

Recruitment, Selection and Admissions Policy

English Language Code of Practice

Relevant regulation

- UKVI Student Route immigration
- Consumer Protection Law obligations

Relevant policy

This code of practice relates to the University of York Recruitment, Selection and Admissions Policy. This code of practice sets out the principles in implementing processes of assessing and verifying applicants' English language ability, particularly under alternative evidence of language ability.

Relevant process documentation

The code of practice does not set out processes. Processes are reviewed annually or, if sooner, whenever legislation, policy or this code of practice is amended.

Principles

1. English language ability is assessed for all applicants on all programmes (including online learning), including applicants from EU countries, but further evidence is not required from applicants with nationality from UKVI-recognised majority English-speaking countries where the applicant has stated that English is their first language.
2. English language ability is assessed to: (a) ensure that all students have the sufficient level of English language competence to undertake and derive full benefit from their programme of study and contribute to a positive learning environment; and where relevant, (b) meet UKVI student visa compliance.
3. Any evidence used in assessing or vouching for English language ability must relate to the period two years prior to the start date of the programme, except where stated otherwise on our English language webpages.
4. Evidence used to assess or vouch for English language ability must include evidence of ability in reading, writing, speaking and listening.
5. Any method of assessing English language ability must be robust, secure and auditable.
6. Evidence must be verified wherever this is feasible and resource-appropriate, for example IELTS certificates will always be verified through the IELTS Verification Service.

7. Submitted documentation or supporting evidence must be from a demonstrably official and authoritative source, for example on an institution's headed paper, with an official stamp or from a professional email address.
8. Evidence must be sufficient that it would be reasonable to argue that it met the minimum IELTS (or equivalent) scores required and that this can be justified.
9. Evidence of a previous undergraduate or postgraduate degree taught and assessed in English in a majority English-speaking country would usually be limited to a UKVI-recognised English-speaking country. The degree should be equivalent to a minimum UK Level 6 award.
10. In some cases we might accept evidence that an institution not in a UKVI-recognised English-speaking country is UK ENIC-recognised as using English as the mode of instruction. The degree should be equivalent to a minimum UK Level 6 award.
11. Where more than one piece of English language proficiency evidence is provided in support of an application we reserve the right to consider only the most recent evidence. This therefore means that a combination of test results cannot be considered.
12. We reserve the right to reinstate any previously met English language condition if further evidence comes to light during the admissions process that gives us reason to believe that the applicant's English language proficiency is not sufficient for the course applied for.
13. Alternative methods of directly assessing English for example through in-house testing or interviewing must be undertaken by staff suitably qualified to assess against the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). This would not usually be admissions, recruitment or departmental academic staff.

Responsibility

In line with the Recruitment, Selection and Admissions Policy, this code of practice is the responsibility of the Head of Admissions and Applicant Experience and will be reviewed and updated annually or whenever legislation or policy is amended.

Responsibility for reviewing individual cases or process against the code of practice is the responsibility of the respective Deputy Heads of Admissions for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Admissions.

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