

English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students Language Proficiency Placement Test Policy

Introduction

The Australian Academy of Commerce (AAC) provides English language courses designed to cater to diverse linguistic backgrounds, educational experiences, and student objectives. To ensure students are placed in the appropriate level of learning, AAC conducts Language Proficiency Placement Tests before course commencement. These tests assess students' English proficiency and determine the most suitable course and level for their learning needs.

This policy outlines the procedures for administering and evaluating placement tests to maintain academic integrity and support student success in language acquisition.

Purpose

This policy aims to:

- Establish clear guidelines for conducting English language proficiency placement tests.
- Ensure students are placed in appropriate course level based on their English proficiency.
- Align placement tests with internationally recognised language assessment standards.
- Maintain fairness, consistency and accuracy in evaluating student placement.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All students enrolling in AAC's ELICOS programs,
- AAC academic staff responsible for administering and assessing placement tests.
- The Director of Studies (DoS) ELICOS overseeing student placement decisions.

Policy Statement

AAC required all new ELICOS students to undertake Language Proficiency Placement test prior enrolment to ensure:

- Students are placed in the appropriate level of study.
- Language skills are assessed fairly and consistently.
- Course content is delivered at a level suitable for student comprehension and progression.
- Assessment results guide individualised learning support.

AAC will:

- Conduct standardised placement tests for all incoming students.
- Use internationally recognised assessment methods for fair evaluation.
- Ensure placement tests align with curriculum requirements.

- Provide students with their placement results and an opportunity to discuss their level with academic staff if necessary.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Placement Test	An assessment used to determine a student's English proficiency level before course commencement.
General English (GE)	An English language course designed for students at Beginner to Advanced levels.
English for Academic Purposes (EAP)	A course focusing on academic language skills, suitable for students at Upper-Intermediate to Advanced levels.
IELTS Preparation	A course aimed at preparing students for the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) exam.
Marking Rubric	A standardised assessment tool used to evaluate student performance in writing, speaking, listening, and reading skills.

References

- ESOS Act 2000
- ELICOS Standards 2018
- ESOS National Code 2018; Specifically, Standard 2 and 8

AAC Language Proficiency Placements Tests Procedure

1. Administering the Placement Test

To address individual student needs, it is necessary that students are placed in the most appropriate level of learning, and the most suitable course available, to meet these needs. AAC has two ELICOS Language Proficiency Tests:

- General English
- English for Academic Purposes

All students take a Language Proficiency Placement Test upon enrolment.

- The test consists of the four core language skills: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing.
- The test is conducted under supervised conditions, without external aids or electronic devices.
- A student has 30 minutes to complete the General English test and up to three hours to complete the EAP test.

2. Components of the Placement Test

General English Placement Test (Beginner – Advanced)

The General English Placement Test has four parts. Grammar is included to give a general overview of the student's abilities, while the four Macro-Skills of Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing are included as they are the four skills taught that also align with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, and our Certification.

- **Part 1: Grammar** – 50 multiple-choice questions assessing grammatical accuracy.
- **Part 2: Reading** – 30 comprehension questions based on IELTS-style texts.
- **Part 3: Writing** – A letter-writing task aligned with General Training IELTS Task 1.
- **Part 4: Listening & Speaking** – A structured interview assessing oral communication skills.

English for Academic Purposes (EAP) Placement Test (Upper-Intermediate – Advanced)

A student may enter the EAP or IELTS course at AAC in three ways:

- as a pathway from Upper-intermediate or Advanced General English
- as a pathway from Upper-intermediate or Advanced IELTS Preparation
- as a newly recruited student who wishes to take the course

A student who has graduated from the appropriate level of Upper-intermediate General English is not required to take the EAP Placement Test. However, if a student is new to AAC and wishes to undertake the EAP course, it is a requirement for them to take the EAP Language Proficiency Placement Test to assess whether they have the Critical Skills necessary for the course.

The EAP Placement Test has three parts:

- **Part 1: Academic Skills** – 50 multiple-choice questions on verb usage, paraphrasing, essay structures, and summarisation.
- **Part 2: Essay Writing** – A formal essay task similar to an IELTS Academic Task 2.
- **Part 3: Listening & Speaking** – A structured interview following IELTS Speaking Test format.

