

BISHOP GROSSETESTE UNIVERSITY
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English Language Requirements Policy

Purpose

Bishop Grosseteste University must ensure that all applicants whose first language is not English have the necessary English language skills to successfully complete their course. As a licensed sponsor of students who require a Tier 4 visa, the University is responsible for assessing all non-EEA applicants' English language ability and that this meets the UK Visa and Immigration's (UKVI) minimum requirements. Additionally, students who are from a non – English speaking EU country must evidence that their English language skills are good enough to meet the demands of the course.

Scope

This policy specifies the minimum English Language entry requirements for international students applying to Bishop Grosseteste University. This policy applies University-wide and to all undergraduate and postgraduate applicants. The policy also relates to methods of assessment for admissions purposes.

Applicants from non-EU Countries

English language requirements for admissions purposes

When assessing applications and making offers the University will assess an applicant's English language skills in the following ways:

- Using a Home Office approved Secure English Language Test (SELT);
- Completion of an academic qualification equivalent to a UK degree from a majority English-speaking country as defined in Home Office 'Tier 4 of the Points Based System - Policy Guidance';
- Nationals of a majority English-speaking country as defined in Home Office 'Tier 4 of the Points Based System - Policy Guidance'.

Where an academic qualification or Secure English Language Test is used to assess an applicant's English language ability, a copy of the qualification must be kept on their file for audit purposes. The Admissions Team will store this information securely on the student record for all applicants. In addition, the applicant's application including personal statement and reference will be used as supplementary evidence and retained on file.

All English language entry qualifications outlined below are acceptable for entry based on the University's stated minimum English language level. Applicants must also meet the University's academic entry requirements for their chosen course of study.

Home Office approved Secure English Language Test (SELT)

Applicants who are required to obtain a Tier 4 visa to study in the UK are required to have passed a SELT. The Home Office publish a list of approved English language tests and test centres. There are currently two SELTS approved by UKVI for Tier 4 applications. These are:

- The International English Testing System (IELTS) for Academic study, for tests taken overseas and in the UK.
- The Trinity Integrated Skills in English (ISE) for tests taken in the UK.

Applicants should meet the University's minimum overall requirements and minimum scores in reading, writing, speaking and listening. Additionally, the test should have been undertaken within two years of the intended start date of the course. The Admissions Team will verify the result of the SELT.

Minimum entry requirements

The minimum levels of achievement for entry to undergraduate and postgraduate study are detailed below.

Table 1: University entry requirements for applicants taking a Home Office approved SELT.

Test provider	Tier 4 Validity Conditions	Minimum entry requirement for Undergraduate courses.	Minimum entry requirement for Postgraduate courses.
International English Language Testing System (IELTS) for Academic study	<p>Tests taken prior to 5 April 2015: All test centres approved but test score only valid until 5 November 2015.</p> <p>Tests taken after 5 April 2015: Only tests taken at test centres approved by UKVI.*</p>	<p>A minimum of level 6 with a minimum of 5.5 across all sections. For example, reading, writing, speaking and listening.</p> <p>Students with a score of Level 5.5 with a minimum of 5.5 across all sections will be required to take part in a programme of in-session support, which will be subject to a further fee. This will be reviewed on an annual basis for the duration of the programme.</p>	<p>Taught Programmes: A minimum requirement of IELTS level 6.5 with a minimum of 6 in reading and writing and 5.5 in speaking and listening.</p> <p>Research programmes: For postgraduate research programmes a requirement of 6.5 with a minimum of 6 in reading, writing, speaking and listening.</p>
Trinity Integrated Skills in English (ISE)	Tests taken prior to 5 April 2015: All tests centres approved but test score only valid until 5 November 2015.		

	Tests taken after 5 April 2015: Only tests taken at test centres approved by UKVI.*		
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* A List of UKVI test centres can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-applying-for-uk-visa-approved-english-language-tests>

In addition, the University may also consider other English language test scores, which meet the University's English language requirements on a case-by-case basis.

For postgraduate taught entry, the applicant must normally produce evidence that they have achieved the level of English outlined in table 1, above, unless their undergraduate degree was taught and assessed in English and completed within two years of commencing their new course of study. Where the student's previous studies were outside the two year time frame, evidence would be required which assures the University they have been appropriately maintaining their English language skills in a work or academic context, otherwise a SELT would be required. The University will consider this evidence on a case-by-case basis and may ask applicants to attend an interview via Skype or other video conferencing method.

Doctoral study

Doctoral programmes at Bishop Grosseteste University are validated by the University of Leicester. All doctoral programmes at Bishop Grosseteste University adopt the entry regulations set out by the University of Leicester. Consequently, International applicants for doctoral study must satisfy the University of Leicester's English language requirements. Applicants shall be deemed to have satisfied the English language entry requirement if they are:

- A national of, and have completed secondary or tertiary education where the medium of instruction was English, in one or more of the countries specified below;
- A national of a country other than those specified but who has completed in one or more of those specified countries their secondary education in the national qualifications and/or two years of Bachelor's level education and/or a higher degree, where the medium of instruction was English and provided no more than three years has elapsed between the date they completed their qualification and the intended start date of the doctoral programme.

