

THE CAMBRIDGE CELTA COURSE AT THE BERLIN SCHOOL OF ENGLISH

Taking CELTA in Berlin

The Berlin School of English (BSofE) is a privately owned English school for adults situated in the centre of Berlin. The school was founded in 1991 and enjoys an excellent reputation for high quality teaching standards, both within the school and in many local, national and international companies. The Berlin School of English Teacher Training Centre was founded to support our commitment to training both new and more experienced teachers of English as a foreign language. We have been an approved centre for the **Cambridge CELTA course** – Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (formerly Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults) since 2004.

What is CELTA?

CELTA is one of the world's foremost entry-level qualifications for people who wish to become professional teachers of the English language. More than 10,000 candidates complete a CELTA course each year. The course is offered at over 200 approved centres in over 40 countries. Between them these centres run over 600 courses per year.

Who is CELTA for?

Candidates come from all walks of life. Many are recent university graduates and others are professionals or teachers in other areas interested in a career change or break. CELTA is suitable for people who wish to teach English as a foreign language in any country, whether in the short term or as a long-term career choice.

Applicants must:

- have an awareness of language and a competence in both spoken and written English appropriate to undertaking the course and teaching at a range of levels. This includes being able to use clear, coherent and error-free written and spoken English in the classroom and in assignments.
- have the potential to develop the necessary skills to become effective teachers and to complete the written assignments and the assessment of practice teaching

It is recommended that candidates be at least 20, but candidates aged between 18 and 20 may be accepted on to the course at the centre's discretion.

CELTA is not only for native English speakers. Many successful CELTA candidates are speakers of other languages with a high level of proficiency in English. The level of English is required for admission to the course is C2 or very strong C1 level on the Common European Framework (this is equivalent to grade A in the Cambridge CAE examination, a pass grade in the Cambridge CPE examination, an IELTS score of at least 7, a TOEFL PBT score of at least 590, a TOEFL CBT score of at least 240, a TOEFL iBT score of at least 100).

All potential CELTA candidates, whether native speakers of English or not, are required to complete an application task and interview prior to acceptance on the course.

What does the course cover?

CELTA is an entry-level course. This means that it is aimed at teachers with no previous classroom experience. However, some candidates do have experience and wish to obtain a formal qualification and learn more about teaching skills. The course consists of a total of 120 hours in the Training Centre. This time includes:

- methodology seminars
- teaching students
- taking part in post-teaching feedback discussions
- supported lesson planning
- observing fellow trainees teaching
- observing experienced teachers
- one-to-one tutorials

In addition to the time spent in the teacher training centre, candidates should be prepared to spend a minimum of 80 additional hours on reading, research, lesson preparation and the four written assignments.

How are candidates assessed?

Candidates are assessed continuously during the course. There is no final examination. An external assessor, appointed by Cambridge English, visits each course towards the end to act as moderator.

There are 2 components of assessment:

- **Assessed teaching practice**

Candidates teach for a total of 6 hours, working with classes at different levels of proficiency. The assessment is based on the candidate's overall performance by the end of the 6 hours. Candidates receive written and oral feedback from the observing tutor after each teaching session. Full details of the assessment criteria will be provided at the beginning of the course. They can also be found on the Cambridge English website:

www.cambridgeenglish.org/teaching-english/teaching-qualifications/celta/about-the-celta-course/

- **Written assignments**

There are four written assignments. One assignment focuses on individual learners, one on teaching language skills, one involves work on the language system of English and one is a reflection on classroom teaching. The assignments are marked "pass", "resubmit" or "fail." Candidates receive one opportunity to resubmit assignments which do not meet the required standard.

To be successful, candidates must pass both components. There are three pass grades – Pass, Pass 'B' and Pass 'A'. Successful candidates receive a certificate awarded by the University of Cambridge English Examinations. You will also receive a report on performance and achievement from the Berlin School of English Teacher Training Centre.

Course hours

Intensive course

The course usually runs over four weeks (Monday-Friday). Candidates are in the training centre from 09.00 to 17.10 daily (18.00 on some Fridays). Before you begin the course, you must be sure that you are available at all of these times. Teaching practice takes place in the afternoon and feedback on teaching practice usually takes place the following day.

