THE STAFF

The program employs appropriately qualified and experienced staff, providing them with appropriate compensation, professional treatment, and opportunities for professional development.

Statements of Best Practice

for The Staff

The program employs appropriately qualified and experienced staff, providing them with appropriate compensation, professional treatment, and opportunities for professional development.

Hiring Program Staff (#18-23)

18. The program hires staff who are interculturally competent, understand the diverse needs of the student body, and treat learners with respect, dignity, and consideration.[1]

_ The staff demonstrate an ability to communicate with language learners through or as a result of any of the following:

- _ Demonstrated patience and respect towards learners having difficulty communicating
- _ Work experience in a diverse community in Canada
- _ Residence or work abroad
- _ Participation in training related to inclusive practices, intercultural communication, anti-racism, etc.

_ The staff demonstrate they value equity, diversity, and inclusion in their practice and service to learners and the community through or as a result of any of the following:

- _ Promoting a welcoming, caring, respectful and **safe** environment for all
- _ Demonstrating intercultural communicative competence
- _ Onboarding training that reinforces the values of equity, diversity, and inclusion _ (See also Best Practices for [2SGBTQ+ Inclusion](#), [Anti-Racism](#), and [Indigenization](#))

_ The staff demonstrate an understanding of the predominant cultures of the learner population as a result of any of the following:

- _ Membership in one of the dominant cultures of the learner population
- _ An ability to speak the language of one of the predominant groups
- _ Work experience among those particular populations in Canada
- _ Residence or work in the learners' countries of origin
- _ Participating in relevant workshops, seminars
- _ Reading of literature/articles on the student population
- _ Participating in relevant community forums, meetings, etc.
- _ The staff demonstrate a developing understanding of the needs of adult **EAL** learners as a result of any of the following:

  - _ Participating in conversations with learners
  - _ Reading of literature on the student population
  - _ Participating in relevant community forums, meetings, etc.
  - _ Participating in relevant workshops, seminars, training opportunities, etc. (See also Best Practices for [2SLGBTQ+ Inclusion](), [Anti-Racism](), and [Supporting Learners with Diverse Learning Needs]())
  - _ Having themselves participated in second language programs as adult learners
- _ As far as possible, staff are hired who reflect the learner body and/or represent **marginalized** communities (e.g., Indigenous, **2SLGBTQ+**, **Racialized**).

19. The program hires qualified staff with the background, skills, and abilities to administer, manage, and provide leadership to an EAL or LINC program.

- _ The program director has expertise and/or training in a variety of TESL/TEAL-related areas, including a selection of the following:

  - _ Second language acquisition theory
  - _ Current TESL/TEAL theory and practice
  - _ Materials analysis/curriculum development
  - _ Assessment/feedback/Portfolio Based Language Assessment (PBLA)
  - _ Canadian Language Benchmarks
  - _ The goals and regulations of LINC and second language programming
  - _ Educational technology and online instruction
  - _ Intercultural communication
  - _ Equity, diversity, justice, and inclusion
  - _ Other
- _ The program director has ability, expertise, and/or training in a wider variety of areas, including a selection of the following:[2]

  - _ Recruitment

- Program research
- Budgets and finance
- Funding (accessing sources of; writing proposals for)
- Employment standards
- Interpersonal relations/conflict resolution
- Program management
- Leadership
- Coaching, mentoring, staff training, and the provision of professional development
- Other

- The program director is active in the EAL field as demonstrated by any of the following:

  - Membership in a professional TESL/TEAL association
  - Regular attendance at TESL/TEAL conferences/workshops
  - The establishment of links to the EAL profession (e.g., by hosting events at the institution)
  - Presentations at conferences/workshops
  - Ongoing networking with EAL organizations and partners

- The program director does the following:

  - Advocates on behalf of staff, learners, and program
  - Is accountable to internal, community, and external stakeholders
  - Is adept at crisis intervention, problem solving, and conflict resolution
  - Keeps lines of communication open with learners, instructors, and other staff
  - Shows awareness of issues, concerns, successes, and innovations within the program
  - Supports and encourages innovation and professional advancement
  - Demonstrates empathy, concern, and a commitment to equity, diversity, justice, and inclusion in interactions with staff and learners
  - Views staff as a team, encouraging staff to use their expertise, skills, and abilities
  - Is adept at time management
  - Promotes partnerships and channels of collaboration with other organizations to support learners and staff

- Compensation and title are provided for the additional duties required to administer a program, for example:

  - An instructor who is also administering a program is given release time or compensation for administrative duties.

