

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL): Effective Provision for International Students

A Resource for Schools

Contents

Foreword	5
Introduction	6
1 Planning for International Students	7
Planning for managing the business	7
Planning for cultural diversity	10
2 Enrolment, Orientation, Initial Assessment and Placement	12
Enrolment	12
Orientation	12
Assessment	13
Initial assessment and placement	13
3 Delivering the Teaching Programme	16
Diagnostic assessment	16
Components of an ESOL programme	16
Planning ESOL programmes	17
What topics should be selected for the ESOL programme?	17
How should the ESOL programme be organised?	19
Delivering an effective programme	19
First language support	19
English language assistants (teacher aides, bi-lingual tutors)	20
Small group tuition	21
How to help students to increase their achievement levels in subject areas	22
Supporting students in classroom interactions, varying teaching strategies and encouraging self-monitoring of learning	22
Creating a supportive classroom environment	23
Classroom resources	23
Professional development	24
4 Monitoring Students and Record Keeping	25
Social and emotional health	25
Academic monitoring	25
Preparation for tertiary study	26
5 Developing English within the Home and Community	27
Supporting the homestay experience	27
Developing English within the wider community	27



English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL): Effective Provision for International Students

FOREWORD

The teaching of English to students for whom English is not a first language is a central export education activity and an important element in the success of the whole industry. The quality of ESOL provision is essential if students are able to participate successfully in the New Zealand school curriculum and interact socially with New Zealand students and within the wider New Zealand community.

This resource is designed to assist schools to provide quality ESOL support for international students. It provides guidance for the development of ESOL policies and business plans to ensure that English language programmes are adequately and appropriately resourced. It also provides good practice advice for programme planning and teaching practice.

The resource refers to a number of ESOL resources already available to schools and they include further helpful advice and guidance for those providing for the ESOL needs of international students. It also draws on the findings of “A Census of Providers of ESOL Programmes for International Students” conducted during 2002, in particular many of the good practice examples provided by schools responding to the survey.

The resource raises many issues that should be considered in developing and delivering ESOL programmes for international students in schools. Many of the ideas can be readily adopted by individual schools. However, many schools may wish to explore the material included in this document as part of a professional development programme involving a number of schools. This approach provides opportunities for the sharing of ideas, and will be of particular benefit to schools with few international students and those that do not have extensive ESOL experience.

Effective ESOL Provision for International Students

INTRODUCTION



This document offers some ideas for effective ESOL provision for international students in the school sector. It provides a framework for schools that enrol international students to help them to review and develop their ESOL policies and procedures. The resource should be read in conjunction with the Ministry of Education resource: “Cross-cultural Communication. For People Working with International Students.” The guidelines also complement: “The Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students” and the training modules developed for the school sector on www.minedu.govt.nz/goto/international.

The ideas in this document should also be read alongside other Ministry publications that have been developed to assist schools to meet the ESOL needs of students funded for ESOL by the Ministry. They are:

- NESB Students – *ESOL Resourcing Information*
- Non-English-Speaking Background Students: *A Handbook for Schools*
- NESB Students – *A Study of Programmes and Support in New Zealand Schools*
- NESB Students – *ESOL Assessment Guidelines*

A further reference point for these guidelines is the survey undertaken in 2002 by the Ministry to determine the extent and nature of the ESOL provision of all providers that enrol international students. The survey asked providers to indicate good practice relating to their ESOL procedures, and many examples from the survey report have been incorporated into this resource.

The following five sections provide good practice ideas for effective ESOL provision for international students in the school sector:

- 1 Preparing for International Students
- 2 Managing Enrolment and Placement
- 3 Delivering Effective Programmes
- 4 Monitoring Students
- 5 Developing English within the Home and Community.

1 Preparing for International Students

PLANNING FOR MANAGING THE BUSINESS

It is important that prior to making a decision to enrol international students, the school has carefully considered the implications and has prepared carefully for including these students into the school community. Preparation should include the following aspects:

Developing a Policy and Business Plan

The board of trustees should establish an overall policy for international students and effective procedures for meeting their pastoral and academic needs.

A sound business plan relating to the students' English language needs should be developed to provide substance to the international student policy.

While the enrolment of international students is often based on a business decision, it is one that requires an ethical commitment to ensuring that all the needs (including the English language needs) of the students are met while they are in the school.

When considering how this business will enhance education for the whole school, it is important to recognise that the first priority for the revenue from the business must be the provision of an adequate and appropriate learning programme for international students. International students do not qualify for New Zealand Government funding and the fee structure should be established to reflect all the initial, ongoing and hidden costs incurred as they relate to the provision of support (including English language support) for international students.

The disbursement of the profit from this business for the benefit of the school in general should be transparent. Developing a budget for ESOL provision enables the board of the school to report on how the funds derived from international students' fees have been allocated, and the extent to which they have been used to meet the ESOL needs of those students.

The 2002 survey on ESOL provision for international students¹ demonstrated that a significant proportion of schools did not have a policy or business plan showing how the school will provide for the English language needs of international students. A robust business plan provides a framework for decision-making for those involved in managing and delivering the ESOL programme, ensuring that resources are budgeted for and allocated in the most effective way to ensure a high quality education for their students.

Implications for Administration

In developing a business plan, schools should ensure that there is an infrastructure which has sufficient financial resources and administrative and teaching staff capable of:

- co-ordinating and supporting the ESOL programme
- developing and implementing appropriate ESOL programmes
- monitoring the quality of the ESOL programmes
- monitoring pastoral care
- providing promotional information
- record keeping
- maintaining good relationships with all stakeholders
- managing applications
- managing compliance with the Code of Practice.

