



Social Programme Policy

Introduction

ELC organises a programme of afternoon and evening activities throughout the year, and weekend excursions where possible. The Social Programme is organised in advance by a full time Social Activities Organiser aiming to offer students varied and interesting activities to help them make friends and introduce them to the opportunities available locally and in the UK. Students sign up to the social programme on a 'pay as you go' basis. In addition, ELC provides students with information about upcoming events and how to make the most of their free time.

In this policy 'Social Programme' refers to those activities organised by ELC 'Social Activities Organiser' and taking place outside teaching times. The Social Programme is not linked to the teaching programme.

1. Aims

- A. To encourage students to interact with each other outside of the classroom, make friends
 - a. and learn about each other's cultures.
- B. To offer a varied and entertaining social programme to all students with consideration given to different interests, ages, genders and length of stay.
- C. To offer the opportunity for students to engage in sporting activities.
- D. To introduce students to different aspects of life and culture in the United Kingdom
- E. To encourage students to improve their speaking / listening / vocabulary skills in everyday situations.
- F. To run all activities and excursions safely and professionally.

2. Scheduling

Our full time Social Activities Organisers run activities year-round, except for the two-week break over Christmas and New Year when ELC is closed. We offer a range of sporting and cultural activities throughout the year as well as some regular weekly and monthly activities. The rate at which activities are repeated is determined by demand and number of students.

3. Cost

Each week there is a balance of free and charged activities (usually between £3-£10). Prices are advertised to students on the weekly social programme and specific event posters. Full day excursions at the weekend vary in price from £20-£40, depending on the destination. Entrance to attractions is usually not included.

4. Availability

Activities can be booked by students on a first-come, first-served basis. There are no reservations. Some activities have a limited number of spaces. All activities are open to all students who are 18+. The majority of activities are open to 16+ students, with the exception of "Pub Quiz Night", or something similar. Activities for 16 and 17 year olds and non-alcohol



related activities are available every week. The Social Programme makes clear which activities are age restricted.

5. Staffing and Ratios

All social programme activities must have at least one member of staff supervising an organised event. Staffing for activities and excursions works on a ratio of 25:1 if all students are over 18 years old. This is dependent on the nature of the activity and other factors such as age and group size. Where groups of students are under 18 years old, we organise student to staff ratio at 15:1. All under 18s are highlighted to the member of staff leading any activity or excursion. Where we use public buses or private coach hire, there is always at least one member of ELC staff per coach. During any free time after a guided tour, students can explore a place of interest at their leisure. Students always have the mobile phone number of the Social Activities Organiser and the school phone number. The Social Activities Organiser will always have the phone numbers of the students attending any excursion.

6. Activities

ELC activities include: sports (football, volleyball, badminton, yoga, bouldering, bowling); film evenings; video games competitions, weekly conversation club, laser tag, mini golf, social evenings, orientation tours, theatre evenings, local half day excursions and national full day excursions, amongst others.

7. Promotion

The Social Programme is promoted through weekly and monthly timetables available in the student lounge, at reception, in classrooms, on student TVs, on the schools' website and social media platforms, regular class visits from Social Activities Organisers. The Social Activities Organisers also talk to students about the programme during break times, whenever possible.

8. Student Feedback and Suggestions

Students are invited to rate and give feedback on the Social Programme in their Final Questionnaire and tutorials with teachers. Social Activity Organisers are always open to suggestions of social programme activities from all students. An anonymous Suggestion Box is located in the student lounge where students can make comments on any aspect of our school. Whenever possible, Social Activity Organisers distribute a Social Programme Survey which encourages students to rate our regular activities and add any comments or suggestions for the Social Programme going forward.

9. Cancellation

On some occasions, we may have to cancel an activity due to unforeseen measures that are out of our control (eg: extreme weather, train disruption). At other times, we may have to cancel an activity due to not enough students having signed up so the activity or excursion will not be viable. Wherever possible, alternative activities are offered if any activity is cancelled. Full refunds are given in such cases.

10. Health and Safety

We aim to provide activities and excursions that are safe and enjoyable for all students.

- **Risk Assessments:**

Ongoing dynamic risk assessments are carried out by Social Activities Organisers with changing circumstances in mind (weather, peak season, group size, group age, road closures/special events, etc). Risk Assessments from external centres are used as guidelines



when writing and updating Risk Assessments. Risk Assessments are updated every 3 months and feedback from group leaders and accompanying staff are taken into account after each trip or activity.

When a member of staff other than the Social Activities Organiser is leading an activity (teaching or administrative staff), the Social Activities Organiser will give a briefing on the activity or excursion and go through the Risk Assessment with the member of staff leading the activity. Medical information is provided to the member of staff leading an activity or excursion if a student has a condition or is taking medication.

- **First Aid Training:**

Social Activity Organisers are trained first aiders (Emergency First Aid at Work) and a first aid kit is carried on all activities.

- **Emergency Procedure:**

Social Activity Organisers have a mobile phone and list of student's numbers for all excursions and evening activities. Emergency checklists are given to staff running activities and excursions which give instructions on what to do in an emergency. We have a duty of care checklist for under 18s with instructions on the special measures to be taken when off-site with under 18s.

- **Student information sheets:**

Students are provided with handouts for all half day and full day trips with maps, itineraries, suggestions of things to do, their Social Activities Organiser's phone number and the ELC phone number. Students are given instructions on safety, often both in writing and verbally, for the majority of excursions.

11. Sports / Physical Activities

The Social Activities Organiser can organise and book any professional sports coaching for students. Social Activities Organisers do not carry out any professional coaching during sporting activities, unless properly qualified. The role of the Social Activities Organiser is to travel to and from the venue with the group, organise teams, liaise with venue staff, and if possible to join in with the sporting activity.

12. Punctuality

Each activity and excursion has a specific meeting time and place. Students must adhere to the instruction set out by the Social Programme or the Social Activities Organiser to ensure a smooth running of any activity or excursion. If a student is late for an activity or excursion, the Social Activities Organiser will call them on their mobile telephone. If there is no answer the Social Activities Organiser will wait up to 15 minutes for the student to arrive or get in contact. If a student has changed their plans it is their responsibility to tell the Social Activities Organiser or member of staff in charge of the activity or excursion. Students are always made aware of the specific meeting times and locations and this is made clear in any student information sheet. If there is more than one member of staff on an excursion and a student is running late, it may be possible for one member of staff to wait for them and travel together, although this is not always possible and would be at the discretion of the Social Activities Organiser. Students will be offered help with getting to any location over the phone if they are late and the group has already left.

13. Information for students on attractions and tours



**The English
Language Centre**
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In the student lounge and by reception, we advertise local places of interest, tour company promotional materials (Discovery Tours and UK Study Tours) and other brochures advertising local and national attractions for students to take advantage of during their time at ELC. Social Activities Organisers are always willing to help students with plans and bookings for sightseeing and travel.

Policy reviewed February 2019 – Phil Hopkins, Chief Executive