

Student emergency support

If a British Council English language teaching centre ceases trading due to the Covid-19 pandemic

It is always sad when a British Council accredited English language teaching (ELT) centre closes and particularly distressing to see well-loved ELT establishments being forced out of business by a global pandemic. We feel for everyone involved.

English UK has no obligation to provide recompense to students who have been affected by the insolvency of an accredited centre. Students may be able to seek financial compensation through the appointed administrators or their travel insurers, but unfortunately this is not always the case.

As a national community of educators committed to the welfare and education of international students in the English language, English UK endeavours to offer support to students impacted when a British Council accredited centre ceases trading.

This is not straightforward as the scale of this Covid-19 outbreak and its impact on the UK ELT sector is unprecedented, so we ask for your understanding.

Our priorities in the event of the insolvency of an accredited centre are:

- to ensure the welfare and safety of the students
- to enable students to continue their English language studies (online at the moment) wherever possible, with the support of the wider English UK membership.

Our support

If an individual student has paid for a course at a British Council accredited ELT centre, and the centre ceases trading before the end of their course, English UK will help find a new centre so they can complete the course at no extra cost. At the moment, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, these courses will be taught online.

English UK will work with other accredited centres to find a course at the same level and for the remaining number of weeks, but it may not be exactly the same. This applies to individual students who are studying on the date that the centre ceases trading.

English UK will also try to help students under the following circumstances, but cannot guarantee to do so in all cases:

- Where individual students have paid in full and whose start dates are in the future, English UK will endeavour to find a new centre for them so they can complete their courses at no extra cost at a time when it is safe and appropriate to provide classroom-based teaching.

We will keep a record of the details of these individual students and will contact them once face-to-face teaching has resumed at English UK member centres.

- Where students have paid for accommodation through the teaching centre, English UK will endeavour to provide limited emergency financial aid if the centre ceases trading unexpectedly.

This limited emergency aid is likely to cover the following scenarios:

- For adult students at imminent risk of losing their accommodation and being made homeless due to the insolvency of an accredited ELT centre, we will endeavour to cover your emergency accommodation costs until you are able to make alternative arrangements (up to one week)
- For students under 18 years of age at imminent risk of losing their accommodation and being made homeless due to the insolvency of an accredited teaching centre, we will ensure that you are safely housed and cared for until alternative arrangements can be made.

Contact membership@englishuk.com with any questions.

[Updated 20 May 2020]