



# Admissions Policy - English Language Proficiency

Policy Area: Governance

Approval: Chairperson, Board of Directors

Signature:

Date:

## 1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Admissions Policy – English Language Proficiency will address the levels of English language proficiency that applicants will be required to demonstrate to gain admission to a Sheridan course studied in English; ie. the language of instruction and assessment is primarily English (recognising that at some stage in the future in some units and research ancient or modern languages will be considered).

This policy applies to domestic and international applicants seeking admission to Sheridan awards and should be used by staff who make decisions on those applications. Applicants may be seeking admission on the basis of completed secondary or tertiary study or their maturity.

## 2. RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Initial approval of policy and later amendments:	Board of Directors
Amendment of procedures consistent with the policy:	Director of Student Services
Distribution of policy:	Executive Principal
Implementation of policy:	Executive Principal, Director of Student Services, Registrar
Monitoring and compliance of policy:	Academic Council, Executive Principal, Director of Student Services Registrar
Evaluation and recommendations for amendments:	Academic Council, Executive Principal, Director of Student Services, Registrar

## 3. BACKGROUND

Sheridan offers admission to its courses to applicants from a broad range of academic, cultural and language backgrounds. In some units or some courses students may study ancient or modern languages, hence the use of the word “primarily” below.

Sheridan may receive applications from ...

- Domestic applicants with English-speaking (ESB) or Non-English-speaking (NESB) backgrounds for admission to courses studied primarily in English;
- International applicants with English-speaking (ESB) or Non-English-speaking (NESB) backgrounds for admission to courses studied primarily in English;

In respect of International applicants, the National Code obliges Sheridan to provide such applicants with information about the minimum level of English language proficiency required for an applicant to be admitted to a Sheridan course. Sheridan must ensure that such an applicant’s English language

proficiency is appropriate for the course to which admission is sought by implementing documented procedures, obtaining evidence that assessment of the overseas student's proficiency in English has been carried out by a suitably qualified person and ensuring this evidence meets the requirements of the Migration Regulations.

In the HEPCAT files reported to DEEWR information on the following elements is required:

[320 - Location code of permanent home residence](#)

[346 - Country of birth code](#)

[347 - Year of arrival in Australia](#)

[348 - Language spoken at home code](#)

[358 - Citizen/resident indicator](#)

The Sheridan Enrolment forms collect this information and from it the administration can infer which applicants may need to demonstrate their English language proficiency in order for their application for admission to be considered. Moreover, Sheridan administration will be made aware that, on admission, these students may require additional academic support during their studies.

Given the commitment of Sheridan to have standards comparable to those of Australian universities, the substance of this policy is drawn from the guide of the NSW Universities Admissions Centre.

#### 4. DEFINITIONS

**ESB** means English-speaking background

**NESB** means non-English-speaking background

**AQF** means the Australian Qualifications Framework

**language** means the language of instruction for a unit, unless otherwise indicated, noting that some units involve study in other languages

**Domestic applicant** means an applicant who is an Australian citizen or permanent resident

**International applicant** means an applicant who is NOT an Australian citizen or permanent resident

**assessable qualification** means a formal qualification which can be assessed as a basis for admission to any Sheridan course

**study period** means the five-week period in which a student may be enrolled for study in an Sheridan course, or another period designated for specific units.

**National Code** means the "National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students", Australian Government (2007)

**IELTS** means International English Language Testing System – Academic version only

**HEPCAT** means a data reporting software package supplied by DEEWR

**DEEWR** means the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

## 5. PRINCIPLES

Sheridan is committed to exercising a duty of care towards applicants by setting requirements for admission to courses at levels that maximise the likelihood of enrolled students completing their course successfully.

## 6. POLICY CONTENT

### 6.1. Countries using the English language in education deemed comparable to Australia

Sheridan deems the level of English language used in education in the following countries to be acceptable for consideration for admission to a Sheridan course:

- American Samoa
- Australia
- Canada
- Fiji
- Ireland
- Kenya
- New Zealand
- Papua New Guinea
- Singapore
- Solomon Islands
- South Africa (institutions w/ English as the language of instruction)
- United Kingdom (including Northern Ireland)
- United States of America
- Zambia

### 6.2. Assessable qualifications

6.2.1. For the purposes of assessing the level of English Language proficiency of an applicant for admission to a Sheridan course, assessable qualifications based on study in English from the countries in 6.1 include:

- completion of WACE with scaled marks of at least 50 in ATAR English or ATAR Literature.
- a certificate of successful completion of senior secondary studies, comparable with the WA Certificate of Education (WACE);
- a transcript attesting to successful completion of at least one full year of Australian or comparable higher education studies;
- a transcript attesting to successful completion of an AQF diploma or advanced diploma;
- a transcript attesting to successful completion of Australian or comparable non-award postsecondary level studies or tertiary preparation courses with full-time equivalence of one year.
- A certificate of successful completion of a university preparation course where the course has been evaluated by Sheridan academic staff and approved by the Executive Principal.

