

English language entry requirements

The University of Wales accepts English language qualifications alternative to IELTS where they appear on the Home Office (previously UKBA) list of secure English language tests and deemed appropriate for academic purposes, and/or used widely within the UK Higher Education sector.

The University does not accept certificates that are more than two years beyond the date of issue, and the University uses online verification services to ensure that the certificates received are valid.

The following tests satisfy the above requirements:

- APTIS
- Cambridge English Advanced (also known as Certificate in Advanced English)
- Cambridge English Business Certificates (for business and cognate disciplines only)
- Cambridge English Proficiency (also known as Certificate of Proficiency in English)
- IELTS
- Swansea Metropolitan English Language Test for Academic Readiness (SMELTAR)
- TOEIC (for business and cognate disciplines only)
- TOEFL iBT Test
- Pearson Test of English (PTE Academic)

Applications for entry based upon a different language qualification to those above should, unless already approved by the University's Academic Board, be referred to the University of Wales as a Special Case.

Where a centre wishes to use their own English Language Qualifications, as an alternative to one of the English language tests listed above, unless already approved by the University's Academic Board, details of the qualification may be submitted to the University of Wales to undertake an approval exercise. Any submission should include sufficient evidence of how the qualification maps to the Home Office list of approved English language tests. An administrative charge may be payable to the University to undertake the approval exercise.

Levels of Achievement:

The University accepts approximate equivalent scores within Levels defined by the Common European Framework for languages (CEFR) for the English language proficiency tests listed above.

CEFR Level B1: Pre-degree study

CEFR Level B2: Undergraduate degrees and any study at Levels 4, 5 and 6.

CEFR Level B2: Taught postgraduate study at Level 7.

CEFR Level B2: Postgraduate research degrees and any study at Level 8.

Within these levels the University has set Benchmark Scores for English Language entry requirements, although some Centres may have agreed other scores for specific programmes of study:

APTIS

Applicants must complete the assessment across all communicative skills; listening, reading, writing and speaking and achieve the following;

CEFR Level B1: Pre-degree study
CEFR Level B2: Undergraduate degrees
CEFR Level B2: Taught postgraduate study
CEFR Level B2: Postgraduate research degrees

Cambridge English Advanced

Pre-degree study: not applicable
Undergraduate study: minimum score of 52
Taught postgraduate: minimum score of 58
Research degrees: minimum score of 58

Cambridge English Business Certificates

These include the following Business English Certificates (BEC) and are accepted for business and cognate disciplines:

- BEC Preliminary - Cambridge English: Business Preliminary, also known as Business English Certificate (BEC) Preliminary.
- BEC Vantage - Cambridge English: Business Vantage, also known as Business English Certificate (BEC) Vantage.
- BEC Higher - Cambridge English: Business Higher, also known as Business English Certificate (BEC) Higher.
- BULATS - Business Language Testing Service (online certificated version taken with certifying BULATS agents).
- ICFE - Cambridge English: Financial, also known as International Certificate in Financial English
- ILEC - Cambridge English: Legal, also known as International Legal English Certificate

The following table is a guide to minimum scores accepted, however, certain performance thresholds (i.e. borderline, good, exceptional) may be expected in accordance with those stipulated by the Home Office:

	BEC Preliminary	BEC Vantage	BEC Higher	BULATS	ICFE	ILEC
Pre-degree study:	80	60	N/A	55	50	50
Undergraduate study:	N/A	75	N/A	65	60	60
Taught postgraduate:	N/A	80	60	70	65	65
Research degrees:	N/A	N/A	60	70	65	65

Cambridge English Proficiency

This test is set at CEFR Level C2, therefore, a pass would be acceptable at all levels of entry.

IELTS

IELTS has two versions - GENERAL TRAINING and ACADEMIC.

Admission to undergraduate and postgraduate courses should be based on the ACADEMIC Reading and Writing Modules. GENERAL TRAINING Reading and Writing Modules are not designed to test the full range of language skills required for academic purposes.

The University recommends all applicants to undertake an ACADEMIC IELTS test, applicants who complete a GENERAL TRAINING test may be required to provide further evidence of their English Language ability.

Pre-degree study: 4.5 (no score below 4.0 in listening, speaking, reading and writing)
Undergraduate study: 6.0 (no score below 5.5 in listening, speaking, reading and writing)
Taught postgraduate: 6.5 (no score below 5.5 in listening, speaking, reading and writing)
Research degrees: 6.5 (no score below 6.5 in reading and writing)

Swansea Metropolitan English Language Test for Academic Readiness (SMELTAR)

This test is an internal English Language test conducted at Swansea Metropolitan University; the scores for SMELTAR are equivalent to the IELTS test in each of the four components.

