English Language Proficiency Policy

Responsible Officer  Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Students and Education)

Approved by  Vice-Chancellor

Approved and commenced  December, 2014

Review by  December, 2017

Relevant Legislation, Ordinance, Rule and/or Governance Level Principle
Admissions Policy
Rules of Graduate Research (Rule 4)

Responsible Organisational Unit  Division of Students and Education

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1 Objective

UTAS recognises that English language proficiency is central to the development and communication of discipline and professional knowledge in cases in which English is the medium of instruction. Appropriate English language proficiency on entry and ongoing development of post-entry English language proficiency are integral to students’ achievement of graduate attributes, the quality of their experience while at UTAS (both within and outside the curriculum), and the quality of UTAS programs and graduates.

The objectives of this Policy are to:
- ensure that national regulatory and legislative requirements in relation to English language proficiency are met, and that all provisions in relation to English language proficiency are aligned with good practice principles;
- ensure that there is sufficient resourcing for assessment and teaching of appropriate English language proficiency;
- ensure that English language proficiency requirements for entry are set such that all students have an appropriate level of English language proficiency to participate effectively in their studies on entry;
- ensure that appropriate English language proficiency pathways are available to students who do not meet these entry requirements;
- ensure that throughout their degree program, all students are provided with explicit opportunities for ongoing development of appropriate English language proficiency for academic, professional and social communication;
- ensure that all University of Tasmania students are informed about their responsibility to continue to develop English language proficiency throughout their courses of study and to engage with the opportunities that the university provides.

2 Scope

This policy applies to:
- domestic and international students (both onshore and offshore) applying for, enrolled in, and graduating from University of Tasmania pre-degree, undergraduate, postgraduate coursework, and Higher Degree Research programs;
- all University of Tasmania organisational units and their staff providing administrative, learning and other support services for enrolled and prospective students;
- all provisions and processes relating to the student lifecycle, from admissions through to graduation.

3 Policy Provisions

3.1 National regulatory and legislative requirements and good practice principles

A mechanism is in place to enable an integrated and whole of university approach to English language proficiency from admission to graduation, to ensure that:
- all provisions in relation to English language proficiency meet the national legislation and regulatory requirements including, but not limited to, the ESOS...
Act 2000 and the TEQSA Act 2011;

- all relevant roles and units are aware of these national legislation and regulatory requirements;
- all activities and provisions in relation to English language proficiency are evidence-based, regularly evaluated, communicated to all stakeholders, and take into account current good practice, including but not limited to the DIICCSRTE Good Practice Principles for English language proficiency for international students in Australian universities;
- all activities and provisions in relation to English language proficiency are adequately resourced.

3.2 English Language Proficiency requirements for entry

- English language proficiency requirements for entry, as defined in the Admissions Policy, are regularly reviewed, and informed by the collection, analysis and dissemination of internal data and by current research;
- Evidence in relation to English language proficiency pathways is collected and disseminated, and used to inform decisions.

3.3 English Language Proficiency pathways

- Applicants who do not yet meet the English language proficiency entry requirements for their degree are given information about pathways within the University of Tasmania;
- Applicants who do not meet entry-level requirements for University of Tasmania pathways are given information about other options;
- Development towards degree entry-level English language proficiency within University of Tasmania pathways is clearly mapped;
- Entry, eligibility and exit requirements for pathway courses, where applicable, are regularly reviewed.

3.4 Ongoing development of English Language Proficiency for degree program students

- Course, program and unit design identify the English language proficiency requirements for academic, professional and social communication relevant to achievement of graduate attributes, and map the development of this English language proficiency from entry to graduation;
- Program, course and unit review include review of English language proficiency entry requirements and of opportunities within the program, course or unit for students to develop their English language proficiency for academic, professional and social communication relevant to achievement of graduate attributes;
- Embedded and co-curricular opportunities relevant to the English language proficiency development needs of particular programs, individuals and cohorts are provided;
- There are professional development opportunities for academic staff in relation to developing students’ English language proficiency.
3.5 **Student responsibility**

- Students are informed about their responsibility for ongoing development of English language proficiency on enrolment and at regular intervals throughout their course of study, including in unit outlines. They are also provided with information on the specific nature and level of programs and support available.
- Information about students’ responsibilities in relation to English language proficiency, and on the specific nature and level of programs and support available, is provided regularly to onshore and offshore education partners and agents.

