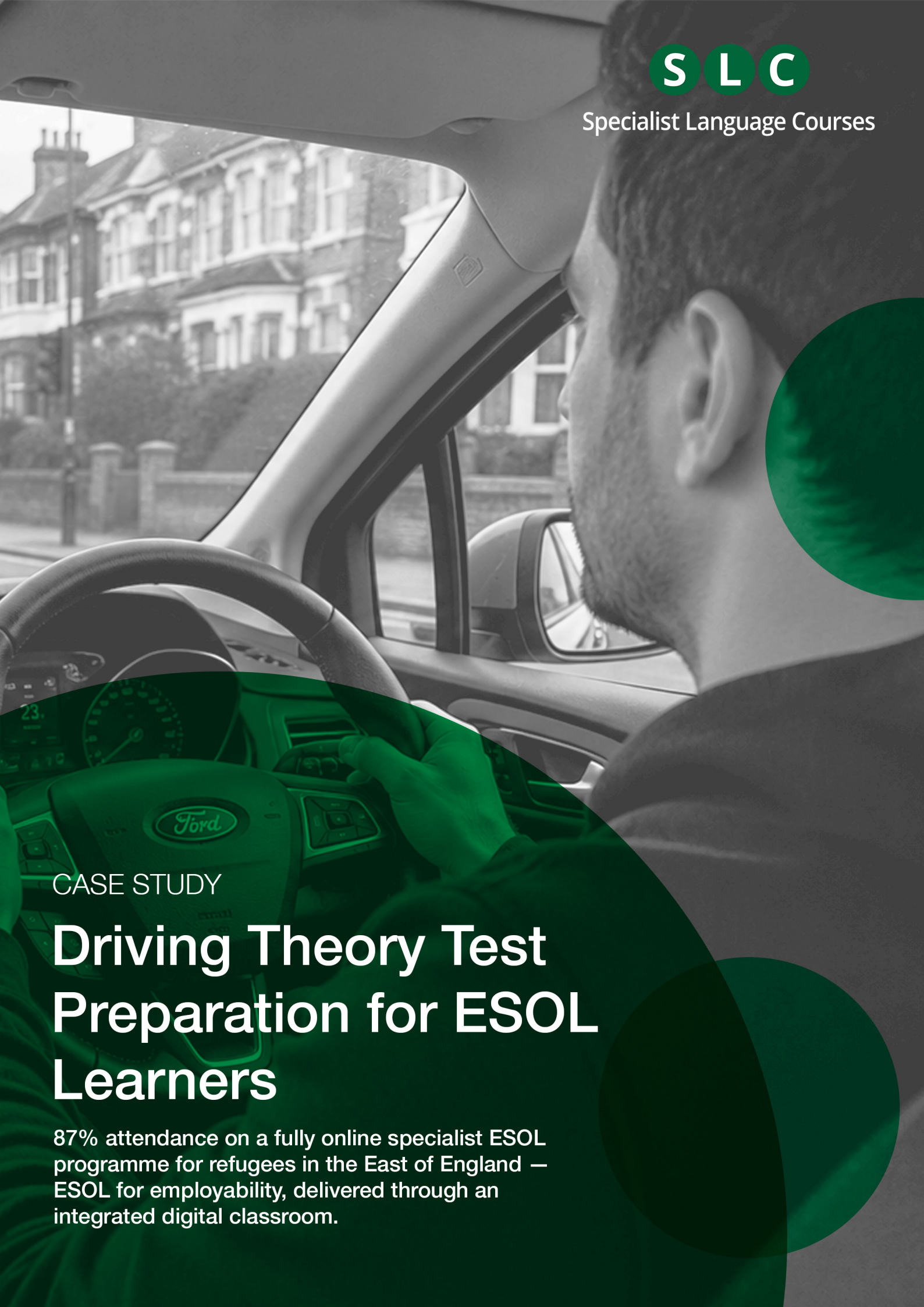


Specialist Language Courses

CASE STUDY

Driving Theory Test Preparation for ESOL Learners

87% attendance on a fully online specialist ESOL programme for refugees in the East of England — ESOL for employability, delivered through an integrated digital classroom.

