



2024

Student Handbook

“Our mission is to provide an Intensive English Program (IEP) that trains a culturally diverse student body from all over the world to become fluent in American English.”



E-mail: admissions@mecenglishcenter.com

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This Student Handbook may be subject to periodic changes and updates. Students are officially updated about changes and updates once they are made.

Licensed private career schools offer curricula measured in clock hours, not credit hours. Certificates of completion, i.e., school diplomas, are issued to students who meet clock hour requirements. The granting of any college credit to students who participated in and/or completed a program at a licensed private career school is solely at the discretion of the institution of higher education that the student may opt to subsequently attend.

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A Message from the President

Dear Student:


I want to welcome you to Manhattan English Center! Students from all over the world come here to experience the energy and excitement of one of the most amazing and most visited cities in the world, New York City! New York is not only famous for its global importance in finance, art, and diplomacy, but it is also famous for its liveliness, energy, and incredible experiences it provides its visitors, resulting in memories that will last a lifetime.

New York has so much to offer international students and we are proud to be able to contribute by providing quality English language courses that assist international students in accomplishing their goals and dreams. Let us help make your stay in one of the world's most memorable places an amazing one! Please take the time to read over this handbook carefully, as it outlines important information for students at MEC.

On behalf of MEC, I welcome you once again!

Sincerely,

Reginald Menos



President/School Director/PDSO

MEC: Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide an Intensive English Program (IEP) that trains a culturally diverse student body from all over the world to become fluent in American English.

To achieve this mission, the School has identified these objectives:

1. To deliver content-based English language courses designed to help students acquire fluent language skills, be able to think critically in English, to communicate ideas clearly, and demonstrate comprehension competence in English through integrated instruction, tasks and projects.
2. To provide an educational environment that encourages an appreciation of academic language studies coupled with American Culture.
3. To uphold our commitment to have a diverse student community while offering policies that hold students accountable to the school's high standards of learning.

Administration and Faculty

Ownership:

Manhattan English Center is 100% owned by Reginald Menos and operated by Manhattan English Center, a New York corporation.

School Director

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BBA Marketing

Education Manager

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Student Services Manager

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Student Services Coordinator

Andrea Alvarez Andrea@mecenglishcenter.com

Student Advisors

Valeria Coniglione Valeria@mecenglishcenter.com

Faculty:

Ronald Michel, BA

Reggie Greene, BA

Samuel Tessler, BA

Tonica Pierre, BA

Reggie Greene, BA

Kameko Blair, BA

Miles Skalman, BA

Charles Rowe, BA

Talibah Sun, BA

Christian Deanna, BA

Ubair Amin, BA

Linda Benveniste, BA

William Petrick, BA

Admission Requirements

MEC accepts applications from students all around the world who are committed to learning and improving their English. We offer Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced levels of ESL and students can enter at any one of these levels. To be admitted to MEC:

- The student must have a high school diploma, GED, or equivalent
- Be at least 18 years of age
- Have a desire to learn English

MEC is an open-enrollment institution. This means that most students are accepted once their application has been submitted. Candidates are urged to visit the school for a personal interview. If this cannot be arranged, please send an email to admissions@mecenglishcenter.com

Students can apply for admission by sending an email to Admissions@mecenglishcenter.com.

Initial Students

Initial students in their home countries and prospective students in the US on a **B-1, B-2, or J-1 Visa** must submit the following documents for admission:

1. **Passport copy**, bio pages, valid at least 6 months (I-94 and VISA needed if you are in the USA).
2. **Original bank statement** showing no less than US \$20,000 for Initial I-20's or Affidavit of support.
3. Copy of **highest diploma** or certificate of academic completion & transcript.
4. A non-refundable **registration fee** of US \$300 for initial I-20's (excluding all USCIS fees).
5. Passport/I-94/Marriage/Birth certificates for dependents (if applicable).

Change-of-Status from B1 (Tourist)

1. **Passport copy**, bio pages, valid for at least 1 year (I-94 and VISA needed if you are in the USA).
2. **Valid Visa** stamp and I-94 Card or I-94 number
3. Approved copy of **I-797**
4. **Original bank statement** showing no less than US \$20,000 or Affidavit of Support.
5. Copy of **highest diploma** or certificate of academic completion & transcript.
6. **Personal Statement** ("Why do I want to change my status?")
7. Passport/I-94/Marriage/Birth certificates for dependents (If applicable).

Change-of-Status from J1

1. **Passport copy**, bio pages, valid for at least 1 year (I-94 and VISA needed if you are in the USA).

2. **Valid Visa** stamp and I-94 Card or I-94 number
3. **DS Form**
4. **Original bank statement** showing no less than US \$20,000 or Affidavit of Support.
5. Copy of **highest diploma** or certificate of academic completion & transcript.
6. **Personal Statement** (“Why do I want to change my status?”)
7. **Last 3 paychecks** (copies)
8. Passport/I-94/Marriage/Birth certificates for dependents (If applicable).