¹ Report on "A Census of Providers of ESOL Programmes for International Students" available on the Ministry of Education International website: www.minedu.govt.nz/goto/international

Implications for Resources

Schools should also ensure that in developing their business plan they have considered the following factors, that:

- a) there is a sufficient number of trained and qualified staff to teach in the ESOL programme
- b) there are sufficient staff to accommodate additional numbers in mainstream and general and specialist classes
- c) the recruitment of curriculum specialist teachers with additional qualifications in ESOL is a priority
- d) general staff are encouraged to take qualifications in ESOL, for example, through schools subsidising study fees
- e) there is access to specialist education services or additional teacher aide time available where special needs is declared on the application form (if assessment post-enrolment indicates evidence of special learning needs then the student's caregiver must cover the costs of meeting these needs)
- f) there is a budget for professional development at whole school, faculty and individual teacher level
- g) there is sufficient appropriate accommodation both for ESOL classes and general and specialist classes
- h) there is sufficient funding allocated to the programme to provide appropriate print materials, hardware and software for all levels of students for both ESOL classes and mainstream classes
- i) there are adequate sporting and cultural facilities within the school and international students are encouraged to participate in the wider life of the school and community, including sporting, cultural, and personal growth activities in which they may be expected to succeed.

Framework for the Business Plan

The following framework provides a checklist of items that should be considered in developing the business plan:

Have we included:

- a) ESOL programme objectives? ☐
- b) Facilities/property requirements? ☐
- c) Student number goals? ☐
- d) Staff number goals (administration, support and teaching staff)? ☐
- e) Staff-student ratio goals? ☐
- f) Staff qualification goals? ☐
- g) Staff development objectives? ☐
- h) Physical and emotional environment details? ☐
- i) Pastoral support/care objectives? ☐
- j) The marketing and promotion strategy? ☐
- k) Attendance requirements? ☐
- l) The strategy for monitoring ESOL provision? ☐
- m) The budget? ☐

The ESOL Budget	<p>The budget for ESOL provision enables schools to demonstrate how resources will be allocated to provide suitable programmes and support for international students. It may include provision for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Staffing, including administrative, in-class and specialist support b) Property and facilities c) Marketing and promotional materials (see Marketing Strategies below) d) Learning resources including bi-lingual materials e) Teaching resources (eg curriculum materials; English language assessment materials) f) Capital items (eg computers) g) Professional development, including upgrading of TESOL qualifications and professional development programmes such as learning through language h) Overheads (eg heating, lighting, accommodation costs).
Marketing Strategies	<p>Various marketing strategies may be followed to attract international students to the school. It is not within the scope of this resource to detail the range of strategies available (for information on marketing strategies, refer to the New Zealand Education Marketing Network website: http://industry.mynzed.com). However there are some basic strategies that take account of the English language capability of prospective international students that can be used to help them make decisions on whether to apply for entry to the school or not.</p>
Promotional Material	<p>In the competitive world of education marketing, each school should package their promotional material well to promote their establishment effectively.</p> <p>For example, enrolment and information packs (whether in paper or electronic form) should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be bilingual, if possible • include entry criteria, incorporating such factors as the oral and written English language competence or level 'necessary for them to participate effectively in the chosen programme of study' (Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students) • include details of English language support and programmes available in the school • include English language assessment procedures and placement policy, if applicable, and as required by the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students.
Using Recruitment Agents	<p>The quality of agents employed by the school is an important factor in evaluating the effectiveness of the school's promotional programme. Under the Code of Practice, recruitment agents must comply with the requirements of the Code and be advised that their agreement with the school may be terminated for any breach of the Code. As the Code states, "the ethical performance of recruitment agents is of paramount importance".</p> <p>Care in selecting agents, both in overseas locations and in New Zealand, is therefore very important. Agents should be made aware of the school policy and character, and the aims of the English language programme in particular. They should have a clear directive as to the level of English required by the school for prospective entrants, as it applies to applicants from the particular country where they are recruiting. They should also be advised of the English language courses, programmes and support available to students, and whether there are any English language prerequisites.</p> <p>If schools require an agent to conduct an initial English language assessment, they should ensure that the agent uses suitable assessment tools.</p>