AT A GLANCE

Course: Driving Theory Test Preparation for ESOL Learners
Programme: Employability for Overseas Nationals (EON)
Funder: Local Government East Strategic Migration Partnership
Audience: Adult refugees and migrants in the East of England
Cohort size: 14 learners
Schedule: Mondays and Thursdays, 18:30 – 20:00
Duration: 23 March – 28 May 2026 (10 weeks, 17 sessions)
Total taught hours: 25.5 hours over the programme
Delivery: Fully online, live, synchronous via Zoom
Cost to learner: No fee (fully funded provision)
Teacher: Peter Rodway, SLC

PROGRAMME CONTEXT: EON

This Driving Theory cohort is delivered as part of the **Employability for Overseas Nationals (EON)** project, funded by the **Local Government East Strategic Migration Partnership (LGE } SMP)**.

EON is an integration programme supporting refugees and migrants across the East of England into employment, with a wider focus on confidence, English language skills development and the practical knowledge needed to navigate work in the UK.

THE CHALLENGE

Learning to drive is one of the single biggest enablers of economic and social integration for refugees and migrants in the UK. A driving licence opens up employment, removes reliance on lifts and limited public transport, and supports family life — including school runs, medical appointments and shift work.

The UK Driving Theory Test, however, is a significant barrier for ESOL learners. The test is delivered in dense, idiomatic English and assumes cultural knowledge of UK road layouts, signage conventions and Highway Code language. Off-the-shelf revision apps assume a level of reading fluency that many adult ESOL learners do not yet have. Layered on top of this, the learner population SLC supports through this provision typically faces:

- Limited daytime availability — many are in work and/or have caring roles
- Geographic spread, ruling out a single physical classroom.
- Mixed digital literacy skills, confidence and access to devices
- Mixed English language levels, typically pre-Intermediate to Intermediate.

The brief, in short: deliver rigorous, exam-relevant content to a dispersed, time-poor adult cohort, in a way that keeps them coming back week after week.

THE SLC APPROACH: A DELIBERATELY INTEGRATED DIGITAL CLASSROOM

SLC's answer to this challenge is not a single platform but a deliberately integrated digital classroom.

Six components form its backbone — four digital tools (class operations, live teaching, official content and generative AI) and two streams of learner-generated material (photographs of local signs and Google Maps coordinates of difficult junctions). The intelligence that knits all of this together is the teacher and the class.

The sections that follow describe the stack, what happens in a typical 90-minute session, how learners themselves contribute content, how AI extends what the teacher can do live in the room, and — most importantly — how it all flows together across the rhythm of the week.

THE LEARNING STACK

Tool	Role in classroom
Teach 'n Go	Course management system — class scheduling, register and attendance tracking, learner messaging, and assignment setting. Gives the teacher and SLC managers lesson-by-lesson visibility on who is engaging and who is at risk of falling behind.
Zoom	The live classroom, joined from a single persistent room link inside Teach 'n Go. Two specific features carry the teaching: shared video for discussion and Q&A, and, critically, the built-in whiteboard, used by the teacher to draw road layouts, junctions and roundabouts live on screen as the class works through them.
safedriving forlife.info	The official DVSA Safe Driving for Life learning site, used as the digital course book for the programme. Provides mock theory tests, video content and hazard perception clips drawn from the same source material that underpins the real test.
Generative AI (Claude)	Anthropic's AI assistant, used on demand to generate animated visual diagrams of complex road scenarios — Y-junctions, box junctions, multi-exit roundabouts — that go beyond what a static image or live whiteboard sketch can show. Used both in-session as a real-time teaching aid and ahead of class to prepare bespoke materials.
Learner photos	Learners photograph any sign, road marking or junction in their own neighbourhood that they don't understand and send the image into Teach 'n Go ahead of class. These photographs become live teaching material.
Google Maps Street View	Learners send map coordinates of confusing or challenging local junctions ahead of class. The teacher pulls them up live during the Zoom session so the class can virtually "stand at" the junction together.

Why this combination, not an all-in-one?
Each component earns its place by doing one thing well. No single product on the market combines course management, live teaching, authoritative content and generative AI at the quality each provides individually — and the learner-generated content (photos and Street View) is not something any organisation can supply at all. The integration cost of pulling these together is more than offset by the depth each brings. The learner experience nonetheless stays simple: one link, one Zoom room, twice a week.

HOW THE STACK INTEGRATES — A WEEKLY LEARNING LOOP IN AN INTEGRATED DIGITAL CLASSROOM

The real value of this digital classroom is not in any single component but in how all of them flow into each other across the rhythm of the week. Each session feeds the next; each learner question generates the next prompt for Claude or the next Street View coordinate to look up; each absence triggers a follow-up message in Teach 'n Go. Below is the integration cycle for a typical week.

1.Before class (weekend / Monday afternoon). Learners send photographs of local signs they don't understand and Google Maps coordinates of difficult junctions into Teach 'n Go. The teacher reviews these to shape the live lesson.