Initial Student/ Change-of-Status Course Fees

Program	English as a Second Language (ESL)
Duration	234 hours
Tuition	\$1,700
Books	\$50
Registration Fee (Non-Refundable)	\$100
Total	\$1,850 (\$580/month) (\$1,700 full pay/Quarter)
Late Payment Fees	Enrolled students will be charged a late payment fee according to the matrix below: 10 days past payment due date: \$30 1 month: \$60 or possible termination for non-payment 2 months: \$90 and/or termination for non-payment *A \$100 re-registration fee will be charged after one month of non-payment
Refund Policy	See Refund Policy
Books and Materials	All books and materials are provided in class, however, students who wish to buy their own textbooks may do so at additional cost

Transfer-In Students

Students already studying in the United States on an **F-1 Visa, US Green Card Holders, or US Citizens** who wish to attend our school must provide the following documents:

1. **Passport copy**, bio pages, valid at least 6 months (I-94 and VISA needed if you are in the USA).
2. **Original bank statement** showing no less than US \$5,000 or Affidavit of Support.
3. Copy of **highest diploma** or certificate of academic completion & transcript.

4. A non-refundable **registration fee** of US \$100.
5. All **copies of I-20** from previously attended schools in the USA.
6. Passport/I-94/Marriage/Birth certificates for dependents (If applicable).

Transfer-In Student Course Fees

Program	English as a Second Language (ESL)
Duration	702 hours
Tuition	\$3,510
Books	\$50
Registration Fee (Non-Refundable)	\$100
Total	\$3,660 (\$400/month) (\$1,140 full pay/semester)
Late Payment Fees	Enrolled students will be charged a late payment fee if: 10 days past payment due date: \$30 1 month: \$60 or possible termination for non-payment 2 months: \$90 and/or termination for non-payment *A \$100 re-registration fee will be charged after one month of non-payment
Refund Policy	See Refund Policy
Books and Materials	All books and materials are provided for use in class, however, students who wish to buy their own textbooks may do so at additional cost

Student Enrollment and Registration

Registration and I-20 Issuance

Any student transferring to MEC, entering the USA on a MEC visa issued by the US Consulate overseas must come to our location at 545 8th Avenue, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10018 and register for their program prior to or on the start date of their program. The student must come in person. Failure to register for their program can result in being terminated from the program, and ultimately lead to deportation procedures, dictated by ICE (Immigration Customs Enforcement), a division of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

Continuing students must sign a new **Enrollment Agreement** (See Enrollment Agreement) prior to the end of their semester and register for their next semester.

Once a student registers for classes, the student must be issued an I-20 Form. The PDSO/ DSO will issue an I-20 to the student only if the student is present and signs for it. This is a requirement for all students, starting and continuing.

Placement Exam

Once students have registered and paid all tuition costs, they must take a placement exam to determine their appropriate program level. MEC uses the Cambridge Placement and Evaluation Package. This exam takes 2 hours to complete and measures a student's ability level in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Students must sign up to take the exam at the reception desk. Currently, exams are offered Wednesday- Friday at 2pm. Shortly after the exam, the students will be given their course level and their class assignment.

If a student feels that his/her assigned level is too high or too low, he/she can meet with the Education Manager, and he will decide the best course of action.

Student Orientation

After the placement exam, new students must meet with a Student Advisor to discuss the policies of the school and sign the Student Orientation Form. Students are required to watch the MEC Student Orientation Video, which can be found on YouTube and complete the Student Orientation Checklist with the student advisor.

Non-Compliance of Required Placement Test and Orientation

If a first-time student has registered, paid, and failed to report for placement testing and orientation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action, including the possibility of being removed from the program. Students who fail to go through the placement and orientation process with MEC staff on or prior to their start date are considered in violation of this policy.

Academic Affairs

MEC offers three courses of ESL instruction: Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced. In addition, there are a total of 5 levels. The ESL grammar skills in each course are aligned with the Common European Framework (CEFR). The CEFR alignment also corresponds to American English language learning standards and widely used assessment exams such as the IELTS, TOEIC, and TOEFL. At MEC, the curriculum follows the Cambridge textbooks *Interchange and Passages* which closely align with CEFR.

Course Description: ESL Program

Beginner

ESL level 1: High Beginner

Prerequisite: Placement

Course Description: This high beginner level ESL course is designed for students who have no foundation in English. High beginner is the only English course in the one-course Beginner Level. Students who successfully complete the course are prepared to move on to the Low Intermediate course. The course integrates the four language skills through reading, writing, listening, and speaking based on familiar topics such as introductions, the workplace, shopping, music, and family.

