

## **Mr. Chris Sowton**

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### **Work History**

#### **Part-time Doctoral Student (2017-)**

I am a part-time doctoral student in education (EdD) at the University of Bath, where my focus is on education in fragile situations, in particular post-conflict areas, refugee camps and post-disaster scenarios.

#### **Director / Chair of Trustees, Global Action Nepal (1996-2017)**

Since founding Global Action Nepal (GAN) in 1996, I have developed it from a tiny NGO into an organization with an income in 2016 of nearly a million pounds in the UK and Nepal. I have led the organization both administratively and also as the lead educationalist, driving projects and programmes across the board and leading the teams working in Nepal. It is now one of the best respected educational organizations working in Nepal, and played a major role in post-earthquake redevelopment. Since 2014 I have been the part-time director, and beforehand was the voluntary chair of trustees. Some of my specific achievements are as follows:

- Developing and managing a range of successful and innovative educational programmes in the formal (primary / secondary), non-formal and informal sectors, which have directly benefited more than 100,000 people in Nepal. These programmes focus on providing support to marginalised communities and groups within Nepal, working in areas such as gender, access, governance, curriculum development; language of instruction (e.g. EMI / CLIL) and materials development.
- Leading GAN's post-earthquake response which included developing relationships with specialist NGOs, funders, governmental agencies and the media. This included delivering a major strategic shift in the way the organization operates whilst maintaining our core programmes;
- Spearheading GAN's takeover / merger with two other UK NGOs working in Nepal, being responsible for all the legal, financial and administrative due diligence processes;
- Developing partnerships with major donors such as the British Council, VSO/DfID and, most recently, the Big Lottery Fund;
- Developing and maintaining relationships with key players in the educational and international development field, ranging from major organizations to key government ministers to world experts;
- Developing and leading a strong trustee team.

#### **International Education and Project Consultant (2007-)**

An overview of a range of my paid and pro bono international education and project consultancy work is as follows:

- **Lead Materials Writer and Editor, British Council India (2017)**

The client for this British Council project was the government of Andhra Pradesh. I was responsible for writing the B1 course (100 hours of material) and supervising / supporting / editing the A1 & A2 writers. The overall programme aims were as follows:

- Improved confidence in English language ability.
- Better skills and knowledge related to employability – CV writing, interview skills etc.
- Better digital learning skills / digital literacy supporting independent learning.
- Improved workplace English skills
- Improved learner autonomy

- **Committee Member / Publications Editor, IATEFL Global Issues Special Interest Group (2017-).** I am currently working with this group on several projects including refugee education in the Balkans, community education in India and teacher training in Rwanda, Cameroon and Angola.
- **Pro bono consultant, Global Action Nepal (2016-).** In my role of trustee, I am leading the organization's staff team in Nepal on developing a vocational / employment programme for 16-19 year olds in earthquake-affected areas, overseeing and supporting the development of all materials for the project. This is a blended course which is specifically aimed at providing them with training in English language, transferable workplace skills (e.g. giving presentations, writing a CV, teamwork) and specific workplace development and upskilling (e.g. in teaching, coding, agriculture).
- **Critical Thinking Consultant, Cambridge University Press (2016-).** I advise CUP on the critical thinking components of several of their courses, including *Prism* and *Unlock*.
- **Materials and Course Writer for Students and Teachers, British Council Turkey (2016).** The main focus of this major speaking skills programme was Syrian refugees across Turkey. My role in this programme was to create high-quality and visually engaging learning materials which could meet the users' range of needs, such as their educational, psychosocial and employment requirements. Given the specific brief, it contained aspects of ESOL, (light) EAP and general EFL. The materials were to be used in a wide variety of contexts, in terms of location, class size and ability. Given the users' personal histories, the brief also called for sensitivity. In addition, since this programme used Syrian refugees themselves as the mechanism for delivering the materials, mostly through non-formal means, a considerable amount of additional support was required.
- **Online Materials Writer / Teacher Trainer, Tropical Health and Education Trust (2014-2015).** Following an initial scoping visit to Somaliland, I wrote a report about the provision of ESP at medical facilities there, especially those which had university teaching facilities. I was then employed to implement these recommendations which included the creation of online materials, wherein I worked closely with a developer to create a website for specific use with the target audience. I also wrote a training course for teachers which was part developed remotely.
- **Teacher Trainer, Garnet Education (2016).** I ran a series of workshops and seminars for a group of public university teachers in Beirut, Lebanon. The focus of the training was on a new textbook which I had written (*'Contemporary Academic Writing'*) but also included sessions on relevant issues including teaching large groups and using online materials in the classroom. I have continued to provide support remotely since.
- **Content Advisor, UNICEF / Global Action Nepal (2015).** I was the lead advisor on a 'mobile meetings' project in rural Nepal which sought to enable teachers to support each other in weekly peer-to-peer training sessions.
- **English Language Books Writer (2012-).** I have written nine English language books for a range of high-calibre publishers, including Cambridge University Press, Pearson and Garnet Education. Some of these books - for example the *50 Steps* Series - I was responsible for from initial concept to final design. My books range in type from self-study books for students, to coursebooks (e.g., the 'Cambridge Discovery Series') to teachers' books (e.g., 'Cambridge Academic English' and 'New Language Leader').
- **Hornby Regional School, British Council (April 2007):** I was a trainer on a two-week intensive 'Hornby School' in Kathmandu, where I trained 30 senior teachers from seven South and Central Asian countries.