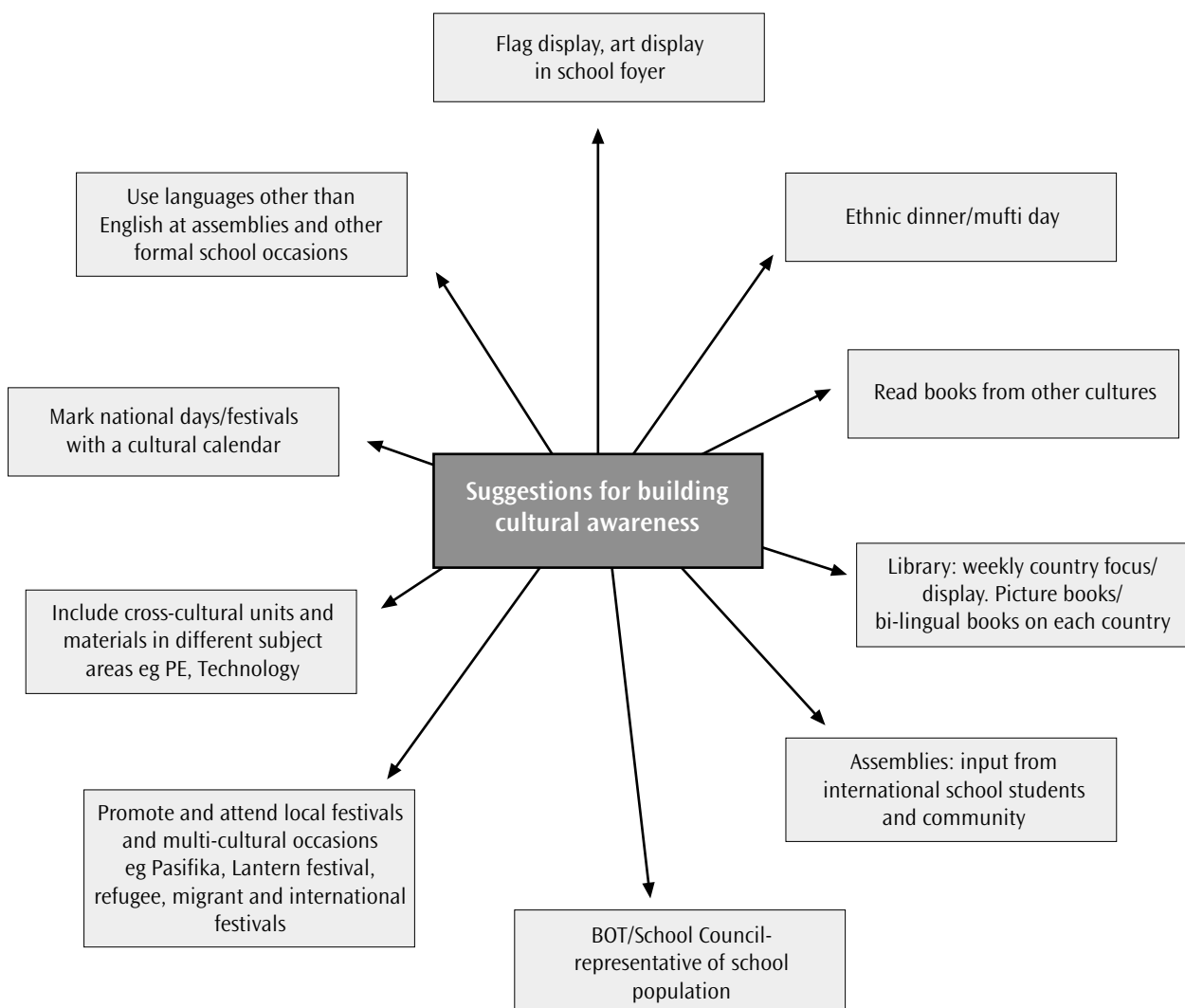
PLANNING FOR CULTURAL DIVERSITY

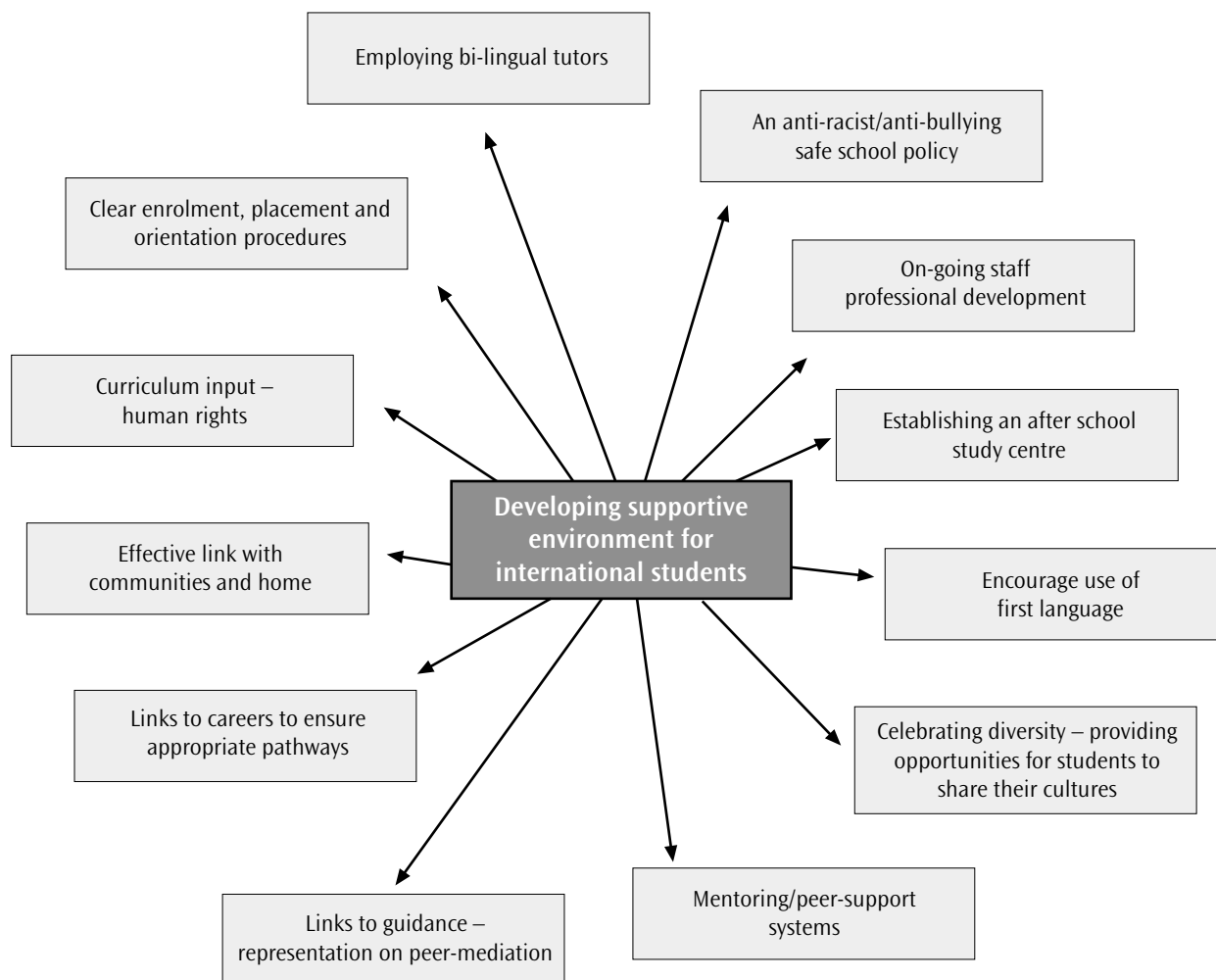
In planning how the needs of the international students will be met, schools should ensure that:

- all staff are prepared to support the academic and social/emotional needs of the students
- the student body has been prepared to welcome them
- the physical environment of the school demonstrates that the school values and affirms cultural and language diversity
- there are clear procedures, and trained personnel to address any social and emotional problem areas.

There are many different possibilities for the individual and the school community to develop and celebrate the diverse cultures and languages in the school.

The following diagrams are based on one school's approach to developing a supportive environment for international students:





You can also:

- identify bi-lingual support people in the local community
- give out the contact details for support agencies such as Asian Youthline
- provide a contact list of local cultural societies, available through the Office of Ethnic Affairs or online at www.ethnicaffairs.govt.nz
- check if there are speakers of the students' first languages available in the local community for urgent translations.