20. The program hires qualified instructional staff with training in the theory and methodology of teaching and learning EAL.

- Qualifications for teaching in the program include formal training in TESL/TEAL. Formal

training includes any of the following:

- _ TESL Canada Professional Certificate or equivalent,[3] minimum of a Standard One Certificate
- _ Bachelor's degree in TESL/TEAL
- _ Post-degree Diploma in TESL/TEAL
- _ Master's degree in TESL/TEAL
- _ Master's degree in a related subject (e.g., linguistics, adult education) with a specialization in TESL/TEAL

- _ Instructors with a range of qualifications are hired (i.e., while some instructors may only have the minimum certification requirements, the program ensures that some instructors have the equivalent of TESL Canada Professional Certification, Standard Two or Standard Three).
- _ Not having the above qualifications may be mitigated temporarily, in special circumstances, if the instructor is working towards recognized TESL/TEAL qualifications and a selection of the following are in place:

  - _ The instructor has expertise in a relevant content area (e.g., nursing or engineering when teaching an English language course for nurses or engineers).
  - _ The instructor has extensive experience in TESL/TEAL.
  - _ The instructor accesses ongoing professional development in EAL theory and methodology.
  - _ The instructor is paired with or mentored by an experienced, trained EAL instructor.

- _ Instructors with training and expertise in relevant content areas may be paired with trained language instructors.

21. The program hires instructional staff with the skills, abilities, and dispositions necessary for effective instruction.[4]

- _ Instructors' proficiency in speaking, listening, reading, writing, and **pragmatics** is functionally equivalent to that of a comprehensible fluent speaker with some higher education and meets TESL Canada Certification requirements.[5]
- _ Instructors are proficient in the skills they are teaching. For instance:

  - _ If teaching academic writing, instructors are competent academic writers.
  - _ If teaching public speaking, instructors are confident public speakers.
  - _ If teaching business English, instructors are able to lead a business meeting, make a presentation, write a resume, write a proposal, etc.
  - _ If teaching adult literacy learners settling in Canada, instructors are able to model the literacy and essential skills that learners are developing.
  - _ If teaching in employment or workplace-related programs, instructors are able to

model the **Skills for Success/Essential Skills**, softs skills, pragmatics, and **intercultural competence** needed for success in the Canadian workplace; they have or are developing the occupation-specific competencies in which they are training learners.

- Instructors are innovative, creative, engaging, and enthusiastic. (See also Best Practices for [Instruction](#))
- Instructors demonstrate the ability to plan instruction to promote learning and meet learner goals by doing the following:

  - Incorporating an understanding of the learners' needs, interests, prior learning, and background knowledge into plans for instruction and assessment
  - Articulating short- and long-term plans/goals
  - Developing modules and lesson plans that do the following:
  - Support the curriculum
  - Include time for learning, practice, review, reflection, and assessment
  - Support the transfer of skills from the classroom to daily life situations
  - Articulating the objectives/purposes of particular classroom activities and resources

- Instructors demonstrate the ability to organize and manage a classroom in such a way to ensure the following:

  - All learners (regardless of ability, sexual orientation, **gender identity**, **gender expression**, **race**, ethnic background, language ability, socioeconomic status, etc.) are safe, welcome, seen, respected, and included in all aspects of the classroom.
  - Learners are engaged and participate.
  - Interaction is respectful and constructive.
  - Instructions are clear, and activities run smoothly.
  - Time is used effectively.
  - Unexpected events are incorporated into learning.

- Instructors make changes to plans to ensure learner engagement and achievement.
- Instructors demonstrate the ability to assess and provide constructive feedback to learners.
- Instructors demonstrate an awareness and understanding of community resources.

22. The program hires instructional and/or other professional staff with varied levels of experience and areas of expertise.

- The program hires instructors with a range of experience (i.e., while some instructors may be novices, the program ensures that a majority of instructors are experienced).
- The program hires instructors or other professional staff (e.g., counsellors, curriculum developers) with special expertise or training in areas that support program goals.