MEC's High Beginner curriculum's student learning outcomes mirror those of the CEFR. Per CEFR, students who successfully complete the A2 Waystage (High Beginner) level will be able to:

Partial list

- Talk about people's behavior using adverbs.
- Describe people's personalities using adverbs before adjectives.
- Use *always* with a continuous verb to describe habits.
- Talk about the best, the worst, and most beautiful things in your city and country.
- Describe natural features.
- Use short responses to be a supportive listener

Intermediate

ESL level 2: Low Intermediate

Prerequisite: ESL level 1 or equivalent placement

Course Description: Low Intermediate is the first English course in the two-course Intermediate Level. Students who successfully complete the course are prepared to move on to the High Intermediate course. The course uses a communicative methodology focusing on both fluency and accuracy to foster students' independent production of English. The course integrates the four language skills through reading, writing, listening, and speaking based on familiar topics such as memories, lifestyle changes, travel, requests, and body language interpretation.

MEC's Low Intermediate curriculum goals mirror those of the CEFR. Per CEFR, students who successfully complete the B1 (Threshold) or Low Intermediate level should be able to:

Partial list

- Ask questions to get to know someone.
- Tell interesting stories about my life.
- Highlight key moments in a story.
- Highlight important information in a story.
- Understand a conversation about an accident.
- Understand a podcast about an athlete's life story.
- Read about a person who overcame an obstacle.
- Write an anecdote about facing a challenge.

ESL level 3: High Intermediate

Prerequisite: ESL level 2 or equivalent placement

Course Description: High Intermediate is the second English course in the two-course Intermediate Level. Students who successfully complete the course are prepared to move on to the Low Advanced course. The course uses a communicative methodology focusing on both fluency and accuracy to foster students' independent production of English. The course integrates the four language skills through reading, writing, listening, and speaking based on topics such as asking for a favor, telling a story, comparing different cultures, lifelong learning, historic events, and personalities.

The student learning outcomes in the High Intermediate course mirror those of the CEFR. Per CEFR, students who successfully complete the B2 or High Intermediate level should be able to:

Partial List

- Talk about friends and social networking habits.
- Talk about life lessons and experiences.
- Tell stories about your childhood.
- Discuss and give advice on finding and changing jobs.
- Share opinions about perks and benefits offered by employers.
- Discuss and prepare to answer interview questions.

Advanced

ESL level 4: Low Advanced

Prerequisite: ESL level 3 or equivalent placement

Course Description: Low Advanced is the first course in the two-course Advanced Level. Students who successfully complete the course are prepared to move on to the High Advanced course. The course uses a communicative methodology focusing on both fluency and accuracy to foster students' independent production of English. The course integrates the four language skills through reading, writing, listening, and speaking based on complex topics such as communication, the information age, creativity, complaints, values, and culture shock.

The student learning outcomes in the Low Advanced course mirror those of the CEFR. Per CEFR, students who successfully complete the C1 or Low Advanced level should be able to:

- Talk about types of literature, reading habits, and favorite authors.
- Discuss the pros and cons of reading and writing blogs.
- Analyze and interpret a poem.
- Talk about technology and its impact on your life.
- Discuss the issue of privacy vs. security.
- Evaluate the pros and cons of modern conveniences.
- Discuss how you respond to new technologies.

ESL level 5: High Advanced

Prerequisite: ESL level 5 or equivalent placement

Course Description: High Advanced is the second course in the two-course Advanced Level. The course uses a communicative methodology focusing on both fluency and accuracy to foster students' independent production of English. The course integrates the four language skills through reading, writing, listening, and speaking based on complex topics such as relationships, science, technology, superstitions and beliefs, consumer culture, exceptional people, and business.

MEC's High Advanced curriculum student learning outcomes mirror those of the CEFR. Per CEFR, students who successfully complete the C2 or High Advanced level should be able to:

Partial List:

- Defining and describing friendship
- Expressing opinions
- Stating preferences.
- Sharing friendship advice.
- Discussing approaches to fashion
 - Describing style and trends
 - Expressing opinions about clothing
 - Talking about first impressions
 - Describing appearances

Class Breaks

Class breaks are at the discretion of each teacher but are normally at 11am, 1pm, 3pm, 5pm and 7pm, depending on the schedule.

Attendance Policy

Students must be in attendance at least 85% of the time. Students must maintain 85% to graduate. Any student who falls below 85% attendance will be put on probation and/or be terminated. The classroom teacher maintains the attendance roster. The attendance roster is always kept at the school. Attendance will be taken every hour of the class schedule and if you arrive more than 20 minutes after the start of the hour, you will not get credit for being in class for that hour.

International students attending schools on an F1 Visa are required by Federal law to maintain a full time schedule of 18 hours per week or 72 hours per month. At the end of each month, a student's hours are calculated. Students not meeting their required hours will be informed via an emailed warning letter and will have one month to improve their attendance. If the student's attendance does not improve after the warning letter their F-1 status could be terminated.

Grading Procedures

Placement Exam

Before beginning classes, every student must take a placement exam, which will determine the appropriate level of English classes for each individual. MEC uses the Cambridge Placement and Evaluation Package. This exam takes roughly two hours to complete and measures a student's ability to read, write, speak and listen to the English language.

