

1. What is ELSA?

ELSA stands for English Language Services for Adults. The ELSA program provides basic and intermediate level English training for adult newcomers to Canada. ELSA is government-funded and is free to students.

2. Who can take ELSA?

You must be a newcomer to Canada, 17 years old or older, and approved for permanent residence. Canadian citizens and Refugee Claimants **cannot** take ELSA classes within Greater Vancouver and Greater Victoria Regional Districts, but they can take ELSA classes outside these areas.

You must have at least **one** of the following documents:

- a) Permanent Resident Card and Number (PRC)
- b) Confirmation of Permanent Residence (form IMM5292)
- c) Record of Landing (form IMM1000 - issued prior to June 2002)
- d) Visitor Record – case Type 17
- e) Work Permit (Employment Authorization) – case type 27
- f) Study Permit (Student Authorization) -case type 37
- g) Temporary Resident Permit (Ministerial Permit) - case type 86, 87, 88 or 89
- h) Notice of Decision from the Refugee Protection Division of the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) confirming convention refugee (CR) status
- i) Letter from Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) giving approval to remain in Canada while application for permanent residence is being finalized (approval in principle)

j) Letter of Acceptance from the Ministry of Economic Development under the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP)

3. Do I need a Study Permit?

People who do not have a Permanent Resident Card (PRC), or Record of Landing (IMM1000), or Study Permit (document a, c, or f described above) must apply for a Study Permit at Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC). After your assessment and referral, go to the school and get a confirmation of registration and take it to the CIC Office to apply for a study permit.

4. What can I do about child care?

Some ELSA classes have free child care for pre-school age children. There are not very many spaces. Most ELSA students have to make their own child care arrangements. There is a provincial child care subsidy to help families pay for child care. Go to an immigrant settlement agency in your area to find out if you are eligible for child care subsidy.

5. What are the ELSA levels?

ELSA goes from level 1 (Low Beginner) to level 5 (high intermediate). There is also a pre-beginner level (literacy). After you apply for ELSA, you will be given an appointment for an English assessment (test). The assessment office will decide your level.

At levels 4 and 5, there are general ELSA classes and also labour market preparation classes (Labour Market Focussed ELSA) available: the assessment office can give you a brochure that explains these special classes.

6. What will I learn in ELSA classes?

You will learn English to help you with all

your communication needs. You will learn about Canadian laws, health care, society, job market, and many things that are important for life in Canada. At the highest ELSA levels you can prepare for further studies in English or raise your English level to qualify for training for employment. To work in Canada in your field or occupation, you may need to learn more English after the ELSA class ends.

7. Where are ELSA classes offered?

There are ELSA classes in more than 30 different schools in Greater Vancouver, the Fraser Valley and other parts of British Columbia. You can find a list of schools at www.elsanet.org under “[Find Schools.](#)”

8. Which school will I go to?

The Assessment office will refer you to a school. You can choose your school. Some students may not get their first choice, because the school they want may not have an available class at their level or at the time they want.

9. What are ELSA class times?

There are classes in the morning, afternoon and evening. Full-time classes are 25 hours a week. Part-time classes are 9 to 15 hours a week.

10. When do ELSA classes start? How long do I have to wait? Most schools start new students only at the beginning of the month. Some classes may be full. Students may be placed on a waiting list (usually not more than 2 or 3 months).

11. How long is the ELSA program?

The maximum hours of study will depend on your level when you start. Your school will explain how long you can study in ELSA.

12. Can I continue to get Employment Insurance (EI)?

You should tell your school you are on EI. Do not apply to study before going to your **Service Canada Centre** to ask if you can continue to receive EI benefits while attending ELSA classes.

13. What are the attendance rules?

Your school will tell you about the attendance rules. **Students are expected to attend all or almost all of their classes, and to attend on time.** Do not apply for ELSA if you cannot attend on all the days when the class meets.

14. When should I apply for ELSA?

Apply **when you are ready to start studying.** Do not apply if you are going to travel, go to hospital or have a baby in a few months.

15. What happens after I apply?

You will get a letter telling you the time and place for your assessment test. You must have this assessment test before you can go to ELSA classes.

16. What if I am not eligible for ELSA?

There are many other English classes at all levels. School boards, colleges, community centres, immigrant agencies, and private schools have classes. You may have to pay for these classes.

Go to www.elsanet.org and click "[Links](#)" and then "[Directory of ESL Courses in BC](#)" for a list of all ESL courses in BC. To apply, go directly to the school where you want to study. The assessment office cannot help you to find other English classes.

17. How can I apply for ELSA?

Write, telephone, fax or go to one of these offices to get an application form.

For people living in Vancouver, North Vancouver, West Vancouver, Richmond, South Delta, Burnaby or New Westminster, apply to:

Western ESL Services
ELSA Assessment and Referral Centre
#208 – 2525 Commercial Drive
Vancouver, BC V5N 4C1
Tel (604) 876-5756 Fax (604) 876-0134

For people living in Surrey, North Delta, Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, Maple Ridge or the Fraser Valley, apply to:

Surrey Language Assessment Centre
#202-7337 137th St.
Surrey, BC V3W 1A4
Tel (604) 507-4150 Fax (604) 507-4155

People living in other areas may apply directly at the school in that area which offers ELSA classes.

Send or bring the completed application form and a photocopy of your immigration document (see section 2). If you are using your Permanent Resident Card, photocopy both sides.

The name on your application must be the same as the name on your immigration document.

When you come to the office for your assessment, bring your original immigration document (not a photocopy).

ENGLISH LANGUAGE SERVICES FOR ADULTS (ELSA)

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