IELTS Students

An existing AAC student who has graduated from General English Intermediate will be able to enter the IELTS Preparation course whereas a new student who wishes to undertake the course is required to take the General English Placement Test to ascertain whether their level of General English is adequate.

3. Assessments and Results

General English Placement Test (Beginner – Advanced)

Each part of the test may result in differing levels being determined for a student which is where it is the Director of Studies role to determine an average level based on their observations.

The Grammar and Reading parts are both relatively easy to determine a score using an Answer Key although the Writing, Listening and Speaking parts rely on Marking rubrics and a teacher's professional judgement.

- **General English Placement Test Answer Key:** The Grammar and Reading parts of the test are prescriptive.

- **Writing Marking Rubric:** This rubric is based on a published IELTS Band Score Writing Marking guide although the headings have been changed to reflect the recommended corresponding General English level.
- **Speaking and Listening Marking Rubric:** This rubric is based on a published IELTS Band Score Writing Marking guide although the headings have been changed to reflect the recommended corresponding General English level. Listening and Speaking does not have a marked score as this part of the test is an interview and is judgement based on the conversation that ensues.

The highest level recommended for all three of these skills is Upper-intermediate although in rare circumstances a student may be Advanced upon entry to the school.

English for Academic Purposes (EAP) Placement Test (Upper-Intermediate – Advanced)

The Academic Skills part is determined using an Answer Key although the Writing, Listening and Speaking parts rely on Marking rubrics and a teacher's professional judgement.

- **EAP Placement Test Answer Key:** The Academic Skills parts of the test are prescriptive.
- **Writing Marking Rubric:** This rubric is based on a published IELTS Band Score Writing Marking guide although the headings have been changed to reflect whether a student should undertake General English rather than EAP. In this case, the student is required to take the GE Placement Test. Two sections of the Marking guide only suggest whether the student could be considered for EAP, where it is up to the Academic co-ordinator to determine placement based on the Academic Skills and Listening and Speaking sections.
- **Speaking and Listening Marking Rubric:** This rubric is based on a published IELTS Band Score Speaking Marking guide although the headings have been changed to reflect whether a student should be undertaking General English rather than EAP. In this case, the student is required to take the GE Placement Test. Listening and Speaking is not marked as this part of the test is an interview and judgement is based on the conversation that ensues.

4. Student Placement and Course Entry

- **General English:** Students are placed according to their overall language proficiency.
- **IELTS Preparation:** Entry is granted to students who score at an appropriate level on the General English Placement Test.
- **EAP:** Students must meet minimum proficiency requirements in academic writing, reading, and critical thinking skills.

5. Documentation Requirements

The following records are maintained for each student:

- Placement Test with Answers
- Writing & Speaking Marking Rubrics
- Final Placement Decision Form
- Student Test Score Records

6. Appeal and Re-Assessment

If a student disagrees with their placement level, they may:

- Request a reassessment of their test results within five (5) business days of receiving their placement decision.
- Discuss their results with the Director of Studies (DoS) ELICOS.
- Undertake an alternative assessment at the discretion of AAC's academic staff.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
CEO	Oversee implementation and enforcement of the Language Placement Test Policy.
Compliance Officer	Ensure compliance with regulatory frameworks and conduct annual reviews.
Director of Studies (DoS) ELICOS	Oversee test administration, review results, and finalise placements.
Student Services Officer (SSO)	Assist with scheduling and test record maintenance.
Academic Staff	Administer placement tests, assess performance, and provide feedback to students.
Students	Complete the test under supervised conditions and follow placement recommendations.

Monitoring and Review

AAC's Language Proficiency Placement Test Policy is reviewed annually to reflect legislative changes and academic best practices

Version Control

Version	Date	Description	Approved by	Approval date	Author	Review date
V1.0	11 Mar 2025	ELICOS Language Proficiency Placement Test Policy	CEO	13 Mar 2025	DOS ELICOS	Mar 2026

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