Depending on program goals, some of those areas may include the following:

- _ Portfolio Based Language Assessment (PBLA)
- _ Curriculum development
- _ Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
- _ Technology for language learning; online instruction
- _ Equity, diversity, justice, and inclusion
- _ Intercultural communication
- _ Workplace skills
- _ Counselling
- _ ESL literacy
- _ Content specialization for ELT courses (e.g., nursing, engineering)
- _ Pronunciation instruction
- _ Grammar instruction
- _ Reading/writing/listening/speaking instruction
- _ TOEFL/IELTS/CAEL/CELTA/CELBAN preparation
- _ Canadian Language Benchmarks
- _ Essential Skills/Skills for Success
- _ Mental health and wellness/**trauma-informed practice**
- _ Learning disability support
- _ English for Academic Purposes (EAP)
- _ Other

- _ Experienced and specialist staff are encouraged and given the opportunity to do any of the following:

  - _ Apply their skills and expertise
  - _ Provide mentoring and leadership
  - _ Provide in-house training

23. The program hires support staff with the training, qualifications, abilities, and dispositions to ensure the smooth running of the program.[6]

- _ Based on the needs of instructional staff, administrative staff, and learners, sufficient support personnel are hired to ensure efficient day-to-day operations of the program. Depending on the size of the program, these may include the following:

  - _ Receptionists
  - _ Administrative assistants
  - _ Office managers
  - _ Instructional aides
  - _ Technology support specialists

- Counsellors/advisors
- Finance specialists
- Recruiters
- Other
- The hiring process for support staff meets the following criteria:

  - It ensures that support staff have appropriate training, qualifications, and experience for the job.
  - It ensures that support staff have the disposition to work with and support the learner population (e.g., the desire and communication skills to help learners to gain access to services, support, and solutions).
  - It gives preference to applicants demonstrating intercultural competence and cross-cultural experience, and/or an ability to speak the languages spoken by the learners, and/or a connection to the ethnic communities of the learners.

Onboarding and Professional Development (#24–27)

24. New staff (administrative, instructional, and support) are set up for success as they are oriented to the program, the learners, and the broader institution.

- An effective system for orienting staff is in place.
- Orientation of new staff includes information and training related to a selection of the following:

  - The organization's mission, mandate, and central values (e.g., related to equity, diversity, and inclusion)
  - The program as a whole, as well as each staff member's particular place in that program
  - Facilities and services
  - Policies and expectations that may be unique to the program (e.g., expectations regarding learner assessment, record keeping, etc.)
  - The learner population
  - The curriculum
  - The resources available for successful job performance
  - Those aspects of copyright legislation that are relevant to their jobs
  - Technology and programs that staff/faculty will be expected to use (e.g., learning management systems, online textbooks, online classrooms, record-keeping software)
  - Those requirements of confidentiality, privacy and freedom of information acts

(Freedom of information and Protection of Privacy Act[7] or Personal Information Protection Act[8]) that are relevant to their jobs

- New staff are oriented to the program in a variety of the following ways:

  - Discussion with supervisor
  - Job shadowing
  - Pairing of new staff with co-workers from the program
  - Observation of instruction or other program activity
  - Provision of written program description
  - Onboarding courses and training (online or face-to-face)

- Newly qualified staff have access to mentoring and support for a reasonable period of time.
- Recently promoted staff have access to relevant skills training and support.

25. The program takes a principled approach to providing ongoing professional development.[9]

- There are processes in place and persons responsible for guiding professional development (PD), including the following:

  - A process for determining needs
  - A process for prioritizing needs
  - A process for systematically planning and implementing professional development opportunities (e.g., PD tracking records, PD priority lists, recommendations for PD)

- Some of the following are considered when determining appropriate professional development for a particular program:

  - Goals/mission of the program
  - Program needs and gaps
  - Solicited feedback from staff regarding their needs for professional development
  - Individual needs of instructors teaching particular courses (e.g., an ESL literacy class, an employment-focused language class)
  - Needs of the learner population
  - Current trends and research (e.g., new teaching or assessment strategies, methodologies, approaches)
  - Province wide safety/health guidelines due to emergent situations