Progress Reports

Testing is standardized throughout the curriculum based on tests of high reliability. Test results will be recorded in and tracked via the school's SMS system.

Weekly Progress Checks	60% of course grade	Quizzes from textbooks	Quizzes every Thursday
Mid-term Exam	20% of course grade	Exam from Cambridge Exam Package, depending on the course and testing support materials.	Midway through the course.
Final Exam	20% of course grade	Exam from Cambridge Exam Package, depending on the course and testing support materials.	At the end of the course.
Beginner, Intermediate, and/or Advanced Certificate of Completion	Based on data from Gradelink school management system		After passing Level Exit Exam

Grade Rubric

Students must maintain at least a 72% grade average to graduate. Any student who falls below a 72% average will be put on academic probation. If a student fails below a 72% average for any two consecutive semesters, that student may be removed from the program. The classroom teacher is responsible for administering and recording grades in the LMS system.

Letter Grade	Percentage	GPA
A	93-100	4.0
A-	90-92	3.67
B+	87-89	3.33

B	83-86	3.0
B-	80-82	2.67
C+	77-79	2.33
C	74-76	2.0
C-	72-73	1.67
F	<72	0

Exit Exam

When students finish their program, they must take an exit exam. Similar to the placement exam, this exam takes roughly two hours to complete and measures a student's ability level in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. After students complete the exit exam, we compare the results to the placement exam to see how much they have learned during their time at MEC. This final grade will be put on the student's transcript and is required for the Certificate of Completion and/or transcript to be provided.

Academic Integrity

Students must accept the responsibility to be honest and to respect ethical standards in meeting their academic assignments and requirements. Integrity in academic life requires that students demonstrate intellectual and academic achievement independent of all assistance except that authorized by the instructor.

The use of an outside source in any academic paper, report of submission for academic credit without the appropriate acknowledgement is plagiarism. It is also academically dishonest to submit anything as one's own work, either fully or in part, of someone else. It is unethical to present as one's own work, the ideas, words, or representations of another without the proper indication of the source. Therefore, it is the student's responsibility to give credit to any quotation, idea or data borrowed from an outside source.

Students who fail to meet the responsibility for academic integrity subject themselves to sanctions ranging from a reduction in grade or failure in the assignment or course in which the offense occurred to suspension, dismissal, or expulsion from the School. Students penalized for failing to maintain academic integrity who wish to appeal such action may petition the School Director for a hearing on the matter.

Facilities

MEC has a total of 8 classroom-lecture halls. MEC's main campus is located at 545 8th Avenue, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10018. Every classroom is equipped with whiteboards, computers, and internet access. All classrooms are handicap accessible.

Student Lounge

The student lounge is a common area open to the entire campus population for the purposes of eating, socializing, and relaxation. There are two vending machines, a coffee maker, a refrigerator, and a microwave, for students use in the lounge.

Student Library

The student library is a common area open to the entire campus population for the purposes of study and research. There are six computers available in the library and several shelves of reading material.

Wi-Fi

MEC has complimentary Wi-Fi available throughout campus available for student use.

MEC Policies and Procedures

Providing Contact Information/ Change of Contact Information

MEC ESL students in the U.S. as an F-1 visa student must, always, provide the school with their correct contact information. Contact information, in this handbook, refers to the following: email address, postal address, resident address, telephone number, and cell number. If a student's contact information changes, that student is responsible for providing the admissions office with their updated information. A student can do this through Student Advisors or directly on Gradelink.

If a student's attendance falls below the acceptable rate (**See Attendance Policy and F-1 Visas**) and is not reachable for more than 14 days, that student will be automatically removed from the program.

All F-1 students must provide their contact information during the initial registration process. Failure to comply with attendance rules and contact information policies will result in that student being denied or removed from the program, without exception.

Health Insurance

All MEC students are strongly advised to purchase health insurance while studying in the US. Having health insurance protects you from paying the full cost of medical expenses, and having student medical and accident insurance is recommended for international students.

We can provide assistance with getting insured.

Counseling Services

This list of counseling services is located at the admissions desk.

Public Counseling Services in New York City

- Mental Health
<https://www.omh.ny.gov/>
- Emergency Services
<http://newyorkcity.ny.networkofcare.org/mh/emergency-services.aspx>
- Sexual Assault Counseling
<http://newyorkcity.ny.networkofcare.org/mh/services/subcategory.aspx?tax=RP-1400.8000-800>
- Individual and Family Counseling (21 years or younger)
<http://www.childcenterny.org/counseling-indandfamily.htm>
- Financial Counseling
<http://www1.nyc.gov/site/dca/consumers/get-free-financial-counseling.page>

Vacation and Leave of Absence

Students may elect to take a vacation during their course of study. A vacation is limited to 180 calendar days in any 12-month period or one-half the published program length, whichever is shorter. Multiple vacation requests may be permitted provided the total of the vacation time does not exceed this limit.

