

Why do you need esp?

From the early 1960's, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has grown to become one of the most prominent areas of EFL teaching today. ESP has been referred to as 'applied ELT' as the content and aims of any course are determined by the needs of a specific group of learners. ESP is often divided into EAP (English for Academic Purposes) and EOP (English for Occupational Purposes). Further sub-divisions of EOP are sometimes made into business English, professional English (*e.g.* English for doctors, lawyers) and vocational English (*e.g.* English for tourism, nursing, aviation, bricklaying).

According to Dudley-Evans the absolute characteristics of ESP are:

- ESP is designed to meet the specific needs of the learners.
- ESP makes use of the underlying methodology and activities of the specialism it serves.
- It is centered not only on the language (grammar, lexis, register), but also the skills, discourses and genres appropriate to those activities.
- ESP practitioners are also becoming increasingly involved in intercultural communication and the development of intercultural competence.

Traditionally ESP courses were typically designed for intermediate or advanced adult learners. Nowadays many students can start to learn academic or vocational English at an earlier age and at a lower level of proficiency. Some teachers are afraid of making the transition from teaching general English to teaching ESP. There is also the danger that the novice ESP teachers will only use materials that they feel comfortable with and will not stretch their learners. Motivation and goals of the students studying English for Specific Purposes and General English are slightly different, various ideas and teaching methods can be transferred to the classes of English for Specific Purposes from the classes of general English and vice versa, giving the learners an opportunity to acquire better skills in a foreign language.