

Wah Yan Online Oral English Programme
Guidelines for students
2016 10 05

Programme Purpose and Operation

This programme offers you the opportunity to talk to English speakers online at a time convenient to you so that through regular use, you can improve both your confidence and your fluency when communicating in English.

Tutors who use English daily and/or professionally, are available during set hours of the day to talk to you. You can choose to always speak to a particular tutor at a mutually convenient time or you can just talk to a tutor who happens to be online at the time you wish to speak. You can also join an ongoing conversation subject to the agreement of the tutor of that session.

While the intention is to have an annual operation if the results are satisfactory, the first year of this programme is planned to run from mid-December 2016 to mid-May 2017.

What do you need?

You need to have:

- (a) a device (smartphone, laptop, desktop computer) ;
- (b) a Google Hangouts account;
- (c) your device should have a video camera ;
- (d) a send/receive sound capability, ideally able to record a two way conversation; and
- (e) an Internet connection.

Do note that a better quality Internet connection gives you a more satisfactory learning experience. You will be issued a password to access your account.

What could you talk about?

The tutor has a list of topics for discussion from which you can choose. The available subjects are generally relevant to your prospective oral English examination(s).

Subject to the tutor's agreement, you may:

- i. request a particular subject to talk about;
- ii. lead a group conversation if you have done sufficient research on a subject; and
- iii. join an ongoing conversation as a group member if you find it interesting.

Sensitive and controversial topics such as religion, sex and politics are prohibited.

When can you talk?

When you are ready to talk, you can reach a tutor:

- (1) on an ad hoc basis, i.e. you can choose amongst the tutors who are online at that moment;
- (2) by appointment with a particular tutor; or
- (3) by joining an ongoing conversation.

Note that there is a maximum limit in a group conversation; this is currently set at 10.

How should you behave?

The tutors in this programme either live in an English-speaking country or work professionally in English. They volunteer their time to assist you without compensation. You are asked to extend to them due respect by:

- A) being polite;
- B) giving the conversation your full attention (turn off mobile phones and eliminate other possible distractions to the extent possible);
- C) not using any foul language; and
- D) not seeking help on homework related matter.

You must keep your password confidential. You will be denied access to the programme if you do not exercise care in handling your password. Under no circumstance should you disclose your password to others.

A tutor may end a session or bar an offending student if

- I. a student does not provide proper identification;
- II. a student does not have the necessary equipment to participate effectively in the tutoring session;
- III. a student becomes unruly, disruptive or behaves inappropriately towards the tutor or another student in the tutoring session; and
- IV. a student is not appropriately clothed while using a webcam.

Note that to ensure a quality learning experience, a conversation could be monitored or recorded or both. Such recordings may be used by this Programme as teaching material for other students unless you tell us in writing that you do not wish your recordings to be used for this purpose.

How can you use this Programme to your best advantage?

Learning a language well is a life-long challenge. Regular practice is the key to good results. Before you talk to a tutor, you should try to look up material and vocabulary related to the topic you are about to discuss with your tutor. You could also record your conversation for subsequent review. Staying on the same subject for a few sessions could help you become more confident in future conversations on a similar topic.

You should also try to talk to different tutors just to get exposure to different styles of verbal communication.

Open Day

There will be an online Open Day in November 2016 for you to ask questions and you will be informed of the date and time after successful registration.

Feedback, Questions or Complaints

You can direct your queries and messages to Francis Choi at c318@outlook.com or call 6691 1430.