4 **Responsibilities**

The University of Tasmania is responsible for:

- appointing a leader to ensure that this policy is adequately resourced, and is implemented;
- oversight to ensure that all national regulatory and legislative requirements are met, and that all provisions in relation to English language proficiency align with good practice principles;
- oversight of collection, analysis and dissemination of all relevant data;
- provision of advice to the University Learning and Teaching Committee, Colleges, Academic Units and others in relation to English language proficiency.

The Centre for University Pathways and Partnerships (CUPP) is responsible for:

- pathways for development of English language proficiency for degree-level study;
- review of entry, eligibility and exit requirements for pathway courses, where relevant;
- program, course and unit review in relation to English language proficiency development for pre-degree students;
- data collection, analysis and dissemination in relation to CUPP functions;
- provision of information to staff, students, onshore and offshore education partners and agents in relation to CUPP English language proficiency pathways.

The Student Centre is responsible for:

- data collection, analysis and dissemination in relation to Student Centre functions;
- co-curricular opportunities for English language proficiency development for degree program students;
- collaborating with Schools and Faculties on delivery of embedded opportunities for English language proficiency development for degree program students;
• provision of information to staff, students, onshore and offshore education partners and agents in relation to English language proficiency development for degree program students.

Colleges and Academic Units are responsible for:

• data collection, analysis and dissemination in relation to Academic Unit or College functions;
• mapping the development of appropriate English language proficiency from entry to graduation within courses, programs and units;
• program, course and unit review in relation to English language proficiency entry requirements and opportunities for ongoing development.

Student Evaluation, Review and Reporting Unit are responsible for:

• data collection, analysis and dissemination to support program, course and unit review at all levels in relation to entry requirements, ongoing development and achievement of graduate outcomes for English language proficiency.

The Tasmanian Institute of Learning and Teaching is responsible for:

• providing support for mapping development of English language proficiency in course learning outcomes related to communication;
• in collaboration with the Student Learning & Academic Development Team, providing opportunities for professional development for discipline staff to support embedding of English language proficiency.

The Graduate Research Office is responsible for:

• data collection, analysis and dissemination in relation to Higher Degree Research students;
• provision of information to staff, students, onshore and offshore education partners and agents in relation to English language proficiency development for Higher Degree Research students.

Students are responsible for:

• participating in ongoing opportunities for English language proficiency development.

5 Definitions and Acronyms

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<tr>
<th>Term/Acronym</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Unit</td>
<td>Means the secondary organisational unit in the academic structure of the University, reporting directly to the College Executive Deans, as per Ordinance 14 – Academic Structure.</td>
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<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>Means</td>
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(a) the primary organisational unit in the academic structure of the University, as per Ordinance 14 – Academic Structure

(b) the University College

**DIICCSRTE**

Department of Industry, Innovation, Climate Change, Science, Research and Tertiary Education

**English Language Proficiency**

The University of Tasmania definition of English language proficiency has been adopted from the DIICCSRTE Good Practice Principles for English language proficiency for international students in Australian universities:

‘English language proficiency’ has been defined as the ability of students to use the English language to make and communicate meaning in spoken and written contexts while completing their university studies. Such uses may range from a simple task such as discussing work with fellow students, to complex tasks such as writing an academic paper or delivering a speech to a professional audience. This view of proficiency as the ability to organise language to carry out a variety of communication tasks distinguishes the use of ‘English language proficiency’ from a narrow focus on language as a formal system concerned only with correct use of grammar and sentence structure.

The ability to ‘organise language to carry out a variety of communication tasks’ includes the oral and written communication tasks for professional communication situations relevant to the course or program.

**ESOS Act 2000**

Education Services for Overseas Students Act

**Executive Dean**

Means:

(a) the Executive Dean of the relevant College, or

(b) in relation to the University College, the Principal of the University College

**Head of Academic Unit**

Means the head of the relevant Academic Unit.

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1 This reflects the name of the Commonwealth Government department at the time of drafting. References will be updated appropriately once website revisions to reflect new department titles and responsibilities have been completed.
6 Supporting Documentation
- DIICCSRTE Good Practice Principles for English language proficiency for international students in Australian universities
- Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards)

7 Versioning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Former Version(s)</th>
<th>Version 1 – English Language Proficiency; approved December, 2014, amended in December 2016 to incorporate Colleges.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Current Version</td>
<td>Version 2 – English Language Proficiency Policy (current document); approved December 2014, amended in December 2017 to reflect College structure and nomenclature.</td>
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