# Critical appropriation of CELTA for our current and future teaching contexts

# Time frame: 45-90 minutes (adapt as required)

**Handouts and preparation:**

1. Prepare images of diverse classrooms around the world, either on PowerPoint slide or handout (see below).
2. Handout: Interpreting the CELTA for our current and future teaching contexts

# Aims:

1. To begin thinking about our future teaching contexts after the CELTA
2. To consider how we will implement or adapt what we have learnt on the CELTA in our current and future teaching contexts
3. To raise our awareness of the issue of appropriacy of methodology and social context

**Notes: This workshop is designed primarily for experienced non-native speaker teachers (NNESTs) on CELTAs, and helps to raise awareness of issues of methodology and social context (Holliday, 1994a, 1994b). If you have mainly NNESTs on your CELTA, this input should be useful, esp. if they work in contexts that are different from those for which CELTA courses were originally intended. If you have mainly NSs, you may elect to differentiate, and give the main activity below to NNESTs in one group, and something else to the NSs. If you have a balance of NNESTs and NSs, it should still be useful, but adaptation may be necessary to make it work.**

**Teachers may benefit from reading Holliday, 1994b (currently** [**available here**](http://adrianholliday.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/holliday-94-tesep.pdf)**) before the session – you could set it as a preparation task if appropriate. Trainers who have only ever taught in private adult education may also want to read this and some of the other references (e.g.,** [**Anderson, 2018a**](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/17501229.2018.1471082)**,** [**2018b**](http://www.elted.net/uploads/7/3/1/6/7316005/vol._21_paper_6_anderson_.pdf)**) to understand more about the importance of the issues involved in this workshop.**

**This version includes reference to ‘CELTA’ below and on handout. Feel free to switch to CertTESOL or other if you are working on a different course.**

# Stages:

| **#** | **Time frame (mins)** | **Suggested procedure** |
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|  | 2-3 | Introduce sessions and aims. |
|  | 10-15 | **Images of different contexts**Present a range of pictures to the participants of different English language classrooms around the world (Google: English classroom + [name of country]), including high, middle and low income countries, compulsory and private education, adults and younger learners. Tell teachers to discuss in pairs or groups how appropriate and ‘implementable’ aspects of the CELTA may be in the contexts shown. Groups discuss. Feedback – elicit some important points:1. **younger learners** have very different needs to adults
2. learners in **compulsory education** are less likely to be motivated than in private language schools
3. **larger classes** are more difficult to manage and monitor effectively
4. in some countries many learners are only learning English to pass **exams**, which they need to do to access further education and employment. The curriculum may be geared only towards this, and not towards ‘communicative’ outcomes.
5. **educational culture** is different in every country (and even within countries), and teaching practices reflect this – what is considered normal and ‘best-practice’ in one country is frowned upon in others.

Combinations of these factors can lead to varying levels of challenge when implementing a more learner-centred, collaborative approach to teaching as promoted on the CELTA, and CELTA practices may need to be adapted, ‘watered down’ or even abandoned by teachers who are working in some contexts.  |
|  | 20-30 | **Groupwork discussion**Organise teachers into groups, ideally with teachers expecting to work in similar contexts (this may be the same country, or at the same [e.g. secondary] level) in the same group. Depending on the cohort composition, you may elect to have combinations of NNESTs and NSs together or to separate them (see **Notes** above). Hand out copies of **Interpreting the CELTA for our current and future teaching contexts** to each group. Explain the task and let them begin. Monitor carefully, taking notes on interesting points, anecdotes and advice that you hear that you may want to call upon in the plenary discussion.  |
|  | 10-20 | **Plenary discussion**If possible, sit teachers in a single, large circle. Ask each group to share one or two of the reflections that they feel will be useful for others to hear. This may be a difference of opinion they experienced, a piece of advice or suggestion, or an anecdote they thought was insightful. You may also want to direct attention to some of the things you heard while monitoring.  |
|  | 5-15 | **Final caution**Share the following, true anecdote from a study of CELTA and CertTESOL graduates, and what happened after their course. You could read it out or share it on a slide: *“I decided to use all the knowledge [learnt on the course] in my lessons* *of English. To my great disappointment, students began to complain* *and leave the group saying that my lessons are too complicated and they* *didn’t understand anything.”* (Anderson, 2016, p. 269)The participant then recounted that she lost her job and felt it was a direct result of the changes they made based on the CELTA (this latter comment from unpublished data). Mention that this is anecdotal evidence, but it’s real data, and things like this can happen. Stories of the need to adapt significantly are common (Anderson, 2018a), so the key pieces of advice that esp. experienced teachers should take away are as follows:* discuss your CELTA with your line manager, including any changes you’d like to make based on what you learnt *before* making them. Get their opinion and advice.
* if in doubt, experiment with gradual changes first, working with the most receptive and mature classes first, and then gradually rolling out with other classes if it goes well.
* be critical of the CELTA; it’s one way of teaching that originates in a specific (private, adult, multilingual, Anglophone-community) context, and there is no evidence to suggest it should be seen as best practice in other contexts. Indeed, there’s a growing body of evidence to suggest it may not be (e.g. Phillipson, 1992; Holliday, 1994a, 1994b, 2005; Canagarajah, 1999; Anderson, 2018a, 2018b; I could go on… )
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| 1.
 | 2-3 | Conclude the session, recapping on and evaluating achievement of your aims. |

**References:**

Anderson, J. (2016). Initial teacher training courses and non-native speaker teachers. *ELT Journal 70,* 261-273.

Anderson, J. (2018a). ‘Buying in’ to communicative language teaching: The impact of ‘initial’ certification courses on the classroom practices of experienced teachers of English. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching.* Advance access version.

Anderson, J. (2018b). The role of initial teacher training courses in the professional development of experienced non-native speaker English language teachers. *ELTED, 21,* 37-46.

Canagarajah, A. S. (1999). *Resisting linguistic imperialism in English teaching.* Oxford: OUP.

Holliday, A. (1994a). *Appropriacy of methodology and social context*. Cambridge: CUP.

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