6.2.2. If an applicant was born in one of the countries in 6.1 AND undertook one of the following qualifications based on study in English in one of the countries in 6.1, Sheridan will also accept the following qualifications for the purposes of assessing the level of English language proficiency of an applicant for admission to a Sheridan course:

- a transcript attesting to satisfactory completion of other post-secondary studies, including a VET Diploma or Advanced Diploma
- a certificate of results in a Special Tertiary Admission Test (STAT) with a minimum score of 140 in Written English;
- a record of successful studies undertaken through professional organisations, including hospital-based training, armed forces training, and theological training.

6.2.3. The Sheridan Executive Principal has the authority to deem other qualifications assessable for the purposes of assessing the level of English language proficiency of an applicant for admission to a Sheridan course on a case-by-case basis and such decisions are not to be taken as precedent.

- 6.2.4. For the purposes of assessing the level of English proficiency of an applicant for admission to a Sheridan course, assessable qualifications must have been completed within five (5) years prior to the start of the proposed commencing study period in the Sheridan course.
- 6.2.5. The five (5) year period in 6.2.4 may be extended by the Executive Principal when the applicant can provide evidence that they have spent a significant portion of the period since successfully completing the course requirements for the qualification living and working in one of the countries listed in 6.1.

**6.3. Proof of the English language proficiency by applicants**

- 6.3.1. Taking account of the proficiency levels set in 6.4, applicants who:
  - have an assessable qualification (see 6.2) that was undertaken solely in English in one of the countries listed in 6.1 OR
  - have been resident in Australia with English being the language spoken at home and at work for ten (10) or more years

are NOT required to provide proof of English language proficiency for consideration for admission to a Sheridan course.

- 6.3.2. Taking account of the proficiency levels set in 6.4, applicants who
  - do NOT have an assessable qualification (see 6.2) that was undertaken solely in English from one of the countries listed in 6.1 AND
  - have NOT been resident in Australia with English being the language spoken at home and at work for at least ten (10) years

MUST provide proof of English language proficiency for consideration for admission to a Sheridan course.

- 6.3.3. Applicants who dispute the need for them to prove their English language proficiency may submit their objection in writing to Sheridan. The Registrar shall consult the Director of Student Services to formulate an agreed response to the applicant. The Registrar shall convey the agreed response to the applicant.
- 6.3.4. The Dean of a School or Faculty, in consultation with the Director of Student Services and the Executive Principal, has the authority in rare circumstances to waive or vary the requirement for proof of English language proficiency as part of the admission process. On such occasions the Dean will record the action on the relevant Sheridan file.
- 6.3.5. The level of English language proficiency required for admission to a Sheridan course may vary with the level of the qualification for which the course prepares the student.

**6.4. Minimum Levels of English language proficiency for admission to Sheridan courses**

- 6.4.1. Applicants who meet the conditions in 6.3.2 must normally provide proof of English language proficiency completed no longer than 2 years prior to the commencement of the proposed first study period. Normally proof of English language proficiency will be provided by the submission of the original results of an IELTS test – Academic Version.
- 6.4.2. Applications for admission to Diploma or Bachelor degree courses (including Honours) will be considered if the applicant can demonstrate English language proficiency at least at the following level (or equivalent):

English Language Proficiency Tests	Score
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Academic IELTS	6.0 (no individual band less than 6.0)
TOEFL – Paper based	550 (with the Test of Written English 5)
TOEFL – Internet based	85 (no band less than 20)
Pearson Test of English (Academic)	57 (no band less than 50)
Australian Matriculation English	Pass
GCE 'O' level	C6 or better
Cambridge 1119	C6 or better
Cambridge Certificate in Advanced English	C or better
Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English	C or better
ATAR	Pass in English or English Literature
ATAR ESL	60%
Other	For other acceptable qualifications, contact the office.

- 6.4.3. Applications for admission to Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma or Master courses will be considered if the applicant can demonstrate English Language proficiency at least at the following level (or equivalent):

English Language Proficiency Tests	Score
Academic IELTS	6.5 (with individual reading and writing bands of no less than 6.5 and no other individual band less than 6.0)
TOEFL – Paper based	550 (with the Test of Written English 5)
TOEFL – Internet based	86 (no band less than 20)
Pearson Test of English (Academic)	58 (no band less than 50)
Other	For other acceptable qualifications, contact the office.

- 6.4.4. Individual program requirements for English language must also be met.
- 6.4.5. Applications for admission to Doctoral courses will be considered if the applicant can demonstrate English language proficiency at least at the following level (or equivalent): **IELTS with no individual band below 7.0**

## 6.5. Alternative methods of proving English language proficiency

- 6.5.1. If the proof of English language proficiency for admission is provided by means other than the results of an English language proficiency test listed in clause 6.4.3, the Dean of a School or Faculty, in consultation with the Director of Student Services, has the authority to determine the acceptability of the alternative proof, both in content and level.
- 6.5.2. If proof of English language proficiency other than the results of an English language proficiency test listed in clause 6.4.3 is provided or the requirement for proof is waived or varied, the Academic Principal, in consultation with the relevant Dean, may require

the applicant to achieve a prescribed level of academic progress after the applicant commences study in order for the student to be permitted to continue studying.

