

Global Skills

Course Overview

In a fast-evolving world, it is increasingly recognized that education needs to cover more than just traditional subjects if students are going to be equipped to flourish now and in the future. This Oxford Teachers' Academy course demonstrates ways that we can bring added value to English classes by incorporating global skills, which are critical for lifelong learning and success.

During the course you will be introduced to global skills from an English teacher's perspective. You will learn about the five components of global skills (communication and collaboration; creativity and critical thinking; intercultural competence and citizenship; emotional self-regulation and wellbeing; digital literacies) and examine ways of developing students' global skills within the context of an English lesson. You will also explore why and how global skills can be assessed, in addition to finding out how to create a global skills learning environment in your classroom.

Oxford Teachers' Academy strives to put teachers at the heart of the conversation. Whether or not you are already familiar with global skills, the course will provide plenty of food for thought, fresh insights into the topic, and opportunities for reflection on your own situation - whatever the age and level of the students that you teach. You will also have the opportunity to interact with other colleagues, creating a small but valuable community of practice.

On completion of the moderated course, you have up to 3 months to submit your evidence of learning, which is assessed by Oxford University Department for Continuing Education. Once assessed and approved, you will receive your certificate.

Course Modules

- Module 1 - An Introduction to Global Skills
- Module 2 - Communication and Collaboration
- Module 3 - Intercultural Competence and Citizenship
- Module 4 - Emotional Self-Regulation and Wellbeing
- Module 5 - Creativity and Critical Thinking
- Module 6 - Creating a Global Skills Learning Environment

Module 1 - An Introduction to Global Skills

The world we live in is evolving fast. This makes it hard for educators to predict what skills and competencies our learners will need in the future. What is clear is that traditional academic subjects alone will not be enough. This session will focus on important additional skill areas and suggest sustainable ways that they can be incorporated into teaching. Global Skills are accessible to any learner, whatever their age or context. By equipping themselves with these essential skills, learners will have the capacity to thrive in school, the workplace, and society at large.

Model aim:

Become aware of what Global Skills are in relation to 21st Century Skills in order to relate to the need to introduce them and select areas for future professional development.

Key questions addressed:

- What skills does an ideal colleague have?
- How do these relate to 21st Century Skills and Global Skills?
- What are Global Skills?
- What is it realistic for me to develop?

Module 2 - Communication and Collaboration

The module aims to distinguish between language practice and real communication, as well as to highlight the array of skills that students need in order to communicate and collaborate effectively, both in the context of the language lesson and in the world beyond the classroom walls. By applying the features of real-world interactions to classroom activities, participants will also gain an understanding of the criteria they can use to make a practice activity more authentically communicative and collaborative.

Model aim:

Explore the nature of successful communication and collaboration inside and outside the classroom by analysing what makes activities communicative and collaborative.

Key questions addressed:

- What is the nature of communication and practice in school and outside?
- What is the difference between oral practice and communication?
- What makes activities more communicative and collaborative?
- How can we strike a balance between traditional and more innovative methods?

Module 3 - Intercultural Competence and Citizenship

This module suggests that cultures are more than the identities of different groups of people and aims to show that we all have multifaceted sides to our cultures. It also demonstrates that culture can refer to any group of people, not only nations. The module moves from a traditional view of culture to one that is more directly relevant to the teaching and learning of English as a global language, where there is a need for intercultural competence. The module also suggests ways in which the topic of citizenship can be addressed in a way which encourages and empowers all students to look for ways they can have a positive impact on the cultures to which they belong.

Model aim:

Establish the importance of intercultural communication and competence, and explore the idea that students are citizens of several different communities. Predict areas of interest for students in citizenship (both locally and globally).

Key questions addressed:

- What is culture, and what does intercultural competence imply?
- How can we become aware of our own cultural perspectives and values?
- How can we make students care about citizenship?
- How can students be encouraged to reflect on their own levels of citizenship and identify opportunities for action?
- How can we identify topics of local interest to focus on, and what can students do to address them?

Module 4 - Emotional Self-Regulation and Wellbeing

For many years, learning a language was considered to be an exclusively cognitive process, and the main role of the teacher was therefore to find the most effective way to activate that learning process. The non-cognitive, or emotional, domain of learning was not considered to be as important as analysis, practice, and application. In recent years, however, the field has come to recognise the importance of other aspects of language learning, for example, the need for emotional self-regulation and wellbeing. This module aims to shed light on what these terms mean and how teachers can nurture them in the language classroom.

Model aim:

To look at what is meant by “emotional self-regulation and wellbeing” in the context of the English Language Classroom and to suggest ways that we can help both students and ourselves as teachers to develop these skills.

Key questions addressed:

- What is a healthy lifestyle (physically, mentally, socially), and what threatens it?
- What can we do to help students recognise and regulate their emotions?
- What classroom activities can help students to develop effective strategies?
- How can teachers practise emotional self-regulation and safeguard their own wellbeing?

Module 5 - Creativity and Critical Thinking

Creativity and critical thinking have long been recognised as key skills to develop in the English Language Classroom. Indeed, their importance is arguably greater than ever. A Global Skills approach to this skills-cluster emphasises its importance both in the language-learning classroom and in the world at large, where different skills have to be combined. Accordingly, this module looks at creativity and critical thinking in a wider context and also allows participants to reflect on their own creative and critical thinking skills in relation to different aspects of teaching.

Model aim:

To look at what creativity and critical thinking skills are, why they are needed in all aspects of life, and how they can be developed in the English classroom.

Key questions addressed:

- What are creativity and critical thinking skills, and why are they needed?
- How can we foster creativity in the classroom?
- How can we add a creative twist to coursebook tasks and activities?
- What can we do to create a classroom culture of critical thinking?

Module 6 - Creating a Global Skills Learning Environment

In a Global Skills learning environment, the tasks and interactions of the classroom perform “double duty”, not only helping the students to improve their language proficiency, but also activating and developing Global Skills in the process. This module examines learning as a multi-faceted process, and encourages teachers to become more aware of the positive impact that their decisions about classroom procedures can have on learning outcomes –both in terms of language and Global Skills. Participants will have the opportunity to put theory into practice by planning a lesson with a GS component.

Model aim:

To Identify components that assist learning in the classroom and to recognise the role of Global Skills as learning skills; to establish the impact of the teacher’s attitudes, knowledge, and skills; to put theory into practice through lesson planning.

Key questions addressed:

- What helps learning?
- Can we create a learning environment?
- What do we mean by a GS learning environment?
- What is the role of teachers in creating, maintaining, and strengthening a GS learning environment?
- How can the learning environment be nurtured more generally in our approach?