

English language entry requirements policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that students admitted to the University of Bristol are able to cope with their studies. Admitting students with insufficient knowledge of the English language not only causes difficulties for the individuals concerned but also problems for the University.

1. General requirement

Applicants whose first language is not English are required to meet the language requirements as outlined in the language Profile relevant for their intended programme of study.

2. Responsibility for implementation

- Undergraduate Admissions Tutors (for admission to undergraduate degrees) or Faculty Offices (for admission to postgraduate degrees) are responsible for the initial application of the policy.
- If an Admissions Tutor/Faculty Office wishes to waive the standard requirement for an individual applicant or accept an unrecognised qualification, then a written case will need to be submitted to the relevant Faculty Undergraduate Admissions Officer or Graduate Dean for approval. This must be accompanied by a School commitment to fund additional support if the student subsequently struggles.
- All applicants are required to meet the minimum visa requirement of IELTS 5.5 in all bands, 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 level must be recorded in the application file.
- Admissions Tutors/Faculty Offices should encourage an applicant whose first language is not English to attend one of the University's Pre-sessional courses (either the 10-week (Course A) or 5-week (Course B)), and the requirement to take a pre-sessional course could be made part of an alternative offer. Please refer to section 5 of the policy for more details.
- It is strongly recommended that students with less than IELTS 6.5 in Writing (or equivalent) should be advised to take an in-sessional EAP unit in their first year, or attend a pre-sessional programme.
- Admissions tutors should make prompt decisions on candidates who need to take a language test or extra English language tuition so that the candidate can be informed in good time.

3. Approved tests of English language

If a test is required, it should have been obtained within the last two years. Please see individual programme entries in the Prospectus for precise details of standards required.

4. Evidence

If an offer specifies that an English language qualification needs to be achieved, independent evidence of the qualification is required. This can be provided either by the applicant submitting the original certificate, or through securing verification of the qualification from the testing body.

5. Applicants who do not yet reach the standard of achievement specified in their offer

If an English language qualification was required as part of the offer, but the standard has not yet been met, the applicant must, before being admitted to the degree programme, EITHER:

- complete successfully the University's 6-week Course B OR 10-week Course A of the Pre-session course **OR**
- complete successfully the University's Pathway (International Foundation Year) programme **OR**
- participate in the University's Pre-Masters programme until such time as the required level is achieved, entering academic studies at the next available intake date.

Guidelines (based on IELTS scores):

- applicant needs to improve their IELTS (or equivalent) score by 0.5: successfully complete the 6-week pre-session course.
- applicant needs to improve their IELTS (or equivalent) score by 1.0: successfully complete the 10-week pre-session course.
- applicant achieves between IELTS 4.0-5.0 (or equivalent): successfully complete the Pathway (International Foundation Year) EAP programme.

At the end of the programme students will be assessed using the [Centre for English Language and Foundation Studies](#) in-house assessment (where a score of 65% is equivalent to IELTS 6.5 overall). It should be made clear that attendance on the pre-session course or Pathway programme does not automatically guarantee progression to the degree programme. If the applicant does not successfully achieve the University in-house assessment standard specified, then the advice of the Centre for English Language and Foundation Studies and the approval of the Faculty Undergraduate Admissions Officer or Graduate Dean will be sought to identify an appropriate way forward for the applicant.

6. Procedure for approval of other English language tests

- Guidance and advice needs to be sought from the International Office to establish whether the specified test should be included in standard exemptions.
- If they agree that the qualification may be added to the list, then approval will be sought from the Student Recruitment Committee, using Chair's Action as appropriate.
- If the qualification is approved, then it may be added to the list, which will be added to the website.
- If either the Centre for English Language and Foundation Studies or the International Office believes that acceptance of a qualification should be rescinded, this needs to be approved by SRC, and the qualification will be removed from the list and admissions tutors/Faculty Offices notified.