

Public consultation online

Consultation on English Language Teaching (ELT) Council Regulation

Feedback from : Liz Camilleri

OPINION

“Distance Learning Provider” means any person that is licensed with the Council to provide Distance Learning;

“Distance Learning Teacher” or “Distance Learning Practitioner” means any person trained and qualified in ELT and in computer skills, and in possession of an ELT Permit for Distance Learning;

Here are my thoughts •

In my humble opinion, I feel that including a qualification in computer skills will discourage many people, especially older teachers, from applying for a permit. I fail to see how a certificate in computer skills will make them a better teacher.

If you take myself as an example, I don't have a certificate in computer skills, however I can use word and excel quite happily, I know a thing or two about Search engine optimisation and can use online social media and programmes such as Moodle and Skype. I doubt a teacher would want to teach online unless they were comfortable using a computer competently. I still however think that the focus for the teacher must be on the teaching. If anything, we should have a course on teaching online for teachers interested in using this medium. Using a webcam, Skype or online platform can be included on the course perhaps but an ECDL certificate or similar will, in my opinion have little impact on the actually teaching done. I feel it is unnecessary.

Teaching online is its own pros and cons. The teacher needs to be much more explicit in their instruction giving for example because there is more room for misunderstanding. Humour can also come across badly which needs to be done sensitively. Studies have also shown that online the student teacher relationship is more equal with students showing more aggression towards their teachers. They also feel freer to speak as there is greater anonymity online than in the classroom. These are just a few of the differences I can think of. A short course approved by the EFLMB to help teachers with teaching online would be far more helpful than a computer course per se which is too general.

Thank you for allowing me to voice my opinion. I hope the council will think carefully about the proposed new regulations that will shape and leave a lasting effect on our industry.
