

ENGLISH LANGUAGE POLICY

Introduction

The **English Language Policy** of The University of Law (the University) has been informed by the Quality Assurance Agency's (QAA) UK Quality Code for Higher Education, specifically the Advice and Guidance on **Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access**.

The University's recruitment, selection and admissions policies and procedures adhere to the principles of fair admission. They are transparent, reliable, valid, inclusive and underpinned by appropriate organisational structures and processes. They support the University in the selection of students who can complete their programme. This policy sits within the University's Quality and Standards Code which provides a suite of policies designed to safeguard the academic standards of the University and to assure the quality of learning opportunities offered; this policy should therefore be read in conjunction with other relevant policies within the Code.

The University recognises that central to this policy is the University's responsibility for the academic standards of all awards granted in its name and the quality of learning opportunities for students. This policy sets out the scope of the University's responsibilities for the management of arrangements for admitting students to its programmes of study in relation to English Language competence to ensure that all students admitted have an appropriate level of English Language proficiency to undertake their chosen programme.

The English Language Policy (ELP) was approved by the University's Admissions Committee of the Academic Board and developed by stakeholders including English Language Assessment, Student Immigration Compliance and Advice (SICA), Admissions, International Student Recruitment, and Student Support.

English Language Requirement

The entry requirements for each course are listed on the [English Language Requirements webpage](#).

Please note:

- Only the most recent evidence of English language will be accepted
- The submission of fraudulent documents will result in automatic cancellation of an applicant's university place as per the [Selection, Recruitment and Admissions Policy](#)
- The English language requirement must be met before the applicant can receive an Unconditional Offer from the University
- The University retains the right to request further evidence of the applicant's English proficiency during the programme

English medium education

Validity: ten years from course start date (not applicable to MESC, Canadian and UK applicants)

Applicants may be exempt from taking an English language test if the programme they are applying for is at Bachelor's level or above (NQF level 6) and they have one of the following qualifications at the appropriate grade:

- UK GCSE English Language
- UK A-Level English Language

- International Baccalaureate including English¹
- IGCSE 1st and 2nd language and International AS/A Level in English Language (Cambridge, Pearson and Oxford AQA only)
- Bachelor or higher degree awarded by a UK university
- Bachelor or higher degree from a Majority English Speaking Country university as listed below:
 - Antigua and Barbuda
 - Australia
 - The Bahamas
 - Barbados
 - Belize
 - The British Overseas Territories²
 - Dominica
 - Grenada
 - Guyana
 - Ireland
 - Jamaica
 - Malta
 - New Zealand
 - St Kitts and Nevis
 - St Lucia
 - St Vincent and the Grenadines
 - Trinidad and Tobago
 - The United Kingdom
 - The United States of America

Please note: Canadian degrees will also be considered if the applicant can demonstrate that the degree was taught and assessed in English.

Alternative qualifications by region/country

Validity: ten years from course start date (not applicable to MESC, Canadian and UK applicants)

Where an applicant has achieved a certain level of English language ability in their high school qualification, the qualification will be accepted at an appropriate level, as detailed below.

Please note: Not all are accepted for courses requiring overall IELTS 6.5 or higher, please refer to the [English Language Requirements webpage](#) for further information.

- American Grade 12 High School Diploma
- Austrian Matura/Reifeprüfung*
- Australian Year 10 Certificate
- Bahamas General Certificate of Education (BGCSE)
- Bermudian School Diploma/School Certificate/Secondary School Certificate

¹ Accepted: 'English Language', 'English Language & Literature'. Not accepted: 'English Literature'.

² Anguilla, Ascension, Bermuda, British Antarctic Territory, British Indian Ocean Territory, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Falkland Islands, Gibraltar, Montserrat, Pitcairn, St Helena, Tristan da Cunha, Turks and Caicos Islands

- Bruneian Cambridge O-level (*1120 syllabus*)
- Caribbean Examinations Council Secondary Education Certificate
- Cameroonian O-level
- Canadian High School Leaving Certificate
- Croatian Matura*
- Danish STX/HHX/HTX/HF
- Dutch VWO
- Estonian Riigieksamid (*state examinations*)
- French Baccalaureat
- German Abitur
- Hong Kongese HDKSE
- Hungarian Matura Eretteségi vizsga
- Indian Standard XII (*only CBSE and CISCE will be accepted*)
- Irish Leaving Certificate
- Kenyan Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE)
- Latvian Atestats par visparejo videjo izglitību (Attestation of General Secondary Education)
- Lithuanian Brandos Atestats*
- Malawian School Certificate of Education
- Malaysian SPM (*syllabus 1119*)
- Maltese Secondary Education Certificate
- New Zealand NCEA
- Polish Matura*
- South African National Senior Certificate
- Swedish Slutbetyg från Gymnasieskola (Upper secondary school leaving certificate)
- Tanzanian Certificate of Secondary Education
- Ugandan Certificate of Education
- WAEC/NECO
- Zimbabwean General Certificate of Education/Zimbabwe O-level

