

# English Language Entry Procedure

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# 1. Purpose and Scope

This procedure outlines the processes for assessing, verifying, and approving the English language proficiency of international applicants to NCI. It supports the implementation of the English Language Policy and ensures compliance with the 2023 Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Higher Education to International Learners (HE Code), Section 5.5.

This procedure ensures:

- A transparent and standardised approach to assessing English language proficiency.
- Fair and consistent application of exemptions and alternative qualifications.
- Clarity on roles and responsibilities in processing applications.

This procedure applies to:

- All international applicants whose first language is not English and who seek admission to QQI-validated programmes at NFQ Levels 6, 7, 8, and 9 at NCI.
- The Admissions Office, International Office, and Academic Schools responsible for verifying and approving English language qualifications.
- The process for recognising exemptions, verifying English language certificates, and handling appeals.

# 2. Roles and Responsibilities

Roles	Responsibilities
<b><i>Applicants:/ Enrolled Learners</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submit a recognised English language qualification as per Section 4.</li> <li>• Provide valid certification issued within 2 years of programme start date.</li> <li>• If eligible for exemption, provide proof of prior education in an approved English-speaking country. Submit appeals where applicable.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Admissions Office:</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verify that applicants meet English Language Requirements.</li> <li>• Ensure all English language qualifications are valid and within the required timeframe.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process exemptions based on approved country list. Handle appeals in consultation with the Head of Admissions and escalate to the Vice-Dean or Dean of School if required.</li> <li>• Maintain and update records of English language certification.</li> </ul>
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### 3. Entry Requirements and Process

- 3.1. Applicants must present a recognised English language qualification as per Section 4: English Language Requirements.
- 3.2. English Language Requirements are subject to review and approval by the NCI Senior Management Team and Academic Council.
- 3.3. All English language certificates must have been issued within 2 years of the expected start date of the NCI programme.
- 3.4. Exemptions: Applicants who have completed previous education through English in the following countries are exempt from additional English language testing:
  - Ireland, UK, US, Canada, Singapore, Australia, New Zealand, Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa.
  - Applicants should note that visa requirements may still necessitate an additional recognised English language certificate.
- 3.5. An applicant can appeal a decision where the English Language qualification they are presenting for admission is not recognised by NCI. The appeal should be submitted to the Head of Admissions and Student Records in the first instance and the outcome will be considered by the Vice-Dean or Dean of School, if required

### 4. English Language Requirements, from Sept 2025 Entry

The below tables present NCI's approved [English Language Requirements](#) as published on the NCI website, marketing materials and prospectuses. English Language Requirements are subject to change from intake to intake. Minimum scores for these tests are benchmarked against the descriptions of language proficiency outlined in the

Council of Europe's [Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching and Assessment](#) (CEFR).

#### 4.1. IELTS Requirements

Programme	IELTS Level	IELTS Level from Sep 2025 and beyond
Undergraduate Programmes	6.0	6.0 overall with no less than 5.5 in any other band
BA (Hons) in Early Childhood Education and Care	6.5 with 6.5 in Speaking and no less than 6.0 in any other band	6.5 with 6.5 in Speaking and no less than 6.0 in any other band
Masters in Computing and Education Programmes	6.0	6.0 overall with no less than 5.5 in any other band
Masters in Business programmes and the MSc in AI for Business	6.5	6.5 overall with no less than 6.0 in any other band

#### 4.2. IELTS Alternatives

NCI gladly accept a range of alternatives to IELTS, which you will find in the table below:

IELTS Equivalents from Sep 2025 and beyond			
IELTS Academic	Minimum 5.5	6.0 overall (no component of less than 5.5)	6.5 overall (no component less than 6.0)
Duolingo Test of English	Minimum 95-104	105-120 overall (no component less than 95)	120+ overall (no component less than 105)
TOEFL Internet Based	Minimum 46	60 overall (no component less than 12)	79 overall (no component less than 15)
PTE Academic	Minimum 42	50 overall (no component less than 40)	58 overall (no component less than 48)

## 5. Version Control

<b>Reference Code</b>	LRN-01-SOP-PUB	<b>Policy/Procedure Manager</b>	Head of Student Admissions & Student Records
<b>Last Updated</b>	26/02/2025	<b>Version Number</b>	V1.0
<b>Policy Reference(s):</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English Language Policy LRN-01-POL-PUB</li> </ul>			