Countries accepted as Teaching in the medium of English for entry to doctoral programmes by the University of Leicester include:

Anguilla	Antigua and Barbuda	Australia
Bahamas	Barbados	Belize
Bermuda	Botswana	British Virgin Islands
Canada	Cayman Islands	Christmas Island
Cocos Islands	Cook Islands	Dominica
Falkland Islands	Fiji	The Gambia
Grenada	Guyana	Ireland
Jamaica	Kenya	Lesotho
Malawi	Malta	New Zealand

Niue	Norfolk Islands	Papa New Guinea
Republic of Ireland	Sierra Leone	Singapore
South Africa	St Kitts and Nevis	St Lucia
St Vincent and the Grenadines	Swaziland	Tanzania
Tonga	Trinidad and Tobago	Turks and Caicos Islands
Uganda	UK	USA
Zambia	Zimbabwe	

Applicants seeking to satisfy the English language entry requirement on the basis of the IELTS for Academic study test must have achieved at least the minimum specified overall and component scores:

- Applicants for programmes including a PhD or EdD in Education (including Education-related) or a PhD in History, Archaeology, Psychology and Sociology shall be deemed to have satisfied the English language requirements if they have achieved a minimum score of 6.5 (IELTS) or 90 in a Test of English as a Foreign Language exam (TOEFL) or 61 in a Pearson's Test of English - Academic exam (PTE Academic) overall with a minimum score of 5.5 (IELTS) or 18 (TOEFL) or 51 (PTE Academic) in each component;
- Applicants for programmes including a PhD in English (including English-related) and Health Sciences (or Health Science-related) shall be deemed to have satisfied the English language requirements if they have achieved a minimum score of 7.0 (IELTS) or 100 (TOEFL) or 67 (PTE Academic) overall with a minimum score of 6.0 (IELTS) or 20 (TOEFL) or 56 (PTE Academic) in each component.

Applicants for these programmes who have not met the normal requirements may, in exceptional circumstances, be made an offer of admission to the research degree programme that is conditional on the successful completion of the University of Leicester's relevant English language pre-session course at the appropriate level.

Exemptions

Academic qualifications equivalent to a UK degree

Students who have completed an academic qualification equivalent to a UK degree from a majority English-speaking country as defined in Home Office 'Tier 4 of the Points Based System - Policy Guidance' will not be required to provide a SELT score. For the purposes of degree equivalencies the government considers these countries to be:

Antigua and Barbuda	Australia	The Bahamas
Barbados	Belize	Dominica
Grenada	Guyana	Ireland
Jamaica	New Zealand	St Kitts and Nevis
St Lucia	St Vincent and the Grenadines	Trinidad and Tobago
UK	USA	

Postgraduate Diplomas (PGDip) and Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert) qualifications obtained from recognised UK universities within the UK are not acceptable as a SELT alternative. English language

conditions can only be waived if candidates have been awarded a full Masters' degree from a recognised UK university within the UK.

With the increase in transnational education and split site degree programmes, students who have taken the majority of their previous degree in the medium of English (e.g. 1+3 students) are exempt from SELT. Students who have only taken the minority of their previous degree in the medium of English, (e.g. 2+1 students) should be asked for an additional English language qualification – either a SELT or a recognised alternative.

Nationals of majority English speaking countries

The UK government classifies the following overseas countries as majority native English speaking:

Antigua and Barbuda	Australia	The Bahamas
Barbados	Belize	Canada
Dominica	Grenada	Guyana
Ireland	Jamaica	New Zealand
St Kitts and Nevis	St Lucia	St Vincent & the Grenadines
Trinidad and Tobago	UK	USA

Nationals of any of the countries listed above would not be required to undertake a SELT for entry to the University. Nationals from other countries who have undertaken qualifications in one of the countries above will also be exempt from a SELT on the following basis:

Undergraduate entry

Applicants must have completed all of their secondary education in English in a majority English speaking country. The qualification must have been completed within two years prior to the course start date. Where the student's previous studies are outside the two year time frame, applicants will be required to provide evidence which assures the University that they have been appropriately maintaining their English language skills in work or academic endeavour. The University will consider this evidence on a case by case basis and may ask applicants to attend an interview via Skype or other video conferencing method.

Postgraduate taught entry

Applicants must have completed their degree studies in English at a recognised institution in a majority English speaking country. The qualification must have been completed within two years prior to the course start date. Where the student's previous studies are outside the two year time frame, applicants will be required to provide evidence which assures the University that they have been appropriately maintaining their English language skills in work or academic endeavour. The University will consider this evidence on a case by case basis and may ask applicants to attend an interview via Skype or other video conferencing method.

