



English Language Policy

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Version Number	Date Approved	Author	Next Review Date	Action
V1	March 2020	Dr D McShane	Sept 2020	
V2	Sept 2020	A Hughes	Sept 2021	
V3				

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Purpose

If English is not an applicant's first language, they will normally be expected to complete a University approved test in English Language. This policy sets out the College's requirements and standards for evaluating the English language ability of an applicant, and provision for supporting students with their English language once they are enrolled.

English Language requirements will be discussed with the applicant and assessed prior and during the interview stage.

Scope

This policy applies to all programmes at BCOM

Responsibilities

BCOM has a responsibility to ensure that all international students have the appropriate level of English language on entry, and support where necessary to succeed on their academic programmes.

The Admissions Team will monitor and ensure the implementation of this policy throughout the application and offer processes.

The policy will be reviewed annually, and the list of accepted English language tests and qualifications will be kept under continual review by the Admissions Team which will be responsible for ensuring that the revised policy is made available on the College website.

English Language Entry Requirements

All applicants who are not from majority English speaking countries (Appendix A refers) must provide verifiable evidence of the required level of English language ability for their programme.

The College's standard level of English language ability required for entry to programmes leading to a University of Plymouth award shall normally be IELTS 6.5, with no component mark below IELTS 5.5, or equivalent University approved test (Appendix B refers)

Applicants for whom the College has deemed their academic qualifications acceptable but whose language proficiency is below that required for a particular academic programme should receive a conditional offer. The conditions of the offer must include achievement of a minimum level in IELTS or equivalent test

Exemptions to the English language requirements are listed in Appendix A

Students who require a Tier 4 Visa/ UKVI Requirements

In addition to the College's own English language requirements, as a Home Office approved Sponsor of Tier 4 student visas BCOM must ensure that all students seeking admission meet the UK Visa and Immigration's (UKVI) minimum English language requirements.

All those applying for a Tier 4 Student Visa are normally required to pass a Secure English Language Test (SELT) in each of the four components of language learning (reading, writing, listening, speaking). Any other English Language test will not be accepted for Tier 4 students by the College. The SELT must meet the College's standard level outlined above (6.5 for IELTS). A SELT must be completed in a government approved centre or it cannot be accepted due to Home Office Requirements.

You can find a full list of government accepted SELTs and centres at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-applying-for-uk-visa-approved-english-language-tests>

Accepted English language tests and qualifications for non-Tier 4 License Students

English language tests and qualifications accepted for international applicants (where English Language is not their first language or students who require a Tier 4 license), for admission to BCOM is available in Appendix B.

The validity period for each accepted English language test or qualification is included in Appendix B and is determined by the Admissions Team after approval from the SMT. If a test/qualification is a test of competence on a given day, it must have been taken within three years of the date of entry to the degree course applied for. If a test/qualification recognises a certain standard of achievement in an examination taken after a specific course of preparation, it must have been taken within three years of the date of entry to the degree course.

Appendix A

Exempted Countries

Antigua and Barbuda	Ireland
Australia	Jamaica
Bahamas	New Zealand St Kitts and Nevis
Barbados	St Lucia
Belize	St Vincent and the Grenadines
Canada (Canadian nationals only)	Trinidad and Tobago
Dominica	United States of America
Grenada	United Kingdom (Including British Overseas Territories)
Guyana	

Speakers of English who are nationals from a majority English speaking country (as defined by the Home Office and listed above) are exempt from both the language conditions for entry set out in the policy. This means that no additional proof of English language skills will be required unless otherwise stated.

Applicants for a degree or higher qualification may also be exempt from the requirement to provide proof of their English language skills at the appropriate level if, no more than 3 years before the date of entry to the degree programme applied for, they have:

- i) successfully completed two full academic years of undergraduate degree level study in one of the countries listed above (excluding Canada). OR
- ii) been awarded a masters qualification following 12 months of a masters degree level study in one of the countries listed above (excluding Canada). OR
- iii) Completed a minimum of 12 months secondary education in one of the countries listed above (excluding Canada)

Applicants for a degree or higher qualification may also be exempt from the requirement to provide proof of their English language skills if the applicant has studied in the UK before as a Tier 4 (Child Student).

Appendix B

Tests and qualifications which are considered acceptable for all international applicants applying for undergraduate degree or above (unless otherwise stated) *

Test/ Qualification	Examination Board/Organisation	Grade/Score for IELTS 7.0 equivalent	Grade/Score for IELTS 6.5 equivalent	Grade/Score for IELTS 6.0 equivalent	Minimum Subskill requirements for visa purposes	Validity Period	Comments
IELTS for UKVI (Academic)	Cambridge English Language Assessment/ British Council	7.0	6.5	6.0	5.5 in each sub-skill	3 years before start of course	
Integrated Skills in English	Trinity College London	ISE III or ISE IV	ISE III or ISE IV	ISE III or ISE IV	ISE II with a Pass in each sub-skill	3 years before start of the course	
AS or A Level in English Language and/or Literature	All UK Examination Boards	C	C	C	Student must continue to be taught and assessed in the medium of English in pre-university qualifications. Validity 3 years before start of course.		
IELTS (Academic)	Cambridge English Language Assessment/ British Council	7.0	6.5	6.0	5.5 in each sub-skill	3 years before start of the course	Non-UKVI approved Centres
Pearson Test of English Academic	Pearson	69	62	54	51 in each sub-skill	3 years before start of the course	
Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL IBT)	Educational Testing Service (EST)	94-101	79-93	60-78	Reading – 18 Writing – 17 Listening – 17 Speaking - 20	3 years before start of the course	
Certificate in Advanced English	Cambridge English Language Assessment	185	176	169	160 in each sub-skill	3 years before start of the course	
Certificate of Proficiency in English	Cambridge English Language Assessment	185	176	169	160 in each sub-skill	3 years before start of the course	185

