

Parent Guide

Virtual Classroom



English exam preparation courses for teens

Virtual Lessons

At the British Council we take the safety, well-being and protection of children and adolescents very seriously, both in our classroom and when delivering online classes.

Please read this document in conjunction with the [Child Protection Policy](#). For any doubt or clarification, or if you observe any action that seems inappropriate by an adult or another child, please contact us at the following email: learnenglish@britishcouncil.bg.

Virtual lessons are designed to cover the same skills and provide the same progress as regular classes. We also try to ensure, as far as possible, that they are with the same teacher, at the same time as the normal class and with the same group of students. It will, by necessity, involve an element of self-study.

Get ready!



Be seen and be heard



In Virtual lessons you need a camera to participate fully. If you have ever used Skype, FaceTime or any other video calling app, you will know what you need because the experience is very similar. You should also use ear/headphones with a built-in microphone as you will need to speak to the teachers and other students throughout the class.



Test your video and mic before the lesson if you are not sure they work.



Be in a quiet place

The great advantage of Virtual lessons is that you can choose where you want to study. For the best experience, however, you need to be somewhere where other people will not interrupt you and where noise is not a problem. Being interrupted and constantly on the move can result in a poor learning experience for you, and for the other students.



Use a desktop/laptop computer rather than phone or tablet.



Be properly connected

You are going to need a stable internet connection. A poor connection will mean people may find it hard to hear or see you, and for you to see and hear them. This can be frustrating for everyone.

How it works

We use **Zoom** for our Virtual classes.

Zoom is a user-friendly web-conferencing software, which has been successfully used in the British Council Teaching centres around the globe.

You will need:



a laptop or a desktop computer

Please do not use phones or tablets because some of the functionality required for the Virtual Classroom will not be available.



a broadband speed internet connection

Check [Zoom System Requirements](#) for Windows, Mac OS and Linux.



ear/headphones with a built-in or standalone microphone

If you can't hear the teacher or others can't hear you, you may need to test your audio. Watch this video for [how to test audio](#).



a webcam

If others can't see you, you may need to test your video. Watch [this video](#) for how to check.



the Zoom App

Always use the Zoom App (it's a very quick download) and not the browser version.



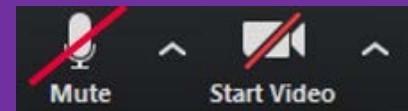
Although there is in-lesson support, to get the best experience from your Virtual lessons, it is a good idea to become familiar with the Zoom software. Watch the [Zoom video tutorials](#).

How to join a Virtual Lesson:

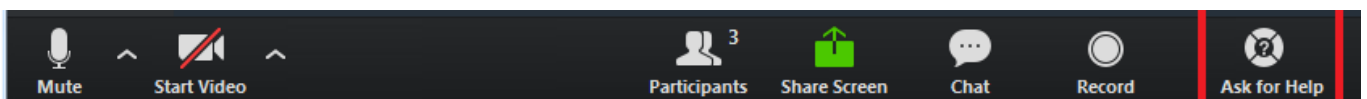
- ➡ Click on the **Zoom link** you will get from the British Council.
- ➡ Zoom should automatically download onto your computer. If it doesn't, click on **download and run Zoom**.
- ➡ Select **Join Audio by Computer**.

Don't log off during breaks

Just switch off your camera and microphone.



Top tips



Using Chat

Use 'Chat' to ask questions or make comments.

Breakout Rooms

Breakout Rooms allow you to work in groups or pairs. The teacher will split you into Breakout Rooms where you will complete tasks in pairs or groups.

The teacher will join your Breakout Rooms to monitor you, correct your errors and give you feedback.

If you need help, click on **Ask for Help** button in the bottom menu bar and the teacher will join your Breakout Room.

Virtual Classroom Rules

We believe the most effective way to create a positive learning environment is to encourage and recognise positive behaviour.

Positive Behaviour

Like in any classroom – physical or virtual – we expect students and teachers to show respect for others at all times. This means they should:

- Be friendly to other students
- Let other students join in activities with them
- Try the activities their teacher asks them to participate in
- Follow the teacher's instructions
- Listen to others and give them an opportunity to speak
- Make sure they are the only person on their camera
- Ask for help from their teacher or tell an adult that they trust if they are unhappy.

Unacceptable Behaviour

These are all examples of unacceptable behaviour:

- Use of or threat of violence
- Bullying
- Deliberate disobedience
- Discrimination
- Use of swear words in any language
- Use of telephones during lesson time
- Sending impolite messages.
- Deliberate browsing, downloading, upload or forwarding of materials that may be considered offensive or illegal
- Invite other people to the class

In addition to this students and parents must abide by the rules in the **Code of Conduct**.

Code of Conduct



No recording

Parents/Guardians are responsible for ensuring that no screenshots or recordings are taken at any time during the virtual class. Failure to comply strictly with the no recording policy may result in expulsion from British Council courses.



Only learners on camera

No person other than the learner must be visible on camera at any time during the class.



Contacting learners

No person apart from the learner should attempt to contact any other learner in the class.



Sharing personal data

The sharing of any form of personal data, including telephone numbers, e-mail addresses and all other forms of personal data or contact data is prohibited.



Appropriate use

Learners should abide by all policies covering the appropriate use of virtual learning platforms managed by the British Council. Learners should only interact with other learners in the virtual classroom environment provided for this purpose, and will not attempt, or aid any attempt by another person, to interact with other learners outside of the virtual learning environment.

Anti-bullying policy

Learners must follow the behaviour policy applicable for face-to-face classes, including our zero tolerance stance on bullying.

Failure to abide by this behaviour policy may lead to the student's suspension or exclusion from the course.

Have any concerns or need help?

If you have any concerns or need help, you can email our Student Service Team at:

learnenglish@britishcouncil.bg.