A student enrolled under a F-1 visa may be granted leaves of absence or vacations in accordance with the regulations of the Department of Homeland Security and the following guidelines: (a) in emergency situations such as a serious illness or a death in the immediate family. Unless otherwise stipulated and documented, the leave is not to extend beyond 50% of the length of period for which the student applied; (b) a vacation policy that allows students to accumulate vacation over an extended period of study. Length and frequency of vacations must not impede student progress and must be reasonable within the context of the institution's curriculum.

MEC students are allowed to take vacation after studying for 2 semesters of 13 weeks for a total of 26 weeks. After studying for 26 weeks students are eligible for 8 weeks of vacation. A student may choose to study for 3 semesters of 13 weeks for a total of 39 weeks and apply for 12 weeks' vacation which is the maximum for 1 year.

The designated Staff personnel is expected to review the student's request, preferably in person with the student requesting the vacation. Not all vacation requests will be granted. All vacation requests must be in writing and approved in writing.

The student must sign and date the vacation request. A vacation request must have a beginning date and date of return. Students must specify whether they are traveling outside the United States so that appropriate advice is given in reference to their immigration status.

The student must attest to understanding the procedures and implications for returning or failing to return to his/her course of study.

The institution must document its approval of the vacation request in accordance with its published policy.

The institution may not assess the student any additional charges as a result of the vacation request.

An approved vacation request may be extended for an additional period of time provided that the extension request meets all of the above requirements, and the total length of the leave of absence does not exceed the specified limits as noted.

Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

All students must maintain satisfactory academic progress in order to remain eligible to continue as students in the school. Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) includes but is not limited to meeting minimum standards for grades (a grade of “C” or above), and students must maintain an attendance rate of 80% or be considered out of status. Students are to complete all assessments for their current level with a C or above. “Students whose grades and/or attendance fall below the rates above are put on probation. Students receive immediate advising by the education manager. Students enrolled in our one term ESL program (13 weeks/234 clock hours) will have to improve their grades by the mid-term or 6th week to be removed from probation or otherwise be considered for termination.

In order to maintain satisfactory academic progress, students must adhere to our Leave of Absence / vacation policies published in the student catalog. Students maintaining satisfactory academic progress must demonstrate progress by enrolling in appropriate proficiency levels. Upon completion of all assessments for the ESL level, students will be referred for promotion to the next level by the instructor and the education manager will assign the student to a new level.

Unsatisfactory Academic Progress

A student who fails a course, or whose cumulative fall or spring term grade point average falls below “C” will be placed on academic probation. In this circumstance, the student will receive written correspondence from the education manager outlining a plan of study designed to improve his or her academic performance. Such a plan of study may include a reduction in non- academic activities, special tutoring, remedial work in reading and writing, or such other provisions as may seem appropriate in each case. The student is required to follow this plan of study until he or she is removed from probation. Students are not to exceed 36 months of study in our ESL program. If a student fails a course, he/she can only repeat that course 1 time. Students who fail to maintain satisfactory Academic Progress due to a failure to maintain an 80% attendance may jeopardize their I-20 status and be terminated for dropping below the required full course load. The student is automatically removed from probation upon successfully completing an academic term (13 weeks) when the student’s grade has risen to a “C” or above and has maintained 80% attendance level.

If a class does not meet our class pass rate of 75%, the education manager will review the individual students in that class to determine the cause. The education manager will follow the regular policy for academic progress with each student who has a failing grade.

Student's right to appeal

A student who has been placed on probation will receive an academic probation letter along with his/her progress report. A student has the right to file an appeal with the education manager. An appeal must be filed in writing within 3 business day from date of notification of probation status. Students must provide evidence to justify their case. The education manager will review any evidence and provide a final decision on the student's status within 5 business days.

Late Fee Policy

We understand that everyone has other things going on in their lives and you can't always make it to the school on the exact day that your payment is due. Because of this, students are given 9 days to pay (including the day their payment is due) without a late fee. On the 10th day, there is a \$30 late fee; one month late, there is a \$60 late fee plus a \$100 re-registration fee and two months later, there is a \$90 late fee plus possible termination.

Medical Leave Policy

If a student needs to be given a leave of absence due to medical reasons, an official note from a licensed physician or hospital / clinic needs to be provided and presented to the Student Advisor who currently deals with Medical Leave. The medical excuse note, written and signed by a doctor, should be uploaded to Gradelink and then the appropriate Student Services staff member will update that student's file to reflect the excused absences. While a student is on medical leave, he or she is excused from classes but must continue to make their regular tuition payments and the time out of class does not count towards accumulated semester hours. If a medical note is not provided, the time the student was absent from classes cannot be justified in the student's attendance records.

Field Trip Policy

MEC recognizes the importance of field trips and recreational activities as part of the entire ESL learning experience. The following are the policies and procedures for field trips which every instructor **MUST** go over before embarking on a field trip.

