

**UNIVERSITY COUNCIL
ACADEMIC PROGRAMS COMMITTEE
REQUEST FOR DECISION**

PRESENTED BY: Kevin Flynn
Chair, Academic Programs Committee

DATE OF MEETING: October 22, 2015

SUBJECT: English Proficiency Policy

DECISION REQUESTED:

It is recommended:

That Council approve the English Proficiency Policy effective for the September 2016 intake of students.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that students admitted to the University of Saskatchewan have the proficiency in English to understand and communicate clearly and to be successful in their academic programs.

CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND:

Applicants for admission to credit programs at the University may be required to present proof of proficiency in English. This policy applies to all undergraduate and graduate applicants for admission to credit programs. The policy outlines the ways that English proficiency can be demonstrated. Appendices cover the details of minimum standards for undergraduate and graduate admission.

The standards for English proficiency are not being changed, but proof of the minimum standard is becoming more fine-tuned. Key points include:

- Recommend IELTS as the test to which we compare instead of TOEFL
- Minimum English proficiency score will remain at an IELTS of 6.5
- Other test scores have been adjusted slightly based on research to more accurately reflect comparative level of proficiency, most significantly the TOEFL equivalent of IELTS 6.5 has been revised to reflect U15 practices (TOEFL 86 and section scores of 19 in all four areas)
- Minimum band scores were established for reading, writing, speaking and listening for all tests
- Pearson Test of English and Cambridge English Advanced have been added

Consultation regarding minimum standards for test scores, new tests or changes has occurred with the College of Graduate Studies and Research, University Language Centre, Academic Programs Committee, and the Admissions & Transfer Credit office.

Note: Minimum Test Standards for Graduate Students are under review for February 2016, and will be discussed with Graduate Faculty Council.

This policy replaces the English Proficiency Requirements for Undergraduate Direct Entry Colleges approved by APC in 2009.

Related policies include Policy on Admission to Degree Programs, College of Nursing English Language Requirements, and College of Graduate Studies Policy and Procedures.

Policy Appendices

All acceptable forms of proof of English proficiency, including years of study in English and tests of English proficiency with minimum scores are captured in policy appendices. All current approved standards which are higher than the minimum standards will also be noted in the appendices.

Appendix A: Minimum Standards of English Proficiency for Undergraduate Students

Appendix B: Approved Standards of English Proficiency Higher than the Minimum (Undergraduate)

Appendix C: Minimum English Proficiency Standards for Graduate Students

CONSULTATION:

Policy Oversight Committee
College of Graduate Studies and Research
University Language Centre
Associate and Assistant Deans Academic
College Advisors
Academic Programs Committee
International Activities Committee
University Council

FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED:

Once approved, the policy and appendices will be communicated to all college and unit stakeholders. Communications to prospective students (web, print, email) will be updated to reflect the latest information on minimum requirements. These changes will be implemented for Fall 2016 intake. As this policy affects admissions, it will go to Senate for confirmation.

Minimum Test Standards for Graduate Students are current under review and will be discussed with Graduate Faculty Council in February 2016. Any recommended changes will be captured in an updated Appendix C and forwarded through appropriate approval processes.

ATTACHMENTS:

- English Proficiency Policy
- Appendix A – Minimum standards of English proficiency for Undergraduate Students
- Appendix B – Approved standards of English proficiency for Undergraduate Students higher than minimum
- Appendix C – Minimum standards of English proficiency for Graduate Students

English Proficiency Policy

Category:	<i>Leave this blank; a category will be assigned</i>
Number:	<i>Leave this blank; a number will be assigned</i>
Responsibility:	Director of Enrolment and Student Affairs
Approval:	<i>University Council, Senate</i>
Date:	<i>Date initially approved:</i> <i>Date(s) reformatted or revised</i>

Purpose:

Minimum standards of English proficiency are required to ensure that students can understand and communicate clearly in order to be successful in their academic programs.

Principles:

The language of instruction and examination at the University of Saskatchewan is English. In order for students to understand, communicate and be successful in programs at the university, an acceptable level of academic English is required (including written, spoken, reading and listening components).

Scope of this Policy:

This policy applies to all undergraduate and graduate students in credit programs and sets: minimum English proficiency standards; authority for reviewing and setting minimum proficiency standards; and acceptable forms of proof of English proficiency.

Policy:

1. Applicants for admission to credit programs at the University may be required to present proof of proficiency in English.
2. Proof of English proficiency may be demonstrated through:
 - a. Years of study in an English-language curriculum secondary school or post-secondary institution, where the primary language of instruction and examination of the institution is English; or
 - b. An accepted standardized test of English proficiency; or
 - c. Successful completion of the English for Academic Purposes Program at the University of Saskatchewan or an intensive English as a second language program that is deemed equivalent to the University of Saskatchewan program; or
 - d. Successful completion of the Graduate Pathways Certificate at the University of Saskatchewan for graduate students.

