

# **Career Profile: English Language High School Teacher**

Teachers of English, as well as teachers of the other official languages, have a crucial role to play in contributing to the development of our multi-lingual society. English has become a global common language, and also serves a useful purpose in a number of spheres of national life. However, there are significant areas in which English is not needed at all. It is important for teachers of English to understand that English needs to complement the role of the other languages and to help students to identify opportunities for using the appropriate language. The English Academy of Southern Africa has useful views on these matters.

Students whose home language is English pose different challenges for teachers than students for whom English is a second or third language. It is not true mother-tongue English speakers do not need to deepen their grasp of the language as too many English-speaking school leavers lack a grasp of the fundamentals and are unable to write reasonably fault-free English. Teachers of second language English face different challenges to help their students master the intricacies of English. If they plan to pursue their studies at tertiary level, the students should be helped to realize the value of mastering English as an invaluable aid to their further studies.

English language teachers are responsible not only for helping students to understand the structure of the language but also for introducing them to the varied and fascinating literature both of the classics and of modern writing as well.

Activities of a typical school day include:

- planning lessons that are 'units of deliverable learning experiences' according to the NCS Learning Programme Guidelines. Such a lesson plan could cover several weeks
- facilitating learning of English language by encouraging students to engage with appropriate activities
- assigning essays and group projects based on relevant language acquisition principles
- marking pieces of work and giving the students supportive feedback. The marking load of language teachers makes language teaching very demanding
- researching and making sense of different views of the literature that students are expected to engage with
- keeping abreast of current approaches and methods of English language acquisition
- working with teachers responsible for other subjects to ensure that students are supported in their use of English across the curriculum.

# Education Requirements

## National Senior Certificate (NSC)

For a career in English language teaching at high school students are advised to select English and to add to this a selection from the *designated* subjects. These are subjects that are particularly suitable for tertiary study.

## Bachelor Degree

- **Bachelor of Education – (4 years)** - A four year degree programme that focuses on developing knowledge and skills for entry into teaching, specialising in English.
- **Bachelor of Arts (English) – 3 years + Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) (1 year)**

### Offered at:

- North-West University
  - [School of Languages](#)<sup>1</sup> (Potchefstroom Campus)
  - [Faculty of Education](#)<sup>2</sup> (Mafikeng Campus)
- University of Johannesburg
  - [Faculty of Education](#)<sup>3</sup> (Information on Career and Academic Development)
  - [Faculty of Humanities](#)<sup>4</sup> (BA - English major)
- University of Limpopo
  - [School of Education](#)<sup>5</sup> (Programmes)
  - [School of Languages and Communication Studies](#)<sup>6</sup> (Turfloop Campus)
- University of Pretoria
  - [Faculty of Humanities, Department of English](#)<sup>7</sup>
- University of South Africa (UNISA)
  - [College of Human Sciences](#)<sup>8</sup> (Bachelor of Education - Senior and Further Education and Training Phases)
  - [College of Human Sciences](#)<sup>9</sup> (BA Languages and Literature)
  - [College of Human Sciences](#)<sup>10</sup> (Postgraduate Certificate in Education)
- University of Venda
  - [Department of English](#)<sup>11</sup>
- University of the Witwatersrand
  - [Humanities, Bachelor of Education](#)
  - [School of Literature and Language Studies](#)

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.puk.ac.za/fakulteite/lettere/skt/eng\\_e.html](http://www.puk.ac.za/fakulteite/lettere/skt/eng_e.html)

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.uniwest.ac.za/faculties/edu/Schools/school\\_graduates.html](http://www.uniwest.ac.za/faculties/edu/Schools/school_graduates.html)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.uj.ac.za/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=KNPwU/97fVw=&tabid=16134>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.uj.ac.za/Default.aspx?alias=www.uj.ac.za/humanities>

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.ul.ac.za/index.php?Entity=sch\\_edu\\_prog](http://www.ul.ac.za/index.php?Entity=sch_edu_prog)

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.ul.ac.za/index.php?Entity=langcom\\_prog](http://www.ul.ac.za/index.php?Entity=langcom_prog)

<sup>7</sup> <http://web.up.ac.za/default.asp?ipkCategoryID=615&sub=1&parentid=592&subid=614&ipklookid=9>

<sup>8</sup> [http://brochure.unisa.ac.za/brochure/showprev.aspx?d=1\\_2\\_3&f=p\\_02615](http://brochure.unisa.ac.za/brochure/showprev.aspx?d=1_2_3&f=p_02615)

<sup>9</sup> [http://brochure.unisa.ac.za/brochure/showprev.aspx?d=1\\_2\\_33&f=p\\_02283](http://brochure.unisa.ac.za/brochure/showprev.aspx?d=1_2_33&f=p_02283)

<sup>10</sup> [http://brochure.unisa.ac.za/brochure/showlist.aspx?d=1\\_2\\_4](http://brochure.unisa.ac.za/brochure/showlist.aspx?d=1_2_4)

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.univen.ac.za/human\\_social\\_sciences/english.html](http://www.univen.ac.za/human_social_sciences/english.html)

## Possible Employers

- Provincial departments of education
- Public schools
- Private schools.

## Find out more

Find out more about English language teaching at high school level:

- Outline of [teaching careers and requirements](#)<sup>12</sup>.
- [Resources for English students and teachers](#)<sup>13</sup>.
- [The South African English Teacher](#) website is a meeting point for English teachers, language schools, employers and students in South Africa.
- [South African Council for English Education](#)<sup>14</sup>.
- A newsletter from the [South African Council for English Education](#)<sup>15</sup> with some interesting suggestions on page 2 for English teachers.
- The [English Academy of Southern Africa](#)<sup>16</sup>. Among other things, it includes a very useful list of links to language and literature related organizations and institutions.
- [Pan South African Language Board](#)<sup>17</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup> [http://www.careerplanet.co.za/\\_sectors/teaching](http://www.careerplanet.co.za/_sectors/teaching)

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.mindset.co.za/learn/s21>

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.sacee.org.za/default.aspx?contentid=1>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.sacee.org.za/images/NEWSLETTER2009.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.englishacademy.co.za/>

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.pansalb.org.za/index.html>

## Are you suited to this career?

This quick quiz can help you to identify whether you are suited for this career.

| Quiz   | YES | NO |
|--|-----|----|
| Have you done well in English language studies at school?                                    |     |    |
| Do you read widely in English?   |     |    |
| Do you want to be involved in helping young people to acquire sound English language skills? |     |    |
| Are you creative and imaginative?  |     |    |
| Would you enjoy encouraging young people to discover their creative potential?               |     |    |
| Are you patient and perservering?  |     |    |
| Are you approachable and do people consider you to be a good listener?                       |     |    |
| Can you communicate well in speech and in writing?   |     |    |
| Are you well organized and do you work systematically?                                       |     |    |
| Are you able to cope with heavy pressures on your time?                                      |     |    |

If you have mainly yes answers it may be an indication that this is a career to consider.