University of Pittsburgh
Health Sciences
School of Nursing

ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Verification of English Language Proficiency for Students Classified as Foreign Students

Date Effective	May 4, 1998
Date Reviewed / Revised	August 2025
Program Level	General

POLICY:

All students admitted to the School of Nursing not only must possess the required proficiency in English (as per Exhibit B—see URL below) to successfully undertake the course of study but also are required to verify their English language proficiency. Applicants who do not meet the set required standards may not be offered admission. The assessment that an applicant possesses the minimum English language proficiency required for study are based on one of the following:

- The applicant has provided a minimum composite score of 100 on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), with sub scores of 21 or higher.
- The applicant has provided a minimum overall band score of 7.5 on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), with a speaking band score of 7.0 or higher and other band scores of 6.0 or higher.
- The applicant has provided a minimum score of 140 on the Duolingo English Test (DET).

Please refer to the University guidance on the English Language Proficiency Test and recommended English as a second language course placements based on TOEFL/IELTS/DET scores.

Graduate students. If an admitted international graduate student applicant—who is not a native speaker of English—is offered a Teaching Assistant (TA) or Teaching Fellow (TF) position, then the student also shall take the *English Language Comprehensibility Test*, which is an interview-based test that includes a teaching role-play.

All international students, undergraduate and graduate, may be required by their academic department or school to complete any remedial work in English as recommended by the Department of Linguistics and English Language Institute (e.g., *Linguistics 7, 8, 9, 10,* and *English Composition 152, 200*), based on TOEFL/IELTS/DET scores. The School of Nursing reserves the right, even after arrival, enrollment, and matriculation, to make individual curricular adjustments whenever particular deficiencies or student needs are identified (e.g., communication difficulties in the clinical setting). In such instances, students may be required to take, at their own expense and without receiving credit, courses in English as a second language or course prerequisite to their course of study to ameliorate any deficiencies.

Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Provost or Provost's delegate after review of the entire record and consultation with the Office of International Services. See University of Pittsburgh policy AC 07 Assessment of English Language Proficiency for Admission (formerly 09-02-01) for more details.

PROCEDURE:

For clarification of the six points below, please see the following URLs:
Assessment of English Language Proficiency for Admission Procedure
ITA/ITF English Language Comprehensibility Test

1. Undergraduate Program: International applicants to the pre-licensure program apply through the Office of International Services using the International Undergraduate Application.
2. Accelerated Second-Degree BSN Program, RN Options Program, and Graduate Programs: The School of Nursing will provide information about the English language proficiency requirements in the application materials.
3. No admission decisions will be made until the required test results are submitted and/or the applicant is exempted from that requirement. Visit the Provost's website for the Assessment of English Language Proficiency for Admission form.
4. After an international applicant meets admission criteria and accepts an admission offer, the Office of International Studies, upon receipt of an Assessment of English Language Proficiency with the signature of the admissions officer, will certify to the U.S. Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services, as part of the certification process for the Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Visa (Form I-20) or Exchange-Visitor Visa (Form DS-2019), that the international applicant possesses the required level of English language proficiency for study. A representative of the School of Nursing Student Affairs Office will send the required admission information to the Office of International Studies.
5. Upon arrival to campus at the beginning of the term in which they matriculate, (a) all undergraduate international students, regardless of TOEFL and/or IELTS score *and* (b) any graduate international students whose TOEFL scores are below 100 and/or IELTS

band scores are below 7.5 will be directed to the University guidance on the English Language Proficiency Test and recommended English as a second language course placements based on TOEFL/IELTS/DET scores.

Scores for the TOEFL/IELTS/DET and their associated course recommendations for language remediation are posted in PeopleSoft for the reference of academic departments and advisors. The recommendations appear in PeopleSoft as REC1, REC2, and REC3, and the scores indicate which language support class(es) are recommended for the student. If no classes are recommended for the student, the REC fields will be blank. The possible courses recommended by the Department of Linguistics and their matching PeopleSoft codes are presented in the second table.

If a graduate international student is offered a TA and/or TF position, then they shall take the English Language Comprehensibility Test. Only a faculty or staff member from the host department may schedule an appointment for this test; moreover, a faculty member from the host department must accompany the student during the test. For a complete description of the test and instructions for scheduling an appointment for the test.

6. Each international student should meet with their academic advisor to discuss the scores for the TOEFL/IELTS/DET and the associated recommendations of ELI, which comprise four general types: (a) no additional study of English is required; (b) support workshops and services that do not grant academic credit are required; (c) academic courses offered by the Linguistics Department that target specific skills in English (e.g., Linguistics 8: Advanced ESL Writing) are required as part of the student's registration; (d) the student will not be permitted to take any academic courses until an intensive program in requisite English language skills is completed successfully. In the event that the scores for the TOEFL/IELTS/DET require an international student to complete academic courses, those courses will be required in addition to, or instead of, courses in the student's curriculum of study at the School of Nursing. International students who require no additional study of English still may choose to incorporate any English language support workshops or courses offered by the Department of Linguistics or ELI into their course schedules if they so desire.

APPROVAL & REVISION HISTORY

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