Success with Touchstone

VICTORIA’S English was founded in Montpellier in 2012, and has since grown to a network of four centers and 10 partner schools across France, serving more than 2,000 business people and university students annually. VICTORIA’S needed a high-quality, flexible course, which would enable them to teach English in an interesting, motivating style.

VICTORIA’S researched a large number of online methods, primarily finding that most of the online material simply consisted of practice for English students, rather than an English language course.

Flexibility

Then VICTORIA’S discovered Touchstone Premium Blended, consisting of a Student Book, the Online Workbook, and an integrated Online Course. Touchstone’s fully customizable suite of print and digital course components made it possible for VICTORIA’S to design a fully blended curriculum, weaving face-to-face teacher time into the time spent with the online course. The Premium Blended solution includes hundreds of hours of highly interactive materials, including audio and video as well as communicative tools to encourage additional interaction. The groundbreaking Touchstone Blended Learning Program is the first course of its kind, truly integrating both classroom and online content.

“Creating a fully blended approach based on Touchstone was surprisingly easy. Touchstone is so rich, so interesting, it was just waiting for us to do it.”

Helen Thirtle, Director of Studies

To find out more about the benefits of teaching English with Touchstone visit cambridge.org/touchstone2
Support

Using the comprehensive Touchstone material together with technical and pedagogical support from Cambridge University Press representatives, VICTORIA’S were able to develop materials for one hour face-to-face classes corresponding to each Touchstone unit. These were successfully adapted over time so that teachers were able to improve the blend of activities between the classroom and online learning at home, to suit the needs of the learners.

To make teaching even easier, the Learning Management System, which delivers the online elements of the course, tracks students’ progress, grades some students’ work automatically, and enables teachers to carry out sophisticated results analysis on both individual students and whole groups. This means teachers can accurately identify their students’ strengths and weaknesses.

Blended works

Annually, over 2,000 students follow Touchstone classes with VICTORIA’S English Centers. Tuition is flexible, using a mixture of teacher-led classes in small groups, conversation classes, and written work in the Touchstone Workbook, backed up by online study.

The flexibility of the Touchstone course means that face-to-face time and the learning rhythm can continually adapt to students’ needs and availability, and also enables a large proportion of the hours, around 50%, to be completed from home or from the office. Students at VICTORIA’S find the Touchstone approach creative and motivating, and it has proven to be more attractive to teachers than previous courses.

Importantly, it has also resulted in improved metrics for VICTORIA’S. Henry Roux de Bezieux, VICTORIA’S Director said: “We have hundreds of students who have used our fully blended approach with Touchstone to move up from CEFR levels A1 and A2 to levels B1 and B2.”

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