work out here at Hyland.

## What kind of people take the course?

All sorts of people take CELTA, from recent graduates to older people looking for a career change. We've had CELTA trainees from age 18 to people in their 60s, although the biggest single age group tends to be people from 25 – 35. There is often a mix of nationalities and the possibilities for shared experiences make for an interesting month. Many people form lasting friendships on their CELTA course.

## DURING THE COURSE

### What's the dress code?

Smart-casual and clean is the order of the day. Suits and ties are not necessary, but you should look clean, comfortable, neat and professional. Flip-flops, mini-skirts, short shorts, revealing tops and anything torn or dirty is not acceptable. Clean, tidy jeans are fine.

### What computer facilities are provided?

There are four computers in the teachers' room with internet access, a printer and folders for CELTA trainees to save their work. However, these are shared with Hyland teachers.

### Should I bring my laptop?

If you have a laptop you will find it useful to bring it with you. We have wireless internet in some parts of the school, and if you have a pen drive you can work at home and print your work out here at Hyland.

### What are the possible grades?

The assessment criteria are set by Cambridge as follows:

- Pass** Pass is by far the most usual grade worldwide and "is awarded to candidates whose performance overall in the teaching practice and in the written assignments meets the specified criteria. They will continue to need guidance to help them to develop and broaden their range of skills as teachers in post."
- Pass (Grade B)** A Pass (Grade B) "is awarded to candidates whose performance in the written assignments meets the specified criteria and who have demonstrated in their teaching practice a level of achievement significantly higher than that required to meet pass-level criteria in relation to:
- demonstration of the criteria for teaching and professionalism
- They will continue to need some guidance to help them develop and broaden their range of skills as teachers in post."
- Pass (Grade A)** A Pass (Grade A) is extremely rare and "is awarded to candidates whose performance in the written assignments meets the specified criteria and who have demonstrated in their teaching practice a level of ability and achievement and a level of awareness significantly higher than that required to meet pass-level criteria in relation to:
- planning for effective teaching
  - demonstration of the criteria for teaching and professionalism."
- Fail** "Candidates who fail to meet criteria in either of the assessed components (teaching practice and written assignments) will be awarded a Fail."
- In practice this means:
- inability to establish rapport or to project a confident, caring classroom presence;
  - insufficient grasp of the basics of language analysis and/or inability to apply these principles to classroom practice;
  - inability to apply basic classroom management skills and techniques in order to facilitate learning;
  - insufficient awareness of the effect of one's teaching style and approach, and/or inability to monitor and direct one's own progress.

## What are the written assignments?

There are four written assignments, the general criteria for which are set out by Cambridge ESOL.

- Assignment 1 is a case study of one of the students in the group you are teaching.
- Assignment 2 requires you to analyze vocabulary and grammar structures for teaching purposes, in terms of meaning, form and pronunciation.
- Assignment 3 involves designing a reading or a listening lesson.
- Assignment 4 is a reflection on your teaching, including lessons learnt from observations of peers and experienced teachers, and the identification of action points.

The assignments are set by the tutors during the course. In each case, time is set aside to deal with any questions you may have. The assignments are also directly related to input sessions on the course, for example, there are two sessions which focus on designing a reading / listening lesson before you are expected to do this yourself in the assignment.

## How long will the written assignments take?

Obviously this varies from candidate to candidate, but including background reading and research, each one could take on average between 4 and 6 hours. The assignments are spread out during the course, around one a week on the intensive course.

## Can I work or study Spanish while doing the course?

It is absolutely impossible to have any other work or study commitments on the intensive course. The schedule of the intensive course is from 9 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. every day, and candidates can expect to be doing 3-5 hours of extra work a night as well as more at weekends. Most candidates find that planning lessons and writing out lesson plans to the required standard is much more time-consuming than they expected.

It is possible to combine the **part-time** course with **part-time** work. However, candidates on the part time course can still expect to be doing 8 – 12 hours work per week outside the course hours, so this must be taken into account.

## How much money should I bring with me?

If you use the accommodation agency we work with, AccomMadrid, you will pay 450 Euros for a single room in a shared flat plus a 65 euro fee. If you look for your own accommodation, you are likely to be paying 350 – 400 Euros for a room in a shared house. However, you will need to arrange this before the course; you won't have time for flat-hunting during the intensive course.

Apart from housing, you can expect to pay between 8-10 Euros for a 'menú del día' (set meal, usually quite substantial!). Eating out in the evening is generally more expensive. Obviously the cheapest option is cooking for yourself. Drinks such as beer, Coke etc cost between 1.20 and 3 Euros, depending on where you are. Spirits with mixers (e.g. rum and coke) can be much more expensive, costing up to 8 Euros in fashionable bars and clubs.

Transport is fairly cheap, with a 10-journey ticket valid on the Metro and buses costing 9 Euros.

500 Euros might be reasonable estimate of how much extra money to bring (not including accommodation costs) if you plan to generally eat in your accommodation and make your own lunch to bring with you, with the occasional meal or night out.

## Is it possible to fail the course?

Yes, it is. Candidates who fail to meet criteria in either their teaching or the written assignments will receive a Fail grade. However, it is possible to fail one assignment and still pass the course if there is evidence of the candidate's ability to meet the assessment criteria for the assignment in their lesson plans or in their written work as a whole.

Any candidate who is in danger of failing the course will be spoken to on an individual basis during the course itself. The tutors will make it very clear which of the CELTA criteria are not being met, and what the candidate has to do in order to pass the course. Happily, this situation does not arise on the majority of CELTA courses.



# CELTA FAQs

## AFTER THE COURSE

### When will I receive my certificate?

The certificate can take up to 6 weeks to arrive after the end of the course, and we will then send it on to you by registered post. However, at the end of the course, you will receive a provisional results letter. This is usually accepted as initial proof of your CELTA grade by reputable academies when you are looking for work.

### Will CELTA help me to find a job?

A CELTA qualification is a requirement for getting a job in most reputable language academies in Spain and elsewhere in the world. However, the availability of work does depend on the time of year. Academies in Spain generally start recruiting around May for the following academic year, which begins in September / October, and teachers who begin looking for a job early can normally be quite choosy about the job they accept. This recruitment process continues right up until the end of October and beyond, and candidates on our summer CELTA courses have often been offered jobs before they finish the course (on the condition that they pass). During the academic year, vacancies sometimes arise in academies as teachers leave or as new classes open. However, teachers looking for work outside the summer recruitment peak may need to build up their hours by working for more than one academy initially.

### Can I get a job at Hyland?

Hyland will always offer employment **when available** to anyone who is awarded an A or B grade on the course and **is able to work legally in Spain**, and all other successful CELTA graduates are offered an interview for work on our intensive summer courses and for academic year contracts starting in October. In practice this means that we often recruit from our summer intensive CELTA courses for new teachers to start work at the beginning of October. In addition to this, considerable help and support is available, both during and after the course, to find employment in reputable schools. The Hyland trainers have management level contacts in quality schools around the world to help you make a smooth transition from the course to your first teaching job, and in fact we often receive requests for teachers from our CELTA course from prospective employers.

### How much can English teachers in Madrid expect to earn?

Salaries before tax range from 1000 – 1400 Euros per month for 23 – 25 hours of teaching a week. Teaching this number of hours per week is a full-time job by any standards, taking into account planning time, and often also involves travel to company classes or offsite schools. When deciding whether or not to accept a job it is important to take into account the location of the classes and therefore how much travel time is involved, as well as the hours of teaching and the salary. It is also important to find out whether travel costs and travel time are paid for by the academy.