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La Trobe Melbourne

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English  
Language  
Standards  
Policy and  
Procedure  
- ELICOS

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## 1. Policy Objectives

This policy establishes the framework for English language admissions requirements for prospective students, English language support during college studies and English language exit requirements.

The English Language Standards Policy and Procedure is designed to ensure that students meet appropriate English language standards before commencing their course of study, are supported and assisted in their English language development throughout their courses and meet appropriate English language standards at the conclusion of their course, including meeting the English language requirements for entry to La Trobe University degree programs.

## 2. Distribution of this Policy

This policy and procedure is circulated to all college staff twice per year, so that they are aware of language entry requirements, the standard of English language support to be provided and the English language competency required at graduation. The Policy and Procedure will be reviewed annually.

## 3. Scope

This policy and procedure applies to ELICOS courses at our Melbourne campus.

## 4. Definitions

4.1 As defined under the **English Language Standards for Higher Education (ELSHE) 2010**, "English language proficiency has been defined as the ability of students to use the English language to make and communicate meaning appropriately in spoken and written contexts while completing their higher education studies and after they graduate".

4.2 Other Definitions:

ELICOS	English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students
Delegated staff	Delegated staff who may interpret this policy and make judgments on English language levels include: Director of Studies; Director, Student Services; Director Marketing and Admissions, College Director and Principal; Academic Director
DIBP	Department of Immigration and Border Protection
FSDP	Foundation Studies and Diploma Programs
ILC	Independent Learning Centre
LTU	La Trobe University
TEQSA	Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency

## 5. English Language Standards Policy Statement

This policy is in line with the standards outlined in the **English Language Standards for Higher Education (ELSHE) 2010** but modifies them to include Foundation Studies and Higher Education Diplomas:

### *Standard One*

The college ensures that its students are sufficiently proficient in English to participate effectively in their studies on entry.

#### *Standard Two*

The college ensures that prospective and current students are informed about their responsibilities for further developing their English language proficiency during their studies.

#### *Standard Three*

The college ensures that resourcing for English language development meets students' needs throughout their studies.

#### *Standard Four*

The college actively develops students' English language proficiency during their studies.

#### *Standard Five*

The college ensures that students are appropriately proficient in English when they graduate (or progress to their next stage of studies).

#### *Standard Six*

The college uses evidence from a variety of sources to monitor and improve its support for the development of students' English language proficiency.

## **6. Standard One**

- 6.1 The College ensures that its students are sufficiently proficient in English to participate effectively in their studies on entry by developing a holistic approach to English language competency, as follows:
- i. By setting appropriate English language requirements for all courses and monitoring the effectiveness of those requirements both formally and informally;
  - ii. By providing adequate support for language development and monitoring the effectiveness of support provided;
  - iii. By examining the particular English language needs of specialized courses and ensuring that language support meets those needs.
- 6.2 Prior to formal admission, students must present an English language test result or undertake a placement test at the college. This Placement Test is kept securely and all test papers are collected at the end of the test and the results are stored electronically on the student's record. The writing component is varied regularly to prevent students from preparing their writing papers.
- 6.3 The college checks its English language entry requirements against the recommendations of testing organisations (IELTS, TOEFL and Pearsons).
- 6.4 Academic Directors and Coordinators receive regular feedback from teaching staff about the English language proficiency of students on commencement and throughout their course. They will assess the feedback and make or propose changes to policy and procedure, as required.
- 6.5 ELICOS exit courses, which are used as direct entry to FSDP courses and La Trobe University degree programs, are benchmarked against the IELTS examination every two years.

## **7. Standard Two**

- 7.1 The College ensures that prospective and current students are informed about their responsibilities for further developing their English language proficiency during their studies, as follows:
- i. Students are reminded at Orientation about their responsibility to continue developing their English language skills and are informed of the English language support opportunities at the college;
  - ii. Students at risk of non-progression are identified in Week 1 of their course and provided with a plan as to how they may overcome their weaknesses.

## **8. Standard Three**

- 8.1 The College ensures that resourcing of English language development meets students' needs throughout their studies by:
- i. Identifying student needs and weaknesses early in their course; and
  - ii. Providing advice on how students can develop their language proficiency, through student-teacher consultations.
- 8.2 The College maintains and develops English language resources in its Independent Learning Centre, which contains both student and teacher resources, and provides a designated budget for this purpose.
- 8.3 The College has postgraduate qualified TESOL staff who are able to provide expertise on how to integrate English language development into content-related courses.
- 8.4 The College provides ongoing professional development on the integration of English language development into content related courses, including for casual staff.
- 8.5 The College has two designated Academic Skills Advisors, a full-time teacher in the Independent Learning Centre and learner support teachers who provide support to students and advice to teaching staff on the development of English language proficiency. The Academic Skills Advisor works closely with teachers with one-on-one consultations and academic skills workshops. The ILC teacher assists seeking assistance with their writing or academic skills. Learner support teachers provide free optional language development workshops to all students at a range of levels as per an advertised timetable.

## **9. Standard Four**

- 9.1 The college actively develops students' English language proficiency during their studies as follows:
- i. Teachers assist and take responsibility for the English language development of their students.
  - ii. Twenty hours of free optional language support activities are provided for all students.
  - iii. The ILC is open for student use and borrowing, Monday to Friday 8.30 am to 5.00 pm.

