

**Evaluation Report of long-term impact of ESOL classes Health Research Course**  
**Supporting REF2021 Impact Case Study: [Improved infection awareness, prevention and treatment in hard-to-reach groups](#)**

**Interviews with students and staff at Bolton College**  
**5th March 2020**

*The interviews and report were conducted and collated by Dr Ceri Harrop, Public Engagement Professional.*

**Executive Summary**

These interviews were arranged specifically to capture the learning and outcomes from the tutors and students using the Health Research Course designed and produced by Prof. Sheena Cruickshank and her research team at the University of Manchester in 2016 that has been delivered at Bolton College annually since to a total of 250 students. The course covers the importance of, transmission, treatment and prevention of parasite infections such as parasitic worms, general infection transmission and prevention, immune responses to infections and specifically parasites, history of infections, vaccination and allergies.

It is noteworthy that these interviews were conducted on 5th March 2020 in person, before the UK lockdown, and therefore precedes the government advice regarding precautionary measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Findings in the report show that outcomes of the course include people having a better understanding of the importance of hygiene, handwashing and covering mouths and noses to reduce the spread of infections such as parasitic worm infection and viruses.

**Interviewees:**

Tutors and students of the course English as a Second Language English for Speakers of Other Languages, or ESOL, (learning English as a new resident in a English-speaking country).

**Format:** Invited the students to complete a short questionnaire (**see Appendix 1**) and followed up with informal one-to-one conversations with some of the students.

Held face-to-face interviews with two of the tutors. The transcription of that is available (**see Appendix 2**).

**Responses to student questionnaire:**

In total, 17 people completed the survey.

Age range	Number answering
Under 18 years	0
18-25 years	1
26-34 years	3
35-44 years	11
45-54 years	2

We asked students where they were from originally in order to offer some context. The numbers in brackets indicate the number of people from each country. 15 people answered this question. Students were originally from: Ethiopia (1), Iraq (2), Somalia (1), Pakistan (1), India (2), Sudan (2), Iran (3), Eritrea (1), Italy (1), Libya (1). Two people did not answer this question.

Everyone who answered the survey found the course useful, citing reasons including:

*I have learned more information to share with others.*

*I am now more informed to share with my family*

*I enjoy the course as I get information how to protect from germs.*

*I have new information about health*

*It's so useful because we are learning a lot of new diseases names and know new information about germs.*

*Because it's helping me to have conversation with the people about health issues.*

*Because it's helped me to understand new words*

*It's improved my health information and my language.*

We asked students if they had shared anything from the courses with anyone else. Notably, 16 of the 17 people who completed the survey said that they had shared content from the course with others, including one person who stated '*I have talked to my friend for her daughter to get MMR to prevent her getting the diseases.*' Another person commented that they '*have talked with my family – how do you get germs, how they transmitted to one person to another.*'

When asked if the students felt more confident to talk about health-related issues, all those who completed the survey said that their confidence in talking about health-related issues had increased. Specific examples people shared include:

*I can now help my family and friends*

*(I know now) how we can protect against germs for yourself and others*

*I should use a tissue when I cough or sneeze and I should take my child to the GP for vaccination.*

*I can designate the family in here, specifically these days [sic].*

*I learned how germs spread from person to person.*

When asked if the students were likely to recommend the course to others, 14 people said they were very likely, two people said they were quite likely and one person said maybe. Notably, the person who was less sure about recommending the course, commented that '*the course impacted me in my opinion. I'll learn new things and this is awesome for me. I like to learn new things. This is funny and interesting. Thank you.*'[sic]

Commenting on the impact the course has had on them, students said:

*This course helped me a lot, I hope we can continue this course every year with more information.*

*We need more information about germs in the UK because this country is new for us, so thank you.*

*I have learned and understood about health. I would like to say that the course should continue as before because that course is important to improve about health and environmental hygiene.'*

*The course like this is very important because we know new things about health. I need more courses (like this).*

*The biggest impact how I can advise my children about germs and bacteria.*

*In my opinion, maintaining hygiene in anything so as to be safe from diseases, because some germs you do not see with the naked eye.*

