

Policy 5070--Proposed Revisions

5070.3 English Proficiency

International applicants whose native language is not English and who do not have an undergraduate or graduate degree from a regionally accredited U.S. academic institution or an overseas academic institution of high standards whose language of instruction is English must demonstrate proficiency in English. English proficiency may be demonstrated by meeting required threshold scores on proficiency tests vetted and recommended by TESOL faculty and approved by the International Education Advisory Committee (IEAC). English proficiency is demonstrated by achieving minimum scores of 20 (60/90) for the Listening, Reading and Writing portions of the TOEFL Paper-Delivered test, a score of 79 on the TOEFL-IBT exam, a band score of six (6) on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), or a minimum score of 57 on the Pearson Test of English (PTE) or a minimum scaled score of 170 on the Cambridge English Qualification. Regular admission to the graduate program in English, however, requires a minimum score of 100 on the TOEFL-IBT, a score of 7.5 on the IELTS, or a score of 68 on the PTE. Applicants for regular degree status may not submit, and graduate programs may not accept, other tests of English ability in place of IEAC approved tests (TOEFL, IELTS, PTE, Duolingo) without prior permission from the Graduate School. Departments may set higher requirements, particularly for students who have applied for graduate teaching assistant positions. International students who have an undergraduate or graduate degree from a regionally accredited U.S. academic institution or an overseas academic institution of high standards whose language of instruction is English are not normally required to take the TOEFL. Academic programs may, however, require that international students with a U.S. degree take the TOEFL as an admission requirement. In addition, international students may be required by their academic advisors to take a university administered English writing placement test. The results of this test will be used to advise students in regard to supplemental on-campus classes required to strengthen their English skills.

The requirement to provide a TOEFL, IELTS, PTE, or Duolingo score will be waived for students who pass 1) all Level 4 LEAP courses with a minimum score of 90% and 2) one WSU graduate course with a minimum grade of B.

International students on the F-1 student visa program applying for non-degree status must meet either the proficiency requirements specified above or one of the following requirements:

- a minimum score of Level B2 on the Cambridge English Qualification
- a minimum score of 750 on the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC)
- a minimum score of 1160 on the Global Test of English Communication (GTEC)

International applicants who are seeking Transient Status ([UP# 5010](#)) and who intend to return to their home institutions to complete their degree are required to take the TOEFL for diagnostic purposes but are exempt from the above requirements, although they still have to meet the admissions requirements set by the academic program to which they are applying.

Students should be reviewed for English writing placement testing before they matriculate or as early in their academic programs as possible. Students who are required to take the placement test should be referred to University Division Testing Services. After the test has been scored, the results will be forwarded to the students' academic advisors. In those cases where it is recommended that the students take remediation, Testing Services will attach to the test results a permit to register for ENG 1050, ENG 1030, or ENG 1100. Academic advisors, after reviewing the test results, may require the students to register for the recommended remediation course. This requirement should be placed on the student's Program of Study.

Commented [DRL1]: This language mirrors recently revised language in policy 3110.3 (paragraph 2) that relates to undergrad international applicants.

Commented [DRL2]: Annual review and potential revision of threshold test scores by the IEAC will eliminate the need to codify (and then regularly change) minimal scores in policy.

Commented [DRL3]: Duolingo was a valuable alternative testing platform during the pandemic. UCIE would like to continue this test as one of the options for English proficiency.

There is some discussion about threshold scores for Duolingo and how they match with IELTS bands. Duolingo scores of 115 previously matched with band 7, but now is band 6.

Giancarlo Mariani from UCIE has lots of information on the Duolingo scoring system and thinks it will stabilize at band 7 in the future.

Background information on “mode of instruction” change from Michelle Streeter-Ferrari

“UCIE is experiencing a large number of students who are accepting our I-20 but then transferring out once they arrive to the United States. Many of them are transferring to English Language programs upon arrival. We are also noticing a decline in the quality of the applicants. For this reason, UCIE is recommending that we no longer accept applicants who have conducted their previous education in English as a means to replace an appropriate English language test for admission (Mode of Instruction).

Our graduate policy does allow for us to accept mode of instruction as a waiver for the English proficiency exam, however, we would like to know if it is acceptable for us not to accept this waiver at this time and request that these applicants take an English proficiency exam for the foreseeable future.”