



ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY POLICY

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Approved by	Academic Board
Responsible Body	Academic Board
Next Review date	20/10/2026
Superseded documents	Admission Policy – English Language Proficiency
Related documents	Coursework Course Enrolment Policy
Related HE Standards	1.1
Student Lifecycle Stage/s	Admission

1. PURPOSE

To outline the minimum levels of English Language Proficiency required in order to enter an ACT course taken in English, and how English Language Proficiency is tested.

2. DEFINITIONS

ACT is the *Australian College of Theology Limited*.

ACT Registrar is the officer of the **ACT** who manages academic administration and performance assessment.

Admission Stage is the stage of the **student** lifecycle in which a student applies, is admitted and enrolls in units and courses. This is at the commencement of study but also recurs at the start of each study period.

Affiliated College is an institution approved to offer an accredited higher education award of the **ACT**.

AQF is the Australian Qualifications Framework. Every accredited course in the Australian higher education sector must comply with the requirements of the AQF.

AQF level is an indication of the relative complexity and/or depth of achievement and the autonomy required to demonstrate that achievement. It is used to describe courses of study by the Australian Qualifications Framework (**AQF**).

Course see **Course of Study**

Course of Study is a course of units that lead to an award given by the **ACT**.

Coursework is work done by a student within a unit of study to a set curriculum and assessment schedule.

English Language Proficiency is the ability to use the English language to make and communicate meaning in spoken and written contexts.

IELTS stands for International English Language Testing System – Academic version only

Registrar is the registrar or equivalent officer of an **affiliated college**.



Research degree is a degree completed by means of a research project.

Single Unit Study is an enrolment method which does not lead to a formal **ACT award** and does not form part of an award course at another higher education provider. For further information, see the Coursework Course Enrolment Policy.

Student is a student of the **ACT**. They may be a prospective, enrolled or former student.

The following definitions apply for the purpose of this Policy:

Approved Countries is the list of countries appearing on the current list of English Language Proficiency requirements of the Australian Universities Admissions Centre. See Appendix 1 at the end of this document for an accessible list.

Assessable Qualification is a qualification which has been successfully completed in English, including completion of senior secondary studies comparable with the NSW HSC; successful completion of at least one full year of Australian or comparable tertiary studies, successful completion of an AQF diploma or advanced diploma, successful completion of Australian or comparable non-award post-secondary level studies or tertiary preparation courses with full-time equivalence of one year.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all applicants seeking admission to ACT courses to be delivered in English, both **AQF** and non-AQF courses. It also applies to students undertaking units via **Single Unit Study** mode.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

The Australian College of Theology is committed to exercising a duty of care towards applicants by setting requirements for admission to courses at levels that maximise the likelihood of enrolled students completing their course successfully. One such requirement is English Language Proficiency.

5. PRINCIPLES

5.1 The ACT seeks to ensure that all students enrolled in an ACT course undertaken in English have the English language proficiency required in order to likely be successful in their course of study. Prior to admission into any course delivered in English, applicants are required to prove their level of English language capacity in order to be admitted to their chosen course. This can be done in one of the following ways:

- 5.1.1 The applicant holds an **Assessable Qualification** completed in one of the **Approved Countries**, completed within the last ten (10) years; OR
- 5.1.2 The applicant has been resident in Australia for ten (10) or more years, with English being the language primarily spoken both at home and work; OR
- 5.1.3 The applicant provides proof of English Language Proficiency. Normal proof of English Language Proficiency is an IELTS Test – Academic



Version. A single test result must be submitted, which is no more than two (2) years old prior to the commencement of the first enrolment in the proposed course. Minimum levels of English language proficiency are as follows:

- For non-AQF courses, the IELTS requirement is an overall is an overall score of at least 6.0, with no subtest score below 5.5.
- For undergraduate courses unless otherwise specified, the IELTS requirement is an overall score of at least 6.5, with no subtest score below 6.0.
- For postgraduate coursework courses, the IELTS requirement is an overall score of at least 7.0, with reading and writing subtests of at least 7.0, and with listening and speaking subtests of at least 6.5.
- For postgraduate research degrees, the IELTS requirement is an overall score of at least 7.5, with reading and writing subtests of at least 7.5, with listening subtest of at least 7.0, and with speaking subtest of at least 6.5.

- 5.2 When an applicant for admission shows English language proficiency through the provisions of sections 5.1.1 or 5.1.2, but the college to which they are applying is concerned about their level of proficiency, the college may exercise its duty of care towards the applicant by requesting the applicant to demonstrate their level of English Language proficiency under section 5.1.3 in order to assess the likelihood of the applicant coping satisfactorily with study in the course. If an applicant provides proof of English Language Proficiency under section 5.1.3 but the college still has concerns about the applicant's level of English, the college may exercise its duty of care towards the applicant in requiring the applicant to undergo further testing by way of an essay, a test, or an interview. If the applicant declines a request to demonstrate their level of English Language Proficiency after meeting the measures in 5.1.1, 5.1.2 or 5.1.3, the college shall determine if the applicant may enter the proposed course of study based on the information available.
- 5.3 If the proof of English Language Proficiency for admission provided under section 5.1.3 is other than the results of a recent IELTS test, the ACT Registrar has the authority to determine the acceptability of the alternative proof, both in content and level.
- 5.4 The ACT Registrar, on the written request of an affiliated college, has the right to waive or vary the requirement for proof of English Language Proficiency as part of the admission process. On such occasions the Registrar will advise the relevant college in writing and record the action on the relevant student's record.



6. RELATED DOCUMENTS AND LEGISLATION

[Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#) – item 1.1.1

[National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018](#)

[English Language Proficiency requirements, Universities Admissions Centre](#)

7. REFERENCES

N/A

8. VERSION HISTORY

Version	Approved by	Approval Date	Effective Date	Changes made
1	Academic Board	19/10/2018	1/1/2019	New policy written to supersede old policy
1a		28/10/2019		Added Appendix 1 – list of countries from UAC website as at 28 October 2019
1b	Academic Board	22/10/2021		Scheduled policy review; no changes
2	Academic Board	22/10/2023		Scheduled policy review, minor updates, introduction of English Language Proficiency standard requirements for ACT's non-AQF courses, update scope to include students undertaking individual units not just whole courses.
3	Board of Directors	11/11/2024		Registrar updated policy based on Board of Directors decision to accredit Diploma of Christian Foundations with IELTS requirements different to other undergraduate courses

Any hard copy of this electronic document may not be current as the ACT regularly reviews its policies. The latest version can be found online at

<https://www.actheology.edu.au/documents>



Appendix 1 – list of Approved Countries

The Policy aligns countries to those listed on the English Language Proficiency Requirements of the Universities Admissions Centre. The table below is provided for ease of access to the list of Approved Countries, and was last confirmed on 11 October 2021, from the Universities Admissions Centre website (<https://www.uac.edu.au/future-applicants/admission-criteria/university-english-language-proficiency>).

American Samoa
Australia
Botswana
Canada
Fiji
Ghana
Guyana
Ireland
Jamaica
Kenya
Lesotho
Liberia
New Zealand
Nigeria
Papua New Guinea
Singapore
Solomon Islands
South Africa
Tonga
Trinidad and Tobago
United Kingdom
United States of America
Zambia
Zimbabwe