

Policy Identifier: English Language Policy

Policy Title:	English Language Policy
Description:	The purpose of this policy is to outline MIE's fair, transparent and consistent requirements and standards for evaluating the English language ability of international learners applying for admission to MIE, and to describe MIE's policy and process for English language support for international learners once they are registered.
Author (Position):	Registrar & Vice President of Academic Affairs
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Date of Next Policy Review:	June 2027 (or as required)

1. Context

Marino Institute of Education aims for the highest standards of quality in all its admission-related activities. A range of policies, procedures and processes exist to support recruitment, admission and retention of international learners in programmes of education and research in MIE. In addition, since 2016, Trinity College Dublin has validated the International Foundation Programme¹ delivered by Marino Institute of Education for international learners from countries where the secondary school leaving qualification does not allow students to qualify for direct admission into Trinity College Dublin undergraduate programmes.

The International Education Mark (IEM) is one of a suite of measures designed to protect the interests of learners engaged with the Irish education and training system. The *Higher Education (HE) Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Higher Education and Training to International Learners* requires Higher Education providers to develop an English language policy, as part of the authorisation process for the IEM.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline MIE's fair, transparent and consistent requirements and standards for evaluating the English language ability of international learners applying for admission to MIE, and to describe MIE's policy and process for English language support for international learners once they are registered.

Additionally, the purpose of this policy is to comply with the English Language Policy requirements of Trinity College Dublin, as the Designated Awarding Body for the Institute, which specifies "Trinity's Linked Providers are required to document their own policy on English Language teaching which must align with this Policy."

3. Benefits

- 3.1 This policy supports the enrolment and admission of suitably qualified applicants and the creation of a diverse student body.

¹ Trinity College Dublin is responsible for the marketing of the International Foundation Programme and the recruitment and admission of learners onto the International Foundation Programme.

Policy Identifier: English Language Policy

- 3.2. This policy complements the existing suite of policies, procedures and processes that ensure the quality of international recruitment and engagement and specifically complies with the *Higher Education (HE) Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Higher Education and Training to International Learners (2023)*.
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4. Scope

- 4.1 This policy applies to all undergraduate and postgraduate programmes of study leading to academic qualifications offered by Marino Institute of Education and accredited by Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin, including the International Foundation Programme (IFP).

5. Principles

- 5.1 In order to create a diverse and inclusive student body, MIE seeks to register students with a broad range of talents and the ability to engage with and benefit from education in the Marino tradition.
- 5.2. As an inclusive and responsible HE provider, MIE operates a fair, transparent and consistent admission policy that supports the successful participation of international learners on their chosen courses.
- 5.3. MIE recognises that it is not in the interest of an applicant to be admitted onto a programme of study in which they are unlikely to be successful because of lack of English language competency.

6. Definitions

- 6.1 **International Learner:** MIE adopts the definition of international learner as articulated in the QQI Code of Practice for the Provision of Programmes of Higher Education to International Learners as applicable to the MIE context:
- “EU/EEA students in the state undertaking programmes that lead to major or non major awards that are included within the NFQ;
 - Non-EU/EEA students in the state undertaking programmes leading to major or non-major awards that are included within the NFQ.”

7. Policy

7.1 Entry Requirements²

- 7.1.1. MIE requires international learners to meet certain minimum requirements in English language proficiency in order to ensure successful participation in its programmes. These requirements are outlined on the MIE admissions [webpage](#) and in the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Prospectuses.
- 7.1.2. All applicants for whom English is not a first language and who have not been educated through the medium of English, for a minimum of one year, must present verifiable evidence of the required level of English language proficiency for their intended course of study as specified in the associated procedures to this policy, as outlined in Appendix 1.

¹ Residents of Northern Ireland are for the purposes of Higher Education recognised as Irish Citizens.