Part-time course

The course typically runs over thirteen to fourteen weeks, with meetings on Tuesday and Thursday evenings (17.30 -20.45) and eight or nine Saturdays (10.00 – 17.00). Before you begin the course, you must be sure that you are available at all of these times. Teaching practice takes place in the evenings and feedback takes place immediately after the lessons.

Workload

As previously mentioned, completion of the CELTA course requires at least 80 additional learning hours for lesson preparation, assignment writing, reading and research. This means that during the intensive course most evenings and weekends are taken up with CELTA work. Because of this heavy workload, you should only take the course if you are in good physical and mental health. It is also extremely ill-advised to take on any other work commitments during the intensive CELTA course.

Quality Assurance

All centres which offer CELTA courses are required to submit a training plan, timetable, details of assessment and assignments to Cambridge English in order to become validated. All CELTA tutors must be approved by Cambridge English, and each course is visited by an external assessor appointed by Cambridge English.

Course facilities, resources and materials

The school has a photocopier, a library of course and resource books and equipment for preparing materials. You are, however, strongly advised to bring your own laptop.

Pre-Course Tasks

Once they have registered for the course, trainees receive a copy of *A Grammar Development Course for Teachers of English* by Jeff Mohamed. This material is free of charge. Trainees need to devote 20 to 25 hours of work to the tasks in this book before the course starts.

All trainees must also purchase *The Practice of English Language Teaching (5th edition)* by Jeremy Harmer and read some specified chapters. Full details will be given on acceptance onto the course.

Pre-CELTA grammar course



To help trainees prepare for the CELTA course, we also offer a two-day grammar awareness course (10 hours in total) immediately before each CELTA course start date. This course takes place in Berlin.

The course is aimed at people who have a “native-speaker” intuitive feel for English, but who have not previously had to gain explicit knowledge of the grammar of the language. Participants will learn about the most important categories in English grammar and the terminology used to describe them. It will build on topics covered in the pre-course tasks described above.

The fee for this course is €150

If you would like more information about this course, please indicate this on your CELTA application form and we can discuss it in your interview.

Accommodation

We can arrange accommodation for a number of CELTA trainees on each course. Rooms are available in the school’s own apartment at a cost of € 520 for the four weeks of the intensive course for a single room and € 660 for a double room. In cases where the school apartment is fully booked or if you wish to have a private apartment, we can arrange alternative accommodation for you for a small fee (provided you request this at least three weeks before the course start date). If you require accommodation please indicate this on the application form and we will discuss it further at the time of your interview.

Health and travel insurance

We cannot arrange health or travel insurance for CELTA trainees, so it is the responsibility of each candidate to ensure that they have adequate insurance to cover their stay in Germany before leaving their country of residence.

Visas

EU citizens

Citizens of member countries of the European Union can travel to, study and work in Germany. If you are staying for more than 3 months, you must register with the Germany authorities as soon as possible after arriving. If you plan to work in Germany before, during or after your CELTA course, you must apply for a residency permit. This can be done in Berlin.

Non-EU citizens

Nationals of most other countries can travel to Germany as a visitor for a period of up to three months. Stays of longer than three months must be covered by a valid visa. Non-EU citizens wishing to work in Germany must apply for the relevant work permit. In most cases this can be done in Germany. It should be noted that acceptance on to our CELTA course does not in any way reduce your responsibility to ensure you have the relevant papers to cover your stay in Germany.

The following web pages contain helpful information:

<http://berlin.usembassy.gov/> (American Embassy in Berlin)

www.germanyembassyottawa.org (German Embassy in Canada)

<http://www.germanembassy.org.au/en/home/index.html> (German Embassy in Australia)

Job assistance

The Berlin School of English Teacher Training Centre offers advice to successful CELTA trainees about finding work on completion of the CELTA course. Of course, we can not guarantee that you will find a position on completing the course, but we can offer advice on how to maximise your chances of finding the sort of job you are looking for.

Who are the tutors?

Each CELTA course at the Berlin School of English has at least two trained and designated CELTA tutors, one of whom acts as the course leader.