



Admission Policy – English Language Proficiency

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Part A: Policy

1. Purpose and Scope

This portion of the College Admission Policy will address the levels of language proficiency that Domestic and International applicants will be required to demonstrate to gain admission to an ACT course studied in English; ie. the language of instruction and assessment is primarily English (recognising that in some units and research original languages will be considered).

This policy applies to domestic and international applicants seeking admission to ACT courses and is for use by staff in the ACT and affiliated colleges who make decisions on those applications. Applicants may be seeking admission on the basis of completed secondary or tertiary study or their maturity.

2. Policy Level

Academic/Operational

3. Background

The Australian College of Theology offers admission to its courses to applicants from a broad range of academic, cultural and language backgrounds. In some units in some courses students may study an original language (ie. Greek or Hebrew), hence the use of the word “primarily” below.

The ACT may receive applications from ...

- (a) Domestic applicants with English-speaking (ESB) or Non-English-speaking (NESB) backgrounds for admission to courses studied primarily in English;
- (b) International applicants with English-speaking (ESB) or Non-English-speaking (NESB) backgrounds for admission to courses studied primarily in English;
- (c) Domestic applicants with English-speaking (ESB) or Non-English-speaking (NESB) background for admission to courses studied partially or primarily in a Language-other-than-English (LOTE)
- (d) International applicants with English-speaking (ESB) or Non-English-speaking (NESB) background for admission to courses studied partially or primarily in a Language-other-than-English (LOTE).

This portion of the College Admission Policy will focus on applicants in categories (a) and (b) above by setting the levels of English Language Proficiency necessary for consideration for admission to the various ACT courses studied fully in English.

Other portions of this College Admission Policy will address the academic requirements for admission to each ACT course and the levels of Proficiency in the English language and a LOTE for consideration for admission to courses studied partially or fully in a LOTE.

In respect of International applicants, the National Code obliges the ACT to provide such applicants with information about the minimum level of English Language proficiency required for an applicant to be admitted to an ACT course. The ACT must ensure that such an applicant’s English Language proficiency is appropriate for the course to which admission is sought by implementing documented procedures, obtaining evidence that assessment of the overseas student’s proficiency in English has been carried out by a suitably qualified person and ensuring this evidence meets the requirements of the Migration Regulations.

In the HEPCAT files reported to DEEWR information on the following elements is required:

[320 - Location code of permanent home residence](#)

[346 - Country of birth code](#)

[347 - Year of arrival in Australia](#)

[348 - Language spoken at home code](#)

[358 - Citizen/resident indicator](#)

Consequently the ACT Enrolment forms collect this information and from it colleges can infer which applicants may need to demonstrate their English Language proficiency in order for their application for admission to be considered. Moreover, colleges will be made aware that, on admission, these students may require additional academic support during their studies.

Given the commitment of the ACT to have standards comparable to those of Australian universities (ACT Constitution, Objects 2.1), the substance of this policy is drawn from the guide of the NSW Universities Admissions Centre.

4. Definitions

The **College/ACT** means the Australian College of Theology

A **college** is an Anglican Theological College or a Christian higher education institution affiliated with the ACT.

ESB means English-speaking background

NESB means non-English-speaking background

LOTE means Language other than English

AQF means the Australian Qualifications Framework

language means the language of instruction for a unit, unless otherwise indicated, noting that some units involve study in an “original language” (ie. Greek, Hebrew)

Domestic applicant means an applicant who is an Australian citizen or permanent resident

International applicant means an applicant who is NOT an Australian citizen or permanent resident

assessable qualification means a formal qualification which can be assessed as a basis for admission to any ACT course

study period means the period January – June or July – December in which a student may be enrolled for study in an ACT course

National Code means the “National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students”, Australian Government (2007)

IELTS means International English Language Testing System – Academic version only

HEPCAT means a data reporting software package supplied by DEEWR

DEEWR means the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

5. Principles

The College is committed to exercising a duty of care towards applicants by setting requirements for admission to courses at levels that maximise the likelihood of enrolled students completing their course successfully.