### **Comments from follow-up conversations with students:**

- One learner described how her son (10 years old, Year 4 in school) has worked through the online course with her and is fascinated by herd immunity (a term describing when sufficient people are immune to an infection such that the infection can be controlled and not spread to vulnerable people).
- The new words section helped one lady in particular, as she explained how she now found it much easier to describe symptoms of illness to her GP when her or her children are unwell.
- One Somalian lady, who is a much-respected community figure, explained how she had been passing the information she had learned onto others, and had used it to support friends and family when they are unwell. She has explained that she now understood why vaccines are so important, and felt confident to explain to others about MMR and why it is important.
- One lady said that the section on allergies was very useful, to help her understand what might cause allergies in her children in an environment that is very different to where they are from (Somalia).
- One student had gone on to study Health and Social Care and the course was helping her with her higher level work.
- One student described how it has taught her how to keep herself (and her future children) safe from germs.
- One student told us how much she had learnt about worms and how they pass from person to person. She shares this information with her family and friends who are back home in Somalia.

The students also discussed future content the students would like to see:  
Allergies developing in Africa compared to Bolton.

### **Summary of interviews with tutors:**

Two of the five tutors were available to interview on the day (see **Appendix 2** for full transcript).

Tutors noted seeing students have a lot more confidence in how to deal with things regarding health and ask a lot more questions. They also noted that students gained the confidence to research topics for themselves and that this continued over time. Students came back time and again to ask things related to what they had done on the course, like the handwashing.

The course was well-received by all five tutors who teach it and the course has expanded in use since it was rolled out in 2015 to involve more tutors and to involve other ESOL groups such as less advanced ESOL learners and teenagers. Importantly, the course is now self-sufficient with limited input required from researchers. The tutors that were unavailable to interview were asked for a comment about the course:

*'This course really stretched and challenged the students. They enjoyed the visits from the staff at Manchester University'*

*'It was useful to have a ready-made course, with excellent resources, particularly as this was my first term teaching at Bolton College.'*

*'Loved it! I used this with my Entry 2 teenagers. I simplified some of the resources and will definitely use it again the next time we have health as an exam topic.'*

Of the tutors interviewed, they explained how the quality of the content of the courses developed by Professor Cruickshank is sufficient for it to be assessed as part of the students' City & Guilds exams. Tutors commented that in this way, 'it was building the students' skills for their ESOL [exam] as well as for their subject [health, biology] knowledge'.

The tutors have also adapted the material to use with teenagers as a comprehension exercise (**see Appendix 3**). Notably, the tutors commented that when they are working with the teenagers, they felt it helped the teenagers' expectations in thinking about science, *'because when they come to us they have to shelve a lot of their hopes because of their limited language...by using something that wasn't just ESOL, it was learning a subject, that was a really good thing, even if they weren't thinking of a science course as such, it was educating them in a subject and got them to look further ahead in their lives and to think about doing other courses'*. [sic]

## **Appendix 1: Questionnaire for ESOL Students**

**1. Please can you circle what age you are?**

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Under 18      18-25      26-34.      35-44      45-54      55-64      65-74      74+

**2. Please can you tell us where you are from originally?**

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**3. Have you found the course useful?**

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Yes    /    No

Please can you tell us why / why not?

**4. Have you shared anything you have learned from the courses with anyone else?**

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Yes    /    No

**5. Do you feel more confident to talk about health-related issues as a result of this course?**

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Yes    /    No

Can you provide any examples?

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**6. How likely are you to recommend the course to others? (please circle)**

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1 (Not likely)

2 (Maybe)

3 (Quite likely)

4 (Very likely)

**7. What, in your opinion, is the biggest impact that doing the course has had on you?**

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**8. Anything else you'd like to say?**

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## Appendix 2: Interviews with tutors

Q. Thank you for taking the time to talk to me. We are trying to capture the value of the Health Research Course, which I know you have both taught over a number of years. Do you have any immediate reflections that spring to mind regarding what works / what doesn't that you are willing to share?

*One of the main things is seeing students have a lot more confidence in how to deal with things regarding health and ask a lot more questions. To gain the confidence to research stuff for themselves. I think it was really interesting. It did continue over time, that people would come back and ask things, related to what they had done on the course, stuff like the handwashing, which is now very relevant, over time they have started to see the value of it.*

Q. Did you find the course easy to teach? Were the resources useful to you?

*Yes, we did pitch it more at the Entry 3 level, which is the top end of who we teach, still not a high language level but we've not adapted it sufficiently for Entry Level 1 but the resources we have are very good for Level 3.*

Q. Did you find the format easy for you to teach / use / adapt?

*Yes, everything was fine. We took the scientific knowledge and use it to make it work for the students. We do the City & Guilds exams, we tended to treat some of the reading things as if they were an exam. It was building the students skills for their ESOL as well as for their subject knowledge.*

Q. Would you recommend the format to other practitioners who work in ESOL / language in terms of adding extra content / extra words? Why should we add science?

