

## Community and Connections: Support for English Language Learners

8<sup>th</sup> November 2014

On Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> November nearly 30 dedicated members of the English language teaching community and related support groups met at Reid CIT. In a packed 3-hour session they shared their knowledge of support available within the Canberra community for English learners of all ages, levels and backgrounds.

In a panel, followed by Q and A, speakers representing the Home Tutor and Community Sector, the Introductory English Centres and Schools Sector and the Adult Sector addressed the group. While each passed on a great deal of information it was stressed that situations can change regularly as many of the courses and support structures are dependent on annual funding and the target clients are determined by the various visa categories. Therefore I am making no effort to list all the connections given. Instead I have attempted to list the appropriate web pages, which would be the best point of call for finding up to date information and contacts.

There is a list of acronyms at the end.

### Home Tutor Programs and Community Sector

- The **ACT AMEP Home Tutor Scheme** is part of the Adult Migrant English Program. It helps eligible adult migrants and refugees who are unable to attend English classes. Volunteer tutors visit students in their homes for one to two hours per week to provide English language tuition. <http://hometutoract.wordpress.com/>
- The **Red Cross** provides support to refugees, asylum seekers, immigration detainees and other people who are vulnerable as a result of migration through a range of services and programs that protect and uphold the health, dignity and wellbeing of vulnerable migrants. They also work to reconnect family members whose loss of contact is caused by international or internal conflict, war and disaster. <http://www.redcross.org.au/migration-support.aspx>
- The **Migrant and Refugee Settlement Services (MARSS)** of the ACT provides a variety of services, including targeted English classes, to migrants and refugees who have just arrived, through to those who have been here for years but still experience difficulty navigating or accessing government services, education or employment. Their English support has covered areas as diverse as preparation for obtaining a drivers licence to swimming. They also offer sporting groups where English is practised in a social situation. <http://www.marss.org.au/>
- The **Multicultural Mouth Service (MYS)** in the ACT focuses on the needs of the younger adult. They offer holiday programs. <http://www.mys.org.au/cms/?q=node/11>
- While **Companion House** does not offer English lessons it is a worthwhile resource for support. <http://www.companionhouse.org.au/>
- It was mentioned that there are other community support groups which run open access English conversation groups or classes. These are sometimes advertised through the local free papers or noticeboards. While the AMEP HTS at CIT has a community groups register, this depends on notifications from the community to remain up to date.

### School Sector including Introductory English Centres.

- The **Secondary English Introductory Centre (SIEC)** at Dickson College caters for students in year 7 - 12 who have limited English language skills. They participate in a 30 week program of study that gives them the necessary language skills to participate in education. <http://www.dicksonc.act.edu.au/international/siec>

- The **Primary Introductory English Centres** cater for students in year K – 6 who have limited English language skills. There are currently four centres in Canberra hosted in mainstream schools and students can attend for 20 weeks with some option for extension.  
[http://www.det.act.gov.au/school\\_education/directory\\_of\\_schools/introductory\\_english\\_centres\\_act\\_government](http://www.det.act.gov.au/school_education/directory_of_schools/introductory_english_centres_act_government)
- **CIT Year 12** has a dedicated EAL/D class in a supported and flexible environment. Both part-time and full-time options are available, as well as day and evening classes.  
[http://cit.edu.au/essentials\\_to\\_get\\_you\\_started/year\\_10\\_and\\_12](http://cit.edu.au/essentials_to_get_you_started/year_10_and_12)

## Adult Sector – Migrant and Refugees

All of these programs are provided at Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT). If you're not sure which program a particular migrant/refugee might be eligible for, please call 6207 4800.

- The **Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP)** at CIT helps newly arrived migrants and refugees to Australia achieve functional English so they can maximise their settlement opportunities. The program provides up to 510 hours of learning to eligible clients, free of charge to most people. Classes are held at CIT Reid (day and evening), with some part-time classes at Gungahlin (funded by the Dept of Industry):  
[http://cit.edu.au/languages/adult\\_migrant\\_english\\_program](http://cit.edu.au/languages/adult_migrant_english_program)
- **Skills for Education and Employment (SEE)** program at CIT for jobseekers registered with Centrelink. Classes are held at CIT Bruce and Woden campuses (funded by the Dept of Industry):  
[http://cit.edu.au/essentials\\_to\\_get\\_you\\_started/skills\\_for\\_education\\_and\\_employment\\_program](http://cit.edu.au/essentials_to_get_you_started/skills_for_education_and_employment_program)
- **English for Employment and Study** classes at the CIT Reid and Gungahlin campuses, from Preliminary to Certificate 4 for Further Study (subsidised program for permanent residents and Australian citizens) - <http://cit.edu.au/languages/esemploymentstudy>
- **CIT Migrant Support** provides specialist support available for migrant and refugee students in mainstream programs:  
[http://cit.edu.au/mycit/students/cit\\_student\\_support/migrant\\_support](http://cit.edu.au/mycit/students/cit_student_support/migrant_support) .

## Adult Sector – International Students

The ACT has three accredited [ELICOS](#) centres:

- **ANU College** offers user pays courses targeting those who plan to engage in further tertiary study. <http://www.anucollege.edu.au/courses/english-language-courses>
- The **University of Canberra English Language Institute** offers fee paying courses to International students, and others on International visas: <http://www.canberra.edu.au/uceli>  
<http://www.canberra.edu.au/uceli/elicos>. UC is also the official testing centre for the **International English Language Testing System (IELTS)** test in Canberra. The tests are conducted two times per month and are held on the University of Canberra campus.  
<http://www.canberra.edu.au/uceli/ielts>
- **CIT English Language Centre** offers courses of English Study for international students and other non-permanent residents. These are full fee paying courses and are offered as full time or part time, day and evening.  
[http://cit.edu.au/languages/english\\_for\\_international\\_students](http://cit.edu.au/languages/english_for_international_students)

**Acronyms explained:**

AMEP	Adult Migrant English Program
ELICOS	English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students
HTS	Home Tutor Scheme
IEC	Introductory English Centre
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
ISLPR	International Second Language Proficiency Ratings
MARSS	Migrant and Refugee Settlement Services
MYS	Multicultural Your Services
SEE	Skills for Education and Employment