

## TEACHING OF ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES

1. **General**
  - 1.1 English as a Second Language (ESL) services should be provided at all levels of public education from preschool to college for every student who has yet to achieve native speaker competence.
  - 1.2 The ESL service be provided on the basis of identified need with a weighting for recency of arrival. The provision must not be limited to new arrivals.
  - 1.3 The responsibility for the support and education of ESL students be undertaken by the whole school.
  - 1.4 The first language and culture of students with language backgrounds other than English be valued and supported.
2. **Programs and Administration**
  - 2.1 The ESL teacher, in consultation with other teachers, identify ESL needs across the school, determine and facilitate the most appropriate programs for ESL students. She/he be included in all discussions and decision making pertaining to ESL in the school.
  - 2.2 The language demands of all curriculum areas be recognised through the implementation of Language for Understanding Across the Curriculum now called InSinc - *Incorporating Strategies for an Inclusive Curriculum*, team planning, team teaching and resourcing.
  - 2.3 The Introductory English Centres (IECs) at both primary and secondary levels and the provision of ESL in mainstream schools and colleges be maintained.
  - 2.4 The early entry to preschool program and provision of the ESL service to preschools be maintained.
3. **Staffing**
  - 3.1 ESL teachers be permanent staff of the Department and have the same rights as all other permanent teachers.
  - 3.2 ESL staffing allocation be based on a class size of twelve in IECs.
  - 3.3 Staffing provision be based on the number of ESL students identified as being below the average native speaker competence in the annual Language Performance Rating (LPR).
  - 3.4 ESL points allocated to schools be used for the ESL provision.
  - 3.5 The ESL staffing of a school be separate and additional to mainstream staffing and not compete with general classroom resourcing and other specialist needs.
  - 3.6 Adequate central support to preschool, primary and secondary levels for administration and curriculum be provided and maintained.
4. **Teacher Education**
  - 4.1 All general teacher education courses include a core unit on ESL, so that teachers can identify needs of ESL students and work effectively with ESL teachers.
  - 4.2 All teachers be trained in language focused teaching strategies and understanding cultural diversity as a resource.
  - 4.3 Teacher education institutions offer courses designed specifically to provide expertise in the education of ESL students, with ESL being a major component of these.
  - 4.4 Such courses provide training in linguistics, the theory and practice of ESL and an understanding of multiculturalism. The study of a second language be considered highly desirable.
5. **Funding and Resources**
  - 5.1 All ESL teachers have the right to:
    - 5.1.1 be treated as professional equals in schools and not asked to do work not required of other teachers.
    - 5.1.2 the same access as other teachers to the full range of professional and administrative support staff.
    - 5.1.3 equal release time to other teachers.
    - 5.1.4 access interpreters when necessary.

- 5.2 ESL teachers have access to curriculum support services and professional development.
- 5.3 ESL accommodation include desk space for administration and file storage; regular flexible and timetabled classroom space; access to computers, library and other school resources.
- 5.4 Data relevant to ESL students be regularly collected to inform funding and staffing programs.
- 5.5 ESL teachers working across two schools:
  - 5.5.1 do playground duty in proportion to the amount of time in each school and the number of duties carried out by other teachers in that school.
  - 5.5.2 alternate attendance at staff meetings and other relevant committees.
  - 5.5.3 receive release time in both schools.

6. **Qualifications**

- 6.1 The minimum requirements for teachers wishing to take up ESL teaching be one semester unit or equivalent in TESOL methodology at an accredited tertiary institution.
- 6.2 ESL teachers be encouraged to extend their qualifications and experience.
- 6.3 Probation of ESL teachers include observation of them working in a whole class setting only where the teacher has an established relationship with that class and some control over the program. Where possible this should occur as part of their normal teaching program.

7. **AEU – ACT Branch Action**

- 7.1 The AEU considers the 2008 funding of ESL provision in ACT schools to be inadequate and recommends the following measures:
  - There must be a change to the current mechanism linking overall public school enrolments to ESL funding. The unfairness of this mechanism can be demonstrated by the fact that ESL enrolments in schools have risen substantially over recent years [35% since 2000] despite an overall fall in public school enrolments and hence a fall in ESL points available in the system [10% since 2000]. The Union will seek an increase in the level of funding to reflect the level of student ESL needs in the system.
  - The level of English competence at which ESL support is withdrawn must be raised. The Union notes a continuous cutting of the level under which support has been provided over recent years, from LPR 3.0 in 1999 to 1.75 in 2007. The requirements of functional English have not fallen, and the level of need of ESL students has risen as the demographic of the immigrant intake has changed. The Union will lobby for restoration of support to previous levels of English acquisition.
  - There are currently many teachers delivering ESL [including in the IECs] who are not qualified in this discipline. The Union will lobby for targeted scholarships through the Scholarships Fund to support the training of ESL teachers.
  - There are currently only 2 ESL teachers for the entire preschool sector. The Union will lobby for doubling of this provision.
  - There is a need to increase the number of LUAC/InSinc officers in ACT schools to support teachers dealing with un-funded ESL students in mainstream classes. The current provision of a single officer is insufficient. The Union will lobby for the restoration of the 5 LUAC/InSinc officer positions as established in 1992.