Quotes from the survey of providers of ESOL programmes for international students

The following are some activities schools can do to make their international students feel at home:

"Having 'International Day' activities where all classes focus on different cultures and traditions. Topic study on cultural diversity, special celebrations around the world. Co-operative learning activities in culturally mixed groups. Regular greetings in different languages. Peer-support/peer-tutoring/buddy system. Encouraging participation in activities such as sports teams. Having international students express themselves in writing using their own native language. Integrating social studies units on multi-cultural themes."

"Term assemblies reflecting cultural diversity. School radio programme celebrating the different cultures of (the school). A celebration of writing by International Cultures at school."

"Orientation to school and New Zealand. Buddy systems in classes. Chat groups with New Zealand students. International week. Homestay evenings at school (parents and students). Visit to and from sister school in Japan every year. International concert/performance."

2 Enrolment, Orientation, Initial Assessment and Placement

ENROLMENT

Effective enrolment procedures should ensure that the school has gathered all the information required for compliance with the Code of Practice and all information relevant to the academic, social and emotional needs of the student.

Enrolment procedures should ensure that:

- the student feels welcomed by the school
- the student understands the information about the school and its programmes – this should be done through an interpreter, or through the provision of bi-lingual materials
- assessment for placement and identification of needs is accurate and comprehensive and assesses the language proficiency and needs in both spoken and written modes.

A variety of types of assessments may be used such as those referred to in the ESOL Assessment Guidelines.

ORIENTATION

A buddy should be provided to show the student around the school. This may be a first language buddy or a student from another language background.

Orientation procedures should ensure that students are provided with *an orientation booklet* (possibly in first language as well) which includes:

- a school map
- an explanation of school procedures, rules and customs
- a clear timetable
- a staff list
- explanations of who is there to help, such as international student deans, teachers with knowledge of the culture and language of the international student, specialists, a buddy, the tutor, or bi-lingual counsellors
- an explanation of the national curriculum areas or course of study to be followed, including such factors as: the ESOL programme, the English language curriculum, the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA)
- a description of the general academic pathways available to the student, including any English language prerequisites and International English Language Testing System (IELTS) tests and their place in the student's programme
- an explanation of academic procedures, including internal assessment, grading, assignments, examinations
- study support programmes such as homework centres, self-access centres or tutoring
- an explanation of anti-harassment procedures
- a list of co-curricular activities and the contact people for these activities
- a school calendar, with dates of school events and examinations and assessments.

ASSESSMENT

There are different types of assessment which need to be undertaken at different points.

- The *initial assessment* will determine the proficiency level of the students in order to determine the level and type of support needed.
- More detailed *diagnostic assessments* will need to be conducted once the students are placed in class to ensure that their specific needs in each of the language modes of the English curriculum are identified and that the teaching programme meets these needs.
- *On-going and summative assessments* are necessary to monitor the progress of the students, and to get an indication of when to reduce levels of support.

Initial assessment is discussed in this section. Detailed diagnostic assessment and summative assessment will be discussed in the section on delivering the teaching programme.

INITIAL ASSESSMENT AND PLACEMENT

Schools should ensure that their programmes and levels of support offered to students meet the requirements of the Code of Practice. In becoming signatories to the Code, schools have guaranteed to assess prospective students for their oral and written English competency to determine whether students can participate effectively in their chosen programme of study. No student should be guaranteed placement in any particular course or level until assessment by the school has taken place.

Decisions on placement need to be made carefully after appropriate assessment. Schools may wish to consider making placements provisional, depending on what the assessment results show, or on how the learners cope in the first few weeks. Where a student chooses to disregard the advice of a school about placement levels or course choices, it may be advisable to keep records of recommendations made by the school in the event that a student subsequently makes a complaint about their academic progress. This process should be documented in the school's complaints procedures.

It is very important that the initial assessment of the student for placement purposes takes account of the needs and goals of the students. The initial assessment should be designed to show their level of proficiency across all modes of English language, ie speaking, listening, reading and writing.



There are many different formal and informal ways of assessing students for placement. These include a number of commercially published tools, standardised and norm referenced tools and Ministry publications. The Ministry publication, *Non-English Speaking Background Students in New Zealand Schools: ESOL Assessment Guidelines*, explains the process used for assessing permanent resident students for ESOL funding and gives examples of formal and informal assessment procedures. These examples are also applicable for assessing international students.

Further recommended resources available through Teachers' Centres are:

Effective Provisions for NESB students in Primary Schools (J.van Hees)

Effective Provisions for NESB students in Secondary Schools (J.van Hees)

If the school determines through assessment that a student needs ESOL support, the students should not have the option of refusing this support. It needs to be a directed option.

As indicated earlier, schools should ensure that they have allocated sufficient staffing resources and support to meet the range of needs of international students. There are many possibilities for provision of ESOL support. These include:

Reception classes and/or immersion classes, (with almost full-time ESOL) especially for students from Years 7-8 onwards, as students with minimal English who are mainstreamed will only be stressed and will not gain from being fully mainstreamed immediately

Students with low levels of English, who need intensive English for both general and specialist purposes, may need to remain in reception/immersion classes for long periods of time. In primary schools, early phase students are likely to be in the mainstream for most of the time, but will need small group intensive English language provision in the early stages.

A combination of general ESOL support classes and mainstream subject classes

New learners of English may need to be placed in more than one ESOL option line and fewer mainstream option lines.

Withdrawal for specified periods of time in small group intensives with a programme that includes English for survival and English for the curriculum areas

This provision needs to be available regularly and often, and the classes need to be frequent so that learning can be reinforced daily. In primary and intermediate schools this could be a slot every morning. Learners should be given this provision for a length of time that is sufficient to enable them to follow basic classroom instructions and to take advantage of modified materials and tasks in the mainstream classroom.

Foundation classes in secondary schools are subject classes which contain only new learners of English and may offer either:

- a general programme including a component of cultural knowledge and social English; or
- modified content, such as ESOL Maths or ESOL Science, which focuses on the language for the subject area in their programme.

