

Temporary expansion of the language tests referred to in Article 4.2 of the Code of Conduct for International Students in Higher Education

The guidelines were approved on 22 July 2020.

Article 4.2 of the Code of Conduct

With respect to the education it offers to international students, the higher education institution determines the minimum language requirements that the international student must meet and makes sure that he/she actually meets these requirements.

For study programmes in Dutch, the provisions of Article 7.28, second paragraph WHW apply.

For study programmes in English, a minimum of an academic IELTS test with an overall band score of at least 6.0 (six) for the B and M level is required.

For preparatory education with a length of 6 up to 12 months, as well as a premaster with a length of at least 6 months, a minimum requirement of 5.0 IELTS applies; for preparatory education or a premaster of 6 months or shorter, a minimum requirement of 5.5 IELTS is required.

The following table shall apply to scores on accepted language tests other than the IELTS test¹:

IELTS, TOEFL, TOEIC and Cambridge English grades & scale					
IELTS	TOEFL Paper	TOEFL Internet	TOEIC ²		Cambridge English grades and scale
			Listening and Reading	Speaking and Writing	
7.5	625	113	790	400	Advanced (CAE) - Grade B (scale 194-199) Advanced (CAE) - Grade C (scale 191-193)
7.0	600	100	780	350	First (FCE) - Grade A (scale 185 and above) Advanced (CAE) - Grade C (scale 185 and above)
6.5	575	90	720	310	Advanced (CAE) - Grade C (scale 180-184) First (FCE) - Grade A (scale 180-184) First (FCE) - Grade B (scale 176-179)
6.0	550	80	670	290	First (FCE) - Grade B (scale 173-175) First (FCE) - Grade C (scale 169-172)
5.5	525	70	620	260	First (FCE) - Grade C (scale 162-168)
5.0	500	60	600	240	First (FCE) - Grade C (scale 160-161) B1 level certificate (scale 154-159)

In case a higher education institution has reasonable doubt about the language test certificate and as a consequence about the international students English proficiency, the higher education institution may impose further requirements related to the English proficiency, in addition to the mandatory language test.

Temporary expansion

Throughout the period during which the measures taken to fight Coronavirus prevent the use of the regular language tests as stated in Article 4.2 of the Code of Conduct, the use of a few approved tests provided by the suppliers listed in Article 4.2 of the Code of Conduct shall be permitted, provided these tests are accompanied by a sufficient guarantee of quality. This expansion applies to prospective international students, whose enrollment starts during the academic year 2020-2021.

Current information on the online language tests that can be used as referred to above, as well as on the minimum scores required is available on the Code of Conduct website. This information will be updated whenever changes occur.

¹ The table is not intended to make comparisons between the listed language tests and/or scores. It is solely intended to formulate the minimum scores for the listed accepted language tests for the admission of international students. These tests have not been related to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), because the CEFR is a framework of level indications, and not an English language test. A CEFR level extends across multiple scores of the language tests listed in the table. For this reason, a minimum score on the specific language test has been included instead of any level indication.

² The threshold values must be met for both components.

All signatories of the Code of Conduct will make every possible effort to facilitate the use of these language tests in order to ensure that the greatest possible share of the prospective students will be able to take a language test as soon as possible.

Current status of online language tests, dated 22 July 2020

The language tests that can be used within the framework of this expansion include:

- the TOEFL iBT Special Home Edition test
- the TOEFL ITP Plus for China

TOEFL iBT Special Home Edition test

Information is available at: <https://www.ets.org/s/cv/toefl/at-home/>

The TOEFL iBT Special Home Edition test is available in nearly all countries, with the exception of Iran and China. For China, the language test can be taken only in Hong Kong and Macao. In Iran the language tests IELTS and Cambridge English grades and scale can be taken. The test centres of the organisation which provides these tests are open with the necessary safety measures.

The applicable minimum scores are listed in the table below³:

IELTS	TOEFL iBT Special Home Edition test
7.5	113
7.0	100
6.5	90
6.0	80
5.5	70
5.0	60

TOEFL ITP Plus for China

Information about the test is available via: <https://www.ets.org/s/cv/toefl/institutions/itp-plus-china/>

The TOEFL ITP Plus for China test may only be used by prospective students in China Mainland. The test assesses three different components: listening comprehension, reading comprehension and structure and written expression. See below the table with the required minimum scores⁴:

IELTS	TOEFL ITP Plus for China
7.5	625
7.0	600
6.5	575
6.0	550
5.5	525

Furthermore, the organisation Vericant provides a video speaking interview with a length of 12-15 minutes. Based on the video the communication skills will be assessed by the educational institutions (for example by a language centre, or staff members who possess expertise in this field, or via an external evaluation). With regard to the assessment it is obligated to use the speaking rating rubric of Vericant. The speaking rating rubric is available at: <https://www.vericant.com/vericant-interview-guide-for-toefl-itp-plus/>.

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See below the table with minimum scores⁵:

IELTS	TOEFL ITP Plus for China
7.5	18
7.0	17
6.5	16
6.0	15
5.5	14
5.0	13

For all elements - listening comprehension, reading comprehension and structure and written expression, as well as for the communication skills - applies that international students must satisfy the threshold values. For example for admission to a bachelor's programme a minimum total score of 550 must be met for listening comprehension, reading comprehension en structure and written expression. With regard to communication skills a minimum score of 15 is required.

Information on the suppliers/language tests included in the Code of Conduct

IELTS and Cambridge English grades and scale

Cambridge Education does not offer any suitable online alternatives to the IELTS and the Cambridge English grades and scale.

At locations where it is permitted and safe, the language centres are open, and the language tests are being administered. In this regard, the organization has taken additional measures to protect the health of staff members and individuals taking the tests.

Current information concerning which language centres are closed and until when is available on the IELTS website: <https://www.ielts.org/news/2020/covid19-information-for-our-global-test-taker-community>

For China (Mainland), a number of test centers have been opened again, where places are available to a limited extent for administering tests. The Chinese government will decide at a later stage whether further opening of test centers is justified.

No restrictions apply for Iran. The testing centres are open, subject to observance of the additional safety measures.

TOEFL and TOEIC

ETS, provider of TOEFL and TOEIC, does not offer an alternative to the TOEIC. The TOEFL iBT Special Home Edition and the TOEFL ITP Plus for China are offered as alternatives to the TOEFL online. As described above, these tests may temporarily be used within the framework of Article 4.2 of the Code of Conduct.

For information concerning which centres are closed, please contact the relevant location representative for each country. For additional information, please visit:

https://www.ets.org/s/cv/toefl/institutions/update/?WT.ac=TOEFL_ChinaUpdate_200403

⁵ The table is not intended to make comparisons between the listed language tests and/or scores. It is solely intended to formulate the minimum scores for the listed accepted language tests for the admission of international students.