

Academic Regulation - Office of the Provost

CATEGORY: STUDENT AFFAIRS
SECTION: Admissions
SUBJECT: Assessment of English Language Proficiency for Admission
EFFECTIVE DATE: March 25, 2010 Revised
PAGE(S): 2

I. SCOPE

This policy establishes English language proficiency requirements for admission of international students to the University of Pittsburgh, and the responsibility of the University to determine that international student applicants possess a level of proficiency in English necessary to succeed academically. The University is responsible for certifying to the U.S. Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services that this determination has been made, in accordance with U.S. immigration laws, for students requiring visa documents.

II. POLICY

Admission

All academic centers, departments, or offices making admission decisions regarding international students are responsible for determining, as part of the admission process, that the applicant has the required proficiency in English to successfully undertake the proposed course of study and for notifying the Office of International Services (OIS) of the determination by completing an Assessment of English Language Proficiency for each admitted student. Applicants who do not meet the required standards may not be offered admission. The assessment that the applicant has the required proficiency may be based on the following:

- The applicant is a citizen of a country whose official language is English.
- A minimum result of 80 on the iBT (Internet-based test) or 550 on the PBT (Paper-based test) on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).
- A minimum result of Band 6.5 on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS).
- Completion of a degree program at a regionally accredited institution in the U.S.
- The applicant is not a citizen of a country whose official language is English but has completed a degree program at an institution outside of the U.S. where the language of instruction is English and where the official national language of the country in which the institution is located is English.

Only original official test scores received directly from test administration agencies are accepted. Copies of test results are not acceptable.

Academic centers and departments may require a higher level of English language proficiency based on the specific needs of the discipline, and are responsible for determining that applicants have such proficiency.

Exceptions: Any exceptions to the policy must be approved by the Provost or Provost's delegate after review of the entire record and consultation with the Office of International Services.

Upon receipt of an Assessment of English Language Proficiency with the signature of the admissions officer, OIS will certify to the U.S. Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services, as part of the certification of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Visa (Form I-20) or for Exchange-Visitor Visa (Form DS-2019), that the student has the required level of English language proficiency. See Procedure 09-02-01, Assessment of English Language Proficiency for Admission.

Registration

Prior to completion of registration, students with TOEFL scores of less than 100 on the iBT, 600 on the PBT, or less than Band 7.0 on the IELTS must take an additional test of English language proficiency administered by the English Language Institute (ELI).

International students who are citizens of countries where English is the official language, international students who have completed degrees at regionally accredited institutions in the U.S., and international students who have results on the TOEFL above 100 on the iBT, 600 on the PBT, or Band 7.0 on the IELTS, may be exempted from taking the additional test of English language proficiency by individual schools or departments.

International students may be required by their academic department or school to complete all remedial work recommended by ELI on the basis of the additional test of English language proficiency.

III. REFERENCE

[Procedure 09-02-01, Assessment of English Language Proficiency for Admission](#)