BRITISH COUNCIL

Exploratory Action Research Online Course Call for Applications Kazakhstan 2024-2025

Description of the Course

The online mentored Exploratory Action Research (EAR) course is a practical, reflective course for teachers who wish to further their professional development by researching their practice. It takes participating teachers through the exploratory action research process supporting them in carrying out the exploratory phase of their own research. It provides examples of research stories, samples of data collection methods, recommendations and plenty of opportunities to reflect on their own project.

Background

In 2021, the British Council embarked on providing a pilot course called 'Exploratory Action Research' for English language teachers working in the state school system. The course aimed to develop teachers' knowledge and skills in conducting action research in their own classroom context. The course was hosted on the British Council OTC platform.

Six teachers from each country, representing Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Ukraine took part in the pilot course. Through this course, teachers learned all about conducting action research while simultaneously doing meaningful, valid, and reliable research in their own practice through an online community of practice, supporting and being supported by other action researchers.

The course included topics around exploring the teachers' own practice, choosing focus areas for research in their classroom, formulating research questions, choosing tools, making conclusions, sharing their research findings, actively carrying out their own small research project. For the EAR course the participants were committed to 6 hours weekly over the 15-week period.

Context
Teacher-research into CPD is closely aligned with current national educational priorities and policy directives set forth by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan. To

respond to this need, the British Council is launching the online mentored programme for a group of 20 teachers to develop their research skills.

The EAR training will provide insight into the concept of the exploratory action research and its key features, support participants to choose their research focus, get familiar with different data collection methods, and learn to select the best ones that suit their research purpose, and explore ways to share findings and ways to further develop as teacher-researchers. Throughout the programme participants will be mentored in the development of their own exploratory research to put in practice their newly gained research skills.

The online mentored EAR programme is a practical, reflective course for teachers who wish to further their professional development by researching their practice. It takes participating teachers through the exploratory action research process supporting them in carrying out the exploratory phase of their own research. It provides examples of research stories, samples of data collection methods, recommendations and plenty of opportunities to reflect on their own project.

The programme comprises the following five modules based on the British Council Teaching for Success (TfS) modules, using high-quality CPD to help teachers and teacher educators improve their performance and achieve better results from their learners requiring two hours of study and one hour of research design. Each module contains three units and includes the following content:

Module 1: Starting with exploratory action research
The first module, Starting with EAR, introduces the concept of exploratory action research and its stages. In this module participants are encouraged to reflect on their beliefs about research and examine key features of research.

Module 2: Choosing a focus area
In the second module, 'Choosing a focus area', participants are expected to reflect on their teaching and choose an area to focus their research on. In this module they define their exploratory research questions using the resources provided for this purpose.

Module 3: Preparing to explore
The third module, 'Planning to explore', describes different data collection methods and helps participants to select the most appropriate ones to address their research questions. In preparation for this process, participants also learn about ethical standards.

Module 4: Analysing data
The fourth module, 'Analysing data', introduces the concept of data analysis and provides participants with strategies to carry out this process. In this module, they learn how to organise, reduce, and interpret their data in order to answer their research questions.

Module 5: Sharing your research

The final module, 'Sharing your research', supports participants to plan the action phase of their research. Moreover, they explore ways to share findings and ways in which they can further their development as teacher–researchers.

Throughout the EAR programme participants engage in the above-mentioned five self-access modules and are supported by a mentor in the different stages of their research; choosing their research focus, proposing exploratory research questions, designing their data collection tools, analysing the data collected and proposing action plans. Support will be provided to participants via six synchronous tutorials each tutorial to clarify the concepts introduced in each module and encourage participants' interaction.

As part of the programme evaluation process, participants will be requested to complete weekly online tasks, answer questions in forums and submit documents as part of their research process. These research documents will be reviewed both by their mentor and the senior mentor. Based on the feedback received, participants will improve their research documents, such as data collection tools, before being applied.

The programme duration: 14 weeks plus an introductory tutorial aimed to introduce the programme, its calendar, key dates and key actions to the participants.

Call for Applications

The British Council invite 20 motivated and dedicated teachers of English to apply for the British Council's Exploratory Action Research course.

The selected participants will get insight into the concept of the exploratory action research and its key features, choose their research focus, get familiar with different data collection methods, and learn to select best ones that suit their research purpose, and explore ways to share findings and ways to further develop as teacher-researchers. Throughout the course participants are expected to develop their own research project with the help of a mentor. There are weekly submissions of tasks that must be completed in order to follow through the course.

The training course includes five three-hour modules, weekly submissions of tasks and weekly tutorials delivered via Zoom. The link will be provided to the selected teachers in due course. Additionally, course participants need to devote two hours per week in the development of their own research projects.

By the end of the course participants will have the chance to share their project with colleagues from around the world.

Please note: Certificates will be awarded to those participants who will attend, engage actively in all the course activities including completing their research.

The tutorials are planned to be delivered on as indicated below at 8:00pm KZ time.

- Module Getting Started: August 30
- Module 1: September 6
- Module 2: September 13
- Module 3: September 20
- Module 3 check-in: October 18
- Module 4: November 22
- Module 5: December 13
- Final online event: January 24

Eligibility criteria

- Applicants should be Kazakhstani citizens teaching English at state secondary or private schools in the Kazakhstani Education system.
- Applicants must demonstrate minimum B2 level of English language proficiency.
- Applicants must have basic IT skills to join the course and actively participate in the discussions.
- Applicants should be willing and able to carry out research in their classrooms.
- Applicants should be prepared to allocate 4-5 hours per week to this course.
- Applications should be fully complete to be considered.

Application process

Those who meet above criteria and are interested in this course, should fill in the online Application form: https://forms.office.com/e/MDqr6CSLdp by **15 July 2024**.

Since the number of course participants is restricted, only selected teachers will be contacted by **31 July 2024**.

Please contact ardak.bekturova@britishcouncil.org if you have any questions about the course and/or the application process.