



Newbury Study Hall

Level assessment and needs analysis

All students' levels are assessed in school on arrival. For the sake of reliability, assessments are conducted prior to arrival only on request or in exceptional circumstances. Students are invited, however, to provide any details of their language background as part of their application, and this may include their class at school, any language exams they have taken, or personal background such as bilingualism in the family or extended periods spent in anglophone countries.

An identical assessment format is used every Monday and Friday morning throughout each student's programme to establish initial level and then to monitor progress from it. Newly arrived students also attend a full induction presentation, part of which includes discussion with the inductor of their specific objectives.

Part 1

Speaking & listening - 30 minutes

All teachers meet all students to discuss various academic topics using critical, creative and exam-style questions. Teachers then assign levels to each student for speech.

Part 2

Reading & recall - 30 minutes

All students take a 'c-test', which is a unique form of reading comprehension. Students have five minutes to study a page of academic text, and then ten minutes to complete a version with one hundred items removed. C-tests assess students' reading skill, vocabulary & grammar knowledge and recall simultaneously, are highly robust and are well used in linguistics research.

Part 3

Quality Writing - 30 minutes

Before every writing test, teachers remind students of various linguistic devices they might aim to use. Students are told that their objective is to demonstrate the highest level of English they can in a very limited number of words: seventy-seven. Students are then given an accessible but thought-provoking writing prompt such as a moral dilemma, and have seven minutes to answer. Limiting the number of words they may use forces students to find more precise terminology and concise syntax, for which they will need to employ their most advanced language skills.

All results and discussions are communicated to the academic manager, who assigns classes based on language levels, cultural mix and objectives.