## **English Language Lecturer & Module Leader, King's College London (2008-2014, f/t)**

As Module leader, my responsibilities were as follows:

- The overall design of the module and to ensure that it met the course objectives in order to satisfy both the internal and external (British Council) criteria.
- The creation of the teaching and assessment materials used on the course, and the quality assurance of materials created by teacher for it.
- The development of an online space (on the Blackboard, and subsequently Moodle platform) for materials for students and teachers. This VLE was not only a repository of key information, but a space in which course participants. It incorporated a range of features including forums, wikis, quizzes, etc.
- The creation and delivery of a wide range of materials on a wide range of academic disciplines, including economics, politics, sociology, philosophy and international affairs.
- The introduction of an online marking and assessment system.
- Providing support and guidance for the teachers who taught on the course.
- General course administration and management.

As a lecturer, I worked on a wide range of courses, including skills classes (speaking, writing, reading and listening), business English, grammar, IELTS, seminar skills, presentation skills, research and critical thinking, the overwhelming majority of which were at the B1 or B2 level. I was also personal tutor (first point of contact) to hundreds of students.

## **Senior Language Teacher, Cambridge University Language Centre (2006-2008, p/t)**

- As a senior language teacher I taught on a wide range of academic English courses, primarily focusing on the four skills, with a particular emphasis in particular on academic speaking and writing. I was also the personal tutor for many Masters and PhD students.

## **International Development Coordinator, St. John Ambulance (2005-6)**

- Acting as the contact point for the St John Ambulance in 31 developing countries (mostly Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia) with responsibilities including sharing best practice and organizing major international conferences (Johannesburg, Hong Kong & Nicosia).
- Developing and managing of 'LIFAC' (Lifesaver First Aid Course), a major community first aid project in five African countries.
- Managing internal grants / funding applications (£500,000), inc. post-Tsunami Sri Lanka;
- Preparing policy / briefing papers to High Commissioners, Trustees & Senior Officers.

## **Researcher/Consultant, Transaid (2005)**

- Writing of a major report on the issue of child road safety in South Africa, Ghana and Malawi, including preparation, research, field-trips, meeting with appropriate stakeholders and production.
- Disseminating findings amongst relevant bodies and interested parties.

## **Project Writer and Developer, Cambridge University Language Centre (2003-2005, p/t)**

- I was the main writer on, and supported the development of, a number of online English language courses created by the Language Centre at the University of Cambridge. One such course was *English at your Fingertips*, a self-access, online EAP course which enabled B1/B2 students to develop the language and skills necessary for academic work. This programme was subsequently bought and repackaged by Pearson. Another course was CUTE (and its follow-up CUTE2), part of the eChina-UK initiative, a suite of general online English language learning materials for specific use by Chinese English teachers.

### **Programme Support Officer, Raleigh International (2002-3)**

- Planning / management of 50+ projects in Namibia, Ghana & Costa Rica with partners.
- Training and preparation of 1000+ volunteers and staff prior to departure.
- Fundraising in excess of £100,000 from statutory bodies, trusts, corporate donors etc.

### **Teacher Trainer, Global Action Nepal (1999-2001)**

- Developed several teacher training course for teachers of English in Nepal, delivering hundreds of sessions.

### **Other Relevant Positions**

- **Creator**, [www.buzzeng.com](http://www.buzzeng.com): I have recently created this free-to-use English language site, based on the BuzzFeed model. I wrote the html code and designed the site myself.
- **Director, Capital Proofreaders** – [www.capitalproofreaders.com](http://www.capitalproofreaders.com): I provide online editing and proofreading services.
- **ESOL Teacher** (Greenwich College, London) and a **voluntary teacher** at **Vietnamese Mental Health Services** (in London) and **The Refugee Council** (in London).

### **Education / Qualifications**

- **Diploma in English Language Teaching to Adults (2009)**, University College London.
- **MA in International Development Studies & Education (2002)**, University of East Anglia
- **BA Honours (Class 2:1) in English Literature (1999)**, University of York.
- **Cert. in English Language Teaching to Adults (1999)**, York Higher Education College.

### **Professional Memberships**

- International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (IATEFL).
- IATEFL's Global Issues Special Interest Group (GISIG).
- British Association for International and Comparative Education (BAICE).
- Nepal English Language Teachers' Association (NELTA).

### **Other Skills**

- Intermediate French and Nepali.
- Advanced user of all Microsoft / Mac software.
- Knowledge of HTML and website development; confident user of Moodle, Blackboard and other VLEs.

### **Publications**

- ***50 Steps to Improving your Grammar*** (Garnet Education, 2016) and ***50 Steps to Improving your Academic Writing*** (Garnet Education 2012).
- ***Contemporary Academic Writing*** (Garnet Education, 2016).
- ***New Language Leader Elementary / Pre-Intermediate Teachers Book / Upper Intermediate 2<sup>nd</sup> Teachers Book 2<sup>nd</sup> edition*** (all Pearson, 2014).
- ***Unlock Level 4 Reading and Writing Skills Student's Book and Online Workbook (Cambridge - Discovery Education Skills)*** (Cambridge University Press 2014).
- ***Cambridge Academic English Intermediate Teacher's Book / Upper Intermediate Teacher's Book / Advanced Teacher's Book*** (all Cambridge University Press 2012).

### **References**

- Available upon request.