2.Monday 18:30, joining. Learners click a single link in Teach 'n Go from a phone, tablet or laptop, and arrive in the same Zoom room.

3.In session — language first. The teacher pre-teaches the vocabulary and concepts — the language of priority, right of way, signage and Highway Code phrasing — before any test-style content is introduced. This is what makes the class an ESOL course rather than a Theory Test cram session.

4.In session — learner-led exploration. The teacher opens Google Street View on screenshare for the learner-supplied junctions, and the class explores them together. Learner photographs from the week are shared and discussed.

5.In session — the Zoom whiteboard. Tricky priority rules and road layouts are sketched live on Zoom's whiteboard. Learners can annotate and ask questions as the diagram is built.

6.In session — AI for the hardest cases. When a particular roundabout, Y-junction or box junction needs more than a sketch can show, the teacher prompts Claude in real time to generate an animated diagram of best-practice routing and shares it on screen. If the class needs a different angle or a slower walk-through, the diagram is regenerated on the spot.

7.End of session — consolidation and assignment. The session ends with a recap and an assignment set through Teach 'n Go pointing learners at specific units of safedrivingforlife.info — mock test questions, hazard perception clips — for the days between classes.

8.Between sessions — self-study and one-to-one support. Learners practise on safedrivingforlife.info and message the teacher via Teach 'n Go with questions in their own time. Many ESOL learners find written, asynchronous contact easier to process than spoken-only contact, so this channel is well used.

9.Continuously — operational visibility. Attendance and engagement are recorded on Teach 'n Go. SLC sees who is at risk of falling behind within days, not weeks, and can intervene early — a message from the teacher, an offer of one-to-one support, or a check-in about wellbeing.

10. Thursday and onward. The cycle restarts, with Thursday's lesson enriched by the questions, photographs and junctions that emerged from Monday's class. Each week of the course is shaped by the week that came before it.

Why this integration matters. In this digital classroom, the gap between learner questions and when they are answered is closed inside a single weekly rhythm. A photograph taken on Saturday is a teaching point on Monday. A learner's question about a specific local roundabout becomes a Claude-generated animation in the same lesson. An absence on Monday is a Teach 'n Go message on Tuesday. The tools, individually, are unremarkable. The integration is what turns a stack of products into a working classroom.

PEDAGOGY AND CLASS DESIGN

The class is built around three principles.

• **Twice-weekly cadence.** Mondays and Thursdays at 18:30 give learners two contact points each week without overwhelming them. The 90-minute slot is long enough for genuine teaching but short enough to fit around evening responsibilities.

• **Language-first, theory-second.** Each session unpacks the Driving Theory content as an ESOL lesson — pre-teaching vocabulary, modelling the question structures used in the official test, and practising scenarios — rather than as a quiz to be drilled.

• **Low-friction technology.** Learners join from a phone, tablet or laptop with a single click. There are no separate logins to manage during the lesson itself.

PEDAGOGY AND CLASS DESIGN

Three components of the stack are worth describing in more detail because they are unusual for an online ESOL classroom and because they carry a disproportionate amount of the educational value: learner photographs, live Google Maps Street View walkthroughs, and on-demand AI-generated diagrams.

• **Learner-photographed signs and junctions.** Learners are actively encouraged to photograph any sign, road marking or junction in their own neighbourhood that they don't understand or find difficult to navigate. These photographs are sent into Teach 'n Go ahead of class and are brought into the live session. The Highway Code stops being abstract content and becomes the road outside the learner's own front door — which is exactly the road they will need to drive on after they pass.

• **Google Maps Street View as a virtual driving tour.** Learners send map coordinates of confusing or challenging local junctions to the teacher, and these are pulled up live on Street View during the Zoom session. The class virtually "stands at" the junction together, looks in every direction, walks through it from the angle a driver would approach it, and discusses what is happening with priority, signage and lane choice. It is the closest thing to a real-world driving lesson that an online classroom can credibly offer.

• **AI-generated animated diagrams for the hardest concepts.** For the genuinely difficult scenarios — Y-junctions, box junctions, roundabouts with multiple exits — the teacher uses Claude to generate animated visual diagrams of best-practice routes through them. These add the dimension a hand-drawn whiteboard sketch or a static textbook image cannot: motion and sequence. And because the diagram is generated on demand, it can be re-prompted on the spot when the class needs a different angle, a different example, or a slower walk-through.

The pattern. None of these elements is provided by an LMS vendor. They are the teacher and the class making intelligent use of everyday consumer technology and AI — most of it free — applied creatively to a teaching problem. This is the human-in-the-loop layer of the digital classroom, and it is where a great deal of the educational value sits.