6. Policy Content

(A) Countries using the English language in education deemed comparable to Australia

A1. The ACT deems the level of English language used in education in the following countries to be acceptable for consideration for admission to an ACT course:

- American Samoa
- Australia
- Canada
- Fiji
- Ireland
- Kenya
- New Zealand

- Papua New Guinea
- Singapore
- Solomon Islands
- South Africa
- United Kingdom (including Northern Ireland)
- United States of America
- Zambia

(B) Assessable qualifications

- B1. For the purposes of assessing the level of English Language proficiency of an applicant for admission to an ACT course, assessable qualifications based on study in English from the countries in A include:
- a certificate of successful completion of senior secondary studies, comparable with the NSW HSC
 - a transcript attesting to successful completion of at least one full year of Australian or comparable tertiary studies
 - a transcript attesting to successful completion of an AQF diploma or advanced diploma
 - a transcript attesting to successful completion of Australian or comparable non-award post-secondary level studies or tertiary preparation courses with full-time equivalence of one year
- B2. If an applicant was born in one of the countries in A AND undertook one of the following qualifications based on study in English in one of the countries in A, the ACT will also accept the following qualifications for the purposes of assessing the level of English Language proficiency of an applicant for admission to an ACT course:
- a transcript attesting to satisfactory completion of other post-secondary studies, including certificate and advanced certificate,
 - a certificate of results in a Special Tertiary Admission Test (STAT)
 - a record of successful studies undertaken through professional organisations, including hospital-based training, armed forces training, and theological training
- B3. The ACT Academic Administrator has the authority to deem other qualifications assessable for the purposes of assessing the level of English Language proficiency of an applicant for admission to an ACT course on a case-by-case basis and such decisions are not to be taken as precedent.
- B4. For the purposes of assessing the level of English proficiency of an applicant for admission to an ACT course, assessable qualifications must have been completed within five (5) years prior to the start of the proposed commencing study period in the ACT course.
- B5. The five (5) year period in B4 may be extended by the ACT Academic Administrator when the applicant can provide evidence that s/he has spent a significant portion of the period since successfully completing the course requirements for the qualification living and working in one of the countries listed in A.

(C) Proof of the English Language proficiency by applicants

- C1. Taking account of the proficiency levels set in Attachment A, applicants who
- (a) have an assessable qualification (see B) that was undertaken solely in English in one of the countries listed in A OR
 - (b) to study 300+ level units, have been resident in Australia with English being the language spoken at home and at work for ten (10) or more years OR
 - (c) to study 200 level units, have experienced English in an English-speaking country (see A1) for at least five (5) years

are NOT required to provide proof of English Language proficiency for consideration for admission to an ACT course.

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- C2. Taking account of the proficiency levels set in Attachment A, applicants who
- (a) do NOT have an assessable qualification (see B) that was undertaken solely in English from one of the countries listed in A AND
 - (b) to study 300+ level units, have NOT been resident in Australia with English being the language spoken at home and at work for at least ten (10) years OR
 - (c) to study 200 level units, have NOT experienced English in an English-speaking country (see A1) for at least five (5) years

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MUST provide proof of English Language proficiency for consideration for admission to an ACT course.

- C3. Applicants who dispute the need for them to prove their English Language proficiency may submit their objection in writing to the college to which they are applying for admission. The college shall consult the Academic Administrator to formulate an agreed response to the applicant. The college shall convey the agreed response to the applicant.
- C4. Following a written request from a college, the Academic Administrator and the Associate Dean have the authority, in rare circumstances, to waive or vary the requirement for proof of English Language proficiency as part of the admission process. On such occasions the Academic Administrator and the Associate Dean will advise the relevant college in writing and record the action on the relevant ACT file.
- C5. The level of English Language proficiency required for admission to an ACT course may vary with the level of the qualification for which the course prepares the student.