Foundation classes are usually at Year 12, but where there is a demand, they may be at another level.

Learners in very early phases of English language acquisition who are not able to complete senior secondary national assessments could benefit from programmes of this type. Schools with small numbers of students will not be able to provide this option, but should provide self-access materials of this type for students in early phases of English language acquisition.

Multi-level placement is also an option at secondary schools. Students may be placed in a year level class below their age level for a particular subject.

Mainstream placement with in-class support, which may be with a bi-lingual teacher-aide

Mainstreaming immediately with no support is not acceptable, as mainstreaming should ideally be considered as a gradual process. However, there should be some points, even at the early stages of English language learning, when international students do interact with mainstream peers. It is important to provide opportunities for these learners to have ongoing contact with the most linguistically competent students to assist them with their English language development. Moreover, international students want to be accepted as members of the school community, so value opportunities to interact socially with peers in the mainstream.

*Quotes from the survey
of providers of ESOL
programmes for
international students*

The following are some approaches that schools can use to provide for the English language needs of their international students:

“Children were grouped according to their learning needs and also sometimes for peer tutoring.”

“The school day is predominantly English with Music, Art, PE, Sports. Conversation buddies (are) integrated, and immersion (is available for) resident Japanese immigrant pupils.”

“(We have the) ability to withdraw ESOL children to work with support staff on (the) language and maths enrichment programme. In some cases support staff also supported students in classrooms.”

“We assessed the children’s abilities and social needs, and would have one-to-one, or one-to-two, one-to-three maximum, where we provided best support and learning options; eg 5 yr (old) child with a peer who had more English, to act as an interpreter on some occasions until the child was confident.”

“We find no reason to separate international students from New Zealand resident students in an ESOL withdrawal programme, at the primary school level.”

“Size of school is too small for a totally separate ESOL programme. Students were given individual tutorial periods up to 4 times a week.”

“ESOL is an option at all levels. Students are assigned one, two or three options out of five, according to need.”

3 Delivering the Teaching Programme

The provision of ESOL support is a major component of the school's international student programme. It is of course recognised that in a significant number of primary, intermediate and secondary schools, ESOL provision for international students will be a fully integrated part of the wider ESOL programming which will include all students who need English language support.

However, there are also a number of schools in areas that have few or no permanent resident students learning English, that have chosen to enrol international students. This will mean that the ESOL provision will be specifically for these students.

Planning for delivering the teaching programmes to international students requires careful thought. This process should include:

- conducting effective assessments at different points of learning
- linking the ESOL programme to the curriculum
- supporting students in mainstream classes.

DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENT

An assessment in the country of origin may have been conducted and the results may have informed placement decisions. However, further diagnostic assessment will be needed to identify the learning needs of the students in the separate curriculum areas.

Effective assessment procedures need to be in place to ensure that the learner's needs have been accurately identified in all modes of language.

A comprehensive diagnostic assessment process should clearly identify whether or not the learner has the fundamental skills to cope with learning in English, such as having sound/letter knowledge (phonemic awareness) and a large enough bank of basic sight words for decoding written text. If these fundamental skills are not in place, it is essential that the ESOL programme includes a component of intensive initial reading instruction, as students will be unable to progress until basic reading skills and processes are mastered.

Assessment of oral proficiency (both speaking and listening) for identification of needs should also be a part of this diagnostic process.

A 1–2 minute tape of the student's oral performance at the start of the programme could be made and used as a measure of progress at the end of the programme.

COMPONENTS OF AN ESOL PROGRAMME

An ESOL programme should be developed by specialist ESOL teachers in collaboration and consultation with the classroom and/or subject teachers. An ESOL programme has a variety of aims. These include:

- providing a well-planned programme at the appropriate levels for the range of students
- supporting the acquisition of written language for content areas of the curriculum
- supporting the development of spoken language
- maximising vocabulary acquisition, based on a principled approach to vocabulary learning grounded in second language learning theory
- familiarising students with different styles of classroom interaction
- supporting the acquisition of general English language for interpersonal communication

- monitoring student progress
- orientating students towards New Zealand language and customs.

In order to meet these aims, schools will need to ensure that there are sufficient and appropriate human, material and financial resources available, as indicated in Section 1.

PLANNING ESOL PROGRAMMES

The main purposes of an ESOL programme are to:

- support access to the curriculum
- help students develop English for interpersonal interaction.

Programmes must therefore be carefully planned to ensure that they match these purposes. Among the aspects of programme planning which need to be considered are:

- a) topic selection – ensuring that ESOL work is linked to mainstream content so that it can be generalised and applied to mainstream learning
- b) sequence of learning – ensuring as far as possible that students are prepared ahead of time for content they will encounter in the mainstream with well-scaffolded materials appropriate to their age and language learning needs
- c) coverage of all four modes of speaking, listening, writing and reading
- d) training students to participate in all types of classroom interactions
- e) supporting self-accessed learning and self-monitoring of learning
- f) (in the secondary sector) linking to senior secondary qualification requirements and to tertiary entry requirements
- g) use of a variety of resources, including taped materials, manipulative materials, visuals, realia, software
- h) use of a variety of teaching and learning strategies
- i) possible provision of bi-lingual support.

English in the New Zealand Curriculum also includes the modes of viewing and presenting, and teachers need to take account of the ways in which viewing and presenting can be integrated into their teaching and learning programmes.

WHAT TOPICS SHOULD BE SELECTED FOR THE ESOL PROGRAMME?

Just as many mainstream curriculum class teachers must select teaching topics from an almost infinite list of possibilities, the ESOL programme has to make a selection of topics through which to teach English. Ideally, these should parallel work done in mainstream curriculum areas.

Teaching language features of text types for generalising learning

Obviously, with a group of learners from a range of year levels, and, in secondary schools, doing different subjects, the ESOL programme will not be able to teach the language of every subject area. However, this means that the ESOL teacher should try and plan a programme which covers the way language is used for different types of texts at whole text and sentence level. This is to help students recognise the typical features of the major text types such as narratives, recounts, procedures, explanations and descriptions, information reports and arguments.