OUTCOMES: ATTENDANCE

Attendance is perhaps the single, clearest signal of whether an adult ESOL programme is working.

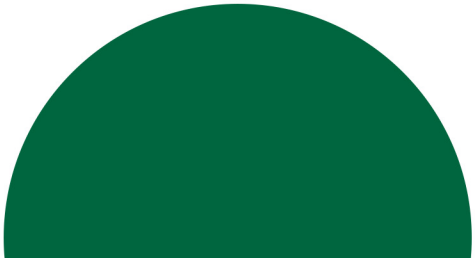
This cohort had an average attendance of **87% across the full 25.5-hour, 17-session programme** — equivalent to roughly **207 learner-attendances out of a possible 238**, or around **310 learner-hours of live, teacher-led ESOL tuition** delivered to the cohort over the course. On average, each of the 14 learners attends approximately 22 of the 25.5 contact hours.

By any reasonable benchmark this is exceptionally high attendance for adult community ESOL provision, where typical figures are widely reported in the 60–70% range. For a free, evening, online course delivered to a refugee and migrant adult cohort, that 87% figure is the strongest single indicator that the model is working.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR ESOL COMMISSIONERS

For local government and ESOL commissioners reviewing this case study, five conclusions are worth carrying into your own commissioning decisions.

• **ESOL-for-employability works better when it is purpose-built.** This course is engineered end-to-end around an employment outcome — a Driving Theory Test pass that unlocks driving focused-work and employment opportunities across a wider geography. It is not a generic ESOL class with employment content added. That focus is what changes attendance, motivation and outcome alignment.

