

English Language Proficiency Policy and Procedure HEPP43

PURPOSE

This policy establishes the framework for English language proficiency requirements for prospective students to ensure they are eligible for entry into a course of study with Southern Cross Education Institute (Higher Education).

SCOPE

This policy and procedure is for all staff and students of Southern Cross Education Institute (Higher Education) including education agents.

DEFINITIONS

DHA	Department of Home Affairs
English language proficiency	The ability of a student to use the English language to make and communicate meaning appropriately in spoken and written contexts while completing their course.
IELTS (International English Language Testing System)	Measures the language proficiency of people who want to study or work where English is used as a language of communication.
PTE (Pearson Test of English)	Is a standardised test to measure the English language ability of non-native speakers who are wanting to enrol in a course/s at the Institute.
OET (Occupational English Test)	Language assessment test
SCEI-HE	Southern Cross Education Institute (Higher Education)
TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language)	Is a standardised test to measure the English language ability of non-native speakers who are wanting to enrol in a course/s at the Institute.
TOEFL (iBT) Test of English as a Foreign Language (internet Based Test)	This is a standardised test taken on the computer and measures 4 skill sets: reading, listening, speaking and writing.

POLICY

1. All applicants applying for a course of study at SCEI-HE need to provide evidence of English language proficiency.
2. It is essential that applicants have the English language proficiency skills to successfully complete the academic requirements of their chosen course as reflected in the course outline.
3. SCEI-HE recognises First Nations language proficiency by a relevant cultural authority as an acceptable alternative standard.
4. Not all courses offered at SCEI-HE require the same level of English language proficiency. Students are advised to read the course entry requirements in relation to English language proficiency levels and accepted English language test certificates published on the website and in the course outline.
5. The course design integrates specific strategies and resources aimed at improving students' English language proficiency, particularly in discipline-specific terminology and academic communication. This may include targeted assignments, language-focused assessments, and in-course support to enhance students' ability to engage with the academic content in English.
6. SCEI-HE acknowledges the DHA minimum English language proficiency standards for international applicants and, in addition, requires that a minimum score must be achieved in all parts of the test.
7. Applicants who do not have adequate English language proficiency for admission to a SCEI-HE course may be admitted to an ELICOS course through SCEI (VET provider). Upon completion of the ELICOS course, students' English proficiency will be evaluated to determine whether additional ELICOS coursework is necessary to achieve English proficiency or the student will be directly admitted to their course of choice.

8. To further support students in developing their English language proficiency, SCEI-HE offers a range of support programs, including academic support sessions and access to language development resources. These services are available to students throughout their studies to enhance their proficiency in both academic and discipline-specific language skills.
9. SCEI-HE provides professional development for teachers to increase their understanding of and skills in the development of student's English language proficiency.

PROCEDURE

1. **English Language Proficiency Requirements** – An applicant will be deemed to have sufficient English language proficiency upon satisfaction of 1 of the following Australian or overseas qualifications **within the preceding 2 years** of application:
 - 1.1 Australian Qualifications:
 - 1.1.1 Senior secondary qualification (VCE or equivalent).
 - 1.1.2 1 or more years of full-time (part-time equivalent) post-secondary school studies.
 - 1.1.3 Completion of a post-secondary school qualification.
 - Note: SCEI-HE recognises First Nations language proficiency by a relevant cultural authority as an acceptable alternative standard. A formal written statement or certificate from a recognised cultural authority will be requested to verify this. The statement or certificate may be provided by:
 - An Elders Council
 - A local Aboriginal Land Council
 - A Traditional Owner group
 - A registered Indigenous organisation with linguistic and cultural authority
 - Acknowledging that for many First Nations peoples, English may not be their first language, additional support and culturally appropriate resources will be considered to ensure equitable access to learning and services.
 - The document should confirm:
 - The individual's proficiency in the First Nations language
 - The authority's status as a cultural body qualified to make such an endorsement
 - 1.2 Overseas Qualifications:
 - 1.2.1 Senior secondary qualification with a pass in General English.
 - 1.2.2 A minimum of 3 years of full-time (part-time equivalent) post-secondary school studies where the sole language of instruction and assessment was in the English language.
 - 1.2.3 International students who are citizens of the following countries are not required to provide evidence of English language proficiency provided they have at least 1 assessable qualification at Senior secondary (VCE) or above from 1 of these countries and the language in which they undertook the qualification was solely English.
List of Countries with English as their first language.
 1. United States
 2. United Kingdom
 3. Canada
 4. Australia
 5. New Zealand
 6. Ireland
 - 1.2.4 Success completion of the following:

Test	Undergraduate Degrees
IELTS	Overall band score of 6.5 (with no individual band score less than 6.0) as a default level. Individual course entry levels may vary with advice from relevant industry consultation.
TOEFL (iBT)	Overall score of at least 87 (no writing score less than 21 and no reading/listening/speaking score less than 19)
TOEFL (paper based)	527 (including a score of 5 or more in the Test of Written English and 54 in Listening and Reading)
OET	Pass
Pearson PTE	Overall score of at least 64 (with no score less than 60 in each communicative skills section).

	Individual course entry levels may vary with advice from relevant industry consultation.
Cambridge English	Post 2015: Overall score of 176 with at least 169 in all sub skills. Pre 2015: Overall score of 58 with all sub skills at borderline or higher.
Test	Postgraduate Degrees
IELTS	Score of 7.0 overall, with no band less than 7.0 and 7.5 in Speaking and Listening
TOEFL (iBT)	Overall score 102+, reading 24+, writing 27+, speaking 24+, and listening 27+
OET	Not accepted for this course
Pearson PTE (Academic)	Overall score of 65+, reading 65+, writing 65+, speaking 73+, and listening 73+
Cambridge English	185+ with no skill below 185
<p>NB: English language requirements for teacher registration in Australian States and Territories may be different from those required for entry into SCEI-HE courses.</p> <p>2. Verification procedures – The enrolment officer will verify all English language proficiency test scores via the following means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 IELTS test scores submitted will be verified on the IELTS Test Report Form verification online service; 2.2 TOEFL online score verification service is utilised to verify the applicants submitted report form; 2.3 Cambridge English Language Assessment verification services is used to validate applicant's; 2.4 Cambridge English examination results; 2.5 The PTE Academic online score reporting system is used to view score reports and listen to applicant's (test takers) personal introductions; 2.6 The photo on the Test Reports will be verified with the applicants Passport photo. <p>In cases where an applicant believes their English language proficiency test results do not reflect their actual abilities, they may submit an appeal. The appeal process will include a review of the applicant's language skills and supporting evidence, and may involve additional testing or assessments. A clear, documented process will be followed, and the applicant will be informed of the outcome in a timely manner.</p> <p>SCEI-HE will also inform applicants about the implications of submitting false or misleading information. If discrepancies are found during the verification process, applicants will be given the opportunity to respond before any action is taken. If an applicant's documentation is found to be fraudulent, they will be informed of the decision to withdraw their application or admission offer</p>	
RELATED DOCUMENTS	
Student Complaint and Grievance Policy and Procedure HEPP03 Admissions Policy and Procedure HEPP37 First Nations People Policy and Procedure HEPP98	
LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT	
Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011	
RESPONSIBILITIES	
Course Coordinator Student Administration Manager	

DOCUMENT AND RECORD CONTROL	
Created	Dec 2015 (V1.0)
Amended	Feb 2020 (V1.1); Feb 2021 (V1.2); Feb 2022 (V1.3); Jan 2024 (V1.4), May 2025 (V1.5)



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