² English Language Requirements may be updated, as required and further detail can be found [here](#).
Page 4 of 8

7.2 Minimum Requirements for English Language Proficiency

- 7.2.1. MIE's minimum standard level of English language proficiency required for entry to a degree course leading to an undergraduate or postgraduate award shall normally be a Level CEFR Level B2 or equivalent.
- 7.2.2. Applicants who meet all of the admissions criteria other than the English language requirements receive a conditional offer. The conditions of this offer require achievement of minimum scores in specified English language proficiency tests (refer Appendix 1).
- 7.2.3. Applicants in receipt of a conditional offer must provide evidence of attaining the required English language standard by the date specified in the offer letter. Where this is not provided by the date specified, the conditional offer is withdrawn.
- 7.2.4. It is the applicant's responsibility to source appropriate English Language education and assessment that complies with the accepted proficiency tests outlined in appendix 1 and communicated on the MIE website and within prospectuses.

7.3 International Foundation Programme

- 7.3.1 The [International Foundation Programme](#) (IFP) is validated by Trinity College Dublin and delivered by [Marino Institute of Education](#) (MIE). The IFP is a one-year pre- undergraduate programme, leading to a Level 6 award on the [National Framework for Qualifications](#). It is intended to provide future undergraduates with the appropriate English language and discipline-specific academic and learning skills to prepare them to undertake undergraduate studies in Trinity College Dublin or other Higher Education Institutions in Ireland or internationally.

7.3.2 In respect of the *Higher Education (HE) Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Higher Education and Training to International Learners*, Academic Governance for the IFP rests with Trinity College Dublin and is overseen by the MIE Associated College Degree Committee and the IFP Co-ordinating Committee. Specifically, Trinity College Dublin Global manage the Marketing and Recruitment, Academic Registry manage the Admission and Qualification Recognition, and the IFP Programme Manager manages academic quality under the oversight of Academic Council, the IFP Co-ordinating Committee and MIE-ACDC .

7.3.3 To be eligible for the IFP, applicants must meet the eligibility criteria for admissions and present evidence of English proficiency as outlined in Appendix 1 of this policy.

7.4 English Language Learning Support

7.4.1 The Institute provides a range of induction opportunities tailored to the needs of its undergraduate and postgraduate learners, including international learners.

7.4.2 Academic integrity is a core component of the Institute’s orientation sessions and is also integrated into the curriculum of all programmes to support knowledge and skills development. This is supported by a dedicated social media campaign, resources available online, and library supports such as Lib Guides explaining academic referencing.

7.4.3 In recognition of the different education cultures of international learners, the Institute also offers an extended induction module – “an Introduction to the Irish Education System”.

7.4.5 Each learner in the Institute is assigned a Personal Tutor to provide academic and pastoral support.

7.4.6 For the IFP, additional academic English support classes are provided alongside the IFP curriculum where a need is identified.

7.4.7 International learners on undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, are advised of the supports available to them in advance of joining the Institute. This includes students services, a dedicated international officer as a central point of contact and support, the Institute’s library service and supports, and the personal

Policy Identifier: English Language Policy

tutor system to ensure the provision of needs-based support associated with progression through a programme of study.

8. Procedure for Evidencing English Language Proficiency

- 8.1 Applicants must submit evidence of English language proficiency as part of their application. See Access, Admission and Transfer Policy. Evidence must satisfy the requirements specified in appendix 1.
- 8.2 Where a conditional offer is made on the basis of evidence of English language proficiency yet to be provided, this must be submitted by the applicant via the specified submission route outlined in the conditional offer and by the specified deadline. Where this is not provided by the deadline, the offer will be considered withdrawn.
- 8.3 Evidence of English language proficiency will be assessed by the Institute as part of the admissions process.
- 8.4 Applicants are responsible for ensuring their application is complete, accurate, submitted via the required platform and satisfies all documentation authentication requirements.