*Only when taken with the University's internal Speaking Assessment

Approved English Language Tests

Validity: two years from course start date

- IELTS Academic* (not General Training)
- ULET
- TOEFL iBT* (not 'MyBest' Scores)
- Pearson Academic
- Cambridge First/Advanced/Proficiency
- Trinity College London Integrated Skills in English (ISE)
- For applicants on the face-to-face International Foundation Programme, a [UKVI-approved](#) secure English language test (SELT) must be taken, and the appropriate score obtained.

*The University will accept either the test centre or online-delivered versions of these tests. The University will accept IELTS One Skill Retake

Other English language tests and qualifications

Validity: ten years from course start date (not applicable to MESC, Canadian and UK applicants)

- Functional Skills
- Trinity ESOL Skills for Life – Level 2

In addition to the above, the University will also consider other GCSE/Level 2 English Language qualifications presented as English Language evidence on a case-by-case basis.

The University of Law English Test (ULET)

ULET is available for applicants applying for undergraduate or postgraduate courses who have an outstanding English language condition on their offer.

Please note:

- Applicants for the face-face International Foundation Programme are not eligible to take ULET and need to take a [SELT](#) instead
- Applicants can take ULET once only regardless of outcome
- ULET is free of charge
- Eligible applicants will receive a link to the registration form in their conditional offer email

Reasonable Adjustments

Reasonable adjustments will be made to accommodate applicants with an impairment, disability, medical condition or injury in accordance with the University's [Disability Support and Inclusion Policy](#).

If there is not enough time between notification of the requirement(s) and course start date:

- The University may not be able to offer ULET as an option to meet the English language requirement
- The University may require students to defer their course to allow the University time to organise and implement the internal/external support required
- The University operates a 'fit to sit' policy, which means that students who attend an assessment are deeming themselves to be fit to sit that assessment. It is therefore not possible to submit a concession application for impaired performance for an assessment that has been sat, unless there was a procedural defect in the conduct of the assessment

This will be communicated at the earliest point possible, and the University will liaise with students to achieve the best possible outcome.

Process for reasonable adjustments:

- Applicants should upload their request to the Medical Evidence portal where it will be assessed by the DIS team. The medical evidence must be uploaded at least 28 days prior to the exam period.
- DIS will inform the English Language Assessment team of the reasonable adjustments.

- ELA will work with their platform provider and proctoring system to accommodate adjustments recommended by DIS. More time may be needed to accommodate bespoke technological requirements with ULET's platform provider.

Malpractice

The University works with a third-party proctoring platform to ensure test security. All tests are recorded and reviewed by the English Language Assessment team. Malpractice is taken seriously and may result in the withholding of results and/or cancellation of the University's conditional offer of study.

In case of malpractice, the candidate will be notified via email. The candidate can appeal against the decision by following the process below:

- Applicants can reply to the malpractice email requesting an appeal within 5 working days of the malpractice email being sent
- The case will be reviewed by the English Language Assessment team and senior members of the Admissions team if necessary; the review and the outcome will be communicated to the applicant within 20 working days
- If the applicant disagrees with the outcome, they will be directed to the University's Complaints team

Responsibility and Policy Review

Ultimate responsibility for the development of clear and effective processes and procedures associated with the quality assurance and maintenance of standards of academic provisions and overseeing their application lies with the Academic Board of the University. The English Language Assessment team, part of Student Immigration Compliance & Advice (SICA), will be responsible for working with all departments to ensure the smooth running and implementation of the ELP.

The policy is updated and reviewed regularly by the Admissions Committee. The review includes:

- Policy details, consideration of entry requirements and student outcomes
- Exemptions and entry requirement scores
- Ensuring compliance with Home Office requirements

The following criteria will be applied when considering the acceptability of English Language qualifications or tests:

- Does the curriculum and/or method of assessment provide evidence of competence in all four components, (reading, writing, speaking and listening)?
- Is the method of assessment sufficiently secure and robust?
- Is there sufficient evidence that students meeting the University's English language requirements via the method of assessment will be able to undertake and derive full benefit from their studies?
- Has the test been validated/benchmarked against the CEFR or IELTS by an accredited body³?