*When we were working with the teenagers, it kind of helped their expectations in thinking about science, because when they come to us they have to shelve a lot of their hopes because of their limited language. I think by using something that wasn't just ESOL, it was learning a subject, that was a really good thing, even if they weren't thinking of a science course as such, it was educating them in a subject and got them to look further ahead in their lives and to think about doing other courses.*

*There was one activity that was created (by team at Manchester) where you can click on the word and get the pronunciation, thought that was a really good thing to have. The students loved it and kept going back to it. It was used outside of lesson time.  
(iSpring)*

Q. Thinking now about tutor learning - do you feel you have learnt anything?

*Yes I learned lots of things – there was a lot about the way germs spread I found useful, I kind of had a vague idea, but it's been a long time since I studied it, so it was a great refresher.*

*I wouldn't have taught these kinds of subjects without the backing of the team at Manchester. You can't be an expert in everything. I would have been hesitant to know if I was delivering the right content or not. Having them (team at Manchester) come and do the technical side of things made a huge difference to my confidence in delivering (the course content).*

Q. How long have you been teaching the course?

*We started 5 years ago. Every time we do health as a topic for City & Guilds, we incorporate this course, and we've also done the material with teenagers as they study the same topic as the adults now (**see Appendix 3**). This year we are doing jobs as a topic, and not health, but given the current situation, we've decided we are going to roll out at least one of the units to the entire department because we think it's really important to get the message across. Although the information is out there, it is not necessarily in a way that everyone can understand it. We are already getting some odd rumours circulating amongst our students so we think it'd be a good idea to have a week where we all cover the content.*

[Comment: One of the students wanted it rolled out as she thought that some of the students weren't very hygiene conscious. ]

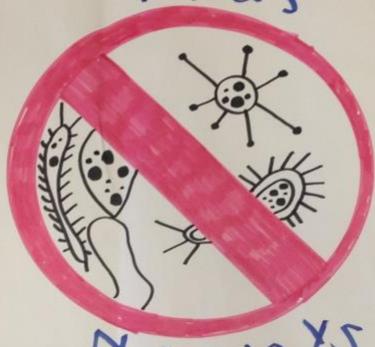
Q. How many students do you think have taken the course?

*250 students.*

Appendix 3: Examples of work by the Entry Level 2 teenagers as a comprehension exercise

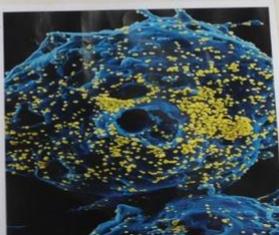
## How to stop germs from spreading

### VIRUS


NO WAYS

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when sneezing, coughing or blowing your nose.
- Discard used tissues in the trash as soon as you can.
- Always wash your hands after sneezing, blowing your nose, or coughing, or after touching used tissues or handkerchiefs.
- Use warm water and soap to wash your hands. If you don't have soap and water, use alcohol-base hand gel or disposable wipes.
- Try to stay home if you have a cough and fever.
- See your doctor as soon as you can if you have a cough and fever, and follow their instructions. Take medicine as prescribed and get lots of rest.
- If asked, use face masks provided in your doctor's office or clinic's waiting room. Follow office or clinic staff instructions to help stop the spread of germs.



## Solution against virus and Germs



Vaccination



Drink hot Tea



Cover mouth with Tissue



Healthy Food





Wear mask



Drink water



Wash your Hands



Virus



Vitamin C

# How to Prevent Spreading Germs

## "Practice Good Manners"

⇒ Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.

Don't have a tissue?

⇒ Cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder if you don't have a tissue.

Then wash your hands for use a hand sanitizer!

⇒ Keep your fingers away from your eyes, nose and mouth.

⇒ Wet your hands and wrists, then apply soap.

⇒ Dry your hands with a clean paper towel.

⇒ Vaccines help your immune system fight infections faster and more effectively.