(D) Minimum Levels of English Language proficiency for admission to ACT courses

- D1. Applicants who meet the conditions in C2 must normally provide proof of English Language proficiency completed no longer than 2 years prior to the commencement of the proposed first study period.

Normally proof of English Language proficiency will be provided by the submission of the original results of an IELTS test – Academic Version.

- D2. Applications for admission to a diploma or an advanced diploma course will be considered if the applicant can demonstrate English Language proficiency at least at the following level (or equivalent):
- IELTS 6.0 overall with a minimum of 6.0 in each subtest.
- D3. Applications for admission to the Associate Degree of Theology or a bachelor degree course (including honours) will be considered if the applicant can demonstrate English Language proficiency at least at the following level (or equivalent):
- IELTS 6.5 overall with a minimum of 6.5 in each subtest.
- D4. Applications for admission to the Graduate Diploma or Master of Divinity course will be considered if the applicant can demonstrate English Language proficiency at least at the following level (or equivalent):
- IELTS 7.0 overall with a minimum of 7.0 in reading and writing, and 6.5 in listening and speaking.
- D5. Applications for admission to a Master of Arts course (or nested Graduate Diploma) will be considered if the applicant can demonstrate English Language proficiency at least at the following level (or equivalent):
- IELTS 7.0 overall with a minimum of 7.0 in reading and writing, and 6.5 in listening and speaking.
- D6. Applications for admission to the Master of Theology course will be considered if the applicant can demonstrate English Language proficiency at least at the following level (or equivalent):
- IELTS 7.5 overall with a minimum of 7.5 in reading and writing, 7.0 in listening and 6.5 in speaking.

- D7. Applications for admission to Doctor of Ministry course will be considered if the applicant can demonstrate English Language proficiency at least at the following level (or equivalent):
- IELTS 7.5 overall with a minimum of 7.5 in reading and writing, 7.0 in listening and 6.5 in speaking.
- D8. Applications for admission to Doctor of Theology course will be considered if the applicant can demonstrate English Language proficiency at least at the following level (or equivalent):
- IELTS 7.5 overall with a minimum of 7.5 in reading and writing, 7.0 in listening and 6.5 in speaking.

(E) Alternative methods of proving English Language proficiency

- E1. If the proof of English Language proficiency for admission is provided by other than the results of an IELTS test, the Academic Administrator has the authority to determine the acceptability of the alternative proof, both in content and level.
- E2. If proof of English Language proficiency other than the results of an IELTS test is provided or the requirement for proof is waived or varied, the Academic Administrator and the Associate Dean, in consultation with the college, may require the applicant to achieve a prescribed level of academic progress after the applicant commences study in order for the student to be permitted to continue studying.

(F) Affiliate college discretion to request proof of English Language proficiency

- F1. When an applicant for admission is not required to prove their level of English Language proficiency under this policy but the college to which they are applying is concerned about their level of proficiency, the college may exercise its duty of care towards the applicant by requesting the applicant to demonstrate their level of English Language proficiency in order to assess the level of academic support the applicant may require following admission and the likelihood of the applicant coping satisfactorily with study in the course. The college must advise the applicant that, whatever their level of English Language proficiency, it will not affect the assessment of their application for admission to the course.
- F2. Should the applicant decline the request to demonstrate their level of English Language proficiency, the college shall process the application for admission based on the information available.

(G) Academic support for students from a Non-English-Speaking Background

- G1. Colleges recognise the obligation to provide academic support to domestic and international students from a non-English-speaking background following their admission to a course of study.
- G2. The college Registrar will make newly admitted NESB students aware of the academic support available, at least during the orientation program at the commencement of the student's course.