Linking with curriculum topics

One way of making choices about the programme content is to obtain a written list of topics taught at each year level in the school and then choose from these those which are likely to get coverage in some way in more than one curriculum area, for example “Disasters” or “Weather”.

Integrating the language modes

An effective ESOL programme should develop students’ competency in all four language modes. An integrated approach to learning and teaching should be used where possible, rather than an approach that teaches the skills associated with different modes in isolation from one another. This means that language learning tasks should provide opportunities for teaching and learning about speaking, listening, reading and writing within the same unit of work or context, even though the assessment associated with the task may focus on only one of the modes.

Experience-based learning

An effective ESOL programme will also include opportunities for experience-based learning. This may be inside the classroom through making and doing things (eg setting up a science experiment on plant growing for learning about the language of comparisons and the language of scientific reports; cooking; and making paper). Field trips can also provide a rich source of cultural knowledge and language experience. The use of computer technology such as a digital camera or a slideshow programme on the computer to record these experiences is a valuable tool for language development.

Learning incorporating international students’ own cultures and languages

International students are a rich resource for many areas of the curriculum - language and social studies to name two. Using and comparing international students’ experiences enriches other children’s learning as well as their own.

*Quotes from the survey
of providers of ESOL
programmes for
international students*

The following are some approaches schools can adopt that build on the cultures and experiences that international students bring to the classroom:

“Comparing/contrasting various aspects of the students’ cultures with the New Zealand way of life.”

“Material used in language programmes is linked to interests of NESB students when possible eg reading material using topics of countries of students, such as aspects of history, traditional talks, topical news events, recounting personal experiences, locating cities and countries on maps.”

“The choice of literature for study often involves literature from their culture eg ‘Joy Luck Club’ as year 12 novel study. Wide reading from their own cultural background.”

“In research/speech topics etc, students are encouraged to select topics that reflect their specific knowledge/culture: eg ‘My first week in New Zealand’ as a speech topic; research topics in workplace English class have included ‘Common reasons why students study in New Zealand’; homestay issues; etc. International students also visit classes such as journalism, social studies, to share their cultures and points of view.”

HOW SHOULD THE ESOL PROGRAMME BE ORGANISED?

Priorities for learning

It should be re-emphasised that the first priority of the ESOL teacher is to ensure that those students who are beginners have access to a good programme for initial reading and writing development taught by staff with specialist knowledge of reading.

Learners cannot participate in mainstream classrooms unless they can read and write at a basic level. This means knowing all the sounds of English and how they are represented by letters and by blends of vowels and consonants, and being able to read, write and say at least the first five hundred most frequent words. Reading is 'taught not caught', and incidental learning is not sufficient, so students must be provided with a systematic programme to meet this need as the first step in their learning.

Sequencing learning

Once the topics for the ESOL programme have been selected, an organised sequence of learning needs to be devised. Where possible, the ESOL programme should teach a curriculum topic ahead of when students will meet it in the mainstream, so they will be familiar with vocabulary and concepts. The grammatical component of the ESOL programme (at whole text, sentence and word level) should be integrated into the topic study as far as possible. Stand alone worksheets on isolated grammar points or English language text books designed for overseas contexts may have a place in self-accessed learning for practice activities, but should not form the basis of programmes for the New Zealand classroom.

DELIVERING AN EFFECTIVE PROGRAMME

The principles of good teaching and learning in mainstream classrooms, such as carefully scaffolded learning and using materials appropriate to the age of the students should be applied to the ESOL programme.

Effective provision of ESOL will ensure that all modes are developed systematically, rather than just focusing on reading and writing. ESOL programmes should make sure that students have access to print materials, taped materials, software and web-based materials that can support the development of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

There are many ways to support English language development. Some recommendations for organisational strategies and some suggestions for methodologies to support English language development follow. They are derived from Section D of the Ministry of Education's ESOL funding information pack for permanent resident students.

FIRST LANGUAGE SUPPORT

It is important that first language development is maintained at the same time as the learner is acquiring an additional language. This is particularly true for younger learners.

In schools with small numbers of English language learners, this may be restricted to providing the following types of support:

- first language buddies
- bi-lingual dictionaries
- reading books (both factual and fictional) in the library in the first languages of the students
- subject topic outlines in first language, ahead of when they will be taught in class so that learners can access the topic in their first language

- subject dictionaries in first language so that students can familiarise themselves with the concepts before they encounter them in English. (Note. Students could be encouraged to bring these to the school from their countries of origin.)

*Quotes from the survey
of providers of ESOL
programmes for
international students*

The following are some methods that schools may use to support the maintenance of international students' first language:

"Our school rules have been translated into Chinese and Korean. An Oxford Picture Dictionary resource has been purchased in Korean and Chinese. Staff throughout the school have been selected who are able to contribute in a variety of languages, Chinese, Tongan, Samoan, Indian, Maori. French is offered as a second language to learn. Japanese is part of our curriculum. During social sciences classes the cultural aspect of Japan is explored further."

"Children are grouped with same language partners where possible to assist with understanding. Written work is done in first language and then they write in English."

"Children participate fully in the whole school programme eg speech festival. International students combine their first language and English on a topic relating to their country eg life in Korea compared with my life in New Zealand."

"Speakers of other languages who live in the community are available if needed."

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ASSISTANTS (TEACHER AIDES, BI-LINGUAL TUTORS)

In schools with larger numbers of learners from the same language backgrounds, the employment of bi-lingual staff (trained and qualified teachers) for the mainstream classroom should be a priority as should the employment of bi-lingual teacher aides.

Teacher aides/language assistants may be bi-lingual, multi-lingual, or English-speaking only. Remember that although they are a valuable resource, they are not usually trained teachers. Therefore when working with students, they should be given very specific details on what to do and how to do it and receive on-going training and support.

