



English Proficiency for Prospective International Students Policy ADM 16.2 Office of International Admission

Policy Type: Administrative

Applies to: New international student applicants, beginning Spring 2021

POLICY DATES

Issued: Fall 2017

Revised: November 2020 (approved by Academic Policy Committee & Faculty Senate)

Edited: 3/2/2021

Currently, the University of Mount Union accepts the following as proof of English proficiency for international student applicants:

English Proficiency Test	Score Required
TOEFL	79 (Students can score between a 61 – 78 but be required to take ESL courses for their first year)
IELTS	6.5 (Students can score between a 5.5 – 6.0 but be required to take ESL courses for their first year)
PTE Academic	55
MELAB	80
ACT (English subsection score)	21
SAT (Evidence-based Critical Thinking & Writing Score)	590

Mount Union also will accept the following as proof of English proficiency when reviewed on a case-by-case basis:

- Completion of a minimum of two English courses (non-ESL) at a U.S. high school with a minimum grade of B.
- Completion of secondary school (with at least 2 years of prior, continuous enrollment) from an English-speaking country (see chart below).
- Completion of an International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum with a minimum score of 5 in the Diploma Programme, or a minimum score of 6 in the standard level English language examinations.
- Completion of the British Ordinary Level (O-level) English Language Exam (GCE/GCSE/IGCSE) with a Grade of B or higher.
- Completion of the British Advanced Level (A-level) English Language Exam (GCE/GCSE/IGCSE) with a Grade of C or higher.
- Completion of a minimum of 24 credit hours of academic (non-ESL) coursework at an accredited two or four-year postsecondary institution in the U.S. with a minimum GPA of 2.0.
- Completion of at least 1 year of postsecondary instruction (non-ESL) from a recognized higher education institution in an English-speaking country (see chart below) with a minimum GPA of 2.0.

Current Policy from Faculty Handbook (Article II, Section 2(e)):

The current policy reads as follows: The faculty of the University of Mount Union set the TOEFL/IELTS/ESL requirement for international degree-seeking students as follows: 500 (PBT), 61 (iBT) or 5.0-5.5 (IELTS) is the required minimum for admission for all degree-seeking international students. Students accepted with TOEFL scores between 61-78 (iBT), 500-547 (PBT) or an IELTS (International English Language Testing Service) score between 5.5-6.0 are required to take a minimum of 8 ESL credit hours in their first year. Students will take 4 ESL credit hours (ESL 110 – ESL Communication) in

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the first semester, followed by an additional minimum of 4 ESL credit hours in the second semester. The determination of the eventual number of ESL credit hours needed in the second semester will be based on the academic advisor's assessment of the student's cumulative first-semester academic performance and the ESL instructor's professional evaluation of the student's language proficiency progress.

Other forms of English proficiency can be accepted on a case-by-case basis.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Duolingo English Test	English proficiency test that is offered online and can be taken anywhere.
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language. Administered by ETS (Education Testing Services)
IELTS	International English Language Testing Service. Administered by the U.K.
PTE Academic	Pearson's Test of English (Academic).
MELAB	Michigan English Language Assessment Battery. Administered across the U.S. by numerous on-campus ESL (English-as-a-Second Language) programs to measure a student's English ability.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the suspension of in-person testing with TOEFL and IELTS, the Office of International Admission researched the Duolingo English Test as an alternative. This English proficiency examination can be taken online and at home. Duolingo has strict protocols in place to adhere to security and test integrity guidelines. For Fall 2020, Mount Union agreed to accept this exam alongside our other English proficiency tests.

Prior to the pandemic, there were already 1,090 institutions around the world accepting this exam as proof of English proficiency. In Ohio alone, there are 27 institutions that accept this exam, including: Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland State University, Kent State University, University of Akron, Oberlin College, The College of Wooster, Ohio State University, Ohio Northern University, and many others. Duolingo provides a score comparison chart that allows schools to compare scores to TOEFL and IELTS: <https://englishtest.duolingo.com/scores>.

PROPOSAL

Given the above information, it is proposed that the following assessments (with corresponding scores) be accepted by UMU along with what we currently accept:

1. PTE Academic score of 46-54 (will need to take UMU's ESL courses)
2. Duolingo English Test score 85 – 99 (will need to take UMU's ESL courses); Score of 100+ (no ESL). These scores correspond to what we accept on TOEFL and IELTS (85 on Duolingo is equivalent to a 61 on the TOEFL and 5.5 on the IELTS; 100 on the Duolingo is equivalent to a 79 on the TOEFL and 6.5 on the IELTS).

We currently accept the PTE, but we did not include a lower range of scores to encompass the ESL classes we offer here at Mount Union. We can accept lower TOEFL and IELTS scores while mandating students take the ESL courses we offer here at UMU. We would be doing the same thing with students that submit a lower PTE score. A 46 on the PTE is equivalent to a 61 on the TOEFL and 5.5 on the IELTS.

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English-speaking countries include (but are not limited to) Canada (except Quebec), Australia, the United Kingdom, the Bahamas, New Zealand, etc. A full list of English-speaking countries can be captured from the United States Central Intelligence Agency's Library where they publish The World Factbook. Each country's official language(s) are listed: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2098.html>.

CONCLUSION

By approving a wide array of options when it comes to proving English language proficiency, as well as approving certain English proficiency waivers (where feasible), this will allow a greater diversification in the international student applicant pool. Also, there are a number of other highly regarded English language proficiency examinations being accepted by other U.S. institutions as proof of English proficiency, like the Duolingo.

By accepting these revisions and additions to the English proficiency policy, the Office of International Admission is confident this will aid international students in being admitted into their degree program(s) here at Mount Union.

Responsibilities

Position or Office	Responsibilities
Director of International Admission	Admit qualified degree-seeking international students to UMU based on academics and English proficiency.

Resources

Central Intelligence Agency. World Factbook. Retrieved online from: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2098.html>.

Pearson's Test of English. Information gathered from: <http://pearsonpte.com/>.

Duolingo English Test: <https://englishtest.duolingo.com/>.

Contacts

Subject	Office	Telephone	E-mail/URL
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History

All changes must be listed sequentially, including edits and reviews. Note when the policy name or number changes.

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