- A selection of professional development opportunities is offered to staff. These may be developed in-house, or offered in conjunction with other EAL programs or TESL/TEAL organizations. Priority is given to professional development that involves any of the following:

- Ongoing commitment of participants
- Opportunities to reflect on practice and challenge biases/assumptions
- Opportunities to apply what is learned
- Opportunities to report back, receive feedback on, and further refine what is learned
- Opportunities for mentorship and collaboration

- The program provides resources and opportunities for instructional staff to expand their understanding of the learner population, adult second language acquisition, and best practices in the TESL/TEAL field. Opportunities and resources are provided for expansion of knowledge in some of the following areas:[10]

  - Current peer-reviewed research related to adult second language acquisition
  - Current trends, approaches, methods and strategies related to adult second language teaching
  - Current trends, approaches, methods and strategies related to teaching particular language skills (e.g., listening, academic writing, pronunciation)
  - Components of language (e.g., the English sound system, grammar, vocabulary)
  - Technology (e.g., training in the use of new software, equipment, or technologies in learning; online learning)
  - Particular learner populations and communities (e.g., ESL literacy, youth in transition, learners with learning disabilities)
  - Research and strategies related to teaching specialized classes (e.g., teaching TOEFL preparation)
  - Affective factors that influence adult language learning
  - Culture, intercultural communication, pragmatics, and their impact on the second language classroom
  - Curriculum development (e.g., **UDL**, **HyFlex** design, online course development)
  - Ways to access funding
  - Community resources
  - Knowledge and use of Canadian Language Benchmarks for curriculum/course development, task design, instruction, and assessment
  - Assessment and Portfolio Based Language Assessment (PBLA)
  - Knowledge and use of Essential Skills/Skills for Success (See Best Practices for Skills and Language for Work)
  - Equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism (See Best Practices for Anti-Racism)
  - Inclusion of **2SLGBTQ+** learners (See Best Practices for 2SLGBTQ+ Inclusion)
  - **Trauma-informed practice** (See Best Practices for Supporting Learners with Diverse Learning Needs)
  - Learning disabilities (See Best Practices for Supporting Learners with Diverse Learning Needs)
  - Indigenization (See Best Practices for Indigenization)

26. The program facilitates, encourages, acknowledges, and rewards participation in professional development.

_ The program supports ongoing professional development through the following:

   _ Ensuring regular access to professional development through release time, rescheduling of classes, etc.
   _ Ensuring ongoing funding for professional development

_ The program recognizes staff who demonstrate commitment and professionalism in accessing ongoing professional development. This recognition may include some of the following:

   _ Providing a process for tracking and reporting professional development
   _ Providing incentives such as:

      _ Additional opportunities for professional development
      _ Opportunities for advancement
      _ Salary increments
      _ Priority for special project selection

   _ Providing opportunity to apply what is learned through program innovations, pilot projects, etc.
   _ Providing opportunity to share what is learned
   _ Encouraging staff to undertake new challenges and responsibilities
   _ Facilitating collaboration on projects

_ Self-directed professional development is recognized and valued by employers and institutions.

_ Instructor involvement in local, provincial and national TESL/TEAL organizations is facilitated, encouraged, acknowledged, and rewarded through some of the following:

   _ Release time to attend conferences/meetings
   _ Rescheduling of classes to allow staff to attend conferences
   _ Reimbursement of fees for professional memberships
   _ Reimbursement of fees and/or substantial defrayment of costs for attending conferences
   _ Release time or support for leadership/involvement in TESL/TEAL organizations
   _ Release time for staff to serve on professional committees
   _ Opportunities for staff who contribute to the profession, or who serve in positions of leadership in TESL/TEAL organizations, to share their expertise with co-workers
   _ Opportunities to share what is learned (e.g., mentoring a co-worker, presenting information in-house)
   _ Opportunity/encouragement to apply what is learned through program innovations, pilot courses, etc.