- Classes must meet at MEC. The instructor will take attendance and the students will leave the campus together.
- All students must sign a waiver of injury form and return it to the Education Manager.
- Students should have the school phone number, as well as the instructor's cell phone number.
- Students should make the instructor aware of any health-related issues (food allergies, asthma, etc.) prior to leaving the school.
- Students should **IMMEDIATELY** contact their instructor or the school if they get separated from their class.

- At the end of the trip, the instructor will take attendance again to make sure that all students have returned to the camps safely.
- If ANY problems arise on a field trip, the instructor and the student should contact the Education Manager or School Director IMMEDIATELY.
- In cases of extreme emergencies, students should call 911 or contact the nearest policeman.
- MEC assumes no liability for injuries sustained during a field trip.

Field trips are meant to enhance the educational experience and is voluntary and not mandatory as part of the curriculum. For those students who choose not to participate, regular class scheduling will be in effect.

Transfer-Out Policy

According to SEVP regulations a student is eligible to transfer at any time. However, a student can be transferred out in a terminated status if a student hasn't followed the rules and regulations at MEC. A student may transfer out of our program to another program in active status if:

- They have completed (successfully) a semester of classes.
- Paid any outstanding balances.
- And have maintained 18 hrs./ week attendance.

If a student does not meet these three requirements, that student will be eligible for a school transfer in terminated status.

- Once a student wishes to transfer to another program, the institution the student is transferring to will request certain documentation from MEC. Respectively, any student wishing to transfer to our program will be required to provide some information from the other institution as well. International students will not be eligible to register at MEC if they are unable to provide the required documentation. An official list of required documentation is available.
- If a student has received warnings during their course, we reserve the right to inform the institution the student wishes to transfer to about this fact. Attendance records of those students whose attendance has been in good standing with our program will not be released to anyone, unless it is requested by that institution or U.S. Immigration authorities. poor attendance could lead to a poor mark in the student's records.

Once a student wishes to transfer to another school, the institution the student is transferring to will request certain documentation from MEC. Respectively, any student wishing to transfer **to** our program will be required to provide some information from the other institution as well. **International students will not be eligible to register to MEC if they are unable to provide the required documentation.** If a student has received warnings during their course, we reserve the right to inform the institution the student wishes to transfer to about this fact. Poor attendance could lead to a poor mark in the student's records.

Closing Your Record

If you are closing your record because you are returning home or because your status has changed there are a few things to do before you go:

1. Take the exit exam, which will go on your transcript and determine your final level of English. We will not be able to provide a transcript for you if you do not take the exit exam
2. Clear your balance; talk to your student advisor at the front desk to find out your balance
3. Submit proof that your status has changed or that you are leaving the country to the Student Services Coordinator or appropriate staff member
4. Request any documents that you may need before your Gradelink account gets deactivated

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Consistent with Family Educational rights and Privacy Act of 1974, Manhattan English Center (MEC) has adopted policies, which protect the privacy of students. In brief, the statute provide the educational institutions and agencies must provide students access to certain official records directly related to the students and an opportunity for a hearing to challenge such records on the grounds that they are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise inappropriate institutions must obtain the written consent of the student before releasing personally identifiable data about student form records to other than a specified list of exceptions. Students must be notified of these rights. An office and review board has been established in the United States Department of Education to investigate and adjudicate violations and complaints of this section.

Emergency Closings and Other Changes to Class Schedules

Occasionally, the school is confronted by the need to close because of inclement weather or reasons beyond the school's control. Such closings are normally announced through major radio stations in New York City. In addition, students can also call the main office for information and check the school's website and Facebook page for updates.

Although classes are planned to commence and conclude on the dates indicated in the academic calendar, unforeseen circumstances may necessitate adjustments to class schedules and extension of time for completion of class assignments. Examples of such circumstances may include faculty illness, malfunction of school equipment (including computers and/or networks), and unavailability of particular School facilities occasioned by damage to the premises, repairs or other cause, and school closings because of inclement weather. The school shall not be responsible for refund of any tuition or fees in the event of any such occurrence or for failure of a class to conclude on the date originally scheduled, nor shall the school be liable for any consequential damages as a result of such a change in schedule.

Refund Procedure

Students requesting a refund should send a written request to the Student Services Coordinator via email. If the refund request meets the school refund policy, the refund will be made to the student within 30 days in the form of a cheque. The student will receive an email from the Bookkeeper when the cheque is ready to be picked up. The failure of a student to notify the appropriate parties in writing of withdrawal may delay refund of tuition due pursuant to Section 5002 of the Education Law.