Test/ Qualification	Examination Board/Organisation	Grade/Score for IELTS 7.0 equivalent	Grade/Score for IELTS 6.5 equivalent	Grade/Score for IELTS 6.0 equivalent	Minimum Subskill requirements for visa purposes	Validity Period	Comments
International Baccalaureate English A: Literature	International Baccalaureate Organisation	Standard Level: 4 Higher Level: 4	Standard Level: 4 Higher Level: 4	Standard Level: 4 Higher Level: 4	Not tested in each sub-skill	3 years before start of the course	English taken in Language and Literature Group would be first language English and at a higher level than English Language B. English Literature and Performance not acceptable
International Baccalaureate English A: Literature & Language	International Baccalaureate Organisation	Standard Level: 4 Higher Level: 4	Standard Level: 4 Higher Level: 4	Standard Level: 4 Higher Level: 4	Not tested in each sub-skill	3 years before start of the course	English taken in Language and Literature Group would be first language English and at a higher level than English Language B. English Literature and Performance not acceptable
GCSE in English Language	All UK examination Boards	C	C	C	Not tested in each sub-skill	3 years before start of course	
Scottish Advanced Higher or Higher English		B	C	C		3 years before start of course	

Test/ Qualification	Examination Board/Organisation	Grade/Score for IELTS 7.0 equivalent	Grade/Score for IELTS 6.5 equivalent	Grade/Score for IELTS 6.0 equivalent	Minimum Subskill requirements for visa purposes	Validity Period	Comments
Irish Leaving Certificate (2017 onwards)		03/H3	04/H4	04/H4		3 years before start of course	
European Baccaureate (English 1 st Language)		7	6	6	Not tested in each sub-skill	3 years before start of course	English would be the mother tongue at a level comparable with GCE A Level/IB Higher Level
European Baccaureate (English 1 st Language)		7	7	7	Not tested in each sub-skill	3 years before start of course	
Austria- Matura / Reifeprüfung		Grade 2	Grade 2	Grade 2	Not tested in each sub-skill		
HKEAA Use of English	Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority	B	C	C	Not tested in each sub-skill	3 years before start of course	
Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination in English Syllabus B	Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority	A	B	B	Not tested in each sub-skill	3 years before start of course	
Denmark: Studentereksamen (Upper Secondary School Leaving Examination) Also: Hojere Forberedelseseksamen (HF) (Higher Preparatory Examination) and Hojere Handelseksamen (HHX)		Grade 10 in English	Grade 10 in English	Grade 9 in English	Not tested in each sub-skill	3 years before start of course	
Finland: Ylioppilastutkintodistus/ Studentexamensbetyg (Finnish National Matriculation)		5 (Magna cum Laude) in English	5 (Magna cum Laude) in English	5 (Magna cum Laude) in English	Not tested in each sub-skill	3 years before start of course	

Test/ Qualification	Examination Board/Organisation	Grade/Score for IELTS 7.0 equivalent	Grade/Score for IELTS 6.5 equivalent	Grade/Score for IELTS 6.0 equivalent	Minimum Subskill requirements for visa purposes	Validity Period	Comments
Norway: Vitnemål – videregående opplæring (School Leaving Certificate)		Grade 5 in English	Grade 4 in English	Grade 4 in English	Not tested in each sub-skill	3 years before start of course	
Sweden: Slutbetyg från Gymnasieskolan (School Leaving Certificate)		VG (Pass with distinction) in English	VG (Pass with distinction) in English	VG (Pass with distinction) in English	Not tested in each sub-skill	3 years before start of course	MVG (Pass with Special Distinction) in English, indicates exceptional performance.
Netherlands: VWO		Grade 8 in English	Grade 8 in English	Grade 8 in English	Not tested in each sub-skill	3 years before start of course	
Germany: Abitur		Grade 11 in English	Grade 11 in English	Grade 11 in English	Not tested in each sub-skill	3 years before start of course	
France: French Baccalaureate		Grade 12 in English	Grade 12 in English	Grade 12 in English	Not tested in each sub-skill	3 years before start of course	
Iceland Studentsprof matriculation examination, English		8 when taken as a compulsory language	8 when taken as a compulsory language	8 when taken as a compulsory language	Not tested in each sub-skill	3 years before start of course	

*Please note that we consider these qualifications alongside other evidence of English Language ability- including references, curriculum vitae, personal statement- when assessing whether you have sufficient English language to successfully complete the course. Exemptions may be made on an individual basis such as work experience or study in a majority English speaking country; however, we will normally look for language requirements to be met according to the above table.