Pearson Test of English (PTE Academic)

Pre-degree study: Benchmark Score of 40 (no score below 36 in communicative skills*)
Undergraduate study: Benchmark Score of 56 (no score below 51 in communicative skills*)
Taught postgraduate: Benchmark Score of 59 (no score below 51 in communicative skills*)
Research degrees: Benchmark Score of 59 (no score below 59 in reading and writing)

*Communicative skills are listening, reading, writing and speaking. Scores may fall below the Benchmark Score in the communicative skills by no more than the specified minimum score and in no more than two communicative skills. Where this is the case, the remaining communicative skills must compensate for this shortfall and exceed the Benchmark Score.

TOEFL iBT

	Overall Score	Listening		Reading		Speaking		Writing	
		Benchmark Score	Minimum Score	Benchmark Score	Minimum Score	Benchmark Score	Minimum Score	Benchmark Score	Minimum Score
Pre-degree Study	51	8	4	12	9	17	16	14	13
Undergraduate study	80	19	17	20	18	22	20	19	17
Taught postgraduate	87	20	17	22	18	23	20	22	17
Research degrees	87	20	19	22	22	23	22	22	22

Scores may fall below the Benchmark Score in the communicative skills by no more than the specified minimum score and in no more than two communicative skills. Where this is the case, the remaining communicative skills must compensate for this shortfall and exceed the Benchmark Score.

TOEIC

	Listening		Reading		Speaking		Writing	
	Benchmark Score	Minimum Score	Benchmark Score	Minimum Score	Benchmark Score	Minimum Score	Benchmark Score	Minimum Score
Pre-degree study	307	275	313	275	130	120	128	120
Undergraduate study	430	400	408	385	167	160	160	150
Taught postgraduate	460	400	432	385	173	160	170	150
Research degrees	460	430	432	432	173	167	170	170

Scores may fall below the Benchmark Score in the communicative skills by no more than the specified minimum score and in no more than two communicative skills. Where this is the case, the remaining communicative skills must compensate for this shortfall and exceed the Benchmark Score.

Table 1: Comparison of some commonly used English language proficiency test thresholds in relation to CEFR Levels

CEFR Level	IELTS	TOEIC	TOEFL iBT	PEARSON
B1	4	L 275 R 275 S 120 W 120	L 4 R 9 S 16 W 13	L 36 R 36 S 36 W 36
	4.5	L 307 R 313 S 130 W 128	L 8 R 12 S 17 W 14	L 40 R 40 S 40 W 40
	5	L 338 R 330 S 140 W 135	L 11 R 14 S 18 W 15	L 43 R 43 S 43 W 43
B2	5.5	L 400 R 385 S 150 W 150	L 17 R 18 S 20 W 17	L 51 R 51 S 51 W 51
	6	L 430 R 408 S 167 W 160	L 19 R 20 S 22 W 19	L 56 R 56 S 56 W 56
	6.5	L 460 R 432 S 173 W 170	L 20 R 22 S 23 W 22	L 62 R 62 S 62 W 62
C1	7	L 490 R 455 S 180 W 180	L 22 R 24 S 25 W 24	L 67 R 67 S 67 W 67
	7.5	N/A	N/A	L 75 R 75 S 75 W 75
C2	8	N/A	N/A	L 80 R 80 S 80 W 80

L-Listening R-Reading S-Speaking W-Writing

Exemptions from English Language Qualification Requirements

The following candidates may be exempt from having to provide evidence to satisfy requirements:

- (i) Candidates who have completed within the last five years a recognised undergraduate or postgraduate qualification, at a recognised institution through the medium of English
- (ii) Candidates who have completed within the last five years a recognised qualification at a recognised institution in the subject of English.
- (iii) Candidates may be considered to be native English speakers through citizenship of the following majority English speaking countries, as recognised by the Home Office who also meet (i) or (ii):
 - Antigua and Barbuda
 - Australia
 - The Bahamas
 - Barbados
 - Belize
 - Canada
 - Dominica
 - Grenada
 - Guyana
 - Jamaica
 - New Zealand
 - Republic of Ireland
 - St Kitts and Nevis
 - St Lucia
 - St Vincent and the Grenadines
 - Trinidad and Tobago
 - United Kingdom
 - United States of America

Reviewing the Policy

The University annually reviews the English Language qualifications that it accepts, using the Home Office list of English language tests and the Common European Framework for Languages as guidance. That the above policy may change in line with cases received over time and Centres will be notified accordingly.