NEW YORK STATE REFUND POLICY AND CANCELLATION POLICY

A student who cancels within seven (7) days of signing the enrollment agreement (7) but before instruction begins receives all payment refunded, excluding the \$100 registration fee. Thereafter, a student will be liable for:

For 234-hour programs (full-time) (1 Semester of 13 weeks)

(I) First Semester

<i>If Termination Occurs</i>	<i>The School May Retain</i>
Prior to or During 1st Week	0%
During the 2nd Week	25%
During the 3rd Week	50%
During the 4th Week	75%
After the 4th Week	100%

(II) Subsequent Semesters

<i>If Termination Occurs</i>	<i>The School May Retain</i>
Prior to or During 1st Week	25%
During the 2nd Week	50%
During the 3rd Week	75%
After the 3rd Week	100%

For All Programs

Fees and charges paid to the school for goods and services, which the school has not provided and was not accepted by the student, shall be refunded.

Any payment to the school in excess of the sum due the school by the student who cancels, withdraws, or is discontinued will be refunded within thirty (30) days from the determination date of withdrawal. The date of withdrawal by a student is no more than 30 days from the last date of attendance. Pursuant of section 5002 of the New York State Education Law, **“the failure of a student to notify the director in writing of withdrawal may delay refund of tuition due.”**

(III) The student refund may be more than stated above if the accrediting agency or the Federal Pro-Rata refund policy results in a greater refund.

MEC Code of Conduct

MEC staff’s main concern is for the welfare and safety of its students. The following actions and behavior will lead to disciplinary actions being taken by the ESL Department:

- An action that may discredit or be damaging to MEC.
- Behavior that is intended to intimidate another person because of race, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation or disability.
- Behavior that could lead to unwanted encounters with law enforcement bodies.
- Non-compliance with MEC policies and the commonwealth and federal laws relative to drugs, alcoholic beverages, and gambling.
- Providing false information to MEC staff.
- Fraud, forgery, alteration, or misuse of MEC documents, records, or identification cards.
- Physical Assault with the intention of doing physical harm, obscene, lewd, vulgar or immoral conduct or profanity.
- Unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, herein defined as ‘Sexual Harassment. ’Sexual harassment may include 1) unwelcome sexual advances, 2) requests for sexual favors, and 3) other verbal, non-verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment may also include denying or

limiting, on the basis of sex, a person's ability to perform their tasks, assignments, or work. Disciplinary action will be taken in the event of violation of MEC Sexual Harassment policy.

- The deliberate creation on the part of an individual student or a group of students of a hostile environment towards other students, faculty or staff, or to stigmatize or harass other students, faculty or staff members.
- Behavior that would lead to violence while on the territory of MEC facilities and campus.

Students are also responsible for maintaining behavior that will not be detrimental to MEC, its faculty and staff. This obligation extends to events organized by MEC International which take place outside Manhattan English Center facilities and campus.

Use of Cell Phones, Computers, and Other Electronic Devices in Class

- The general policy and guidelines in regards to electronic devices that follow apply to all ESL students and classes.
- All cell phones must be either turned-off or switched to 'silent mode 'during class.
- If a student needs to receive or make an urgent call, they must do so outside the classroom. If constant disruption continues, the teacher has the authority to consider the student absent from class for that hour.
- Laptops, tablets, MP3 players, or other electronic devices are not allowed to be used in class, unless otherwise instructed by the teacher. This includes the computers owned by MEC.
- The use of SMS messaging, or 'texting', is also disruptive and disrespectful to the instructor. The ESL Instructors at Manhattan English Center are committed to making interesting and productive lessons for their students, and it is considered by the faculty and staff very disrespectful if the students do not make an effort to participate in classroom activities. If a student's constant texting becomes a problem for the instructor, **the instructor has the right to send that student to the ESL Program Manager to discuss the concern. The student may be considered absent by ESL staff for that day.**

Zero Tolerance of Disrespect Towards Faculty, Staff, and Students

Any perspective or enrolled student at MEC, who shows disrespect to MEC students, any member of staff or faculty can be subject to disciplinary action such as loss of attendance and/or removal from the program. Disrespect in this Handbook is defined by (but not excluded to) the following:

Constant class disruption, rudeness, unnecessary and excessive argumentation with other students or staff and faculty, harassment, excessive complaining, yelling or threatening speech, physical violence, verbal threats of violence, disregard or refusal of faculty direction, refusal to participate in classroom activities, overall disrespect and disregard for Staff and Faculty efforts and direction.

Any student or prospective student may be removed from the program and not be allowed to register and attend the programs offered at MEC due to violating the Zero-Tolerance of Disrespect policy. MEC students are required to maintain certain standards of behavior while they attend our program which encourages an atmosphere of learning and mutual respect.

Formal/Informal Complaints

The purpose of the Student Complaint Procedure is to provide students with a prompt and equitable means of seeking resolution for alleged violations of student rights which are protected under the school's academic and general policies. Complaints based on unlawful discrimination, harassment, unfair or biased treatment, or complaints regarding the quality of services and instruction, against any member of MEC (including students, staff, or faculty) should be made in writing and given to the School's Director.

