

## IOB English Language Policy

|                     |                 |                          |             |                            |            |
|---------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-------------|----------------------------|------------|
| <b>Policy Owner</b> | <b>Registry</b> | <b>Approval and body</b> | <b>date</b> | <b>IOB Programme Board</b> | <b>UCD</b> |
|                     |                 |                          |             | <b>19 March 2025</b>       |            |

### 1. Purpose

IOB admits students to programmes from NFQ level 7 to level 9 and at various stages within these programmes. Teaching in IOB is primarily through the medium of English; applicants must demonstrate a high level of competence in the English language to be admitted.

The purpose of this English Language Policy is to outline IOB's requirements and standards for evaluating the English language ability of all those seeking admission to IOB and the IOB's English language supports for international applicants and learners. This policy reflects IOB's commitment to transparency, quality, and the academic success of international applicants in their programmes of study.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the IOB's Admissions Policy<sup>1</sup> and other policies and procedures relevant to the admissions process. It also supports IOB's compliance with the QQI Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Higher Education to International Learners.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://iob.ie/info/student-info#exams-and-regulations>

<sup>2</sup> [iem-01-he-code-of-practice-october-2023.pdf](#)

## **2. Definitions**

### **2.1 International Learner**

An international learner is defined by the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012<sup>3</sup> as 'as a person who is not an Irish citizen but is lawfully in the state primarily to receive education and training' and for whom English is frequently an additional language requirement for admission.

### **2.2 Native Speaker**

The definition of a native speaker, within the context of this policy, is an applicant for whom English is their first language.

### **2.3 International Education Mark (IEM)**

The International Education Mark (IEM) is defined as a statutory quality mark (TrustEd Ireland) and is part of a suite of legislative measures designed to protect international learners, as defined under the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012. It is awarded to Higher Education and English Language institutions who demonstrate that they meet the national standards to ensure a quality experience for international learners from pre-enrolment through to the completion of their studies.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012

<sup>4</sup> For further detail on how the definition of an international learner is to be applied for the purpose of the International Education Mark, refer to QQI's 'Policy on Authorisation to use the International Education Mark' [https://www.qqi.ie/sites/default/files/2024-01/policy-on-authorisation-to-use-the-international-education-mark\\_0.pdf](https://www.qqi.ie/sites/default/files/2024-01/policy-on-authorisation-to-use-the-international-education-mark_0.pdf)

## **2.4 Quality and Qualifications Ireland**

Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) is the state agency responsible for promoting the quality, integrity and reputation of Ireland's further and higher education system.

## **3. Scope**

This policy applies to all applicants and students of IOB, including International learners to whom the IEM is applicable.

## **4. Principles**

IOB has five core values driving our culture; Learner and Member Focused; Collaboration; Accountability and Integrity; Innovation and People, Diversity and Inclusion.

In line with these values, the University welcomes applicants from a wide variety of backgrounds. Teaching in IOB is through the medium of English. Therefore, all applicants are required to demonstrate a high level of competence in the English language.

IOB's minimum English language requirements are approved by the IOB UCD Programmes Board and apply to all applicants and all levels of study. These may be subject to change and are published on the IOB website.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> [Info | IOB](#)

## 5. Objectives

5.1 Support the selection of applicants who demonstrate the capacity to engage with and benefit from the unique IOB educational experience, thereby promoting a diverse student community.

5.2 Acknowledge that admitting applicants who do not meet the necessary English language proficiency thresholds could hinder their chances of success in their chosen programme.

5.3 Promote English proficiency by supporting students in achieving a high level of English proficiency necessary for academic success.

5.4 Encourage inclusivity by creating an inclusive environment where all members of the IOB community are supported in their programme of study and feel comfortable communicating in English.

## 6. English Language Requirements

6.1 All applicants, whether international applicants or otherwise, must demonstrate English competency.

6.2 For undergraduate entry, those presenting Irish school leaving examinations must have attained at least a grade H7/O6 in English in the Leaving Certificate. Native English speakers presenting other school leaving qualifications, attained through English, must meet the specified equivalent grade.

For non-native speakers who have achieved their school leaving qualification through English, please see Appendix One for exemptions to this English Language Policy.

6.3 At graduate level, native speakers who have taken their third level degree through English do not need to present further proof of English.

For non-native speakers who have achieved their undergraduate or postgraduate award through English, please see Appendix One for exemptions to this English Language Policy.

6.4 International applicants who are not native speakers must present proof of English competency through one of the acceptable English language tests listed at [Info | IOB](#).