9. Appeals

- 9.1 An applicant can appeal a decision where the evidence of English language proficiency they are presenting for admissions purposes is not accepted by the Institute and the applicant accurately identifies procedural failings on the part of the Institute. Disagreement with an admissions decision in itself is not suitable grounds for appeal.
- 9.2 The appeal should be submitted to the Admissions Officer for consideration by the Assistant Registrar who will determine if there is evidence of procedural failings accurately identified by the applicant. In such cases the appeal will be escalated to the Registrar and Vice President for Academic Affairs for consideration. Where there is no evidence of procedural failings, the applicant will be advised that the appeal application has been rejected.
- 9.3 The outcome of an appeal will be communicated to the applicant, normally within 10 working days of the appeal being accepted.

10. Responsibility

- 10.1 The responsibility for this policy lies with the Registrar/ Vice President Academic Affairs.

Appendix 1 Procedures for English Language Provision

Accepted English language proficiency tests

1. All applicants to MIE are required to provide official evidence of proficiency in the English language.
2. The following international English language proficiency tests are accepted by MIE for the purpose of admissions:
 - International English Language Testing System (IELTS Academic)
 - Duolingo English Test³
 - Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)
 - Cambridge English Qualifications
 - Pearson English International Certification
3. English language proficiency tests scores must be dated within two years prior to the start of your course.
4. Minimum scores in these tests are benchmarked according to the descriptions of language proficiency contained in the Council of Europe's *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* (CEFR).
5. Applicants for postgraduate courses who have completed a primary degree through the medium of English may request an exemption from the requirement to present an English proficiency qualification. Exemptions will only be considered if the application is otherwise complete and submitted. The applicant must provide a formal document from the awarding institution clearly stating their prior degree was delivered wholly through English. Requests for exemption should be made to the course leader. Exemption requests approved by the course leader will be considered by the Admissions Team.
6. Specified High School/Secondary Examinations are accepted in lieu of English language proficiency tests English Language Requirements.

7. The table below shows the standardised English proficiency tests accepted at MIE, with scores required divided into bands. There are two distinct requirement bands: Band B (Standard Entry) and Band C (Higher Entry). Every course will be associated with one of these bands, as set out in the course proposal or subsequent approval by Academic Council, the MIE Associated College Degrees Committee (ACDC), the Undergraduate/Graduate Studies Committee and University Council. Specific rationale must be advanced for a course to adopt the Higher Entry band. The band required depends on the course or programme being applied for and is identified on the relevant course / programme page.

8. MIE's standard English requirements for undergraduate and postgraduate admissions are:

- International English Language Testing System (IELTS)

- Band B (Standard Entry): Minimum overall score of 6.5, no individual band below 6.
- Band C (Higher Entry): Minimum overall score of 7.0, no individual band below 7

- Duolingo English Test

- Band B (Standard Entry): Minimum overall score of 120, no individual sub-scores below 100.
- Band C (Higher Entry): Minimum overall score of 130, no individual sub-scores below 110.

- Test of English as a Foreign Language internet-based Test (TOEFL iBT)

- Band B (Standard Entry): Minimum overall score of 90 with a minimum score in writing of 21.
- Band C (Higher Entry): Minimum overall score of 100 with a minimum score in writing of 23.

- Cambridge English Qualifications

- Band B (Standard Entry): Minimum overall score of 180 on the Cambridge English scale, i.e. minimum Grade C in Advanced or Proficiency Certificate, no individual score below 170.

Policy Identifier: English Language Policy

- Band C (Higher Entry): Minimum overall score of 190 on the Cambridge English scale, i.e. minimum Grade C in Advanced or Proficiency Certificate, no individual score below 180.

- PTE Academic - Pearson English International Certification

- Band B (Standard Entry): Minimum overall score of 6369, no section scores below 59.
- Band C (Higher Entry): Minimum overall score of 75, no section scores below 69.