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7. Associated Documents

(A) Related internal documents

ACT Undergraduate Handbook 2010

ACT Graduate and Postgraduate Handbook 2010

(B) Related external documents

National Code 2007 - <http://www.aei.gov.au/AEI/ESOS/NationalCodeOfPractice2007/default.htm>

8. Responsibility and Authority

Body/Position with authority to initially approve the policy and procedures and amend the policy:

Academic Board

Body/Position(s) with delegated authority to amend the procedures consistent with the policy:

Dean/Academic Administrator

Body/Position(s) accountable for:

Responsibility	Position
Development of the policy	Quality Manager
Provision of advice in development of the policy	AQC , college Registrars, CC, R&RSC
Distribution of the policy	Academic Administrator
Implementation of/Advice concerning the policy	Academic Administrator college Registrars
Monitoring of and compliance with the policy	Academic Administrator
Evaluation and recommending amendment of the policy	Academic Administrator Quality Manager

9. Approvals

Document Title:	Admission Policy – English Language Proficiency	Document Number:	AB1009-11.1
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Revision History			
Authority	Action	Resolution No.	Date
Academic Board	variation in clauses C1 and C2 in section 6(C) Proof of the English Language proficiency by applicants AND addition of the following section to Section 6 Policy Content	AB1111-14.2	18 Nov 2011

10. Communications

Date	Recipient	Purpose	Mode
16 July 2010	Academic Quality Committee	Review of Draft Version 1 – comments updated to Version 2	Committee & Email
30 July 2010	College Registrars and Academic Deans	Review of Draft Version 2 – comments updated to Version 3	Email
27 Aug 2010	R&RSC & CC	Review of Draft Version 3 with comments updated to Version 4	Email & Committee
3 Sept 2010	AQC	Review of Draft Version 4 for recommendation to the Academic Board	Email & Committee
17 Sept 2010	Academic Board	Consideration of Final version for approval	Committee
1 Oct 2010	ACT Website	Publication of approved version of policy	PDF
8 Dec 2011	ACT Website	Publication of approved amended version of policy	PDF

Part B: Procedures

1. Introduction

(A) Determination of need for a course applicant to prove English Language proficiency

- A1. The key fields on the ACT application form for determining if the applicant is required to prove English Language proficiency in order to be considered for admission are the following:
- citizenship
 - country of birth
 - location of permanent home residence
 - language spoken at home
 - year of arrival in Australia
 - courses of study and duration of each course
 - year of completion of each course
 - country and language in which study for each course was undertaken
- A2. The Registrars of affiliate colleges are authorized to process applications for admission to ACT coursework programs. Consequently they have the authority to determine whether an applicant is required to prove their English Language proficiency under this policy.
- A3. The Postgraduate Coordinators of affiliate colleges are authorized to process applications for admission to ACT research programs. Consequently they have the authority to determine whether an applicant is required to prove their English Language proficiency under this policy.

2. Procedures

(A) Proof of English Language proficiency by international students

- A1. When in receipt of an application for admission by an international student a college Registrar/Postgraduate Co-ordinator shall determine if the applicant is required to provide proof of their English Language proficiency and, if so, review the documents with the application for an original IELTS result notice.
- A2. If the international applicant is required to prove their English Language proficiency and/or provide an original IELTS result notice, the college Registrar/Postgraduate Coordinator shall request the applicant to undertake an IELTS test (Academic Version only) and/or provide an original result notice. While the college Registrar/Postgraduate Coordinator may consider the academic standing of the applicant for admission, no final decision about admission may be made until the original IELTS result notice has been received by the college.
- A3. When all necessary documentation for admission to a coursework program has been considered and the college Registrar is at the point of making a decision concerning admission or otherwise, the college Registrar shall consult the Academic Administrator so that an agreed collaborative decision is made concerning eligibility of the applicant for admission.
- A4. When all necessary documentation for admission to a research program has been considered and the college Postgraduate Coordinator is at the point of making a decision concerning admission or otherwise, the college Postgraduate Coordinator shall consult the Associate Dean so that an agreed collaborative decision is made concerning eligibility of the applicant for admission.