27. Instructional and administrative staff demonstrate commitment and professionalism through reflective practice, collaboration, and ongoing professional development.[11]

_ EAL instructors and administrators demonstrate ongoing commitment to their profession by doing the following:

  _ Seeking out opportunities to learn, with or without the explicit directive of their employers or organizations
  _ Interacting with and reflecting on what is learned
  _ Applying what is learned
  _ Sharing what is learned

_ Instructors and administrators participate in a variety of the following activities:

  _ Mentoring and/or being mentored
  _ Observing peers
  _ Collaborating with colleagues on projects (e.g., curriculum, test development) or classroom research (e.g., ways to engage online learners)
  _ Joining and participating in professional associations
  _ Reflecting (and recording reflections) on classroom activities that worked or did not work
  _ Engaging in discussions with EAL colleagues and professionals (e.g., a professional development talking circle; a reading group; an ATESL special interest group)
  _ Attending TESL/TEAL workshops and conferences
  _ Using technology to access self-directed professional development (webinars, social media, podcasts, blogs, websites)
  _ Taking a course that expands understanding of the learner population, the TESL/TEAL profession, the process of learning a language (e.g., taking a language course; taking an online CCLB course; taking a course related to intercultural competence or trauma-informed practice)
  _ Engaging in critically informed reading about second language learning, second language teaching, and the learner population
  _ Publishing in blogs, newsletters, magazines, and journals
  _ Attending community events of the cultural communities represented in the program
  _ Taking on new challenges and responsibilities (e.g., teaching a class for a new learner population; developing a curriculum or test; writing a grant proposal; teaching a new course or workshop) and actively pursuing the skills and knowledge necessary for success
  _ Helping other educators or workplace and community stakeholders understand EAL learners and the second language learning process (e.g., through serving on committees, publishing)

_ Searching for and/or taking on opportunities to deliver professional development (e.g., webinars, conference presentations, in-house training)

Compensation and ethical treatment of staff (#28–30)

28. The compensation of program staff is equivalent to the compensation of staff with comparable qualifications in similar positions in the broader institution or in similar programs across institutions.[12]

_ The program works towards providing employment opportunities that meet instructors' preferences where possible, for example:

  _ Full- or part-time employment
  _ Day or evening employment
  _ Contract or ongoing employment
_ The program provides benefits (e.g., sick leave, vacation, healthcare, and pension) for full-time ongoing staff.
_ Staff are financially compensated or provided time for non-instructional activities such as:

  _ Curriculum, materials, and test development
  _ Program meetings
  _ Administrative responsibilities
  _ Placement testing
  _ Preparation and marking
  _ Student conferences
  _ Required staff development functions
  _ Participation on equity, inclusion, and anti-racism initiatives/committees
  _ Recruitment
_ The program provides a salary scale and promotional ladder that reward the following:

  _ Qualifications
  _ Experience
  _ Competence
  _ Professional development

29. There are policies and procedures in place that ensure the ethical treatment of staff.[13]

- Hiring practices are inclusive, ethical, and transparent, including the following:

  - Clearly stated required qualifications (e.g., in advertisements)
  - Written policies for recruiting, interviewing, and hiring
- Staff receive timely appointment letters or contracts.
- Written descriptions of duties and responsibilities are available for all positions.
- Staff receive print or electronic copies of program policies.
- Staff receive and agree to abide by a clearly articulated statement of program expectations regarding ethical conduct. This code of conduct covers a selection of the following issues:

  - Interactions with learners and with other staff, including expectations of inclusion and protection from discrimination and bullying of all staff/learners, with explicit mention of sexual/gender minority staff as well as Black, Indigenous, and **Racialized** staff
  - Conflict of interest in hiring practices, or in the acquisition of services, supplies, or equipment
  - Competition in business with the employer (e.g., private tutoring of a learner who may be able to access the same services through the institution)
  - Representation of the institution to the broader community
  - Acknowledgment of substantive and/or creative contributions of colleagues or of work done collaboratively
  - Ethical treatment of learners,[14] including respecting learner confidentiality and not abusing professional roles for personal gain
- Staff have access to a grievance procedure.
- The program provides clear criteria for dismissal.
- Instructors are informed of employment prospects for the following term in a timely manner.
- Federal and provincial regulations regarding labour standards are followed.
- Program policies and practices explicitly address and protect the rights, freedoms, and safety of sexual and gender minority staff as well as Black, Indigenous, and Racialized staff.

30. There is a process in place for the regular evaluation of administrative, teaching, and support staff.

- The program provides learners with the opportunity to anonymously evaluate program staff (administrative, instructional, and support).
- Results of learner staff evaluations are reported to the relevant staff member in a timely

manner.