3. Applicants who do not meet minimum standards of English proficiency are not admissible to credit programs.

Responsibilities

The Admissions and Transfer Credit Office determines minimum test scores and equivalents to the minimum standard, in consultation with the University Language Centre, the College of Graduate Studies and Research, college stakeholders, and Academic Programs Committee.

Minimum standards and changes to standards will be approved as appropriate through Faculty Councils, Academic Programs Committee and University Council.

Colleges may approve higher than minimum standards through their Faculty Councils, Academic Programs Committee and University Council.

Admissions offices apply the approved standards when reviewing applications for admission.

Procedures:

The Admissions & Transfer Credit Office maintains the following appendices:

1. Appendix A – Minimum standards of English proficiency for Undergraduate Students
2. Appendix B – Approved standards of English proficiency for Undergraduate Students higher than minimum
3. Appendix C – Minimum standards of English proficiency for Graduate Students

Contact:

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Appendix A: Minimum Standards for Proof of English Proficiency for Undergraduate Students

1) Minimum Test Standards

ENGLISH PROFICIENCY TEST	Minimum Score U of S Current	Minimum Score U of S Proposed
TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language)	80	86
<i>Reading</i>	19	No change
<i>Listening</i>	19	No change
<i>Speaking</i>	18	19
<i>Writing</i>	18	19
IELTS (International English Language Testing System)	6.5	No change
<i>Reading</i>		6
<i>Listening</i>		6
<i>Speaking</i>		6
<i>Writing</i>		6
CAEL (Canadian Academic English Language Assessment)	60	70
<i>Reading</i>		60
<i>Listening</i>		60
<i>Speaking</i>		60
<i>Writing</i>		60
CAE (Cambridge English: Advanced)		C with 65 score
<i>Reading</i>		
<i>Listening</i>		
<i>Speaking</i>		
<i>Writing</i>		
PTE Academic (Pearson Test of English)		63
<i>Reading</i>		59
<i>Listening</i>		59
<i>Speaking</i>		59
<i>Writing</i>		59
CanTEST (The Canadian Test of English for Scholars and Trainees)		4.5
<i>Reading</i>	4.5	No change
<i>Listening</i>	4.5	No change
<i>Speaking</i>		4
<i>Writing</i>	4	No change
MELAB (The Michigan English Language Assessment Battery)	85	No change
<i>Reading</i>		80
<i>Listening</i>		80
<i>Speaking</i>		>=3
<i>Writing</i>		80
IB (International Baccalaureate) English A1 or A2 Higher Level	5 or better	No change
IB (International Baccalaureate) English B Higher Level	5 or better	No change
GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education)/ IGCSE (International General Certificate of Secondary Education)/ GCE (General Certificate of Education) O (Ordinary)- Level English, English Language, or English as a Second Language	B or better	No change
GCE (General Certificate of Education) A (Advanced) / AS (Advanced Subsidiary) / AICE (Cambridge Advanced International Certificate of Education) Level English or English Language	B or better	No change
AP (Advanced Placement) English	4 or better	No change

2) Completion of an Approved English Language Training Program

a) University of Saskatchewan Language Centre

- i) Successful completion of U-Prep 2: High Advanced Academic English
- ii) Successful completion of U-Bridge 2

b) University of Regina

- i) English as a Second Language (ESL 050)

3) Completion of Secondary or Postsecondary Studies in English

a) Years of Full-time Study in an Approved English-medium Secondary Program

- i) At least 3 years of full-time study including Grades 10, 11, and 12, as well as successful completion of Grade 12 English Language Arts A30 and B30 (or equivalents). Students from Overseas schools offering a Canadian education system curriculum in English require a minimum grade of 65% on their Grade 12 English course(s).¹
- ii) At least 2.5 years of full-time study including Grades 11 and 12, as well as successful completion of Grade 12 English Language Arts A30 and B30 (or equivalents) with minimum final grades of 70%.¹
- iii) At least 2 years of full-time study including Grades 11 and 12, as well as successful completion of Grade 12 English Language Arts A30 and B30 (or equivalents) with minimum final grades of 80%.¹

The following English Language Curriculums would be considered acceptable:

- Canadian English-medium schools
- Overseas schools offering a Canadian education system curriculum in English
- US regionally-accredited English medium schools
- International Baccalaureate Programme
- India – IGCSE (International General Certificate of Secondary Education) and CBSE (Central Board of Secondary Education) only
- GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education) O (Ordinary) Level & GCE (General Certificate of Education) A (Advanced) Levels
- NZQA (New Zealand Qualifications Authority)
- Australian State Curriculums
- CAPE (Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examinations)
- SQA (Scottish Qualifications Authority)
- NQAI (National Qualifications Authority of Ireland)
- WBQ (Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification)

Students who have not followed one of these curriculums, will be required to provide another form of proof of English proficiency. This list will be updated annually as required.

b) Years of Full-time Study in a Recognized Postsecondary Institution

- i) Successful completion of at least one year of full-time study in a degree program from a recognized post-secondary institution where English is the official language of instruction and examination¹
- ii) Successful completion of a minimum two-year diploma from a recognized post-secondary institution in Canada where English is the official language of instruction and examination¹

iii) A minimum three-year diploma from a recognized post-secondary institution outside of Canada where English is the official language of instruction and examination is sufficient proof of proficiency¹.

