

Social Activity Policy

Last updated: November 2018 / November 2019

Next review: November 2020

Introduction

WE Bridge Academy ensures that students have appropriate information about and access to social, cultural and sporting events and activities which enhance their experience of studying in the UK.

Every Monday a 'Weekly Events Guide' is posted in the student lounge and on the social programme notice board which highlights free or inexpensive events happening in or around Cardiff. These events fall into the following categories:

- Theatre and Music
- Exhibitions
- Sports
- Shopping
- Talks and Classes

Monthly Calendars

Three-month social activities calendars are posted every three months to provide an overview of upcoming events. These include Academy-led events as well as additional events not requiring academy supervision.

Each week separate posters are displayed on the social programme notice board and around the Academy to provide more detailed information about each activity (i.e. meeting time/place, cost, description of the event). Social activities and free events are also posted on social media and our website.

Types of Events

WE Bridge Academy promotes four main types of social activities which include:

- In-Academy Activities. These include a conversation club, book club and film afternoon and other academy-wide events designed to encourage students to practise their English and learn more about British culture
- Evening Activities. These include cinema nights, live music events, bowling and meals. These activities are designed to introduce students to British culture and give them an opportunity to practise English with fellow students as well as with local people
- Half day excursions. These include trips to sporting events (i.e. football or rugby games), local festivals and local heritage sites such as Caerphilly Castle
- Full day excursions. These include trips to nearby coastal areas, national parks, villages, towns and cities (i.e. Swansea, Bristol, Oxford, Bath, London). These activities often include guided tours and aim to increase students' social, cultural, and historical knowledge of the UK

These events can either be booked by the academy (i.e. a day trip to Oxford) or suggested by the academy (i.e. a weekly live music night at a local venue). Students are made aware of which activities they must sign up for in advance and which they can simply turn up for. Sign-up sheets for events are kept in reception or they are displayed on the social activities notice board.

Frequency of Events

The social activities programme has at least:

- 1 booked or suggested evening activity per week and 1 full-day excursion once a month during off-peak times, and
- 1 booked evening activity, 1 suggested evening activity and 1 full-day excursion every week during peak times (June, July, and August)

Additional Social Opportunities

Students at WE Bridge Academy have access to both Conversation Cafe and a book club on a weekly basis. The following description of these events is displayed on posters throughout the academy:

- Conversation Cafe: Conversation Cafe is held every Friday at lunch time in the Student Lounge. It is designed to help students make friends and practice their English in a relaxed and friendly environment - students are encouraged to bring their own lunch
- The WE Bridge Academy Book Club: it gives students a chance to read and discuss books together. Every week, students select a book and meet to talk about its characters, storyline, and theme as well as discuss how the piece could relate to life in the UK

Learning Links

WE Bridge Academy aims to provide social activities that offer real world opportunities and context for the students to practise structures and functional language that has been presented and practised in a more formal classroom environment.

During classes, teachers endeavour to help learners participate more fully in social activities by developing their understanding of cultural-linguistic aspects to English, such as ways to seek clarification and to interrupt others effectively and politely as well as greater understanding of lexical groups that link to upcoming activities, such as architecture theme to a lesson preceding a walking tour of Bath.

Developing study skills that encourage students to notice and use language in social activities is also an important part of lessons. The academy possesses activities and worksheets, developed in-house, that are used to assist students with more specific out of academy social activities such as trips to castles in the area, the law courts, St Fagan's museum and Cardiff museum.