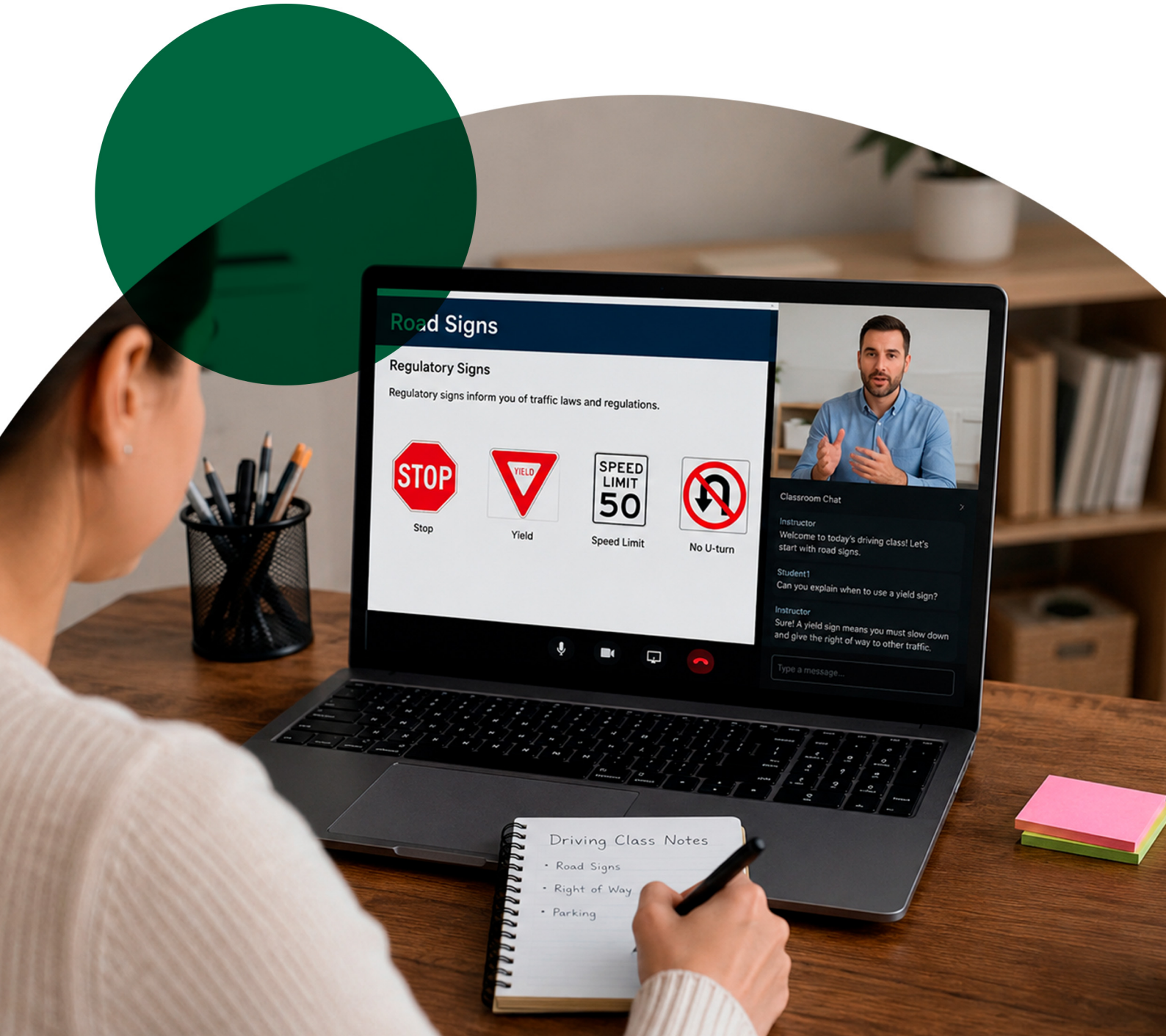


- **A fully digital classroom can outperform local face-to-face provision for dispersed adult learners.** 87% attendance on a free, evening, online refugee ESOL programme is a strong number against any community-ESOL benchmark. The integration of operations, live teaching, official content and AI — together with learner-supplied photographs and Street View walkthroughs — is what makes it work.

- **The model is scalable and portable across local authority areas.** Other than teacher time, the marginal cost of a 15th, 20th or 30th learner is close to zero. The same provision can run across multiple LA areas without duplicated infrastructure — which is particularly relevant for commissioners with smaller or dispersed eligible populations who struggle to justify a local classroom.

- **Real-time engagement data changes the quality of the contract.** Commissioners receive attendance, engagement and progression data lesson-by-lesson rather than at end-of-programme. Issues are flagged in days, not in a final report.

- **Generative AI is already a practical part of the ESOL teacher's toolkit.** Bespoke animated explanations of complex concepts (junctions today; workplace processes, medical procedures, financial scenarios tomorrow) can be generated in minutes during a live class. This is an early signal of where digitally-delivered ESOL will outpace traditional formats over the next few years — and a reason to commission with providers who are already working with these tools.



ABOUT SLC: ESOL FOR EMPLOYABILITY, DELIVERED DIGITALLY

Specialist Language Courses (SLC) is an ESOL specialist. We are not a general adult-education provider that also runs language classes. We have built our operations around delivering ESOL digitally and at scale. Three things distinguish our provision.

- **ESOL for employability and integration.** Our courses are designed around the outcome — a job, a career step, a professional qualification, a Driving Theory Test pass, a healthcare registration — rather than around a generic language curriculum. Where the outcome is employment, we engineer the language teaching around it.

- **Fully digital, integrated delivery.** We deliver online, at times that fit working adult learners, using a deliberately curated stack of operational tools, live teaching, official content and — increasingly — generative AI. We are early adopters of AI in the ESOL classroom and have working practice in deploying it as a live teaching aid, as this case study demonstrates.

- **Operational discipline.** We treat attendance, engagement and progression as live management data, not end-of-course reports. That drives both learner outcomes and the quality of the data we provide back to commissioners.

IN SUMMARY

This Driving Theory cohort demonstrates the core proposition SLC offers commissioners: a deliberately designed digital and EdTech stack — including generative AI and learner-generated content — that, in the hands of an experienced ESOL teacher, can deliver outcomes for hard-to-reach adult learners that traditional classroom provision simply cannot match.

And do so at lower cost, with better data and at greater scale.

The 87% attendance figure — across a 25.5-hour, free, evening, online course for refugee and migrant ESOL learners, delivering an estimated 310 learner hours of live tuition to a cohort of 14 — is the product of a delivery model engineered around what these learners actually need: ESOL that leads to employment, delivered in a digital classroom designed for adult learners with complex lives.

For Local Government East Strategic Migration Partnership and the EON programme, the value is the integration pathway this course opens up. Passing the UK Driving Theory Test removes one of the single most concrete barriers between a recently arrived refugee or migrant and a meaningful job in the East of England. For ESOL commissioners elsewhere in the UK, the same model is available — across a range of employability and integration outcomes, not only driving, but also different employment sectors, education and housing among others.

We work with local government, NHS organisations, professional bodies and employers across the UK.

If you commission ESOL provision in your area and would like to discuss whether an integrated digital model could work for your eligible population — refugees, migrants, healthcare workers, employees of local businesses — we would be glad to talk.

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