³ examples of accredited body are ECCTIS, CRELLA, Cambridge Assessment

Version history:

Version	Amended by	Revision summary	Date
1.0	English Language Assessor	Additional comment to not accept TOEFL iBT 'My Best Scores' that will start from August 2019 added to Appendices document.	July 2019
2.0	English Language Assessor	Introduction paragraph updated to be in line with internal procedures. Addition of accepted overseas campuses for Tier 4 applicants (Appendix B). Cambridge IGCSE syllabus name change. Degrees/equivalents percentage taught in English.	September 2019
2.1	English Language Assessor	Expiry for TOEFL iBT amended to 2 years following updates to online verification tool Included new grading system for Romanian Baccalaureate	October 2019
2.2	English Language Assessor	Corrections in line with Admission documents. Update review date for annual review.	February 2020
2.3	English language Assessor	Acceptance of TOEFL iBT Home Edition during test centre closures (COVID-19). Addition to 6.4 regarding deadline to present EL evidence after enrolment. Adjustment of entry requirements for India Standard XII (in-country, non-Tier 4 qual) in line with sector WAEC/NECO expiry date clarification Acceptance of LanguageCert and grade equivalencies	March 2020 April 2020
2.4	English language Assessor	Acceptance of Dominica in-country English qualification Acceptance of IELTS Indicator during test centre closures (COVID-19)	April 2020
2.5	English Language Assessor	Addition of new SELTs from UKVI list From 2021, update for in-country qual India XII	May 2020
3.0	English Language Assessor	Tests acceptable due to COVID-19 Updated footnote links LanguageCert component scores	July 2020
3.1	English Language Assessor	Benchmarking for 2021 intake of TOEFL iBT, LanguageCert, Pearson PTE, Trinity ISE, IGCSE (approved by ACM July 2020)	September 2020
3.2	English Language Assessor	References to 'Tier 4' visa changed in accordance with changes to Home Office guidance Inclusion of EU/EEA English qualifications to be accepted as part of the new Student Route Visa	October 2020
3.3	English Language Assessor	Extension of acceptance of online English qualifications until 31 st May 2021 (approved by ACM Feb 2021)	February 2021
3.4	English Language Assessor	Extension of acceptance of online English qualifications until 31 st August 2021 (approved by ACM April 2021)	May 2021
3.5	English Language Assessor	Acceptance of University of Sunderland Hong Kong Campus degrees, approved by ACM	July 2021

3.6	English Language Assessor	Addition of 'The University will also consider other GCSE/Level 2 English Language qualifications presented as English Language evidence' to page 16 of Appendix B	August 2021
3.7	English Language Assessor	Extension of acceptance of online English qualifications until 30 th November (approved by ACM August 2021)	August 2021
3.8	English Language Assessor	Amendment of IGCSE Cambridge Certifying Statement requirement	Sept 2021
3.9	English Language Assessor	Acceptance of Online English tests for the next academic year (22/23 onwards) for review in 2023. Updated footnotes Stipulation of 3-month window to take both LanguageCert papers Inclusion of new section related to ULET: Eligibility, Reasonable Adjustments and Malpractice	Nov 2021
4.0	English Language Assessor	Acceptance of degrees awarded by UK and MESC countries Acceptance of Non-SRV quals for SRV applicants	Jan 2022
4.1	English Language Assessor	English Language Waiver option removed. All offers based on ELW made up to October 1 st 2022 will be honoured	Oct 2022
5.0	Head of English Language Assessment	Expiry of First/Advanced/Proficiency Addition of Polish Matura and Croatian Matura and IGSCCE EdExcel Updated footnotes links and annual review to ensure up-to-date information Addition of British Overseas Territories to the list of MSECs	Jan 2023
5.1	Head of English Language Assessment	Removal of Pearson PTE (online) and LanguageCert ESOL	August 2023
5.2	Head of English Language Assessment	Removal of Speaking Assessment requirement for WAEC/NECO and IGCSE holders	March 2024
5.2	Approved by Academic Board		12 th March 2024
5.3	Head of English Language Assessment	Removal of Speaking Assessment requirement for IGCSE holders Addition of Oxford AQA IGCSE Removal of requirements of certifying statement for Cambridge IGCSE holders	March 2024
5.3	Approved by Academic Board		12 th April 2024