They may complement ESOL programmes in a variety of ways. They may be employed to:

- read to and with a small group of students, with supportive activities and discussion
- work through an intensive initial reading programme with individuals or small groups
- develop key oral and written vocabulary in a specific curriculum, topic or concept area, through discussion and using visual support materials with a group
- support first language translation and interpretation to aid learning
- be available in a class to support students in carrying out specific learning tasks set by the class teacher
- prepare and organise materials and learning support resources under teacher direction
- supervise learning centres established by the teacher. (This may be in class time, intervals, lunchtimes, or after school.)



*Quotes from the survey
of providers of ESOL
programmes for
international students*

The following are some examples of the support staff that may be employed by schools to support the mainstream programme:

“Provision of a bi-lingual support teacher in mainstream classes... Multi lingual signs, labels, instructions.”

“We have a Korean teacher aide and a Chinese teacher aide (who speaks Mandarin and Cantonese.)”

“Korean teacher, ethnic translators, interpreters. Register for all other languages spoken in the school.”

SMALL GROUP TUITION

Working in small groups is especially necessary for supporting students in the early phases of English language learning. Generally, working with small groups is more beneficial than working with students on a one-to-one basis.

In providing the optimum small-group intensive learning opportunities, teachers should consider:

- establishing optimum group sizes (primary 4–8 students and secondary 6-10 students)
- varying groups so that students with similar English language competency work together some of the time but are also able to work with more proficient learners at other times and with access to speakers of English as a first language at other times
- grouping students from the same class or year level, the same team or syndicate area, on a targeted subject or curriculum area
- providing a sustained learning time of at least an hour three or four times a week as a minimum
- identifying specific, short-term language and curriculum objectives
- providing plenty of input from adults and other students
- encouraging student talk and limiting teacher talk
- using curriculum-based contexts as much as possible and having specific, short-term language and curriculum objectives.

*Quotes from the survey
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international students*

The following are some approaches that schools can use to foster small group interaction:

“Small groups of up to four generate interaction, modeling, friendships and support for each child.”

“Depending on their ability and rate of progress shown, children were grouped according to their learning needs and also sometimes for peer tutoring.”

Refer also to the video in the Cross Cultural Communication resource sent to all schools' international departments.

HOW TO HELP STUDENTS TO INCREASE THEIR ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS IN SUBJECT AREAS

There are many ways to help students increase their achievement levels in subject areas that should be shared with and by all subject/classroom teachers. These include:

- having word lists and topic-related sentences for preview, revision, copying and reading
- providing vocabulary, sentence and computation cards for self-directed revision
- teaching them, step-by-step, how to write essays and assignments in the various genres and presentation formats appropriate for the topic
- relating homework to learning that they have previously covered and understood well and giving specific written (not just oral) instructions
- scaffolding their new learning, helping them to take small steps and being explicit about links to previous learning and breaking longer or more complex tasks up into smaller achievable units
- using taped material where possible so that the students can listen and read at their own pace
- making the first moves towards students if they seem to be having difficulty with the subject as they may not realise they could ask for additional help
- giving the students specific tasks with clear written and oral instructions and providing visual supports such as diagrams, flashcards and illustrated glossaries
- directly teaching the learning skills that are unfamiliar, such as independent research skills, teaching them how to use the library, and having plenty of reference material readily available at levels which they can understand.

SUPPORTING STUDENTS IN CLASSROOM INTERACTIONS, VARYING TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ENCOURAGING SELF MONITORING OF LEARNING

It is often necessary for international students to be shown what different types of interactions are expected in New Zealand classrooms. Students can be shy about participating in groups when they have low levels of oral English and they may not be used to saying when they do not understand or when they have something to offer. They also may need support in selecting the most appropriate strategies to monitor their own learning. It can be helpful to:

- model asking questions and participating in whole class and group discussions
- set up co-operative learning tasks that require the students to contribute orally, but also support their participation
- share the purpose, the learning plan, and the expected outcomes with the students at the outset of a learning session
- encourage independence and have a sustained focus on learning in a topic or context so that consolidation can occur
- provide homework that is linked to the day's lesson, or that prepares students ahead for a new topic
- give students strategies for vocabulary learning
- demonstrate self-questioning and self-review of learning, and share the responses with the teacher (eg What did I find hard/easy about this topic/lesson? What do I still not understand? What should I do if I don't understand something?)

CREATING A SUPPORTIVE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

International students need to feel that they are welcomed into their new environment and that they are valued learners. Teachers can facilitate this by:

- making a point of talking to the new learners of English individually. Both teacher and student should know each other's name and be able to say it clearly and correctly
- breaking down timetables into a personalised diary (detailing subjects, rooms, teachers). This allows for predictability in an unfamiliar environment
- encouraging the new learners to join in with practical activities that involve talking with other students, such as distributing worksheets or equipment
- understanding that the students need to speak in their first language. It can help them to participate in learning activities (using dictionaries or with translation by other students) and assist their comprehension
- training students and using buddy and peer-tutoring programmes to provide in-class support
- building on rote-learning skills when these are a strength for students (for example, students who come from cultures strong in oracy or who have previously studied in education systems where rote-learning is particularly valued)
- providing models and examples of learning activities so students understand teacher expectations and the required outcomes of the tasks
- allowing learners in early phases of development to copy relevant texts as it enables them to participate, provides a sense of achievement, gives models for further study and gives practice in necessary handwriting and presentation skills.

*Quotes from the survey
of providers of ESOL
programmes for
international students*

The following approaches may be used by schools to help create a supportive classroom environment for international students:

"Buddy system, peer writing programme, small group tuition by teacher aide, parent meetings of ESOL parents, remedial reading (Rainbow Reading and reading recovery), and maths recovery."

"The tutor of overseas students organises for a "buddy" from the same background (language/country/year level), for the international students and NESB students to be acquainted with the school programme."

CLASSROOM RESOURCES

All ESOL programmes for international students should be provided with sufficient resources. International funding should be used to buy additional commercial resources, but careful decisions need to be made in this regard, including recognising that resources should support all areas of the curriculum.

There should be enough print resources for all students and a budget for a wide range of quality fictional and factual texts at all levels of English proficiency, rather than heavy reliance on photocopied worksheets. It is essential that oral language development (both listening and speaking) is supported through the use of taped materials, which requires the provision of listening posts.