- iv. The ILC contains English language books, online materials, DVDs, listening materials and computers for research.
  - v. Students who demonstrate lower levels of language proficiency are directed to the appropriate Academic Skills Advisor for support.
  - vi. All students may seek the support of the ILC Teacher for their English language development.
- 9.2 The College graduates' capabilities are aligned with those of La Trobe University, which are as follows:
- Literacies and Communication Skills
  - Inquiry and Analytical Skills
  - Personal and Professional Skills; and,
  - Discipline-specific Knowledge and Skills

The college also includes the following elements in its graduate capabilities:

- Listening
  - Reading.
- 9.3 Course reviews consider the extent to which English language development is included in curricula, assessment and teaching.
- 9.4 Classes are interactive as far as possible and encourage the use of English in practical communication activities.
- 9.5 The College conducts a range of social activities to encourage students to develop their informal English language competency, including volunteer work, excursions, sightseeing and sports.

## **10. Standard Five**

- 10.1 The college ensures that students are appropriately proficient in English when they graduate, through the following mechanisms:
- i. ELICOS direct entry courses, which provide entry into academic courses at the College and University courses, are benchmarked against the IELTS examination every two years.
  - ii. Examinations undergo a moderation process.
  - iii. Communication components are included in assessment items. Course outlines clearly indicate the assessment expectations regarding a range of communication skills.
  - iv. The Graduate Satisfaction Survey and Student Satisfaction Survey both seek information on how well students believe they have improved their written and oral communication.
  - v. The College's Academic Board includes one representative from industry who is involved in the review of student outcomes at La Trobe Melbourne.

## **11. Standard Six**

- 11.1 The college uses the following range of evidence to monitor and improve its support for the development of students' English language proficiency:
- i. Subject reviews by teachers and students
  - ii. Student and graduate satisfaction surveys
  - iii. Monitoring and review of English language standards annually
  - iv. Benchmarking of policies and procedures
  - v. Continuous review and improvement of entry standards, resourcing, curricula, assessment practices and teaching methods
  - vi. Specific surveys of language support opportunities at the College.

## **12. English Language Entry Requirements Procedure**

- 12.1 Approved entry criteria clearly stipulates the relevant entry criteria for each level of ELICOS course.
- 12.2 New tests or courses may emerge for which recognition is sought. The Admissions and Selection Committee will make recommendations to the La Trobe Melbourne Executive Committee for additions to the accepted tests. If approved, the test will be accepted with immediate effect and a summary of updates will be provided to the Academic Board annually.
- 12.3 From time to time, students may present evidence of English language proficiency for which there is no current recognition. In this case,
- i. Students may be required to submit for an approved test or course, or
  - ii. College Director and Principal may seek to ascertain the acceptability of the submitted evidence.
- 12.4 Where an international student disputes the College's decision to reject the evidence submitted in support of their English language proficiency, and where the evidence is not based on a measure publicly accepted by the College, the matter will be referred and responded to in accordance with the Student Grievance Policy and Procedure.
- 12.5 Where a student presents fraudulent English language proficiency documents, the College has the right to refuse or cancel enrolment (see Enrolment Policy).
- 12.6 Generally, measures of attainment of English language proficiency have a currency of 2 years prior to the anticipated date of first enrolment.

## **13. Admissions Procedure**

- 13.1 When an ELICOS application is received with an international English language test result, Admissions staff determine which level of English is appropriate and how many weeks of English are required for the student's intended study plan, based on published English language entry requirements.

- 13.2 If no international English language test result is received, admissions staff inform the student that he/she will need to undertake a Placement Test.
- 13.3 If Admissions staff are in doubt about whether an English language test result meets the published English language requirements, they must seek confirmation from a Designated Staff Member, who will determine if the English language level is sufficient to undertake a particular course or ELICOS level.

#### **14. One-to-one Consultations**

- 14.1 All teaching staff provide one-to-one counselling for their students, including feedback on their English language progress and development needs. Teachers provide high levels of support to students at risk of not progressing and provide additional feedback on their progress and needs.

#### **15. Professional Development**

- 15.1 Teaching staff who undertake professional development on the integration of English language competency into content-related subjects are expected share their expertise with other teachers at the college. ELICOS Academic and teaching staff undergo regular professional development in all aspects of English Language teaching including moderation of assessments.

<b>Policy Title</b>	English Language Standards Policy and Procedure	
<b>Policy Owners</b>	College Director and Principal	
<b>Contact Persons</b>		
<b>Key Stakeholders</b>	College Director Director of Studies Academic Director Director, Student Services Director, Marketing and Admissions Admissions Staff Marketing Staff	
<b>Approval Body</b>	LTM Executive Committee	<b>Approved on</b> 9 August 2013
	La Trobe Melbourne Academic Board	1 December 2017
<b>Relevant Legislation</b>	Education Services for Overseas Students Act (ESOS) 2000 National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007	
<b>Related Policies</b>	Enrolment Policy and Procedure Student Grievance Policy	
<b>Related Guidelines</b>		
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