Postgraduate research entry

In order to be exempt from a SELT, applicants must have completed at least two years of continuous study in English in one of the countries listed above including either:

- An honours degree (class I or 2:1) which has been fully taught and examined in English, with a minimum 60% in the project/dissertation;
- A Master's degree which has been fully taught and examined in English, with a minimum 60% mark in the project/dissertation and a minimum 60% overall module average.

For applicants who have undertaken a top-up degree, HNC/D or Master's Qualification (i.e. two years or less of the degree has been completed at the institution in the majority English speaking country), this qualification would be considered in lieu of a SELT. The following guidelines are offered:

- The top-up degree/HNC/D/Master's must normally have been completed within 12 months of the new course start date;
- The qualification must have been fully taught and assessed in English;
- The qualification must have been delivered by a recognised institution, for example a University or College or School;
- Evidence of English language ability upon entry to the top-up degree/HNC/D or Master's degree will normally be required.

UK qualifications

The University also accepts a range of UK qualifications as evidence of English language proficiency for non-Tier 4 students. The levels of achievement we normally require are detailed below.

Qualification	Level
GCSE English	Grade C or above
A Level or AS level in an essay-based subject taught in English	Grade C or above
AQA Level 2 Certificate (IGCSE) in English Language	Grade C or above

European Union applicants

Whilst students from the European Union (EU) are not governed by Home Office regulations for visa and immigration purposes, it is imperative that the University ensures students entering the University (either for a full degree or as part of an Exchange or Study Abroad) have appropriate English language skills to succeed on their course of study.

Undergraduate entry

The University accepts the following school-based qualifications at specified grades as satisfying its English language entry requirements for undergraduate programmes. Undergraduate applicants would be expected to have achieved the qualification levels outlined below within two years of the degree course start date. Where the student's previous studies are outside the two-year time frame,

applicants will be required to provide evidence which assures the University that they have been appropriately maintaining their English language skills in work or academic endeavour. The University will consider this evidence on a case-by-case basis and may ask applicants to attend an interview via Skype or other video conferencing method. The will consider qualifications from EU other countries on a case-by-case basis.

Table 3: Indicating list of EU qualifications accepted as evidence of English language proficiency for non-Tier 4 students.

Country	Qualification	Level
France	Baccalaureate l'Option Internationale, English	Grade 11 or above
Germany	Abitur, English	Grade 11 or above
Malta	Matriculation Certificate English	Grade C
The Netherlands	VWO, English	Grade 7 or above
Norway	Vitnemål, English	Grade 4 or above
Sweden	Fullständigt fran Gymnasieskolan, English	Grade B or above
Czech Republic	Maturitni Zkousa, English	Grade 2 or better
Austria	Reifeoprfung / Matura , English	Grade 2 or better
Poland	Matura, Advanced Level English	Overall 70% or higher
Spain	Titulo de Bachillerato, English	Grade 6 or above
All	European Baccalaureate, Year 7 English	60% or above
	International Baccalaureate	Fully taught in English – Standard level Grade 4 Mixed tuition – Higher Level Grade 5

The University will consider other EU qualifications on a case-by-case basis using the comparative database supplied by the UK National Recognition Information Centre (NARIC).

Postgraduate taught entry

For postgraduate taught entry, the applicant must normally produce evidence that they have achieved the level of English outlined in table 1, above, unless their undergraduate degree was taught and assessed in English and completed within two years of commencing their new course of study. Where the student's previous studies were outside the two year time frame, evidence would be required which assures the University they have been appropriately maintaining their English language skills in a work or academic context, otherwise a SELT would be required. The University will consider this evidence on a case-by-case basis and may ask applicants to attend an interview via Skype or other video conferencing method.

Postgraduate research entry

For postgraduate research entry the applicant must produce evidence that they have achieved the appropriate level of English (in table 1 above), unless their undergraduate degree has been taught and assessed in English and completed within two years of commencing their research degree. Where the student's previous studies are outside the two-year period, applicants will be required to provide evidence which assures the University they have been appropriately maintaining their English language skills in work or academic endeavour. The University will consider this evidence on a case-by-case basis and may ask applicants to attend an interview via Skype or other video conferencing method.

Erasmus plus mobility programme

The University receives a number of EU applicants each year from partner institutions under the Erasmus Plus mobility programme. Applicants participating in this programme must attain the minimum requirements as set out in the bi-lateral agreement between the University and partner institution. It is essential, however, that both the University and its partners ensure that those coming from a partner institution have the English language skills to enable them to successfully complete their programme of study.

UK qualifications

The University also accepts a range of UK qualifications as evidence of English language proficiency for non-Tier 4 students. The levels of achievement we normally require are detailed below.

Qualification	Level
GCSE English	Grade C or above
A Level or AS level in an essay-based subject taught in English	Grade C or above
AQA Level 2 Certificate (IGCSE) in English Language	Grade C or above

Review and revision

The University's Retention and Recruitment Oversight Committee will receive amendments to the methods of assessment for English language proficiency for consideration and approval.