Schools with both large and small numbers of students should recognise the benefits of using appropriate software for self-accessed learning and practice. All software should be previewed prior to purchase. It is a good idea to consult with others who have used the software to check that it meets the learning needs of the students and is an improvement on a textbook.

Teachers may need to develop materials to support ESOL learning which at present do not exist or are specific to the learning contexts of the school. Teachers should plan these, but teacher aides can be of great assistance in the actual preparation of the materials or resources.

Many websites also offer prepared materials suitable for a range of English language learning needs, but these should be carefully reviewed before use, to ensure that they are consistent with models of good teaching and learning.

NESB OnLine. You can access the Ministry's NESB OnLine on Te Kete Ipurangi at: www.tki.org.nz/r/nesb/nesb_online/. The site has units of work across a range of curriculum areas such as English for Science and Social Studies (Volcanoes and Antarctica) for primary, intermediate and secondary school teachers. There are also many useful articles on teaching ESOL.

Many Learning Media materials which are available free for New Zealand born and permanent residents can also be purchased for or by international students.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

As indicated earlier, it is important that when a school has enrolled international students, a professional development budget is set aside to support not only the staff who are managing the administration aspects of the business, but also the ESOL staff and the subject/classroom teachers who are responsible for delivering the teaching programme.

Training curriculum teachers in how to teach language through content areas is valuable professional development. It benefits not only all learners from non-English speaking backgrounds, but also learners who have English as their first language. Therefore, both ESOL teachers and curriculum teachers should be encouraged to participate in initiatives which focus on learning through language and the development of academic literacy.



4 Monitoring Students and Record Keeping

International student programmes should include monitoring of both social/emotional well-being as well as academic development, including English proficiency. This will include complying with the requirements of the Code of Practice regarding accommodation.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH

It is important to recognise that there is a close relationship between a student's social and emotional health and their academic learning and language development. The social and emotional health of students should be carefully monitored and students should be given opportunities for individual discussions with the personnel responsible for the pastoral care of students. These personnel should be trained in recognising possible signs of extreme distress and knowing when and how to make referrals to trained counsellors or other specialist personnel.

The monitoring of social and emotional health should also include the provision of information on all aspects of keeping safe in the community, such as:

- personal safety at and after school and in leisure time
- road safety (both as pedestrians and drivers)
- access to advice and information on sexual health, where appropriate.

ACADEMIC MONITORING

Academic monitoring should occur as part of the school programme, but should also ensure that there is an early check on the students soon after initial placement, to confirm that the right decisions have been made, especially for senior students who need future access to tertiary study.

School reporting systems for academic progress should:

- include samples and/or records of initial diagnostic and on-going assessments, so progress can be measured
- keep notes on any social or academic concerns and report these to parents if appropriate
- enable families to understand the student's achievements.

Some schools have found that a portfolio approach is useful. This means that work samples are included in an individual portfolio for each student, along with other important documentation and information. Designing an ESOL report which records, for example, progressive increases in English vocabulary levels and reading age levels, can provide a clear indication of development of English proficiency with written texts.

Another helpful way to record development of spoken English proficiency is to use some of the oral assessment tasks that can be found in the ESOL Funding Assessment Guidelines. Record the student's performance regularly, on video, audiotape or digital camera. Several schools have reported that the audiotaped records of oral language development have provided clear evidence of progress.

PREPARATION FOR TERTIARY STUDY

It is important that staff responsible for advising senior students keep up-to-date with tertiary entry requirements and give accurate information and informed advice to students. Initial placements and subject choices should be carefully planned, so that students wanting to study at a tertiary level are following a course which ensures they are eligible to apply. This will include a careful consideration of the English language requirements for international students, and the provision of school courses that will enable them to meet these requirements.

Careful records of students' progress should be maintained, with an individual file on each student, as described above.

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The following are some activities schools can use to provide information to international students on pathways to tertiary study:

"University/polytechnic prospectus available on display in guidance area. Assistant principal advised what subjects required/relevant for future tertiary aims."

"Individual career planning sessions and internet information assistance. Visits to school by university liaison staff. Visit by our students (organised by our International Department), to the University."

"Visitors from some tertiary institutes, attendance at university open days, university prerequisite letters posted on international students' whiteboard, individual counselling, and advice to agents."



5 Developing English within the Home and Community

The homestay context and the wider community provide further opportunities for international students to develop their English language competence.

SUPPORTING THE HOMESTAY EXPERIENCE

Schools can have a helpful role in assisting homestay parents to understand the English language requirements of the school, and in explaining how they too can assist international students to develop their English.

It is possible that a student is with a family of the same mother tongue. This provides opportunities for the student to continue to develop their own language. It also poses particular challenges to ensure that international students have exposure to English language. Again, schools have a role in advising such families how they can help to support the development of the students' English.

By maintaining close and supportive communication with families, the school can ensure that the student is helped by the arrangement and not restricted, whatever the mother tongue of the caregiver. Ultimately the student is here to develop skills in English. A good homestay will take an interest in the international students they host, spend time with them, involve them in family activities and provide plenty of opportunities to speak or listen to English.

DEVELOPING ENGLISH WITHIN THE WIDER COMMUNITY

Inclusion of activities involving the local community is a major consideration in hosting international students. The community has a part to play in widening students' cultural exposure and developing their English language skills through exposure to a range of the language in different contexts (eg sports and cultural clubs, cultural experiences, films, drama and concerts).

Both schools and the wider community, then, have a role in extending the English language experiences of international students.

"The home situation provides an environment for socio-cultural and linguistic experiences which do not occur naturally in the classroom. These include sharing meals, and mealtime conversations, receiving and farewelling guests, planning family outings, performing household chores, discussing television and radio programmes, making bathing and laundry arrangements, answering the door and telephone, attending community and sports events, and the multitude of other events that contribute to daily family life. These experiences are not only highly culturally significant, but also employ task-specific language which may not be heard in another context. The wider host community is also a major source of informal behaviour patterns and colloquial language."

"Cross Cultural Communication. For People Working with International Students." CD ROM published by the Ministry of Education. January 2003.