

Guideline concerning the Code of Conduct for International Students in Higher Education

This guideline was approved on the 16th of November 2021

Background

In response to the measures of foreign local governments aimed at fighting the COVID-19 virus, several questions have arisen among the Dutch educational institutions and international students about the possibility of taking one of the mandatory English language tests in accordance with article 4.2 of the Code of Conduct. To give an answer to these questions a guideline was introduced, which provides for a temporary expansion of article 4.2 of the Code of Conduct. The COVID-19 virus is still among us and infections continue. Therefore, the National Commission, the umbrella organisations in Dutch higher education, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, the Ministry of Justice and Security, and the IND have decided to prolong the guideline for students who want to apply for the academic year 2022-2023. The National Committee expects that the guideline is a solution for the problems international students are experiencing in taking one of the mandatory language tests on location.

Article 4.2 of the Code of Conduct: Obligation to take an English language test

The National Committee has received signals that international students are encountering problems in their home countries with regard to taking the required English language test. Many testing centres are closed as a consequence of the measures that have been taken to fight coronavirus, such that the tests listed in the Code of Conduct cannot be taken in all countries at this time. Several suppliers responsible for the language tests listed in the Code of Conduct have developed alternatives. These efforts include the TOEFL iBT Home Edition.

In consultation with the aforementioned bodies, the National Committee has arrived at the following temporary expansion of Article 4.2 of the Code of Conduct:

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 educational program starts during the academic year 2021-2022 or 2022-2023.

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.

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.