- Regular evaluation of **administrative staff** takes into account a selection of the following:

  - Formal and informal feedback from learners
  - Formal and informal feedback from teaching and support staff
  - Performance/annual review reflecting a selection of the indicators listed in Best Practice #19 and Best Practice #27
  - Other

- Regular evaluation of **instructional staff** takes into account a selection of the following:

  - Formal and informal feedback from learners and support staff
  - Feedback from program director (e.g., regarding classroom observation, lesson plans, self-evaluation)
  - Participation in professional development (for more detail, refer back to Best Practice #27)
  - Competence in terms of skills and abilities (for more detail, refer back to Best Practice #21)
  - Other

- Regular evaluation of **support staff** takes into account a selection of the following:

  - Formal and informal feedback from learners
  - Formal and informal feedback from administrative/instructional staff
  - Performance review
  - Other

- The purpose and processes of evaluation (e.g., frequency, who conducts evaluation, how feedback is delivered) are clearly described and conveyed to staff upon onboarding; staff are updated on changes to processes.
- Criteria for evaluation are measurable, clearly described, and conveyed to staff; staff are updated on changes to criteria.
- Results of performance reviews are documented; as a result of fair evaluation, further training may be recommended or required.

Volunteers (#31)

31. In programs supported by volunteers, volunteers are screened, oriented, guided, supported, valued, and thanked as they perform meaningful tasks to support learners.

- The program recruits volunteers with the skills, abilities, and dispositions to support learners.
- The program screens volunteers based on program needs and using Vulnerable Sector Checks.
- The program provides a safe and healthy work environment for volunteers.
- The program orients volunteers to the program, its mission, and its central values, including expectations of inclusion and protection from discrimination and bullying of all learners/volunteers/staff (with explicit mention of sexual/gender minorities, as well as Black, Indigenous, and Racialized people).
- The program provides a clear description of the volunteer's roles and duties.
- The program provides orientation, training, and guidance related to a volunteer's particular role and duties.
- In contexts where volunteers tutor English language learners, they work under the supervision of trained EAL instructors, and they receive initial and ongoing training in a selection of the following areas, as needed for their assignments:

  - Their role as tutor
  - Getting to know the language learner; intercultural communication; principles for teaching adults; assessing learner needs
  - Principles for/approaches to teaching language (e.g., task-based language teaching)
  - Planning instruction, along with relevant supporting resources and lesson plans
  - Teaching/learning strategies and resources specific to their context and the needs of their learner(s), for example, leading conversation groups, teaching EAL literacy learners, citizenship preparation, English in the workplace, IELTS preparation, teaching online, etc.
  - Understanding the English language, and strategies for helping learners improve their vocabulary, grammatical accuracy, pronunciation, pragmatics, etc.
  - Strategies and resources for teaching language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing)
- The volunteer's duties are meaningful and provide opportunities to maximize skills.
- The program provides feedback to and solicits feedback from volunteers.
- The program recognizes and values the contributions of their volunteers (i.e., volunteers are acknowledged and thanked).

[1] Informed by TESOL (2003), Standard 7E.

[2] See Henry (1997).

[3] See the TESL Canada website for current certification requirements (specifically see the TESL Canada Instructor Certification Manual): https://www.tesl.ca/

[4] This Best Practice and indicators are informed primarily by TESOL (2008).

[5] See the TESL Canada website for current certification requirements (specifically see the TESL Canada *Instructor Certification Manual*, p. 9): https://www.tesl.ca/

[6] Informed by TESOL (2003), Standard 7F.

[7] For public institutions.

[8] For private-sector organizations (businesses, non-profit organizations).

[9] See CAELA Network (2008).

[10] Informed significantly by CAELA Network (2008).

[11] See TESOL (2008), Standard 8: Commitment.

[12] See TESOL (2003), Standard 7A.

[13] See TESOL (2003), Standard 7B.

[14] *Ethical guidelines for ESL Professionals in Alberta* (ATESL, 2007) provides a list of ethical standards of conduct for ESL practitioners in relation to students, colleagues, and the ESL profession.

References and PD Resources

for The Staff

This section includes resources that informed this document and resources (academic articles, websites, videos, tutorials, courses, etc.) for professional development and further learning on this topic.

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