#### **6.6. Discretion to request proof of English language proficiency**

- 6.6.1. When an applicant for admission is not required to prove their level of English language proficiency under this policy but Sheridan is concerned about their level of proficiency, Sheridan may exercise its duty of care towards the applicant by requesting the applicant to demonstrate their level of English language proficiency in order to assess the level of academic support the applicant may require following admission and the likelihood of the applicant coping satisfactorily with study in the course. Sheridan must advise the applicant that, whatever their level of English language proficiency, it will not affect the assessment of their application for admission to the course.
- 6.6.2. Should the applicant decline the request to demonstrate their level of English language proficiency, the campus shall process the application for admission based on the information available.

### **7. PROCEDURES**

#### **7.1. Determination of need for a course applicant to prove English language proficiency**

- 7.1.1. The key fields on the Sheridan application form for determining if the applicant is required to prove English language proficiency in order to be considered for admission are the following:
- citizenship
  - country of birth
  - location of permanent home residence
  - language spoken at home
  - year of arrival in Australia
  - courses of study and duration of each course
  - year of completion of each course
  - country and language in which study for each course was undertaken
- 7.1.2. The Registrar, in consultation with the Director of Student Services, is authorised to process applications for admission to Sheridan coursework and research programs on behalf of Sheridan. Consequently they have the authority to determine whether an applicant is required to prove their English language proficiency under this policy.

#### **7.2. Proof of English language proficiency by international students**

- 7.2.1. When in receipt of an application for admission by an international student the Registrar shall determine if the applicant is required to provide proof of their English language proficiency and, if so, review the documents with the application for an original result notice for an English language proficiency test listed in clause 6.4.3.
- 7.2.2. If the international applicant is required to prove their English language proficiency and/or provide an original result notice from an English language proficiency test listed in clause 6.4.3, the Registrar shall request the applicant to undertake such a test and/or provide an original result notice. In some cases, a conditional letter of offer and Confirmation of Enrolment may be granted, however, both documents will state that a condition of enrolment is that the applicant provide an original result notice from an English language proficiency test which meets the stated Sheridan entry requirements.
- 7.2.3. When all necessary documentation for admission to a coursework or research program has been considered and the Registrar is at the point of making a decision concerning

admission or otherwise, the Registrar shall consult the Director of Student Services so that an agreed collaborative decision is made concerning eligibility of the applicant for admission.

### 7.3. Proof of English language proficiency by domestic applicants for admission to a coursework or research program

- 7.3.1. When considering an application for admission the Registrar shall determine if the applicant needs to be requested to demonstrate their level of English language proficiency by applying Sections 6.1-6.3 of this policy before the application can be considered further.
- 7.3.2. If the Registrar determines the applicant must demonstrate their level of English language proficiency, the Registrar will so advise the applicant and provide information about the administration of an English language proficiency test listed in clause 6.4.3 in the state in which the applicant resides.
- 7.3.3. In the information about the basis for admission of a student provided to Sheridan the Registrar shall include information about the level of English language proficiency of the applicant or information about the alternative entry requirements approved for the applicant.

## 8. APPENDIX: DOCUMENT HISTORY AND VERSION CONTROL RECORD

<b>Document Title:</b>	Admissions Policy - English Language Proficiency
<b>Source Documents:</b>	NSW Universities Admissions Centre.
<b>Associated Internal Documents:</b>	SIHE Admissions Policy SIHE Student Handbook SIHE Credit Transfer and RPL Policy
<b>Associated External Documents</b>	The National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007; Higher Education Standards Framework 2015
<b>Authorised Officer:</b>	Chairperson, Board of Directors
<b>Approved by:</b>	Mr Michael Smith
<b>Date of Approval:</b>	02 Mar 2013
<b>Next Review Before:</b>	Dec 2017

Version Number	Version Date	Authorised Officer	Amendment Details
0.01	30 May 2011	N/A	Draft prepared for Sheridan College and Vose College
0.02	29 Jan 2013	N/A	Revised for Sheridan College Board of Directors
1.00	02 Mar 2013	Chairperson, Board of Directors	Submitted to TEQSA for Sheridan College HEP registration: Attachment 6.3e Admissions Policy – English Language Proficiency
1.01	09 May 2014	Chairperson, Board of Directors	Revised for Sheridan College to comply with TEQSA requirements.

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1.02	16 Dec 2014	Chairperson, Board of Directors	Change to version control box
1.03	15 Sep 2014	Chairperson, Board of Directors	Correction of bullet numbering
1.04	12 Mar 2019	Chairperson, Board of Directors	References to "College Council" changed to "Academic Council". References to "Principal" changed to "Executive Principal" Minor text changes to improve clarity TOEFL iBT scores raised to reflect recent research on score equivalency with IELTS
2.00	25 May 2021	Chairperson, Board of Directors	Updated with new name and logo; corrections to reflect revised administrative procedures
2.01	13 Jun 2022	Chairperson, Board of Directors	Revisions following review by Student Services and Academic Council