(B) Proof of English Language proficiency by domestic applicants for admission to a coursework program

- B1. When considering an application for admission the college Registrar shall determine if the applicant needs to be requested to demonstrate their level of English Language proficiency by applying Sections A-C of this policy before the application can be considered further.

- B2. If the Registrar determines the applicant must demonstrate their level of English Language proficiency, the Registrar will so advise the applicant and provide information about the administration of the Academic Version of the IELTS in the state in which the applicant resides.
- B3. In the information about the basis for admission of a student provided to the ACT the Registrar shall include information about the level of English Language Proficiency of the applicant.
- (C) Proof of English Language proficiency by domestic applicants for admission to a research program**
- C1. When considering an application for admission the college Postgraduate Co-ordinator shall determine if the applicant needs to be requested to demonstrate their level of English Language proficiency by applying Sections A-C of this policy before the application can be considered further.
- C2. If the Postgraduate Co-ordinator determines the applicant must demonstrate their level of English Language proficiency, the Postgraduate Co-ordinator will so advise the applicant and provide information about the administration of the Academic Version of the IELTS in the state in which the applicant resides.
- C3. In the information about the basis for admission of a student provided to the ACT the Postgraduate Coordinator shall include information about the level of English Language proficiency of the applicant.

Attachment A: Table of English Language Proficiency for admission to ACT courses

Commentary on measures	Short Titles of measures	Diploma/ Adv Diploma (200 level units)	Associate and Bachelor Degrees (300-400 level units)	Grad Dip & Masters (Coursework) (500-700 level units)	Research Degrees	
International English Language Testing System	IELTS (Academic version only)	6.0 overall and 6.0 each subtest	6.5 overall and 6.5 each subtest	7.0 overall and 7.0 reading/writing, 6.5 listening/speaking	7.5 overall and 7.5 reading/writing, 7.0 listening, 6.5 speaking	
Combined Universities Language Test	CULT overall	65	70	75	80	
Test Of English as a Foreign Language	TOEFL	Paper	550 (4.5 TWE)	575 (4.5 TWE)	600 (5.0 TWE)	637 (TWE 5.0)
		Computer	213 (21 structure/ writing)	230 (21 structure/ writing)	250 (23 structure/writing)	280
		Internet	80 (21 writing)	90 (21 writing)	100 (23 writing)	110
Pearson Test of English	PTE Academic	50	58	65	73	
International Baccalaureate	IB	English A2 at higher or standard level	English A2 at higher or standard level	English A2 at higher or standard level		
General Certificate of Education - Advanced Levels	GCE 'A' Levels (from Britain or Singapore)	C pass in humanities subject	C pass in humanities subject	C pass in humanities subject		
General Certificate of Secondary Education General Certificate of Education	GCSE/GCE 'O' Levels (from Britain or Singapore)	C pass in General Paper or English	B pass in General Paper or English	B Pass in General Paper or English		
Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English	CCPE	C pass	B pass	B pass		
Sijil Tinggi Persekolahan Malaysia (<i>Malaysia Higher School Certificate</i>)	STPM	C pass in 914/920 English	B pass in 914/920 English	B pass in 914/920 English		
Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination [changing in 2012]	HKALE	C pass in Use of English	B pass in Use of English	B pass in Use of English		
Australian Technical And Further Education & private provider studies, successfully completed with appropriate English language skills	TAFE & private provider studies	Completed AQF Cert IV or Adv Cert or at least 1 yr of AQF Dip or Adv Dip	Completed AQF Cert IV in EAP or AQF Dip or Adv Dip or at least 1.5 years FTE AQF Dip or Adv Dip level	Completed AQF Cert IV in EAP or AQF Dip or Adv Dip or at least 1.5 years FTE AQF Dip or Adv Dip level		
Special Tertiary Admissions Test (ACER)	STAT (multiple choice)	150 in verbal component	155 in verbal component	160 in verbal component		
Australia Onsong International College English for Theology course	Onsong	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4		
English College of Adelaide English for Direct Entry course	ECE	Level 2	Level 2			