

# Home tuition in the UK

Living and learning with a teacher is an intimate experience that can provide a fast track to linguistic ability. Here, we find out more about the sector and profile some one-to-one language training providers in the UK.

Forty years in education led me to the conclusion that one-to-one tuition combined with total absorption in the language is the fastest, most efficient way to learn a foreign language," relates David Fox at Personal English Tutors, based in Oxfordshire.

Like other language trainers active in the field of home tuition, Fox is convinced of the effectiveness of this particular teaching style. Ian Josephs at Home Language International, based in Monaco, who claims he pioneered the idea of home language teaching in 1979, is equally persuasive. "Because the student is taught in his teacher's home, when he wakes up in the morning the lesson has already begun," he explains. "Most language schools say that a student can only make progress if he or she wants to learn. With our system, that is not the case: you can't avoid learning!"

The results must be effective, because many home tuition providers in the UK attest that demand has grown steadily. "We have grown year on year for many years as more and more students become aware of the advantages of this approach to foreign language [learning]," says Fox. Bernadette Wall at RLI Language Services, based in London, testifies, "We have many more enquiries now than three or four years ago. The courses have now proved themselves and I think people are more confident about choosing home tuition, especially more mature students."

At Academy English Programmes based in London, George Martin says that it is notably Europeans and Japanese that enrol on these programmes. "They are sophisticated clients, who know exactly what they are looking for," he says. Fox agrees but says he has noticed growing interest from Russia, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Africa and China. Betina Bunte at Churchill House English Home Tuition Courses, based in Kent, relates that they receive "Western and Eastern Europeans,

Asians and the occasional South American," while Andrew Pritchard at EJO in Hampshire observes that Asian professionals are increasingly favouring home tuition.

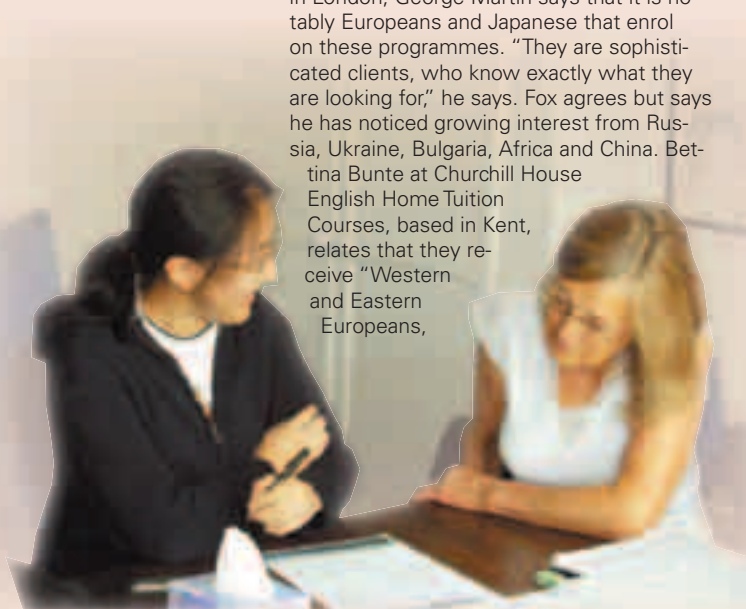
One-to-one tuition is as personalised as English language training can be. The tailored programme, which can be as little as two days for a crash course, is sometimes adapted to involve an interest or hobby too. Josephs relates, "A new development has been combining language training with sports programmes or culture programmes." He adds, "We also have host families available that can accommodate families. Parents can do different activities while their children have lessons, or we can arrange babysitting for young children while parents have their lessons."

For this reason, one-to-one tuition is sometimes two-to-one tuition, as providers accommodate families, couples, or friends. However, Sarah Nichols at Vivastudy, based in Brighton, points out that students do not need to rely on learning with a friend for social opportunities. As well as the tuition, she reports that students "also like the contact with the family and joining in the family's activities." And Wall at RLI Language Services points out that this social time with teachers provides for a whole area of social and idiomatic English that doesn't always form part of traditional classroom-based courses.

Teachers active in this sector testify that they also enjoy the social side of teaching in their own home. Lynette Burrows of The Byron School in Cambridge relates, "I have built up a team of experienced teachers like myself who do not want to work in a normal language school because of the long hours and inflexibility. We socialise a lot with the students and generally have a much closer relationship with them than is the norm." Cathy Low of School-House in Royal Deeside in Scotland adds that she and her fellow teacher "tend to get on very well with people and find this type of teaching very fulfilling, both academically and socially."

## Selection of programmes available

Locations of home tuition centres	Name of company	Min. length of stay	Min. age of student	2 accepted?
Cambridge	The Byron School	1 week	17	yes
Cornwall	Cornwall Language Services	1 week	14	yes
Tunbridge Wells	Cicero Language International	1 week	5	yes
London, southeast England	Vivastudy	1 week	16	yes
London, south England	EJO	1 week	10	yes
Norfolk	Study and Stay	5 days	20	yes
Oxford	Homelingua	1 week	14	yes
Oxfordshire	Personal English Tutors	1 week	12	yes
Royal Deeside, Scotland	School-House	1 week	10	yes
Shropshire	Lydbury English Centre	1 week	16	yes
southeast England	Academy English Programmes	1 week	18	yes
various	Regent Home Tuition	2 days	11	yes
various, southwest England	Mercator English Lang. Training	1 week	12	yes
various	RLI Language Services	3 days	18	v
various	InTuition Languages	1 week	16	yes
various	Churchill House EHTC	2 days	10	yes
various	Home Language International	2 days	none	yes



PHOTOGRAPH: PERSONAL ENGLISH TUTORS