9. The following 2nd level qualifications will also be accepted as evidence of proficiency in the English language:

Irish Leaving Certificate	A grade 6 or better in Ordinary or Higher Level English
GCSE	A grade C/5 or better in English Language
European Baccaalaureate	English: 6 in your 1st language, or in 1st or 2nd Foreign Language
QQI/FET	Pass in Communications module (5N0690)
French Baccaalaureate	Students presenting the OIB or International Option of the French Baccaalaureate may satisfy the English language requirement by achieving a minimum of 12 (where the coefficient is greater than 5) in English Language and Literature. In cases where the coefficient is less than 5, a minimum result of 14 will be required.
International Baccaalaureate	English A1, A2 or B: SL4 if presenting IB through English, HL5 if presenting through French or Spanish.
US High School Curriculum	A grade C in English taken in final year. This applies to students who have completed their full second level education at a US High School.
Hong Kong, HKDSE	Level 4 or better in English Language.

Policy Identifier: English Language Policy

Malaysia, SPM	Grade C or better in English 1119
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10. An applicant can appeal a decision where the qualifications they are presenting for admissions purposes is not recognised by MIE. The appeal should be submitted to the Admissions Officer, for review by the Assistant Registrar, in the first instance, and that outcome of the appeal can be escalated, if required, to Registrar / VP of Academic Affairs.

International Foundation Programme requirements

11. To be eligible for the IFP, if progressing to a Trinity College Dublin course with Standard Entry English language requirement (Band B) applicants must meet the eligibility criteria for admissions and present evidence of English language proficiency tests in Band A – Pre sessional entry 1 as follows:

- International English Language Testing System (IELTS)

Minimum overall score of 5.0, score in 5.0 for Writing and 4.5 in other bands

- Duolingo English Test

Minimum overall score of 80, score 80 in Literacy and 65 in other sub-scores

- Test of English as a Foreign Language internet-based Test (TOEFL iBT)

Minimum overall score of 64 and each individual section score of 16

- Cambridge English Qualifications

Minimum overall score of 160, and no score below 150

- Pearson English International Certification

Minimum overall score of 45, each section score of 40

12. To be eligible for the IFP, if progressing to a Trinity College Dublin course with Higher Entry English language requirement (Band C) applicants must meet the eligibility criteria for admissions and present evidence of English language proficiency tests in Band A – Pre-sessional entry 2 as follows:

- International English Language Testing System (IELTS)

Minimum overall score of 6.0, and each band score of 5.5

- Duolingo English Test

Minimum overall score of 105, and each individual sub-score of 90

- Test of English as a Foreign Language internet-based Test (TOEFL iBT)

Minimum overall score of 72, each individual section of 18

Policy Identifier: English Language Policy

- Cambridge English Qualifications

Minimum overall score of 170, and no score below 165

- Pearson English International Certification

Minimum overall score of 59, each section score of 50 or better

Policy Identifier: English Language Policy

English Language Requirements Bands Table

MIE Bands	Course Entry	IELTS Academic	Duolingo English Test	TOEFL iBT	Cambridge Advanced or Proficiency	PTE Academic (Pearson)
Band A (pre-sessional entry 1)	Trinity International Foundation Programme	5.0 overall 5.0 Writing 4.5 in other bands	80 overall 80 in Literacy 65 in other subscores	64 overall 16 in each section	160 overall No score below 150	45 overall 40 in each section
Band A (pre-sessional entry 2)	Trinity International Foundation Programme specified higher requirements	6.0 overall 5.5 in each band	105 overall 90 in each subscore	72 overall 18 in each section	170 overall No score below 165	59 overall 50 in each section
Band B (standard entry)	UG & PG Standard requirements (L8 & 9 in MIE, unless specified otherwise)	6.5 overall 6.0 in each band	120 overall 100 in each subscore	90 overall 21 in each section	180 overall No score below 170	69 overall 59 in each section
Band C (Higher entry)	UG & PG Higher-than-standard-requirements (where explicitly indicated)	7.0 overall 6.5 in each band	130 overall 110 in each subscore	100 overall 23 in each section	190 overall No score below 180	75 overall 69 in each section