Complaints can be made in two ways:

Formal complaints must be made in writing and cannot be made anonymously, however will be kept confidential. Minor complaints pertaining to the quality of educational programs and services, teacher performance, or condition of facilities can be made either formally or informally.

Informal complaints can be made in person by speaking with administrative personnel, or in writing by email or letter. Informal complaints may be opened and reviewed by individual administrative staff members and can be dropped in the school's suggestion boxes. All complaints formal or informal are reviewed and analyzed by either the school's Director or Education Manager.

New York State Student Complaints Procedure

The purpose of the Student Complaint Procedure is to provide students with a prompt and equitable means of seeking resolution for alleged violations of student rights which are protected under school's academic and general policies. Complaints based on unlawful discrimination, harassment, unfair or biased treatment, or complaints regarding the quality of services and instruction, against any member of MEC (including students, staff, or faculty) should be made in writing and given to the School's Director.

1. Who can file a complaint?

If you are or were a student or an employee of a Licensed Private or Registered Business School in the State of New York and you believe that the school or anyone representing the school has acted unlawfully, you have the right to file a complaint with the New York State Education Department.

2. What can a student or employee complain about?

You may make complaints about the conduct of the school, advertising, standards and methods of instruction, equipment, facilities, qualifications of teaching and management personnel, enrollment agreement, methods of collecting tuition and other charges, school license or registration, school and student records, and private school agent.

3. How can a student or employee file a complaint?

The steps you must take to file a complaint are:

- Write to the New York State Education Department at 116 West 32nd Street 14th Floor NYC, NY 10001 or telephone the Department (212) 643-4760, requesting an interview for the purpose of filing a written complaint. Bring all relevant documents with you to the interview, including an enrollment agreement, financial aid application, transcripts, etc. An investigator from the department will meet you and go through your complaint in detail.
- If you cannot come for an interview, send a letter or call the office to request a complaint form. You must complete and sign this form and mail it to the office. Please include with it copies of all relevant documents. You should keep the originals. You must file a complaint within two years after the alleged illegal conduct took place. The Bureau cannot investigate any complaint made more than two years after the date of the occurrence.
- The investigator will attempt to resolve the complaint as quickly as possible and may contact you in the future with follow-up you should provide all information requested as quickly as possible; delay may affect the investigation of our complaint. When appropriate, the investigator will try to

negotiate with the school informally. If the Department determines that the violations of law have been committed and the school fails to take satisfactory and appropriate action then the Department may proceed with formal disciplinary charges.

- In addition to filing a complaint with the Department, you may also try to resolve your complaint directly with the school. Use the school’s internal grievance procedure or discuss your problems with teachers, department heads, or the school director. We suggest that you do so in writing and that you keep copies of all correspondence to the school. However, the school cannot require you to do this before you file a complaint with the New York State Education Department.

4. What is the Tuition Reimbursement Fund?

The Tuition Reimbursement Fund is designed to protect the financial interest of students attending proprietary schools. If a school closes while you are in attendance, prior to the completion of your educational program, then you may be eligible for a refund of all tuition expenses, which you have paid. If you drop out of school prior to completion and you file a complaint against the school with the State Education Department, you may be eligible to receive a tuition refund if the State Education Department is able to provide factual support that your complaint is valid and to determine that there was a violation of Education Law or the Commissioner’s Regulations as specified in Section 126.17 of the Commissioner’s Regulations. To file a claim to the Tuition Reimbursement Fund, you must first file a complaint with the State:

Education Department at the address below.
 NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
 116 WEST 32ND STREET # 14TH FLOOR
 NEW YORK CITY, NY 10001
 (212) 643-4760

Program Start Dates

MEC offers open-enrollment for ESL students. Students can begin classes every Monday. The following are the approximate program start dates in 2020-21:

	1st	1st	1 st
January 2024	A/B/G/H Schedule		
February 2024		C/D Schedule	
March 2024			E/F Schedule
April 2024	A/B/G/H Schedule		
May 2024		C/D Schedule	
June 2024			E/F Schedule
July 2024	A/B/G/H Schedule		
August 2024		C/D Schedule	

October 2024			E/F Schedule
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<u>Course Schedule</u>		
	Session 1	Session 2
A, B, G, & H Schedules	April 6 th and October 5 th	January 6 th and July 6 th
C & D Schedules	May 4 th and November 2 nd	February 3 rd and August 3 rd
E & F Schedules	June 1 st and December 7 th	March 2 nd and September 7 th

2024 Academic Calendar

MEC is closed during the following school breaks and Federal Holidays:

New Year's Day	January 1 st
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	January 15 th
President's Day	February 19 ^h
Easter	March 31 st
Memorial Day	May 27 th
Summer Break	July 1 st --- July 7 th .
Labor Day	September 2 nd
Columbus Day	October 14 th
Thanksgiving	November 28 th
Winter Break	December 23 rd - January 5 th 2025