The post-secondary institution must declare English to be the only language of instruction and examination throughout the institution, not just in select departments.

¹ *If secondary or post-secondary study occurred more than five years ago, additional proof of English proficiency may be required.*

Appendix B: Approved Standards of English Proficiency Higher than Minimum for Undergraduate Students

1. College of Nursing

Applicants who are not a citizen of one of the countries listed below must write and successfully pass an English proficiency examination, regardless of their primary language:

Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, Australia, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, Botswana, British Virgin Islands, Canada, England, Fiji, Ghana, Guyana, Jamaica, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, New Zealand, Nigeria, Northern Ireland, Papua New Guinea, Scotland, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, Sierra Leone, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, United States, US Virgin Islands, Wales, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Prior attendance at a Canadian high school or having 18 transferrable credit units from an English speaking/testing institution are not adequate evidence of English language proficiency.

The following minimum test scores are required for proof of proficiency:

ENGLISH PROFICIENCY TEST	Minimum Score required for College of Nursing
TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language)	90
<i>Reading</i>	20
<i>Listening</i>	20
<i>Speaking</i>	20
<i>Writing</i>	20
IELTS (International English Language Testing System)	7
<i>Reading</i>	7
<i>Listening</i>	7
<i>Speaking</i>	7
<i>Writing</i>	7
CAEL (Canadian Academic English Language Assessment)	70
<i>Reading</i>	60
<i>Listening</i>	60
<i>Speaking</i>	70
<i>Writing</i>	60
CanTEST (The Canadian Test of English for Scholars and Trainees)	
<i>Reading</i>	4.5
<i>Listening</i>	4.5
<i>Speaking</i>	5
<i>Writing</i>	4.5

Appendix C: Minimum Test Standards of Proof of English Proficiency for Graduate Students

	U of S Actual	U of S Remedial*
TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language)	80	80
<i>Reading</i>	20	18
<i>Listening</i>	20	18
<i>Speaking</i>	20	18
<i>Writing</i>	20	18
IELTS (International English Language Testing System)	6.5	6.5
<i>Reading</i>	6.5	6
<i>Listening</i>	6.5	6
<i>Speaking</i>	6.5	6
<i>Writing</i>	6.5	6
PTE Academic (Pearson Test of English)	59	59
<i>Reading</i>	59	54
<i>Listening</i>	59	54
<i>Speaking</i>	59	54
<i>Writing</i>	59	54
CanTEST (The Canadian Test of English for Scholars and Trainees)	4.5	4.5
<i>Reading</i>	4.5	4
<i>Listening</i>	4.5	4
<i>Speaking</i>	4.5	4
<i>Writing</i>	4.5	4
CAEL (Canadian Academic English Language Assessment)	60%	
<i>Reading</i>		
<i>Listening</i>		
<i>Speaking</i>		
<i>Writing</i>		

*Remedial Entry

Students with an overall score that meets the requirements, but with a remedial minimum in only one area (reading, writing, speaking or listening), may be admitted. This requires the recommendation of the academic unit, and approval from the College of Graduate Studies and Research. The student will be required to take a remedial part-time English class during their first term.

Countries Eligible for Exemption

Applicants from outside of Canada may meet their English language proficiency requirement based on the country in which they reside, or, the university they have attended. The College of Graduate Studies and Research will post and maintain a list of those countries from which students do not need to provide proof of English proficiency, providing they have been educated for a minimum of three consecutive full-time years at a post-secondary level in that country.

English as a Second Language (ESL) Program at the University of Saskatchewan Language Centre or the University of Regina

1. U-Prep 2 from the University of Saskatchewan Language Center with a minimum score of 75%
2. University of Regina Intensive ESL Advanced Level (ESL 050); Plus completion of Academic Writing Elective A with a minimum score of 60%

The Graduate Pathways Certificate (GPC)

The Graduate Pathways Certificate (GPC) program is a non-credit certificate program for graduate student applicants who are academically qualified, but who do not meet the minimum English proficiency requirements for their graduate program. For students with a conditional admission to most graduate programs, the GPC is an option to study academic English at the University of Saskatchewan and move directly into their graduate program. Registration and satisfactory progress in the GPC will be a required component of their academic study. For graduate studies applicants who are also applying to the Graduate Pathways Certificate program, the following minimum English proficiency standards will apply:

Test Type	Minimum each area	Overall Score
Test of English as a Foreign Language Internet Based (TOEFL IBT)	15	65
International English Language Testing System (IELTS)	4.5	5.0