These requirements apply to undergraduate and postgraduate applicants and see Appendix One for approved exemptions.

6.5 Acceptable English language tests are reviewed for each academic session and will apply for entry in the relevant year. These may be subject to change and are published on the IOB website.

## **7. Roles and responsibilities**

7.1 IOB UCD Programme Board, on behalf of IOB is responsible for approving admissions policies, procedures and processes that include this English Language policy.

7.2 IOB – Registry Admissions are responsible for ensuring that this policy is operated fairly and consistently in recruitment and student admissions, in line with IOB's strategic aims, sectoral and legislative requirements in relation to the IEM.

7.3 Students are expected to actively engage in available language support services and take responsibility for their own language development.

## **9. Related documents**

### **Policy**

UCD's Academic [Regulations and Policy – UCD Current Students](#)

IOB's Admission Policy [Info | IOB](#)

### **Links**

QQI Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Higher Education to International Learners. [iem-01-he-code-of-practice-october-2023.pdf](#)

[Qualifications and Quality Assurance \(Education and Training\) Act 2012](#)

<https://www.ucd.ie/cegl/programmes/pathways/pathways-presessional/>

[https://www.ucd.ie/cegl/programmes/glm/placement\\_tests/](https://www.ucd.ie/cegl/programmes/glm/placement_tests/)

<https://www.ucd.ie/quality/ucdqualityframework/>

## 9. Date of Next Review

February 2027

## 10. Version history

| Version | Date       | Description                                                                                                                    | Author                      |
|---------|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1.0     | 10/2/25    | Creation of policy in line with UCD's new English Language Policy for approval at IOB's IOB UCD Programme Board in March 2025. | IOB Dean and IOB Registrar. |
| 1.1     | 25/03/2026 | Updated Exemptions*                                                                                                            | IOB Registrar               |

# Appendix One\*

English Language Policy to exclude from IOB's English language requirements (IELTS, TOEFL etc.) those who have completed the whole of their undergraduate degree in a native, English-speaking country as follows:

| Country          | Approved (UCD PB)/Not Yet Approved | Comments   |
|------------------|------------------------------------|------------|
| UK               | Approved                           | IOB/UCD PB |
| Northern Ireland | Approved                           | IOB/UCD PB |
| Wales            | Approved                           | IOB/UCD PB |

|             |                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-------------|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Scotland    | Approved             | IOB/UCD PB                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Ireland     | Approved             | IOB/UCD PB                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Malta       | Approved             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Netherlands | Approved             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| India       | Approved with caveat | <p>If award achieved from a provincial (non-state) university, IOB reserves the right to apply this English Language Policy and may seek documentation thereto.</p> <p>All other state and private universities are exempt i.e. English Language does not apply as the awards are achieved through the medium of English.</p> |
| Pakistan    | Approved with Caveat | <p>If award achieved from a provincial (non-state) university, IOB reserves the right to apply this English Language Policy and may seek documentation thereto.</p> <p>All other state and private universities are exempt i.e. English Language does not apply as the awards are achieved through the medium of English.</p> |
| Philippines | Approved             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Singapore   | Approved             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

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|---------------------|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Hong Kong           | Approved | <p>If award achieved from a provincial (non-state) university, IOB reserves the right to apply this English Language Policy and may seek documentation thereto.</p> <p>All other state and private universities are exempt i.e. English Language does not apply as the awards are achieved through the medium of English.</p> |
| Australia           | Approved |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| New Zealand         | Approved |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Fiji                | Approved |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Papua New Guinea    | Approved |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Solomon Islands     | Approved |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| USA                 | Approved |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Canada              | Approved |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Jamaica             | Approved |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Bahamas             | Approved |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Barbados            | Approved |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Trinidad and Tobago | Approved |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Antigua/ Barbuda    | Approved |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Nigeria             | Approved |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

|                                  |          |  |
|----------------------------------|----------|--|
| South Africa                     | Approved |  |
| Kenya                            | Approved |  |
| Ghana                            | Approved |  |
| Uganda                           | Approved |  |
| Zimbabwe                         | Approved |  |
| Zambia                           | Approved |  |
| Botswana                         | Approved |  |
| Sierra Leone                     | Approved |  |
| Dominica                         | Approved |  |
| Grenada                          | Approved |  |
| Belize                           | Approved |  |
| Guyana                           | Approved |  |
| St Kitts and Nevis               | Approved |  |
| St Lucia                         | Approved |  |
| St Vincent and the<br>Grenadines | Approved |  |