

English language entry requirements policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that students admitted to the University of Bristol can cope with and succeed in their studies. Admitting students with insufficient knowledge of the English language causes difficulties for both the individuals concerned and the University.

1. General requirement

Applicants whose first language is not English must meet the language requirements outlined in the language profile relevant to their intended course of study. The required level of English language is listed on the online course finder.

2. Responsibility for implementation

- Faculty Admissions and Recruitment Officers and Admissions Tutors (for admission to undergraduate degrees) or Faculty/School Offices (for admission to postgraduate degrees) are responsible for the initial application of the policy.
- If an Admissions Tutor/Faculty Office wish to waive the standard requirement for an individual applicant or accept an unrecognised qualification, a written case should be submitted to the relevant Faculty Admissions and Recruitment Officer (FARO) or Graduate Education Director (GED) (or equivalent) for approval. This should be accompanied by evidence and a clear rationale to detail how the University can be satisfied that the applicant has an appropriate level of English. This must be accompanied by a school commitment to fund additional support if the student subsequently struggles.
- All applicants must have a minimum of CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) B2 in all four language skills (listening, reading, writing, speaking) which can also be phrased as IELTS Academic 5.5 (or equivalent) in all bands. This minimum requirement applies regardless of decisions made relating to the individual's personal circumstances. If this is not evidenced by a Secure English Language Test (SELT) or authorised exemption, alternative means of establishing the required proficiency must be recorded in the application file.
- Admissions Tutors/Faculty/School Offices should encourage applicants whose first language is not English to attend one of the University's pre-sessional courses, lasting six weeks, 10 weeks or (for postgraduates only) 14 weeks. The requirement to take a pre-sessional course could be made part of an alternative offer. See section 5 for more details.
- It is strongly recommended that students with less than IELTS 6.5 in writing (or equivalent) be advised to take an in-sessional EAP unit in their first year, or attend a pre-sessional programme.

3. Approved tests of English language

If an English language test is required, it must have been obtained within the past two years. Please see individual programme entries on the online course finder for precise details of standards required.

4. Evidence

If an offer specifies an English language qualification, applicants must provide evidence of the qualification by submitting the original certificate with their application, providing the original

certificate at registration, or securing verification of the qualification from the testing/awarding body.

5. Applicants who have not yet reached the required proficiency

If an applicant has not yet reached the English language qualification required as part of their offer, they must, before being admitted to the degree programme, successfully complete one of the University's pre-sessional courses, lasting six weeks, 10 weeks or 14 weeks (postgraduates only).

Guidelines for the relevant pre-sessional course (based on IELTS Academic scores) are as follows:

- Applicants who need to improve their IELTS (or equivalent) component scores by no more than 0.5 must successfully complete the six-week pre-sessional course.
- Applicants who need to improve their IELTS (or equivalent) component scores by no more than 1.0 must successfully complete the 10-week pre-sessional course.

At the end of the programme students will be assessed using the Centre for Academic Learning and Development in-house assessment (where a score of 63% to 67% is equivalent to IELTS 6.5 overall). Attendance on the pre-sessional course does not automatically guarantee progression to the degree programme. If the applicant does not achieve the assessment standard specified, the FARO or GED (or equivalent role) and Admissions Compliance Officer, in conjunction with the Centre for Academic Language and Development, will seek to identify an appropriate way forward for the applicant.

6. Procedure for approval of other English language tests

- Applicants should seek advice from the Admissions Manager, Pathways and Qualifications to establish whether other English language tests can be included in standard exemptions.
- The Admissions Manager, Pathways and Qualifications will assess whether the qualification in question satisfies the University's English language requirements, and establish its equivalency to other English language tests.
- If the qualification satisfies the University's English language requirements, the Admissions Manager, Pathways and Qualifications will make a recommendation for approval to the Director of Admissions.
- If the qualification is approved, it may be added to the English language profiles.
- Any recommendations by the Admissions Office, Centre for Academic Language and Development or International Office to rescind a qualification must be approved by the Director of Admissions. Relevant staff members will be informed in the event of a qualification being removed from the English language profiles.

7. Nationality and country-specific language exemptions

Where an applicant is a national of an English-speaking country as defined by UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI), the University still has an obligation to ensure that the applicant's level of English is sufficient for them to succeed on their course. In these cases, the University will detail on the website how it considers applicants who are nationals of, or resident in, an English-speaking country as defined by the University.