

Heriot-Watt University – English Language Entry Requirements for Scottish Campuses

Regulation A3, paragraph 2.5 states that applicants to degree programmes “*whose native language is not English may be required to show by examination or by means of documentary or other evidence that he or she possesses sufficient competence in the use of the English language to enable him or her to carry out the work of the proposed course of study and profit by the instruction provided*”.

Applicants who are not nationals of a country recognised by the UKVI as being majority English speaking and who have not been educated previously in the English language must provide evidence of their English language ability to ensure that they can cope with the demands of a Heriot-Watt programme taught and assessed in English.

CEFR is the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages – for a student visa, students must be at the B2 level for University entry – at the lowest level, this is IELTS 5.5 overall with no individual test component lower than 5.5, Alternatively we can make our own assessment from other acceptable qualifications or evidence of previous study in English.

The standard requirement for entry to degree level study is a minimum of IELTS 6.0 or equivalent for Undergraduate study, IELTS 6.0 or equivalent for Postgraduate STEM and Design study or IELTS 6.0 with writing at 6.5 or equivalent for Postgraduate non-STEM study.

There are minor exceptions to this level, which have been set and agreed according to the linguistic demands of the intended programme of study.

Programme type	Minimum English requirement	Exceptions
Bachelor’s degree Accelerator Foundation one year programme	IELTS 5.0 (or equivalent) with no score lower than 4.5.	Must be a SELT
Degree accelerator four-year programmes	IELTS 5.5 overall with no score lower than 5.5	
Pre-Masters one year programme -	IELTS 5.5 overall with no score lower than 5.5	
Pre-Masters Accelerated four-month programme	IELTS 6.0 with no bands below 5.5.	
Undergraduate Programmes	IELTS 6.0 (or equivalent) No component lower than 5.5	Actuarial Science – IELTS 6.5 Languages (Int & trans) IELTS 6.5
Postgraduate STEM and Design programmes	IELTS 6.0 (or equivalent) No component lower than 5.5	Actuarial Science – IELTS 6.5
Postgraduate non-STEM programmes	IELTS 6.0 (or equivalent) No component lower than 5.5 with writing score no lower than 6.0	Languages (Interpreting & translation) – IELTS 7.0
Postgraduate Research	IELTS 6.5 (or equivalent) with no individual score lower than 6.0	

Student Visa requirements

Students wishing to enter the UK on a Student Visa can evidence their English Language ability through a SELT (Secure English Language Test).

However, as a HEI, **we can also make our own assessment** of a student's English ability for entry to **degree programmes** (UG, PGT, PGR), so acceptable/preferred alternatives to IELTS and the equivalent scores accepted are given in the table below (see above for exceptions):

Level	PTE Academic	TOEFL iBT	Cambridge (new)	Trinity ISE II	LanguageCert International ESOL SELT
Bachelor's Degree Accelerator Foundation one year programme	55 overall (minimum 50)	Not accepted /SELT required	N/A	N/A	B2: minimum of 25 in each of the 4 components
Degree accelerator four-year programmes	60 overall (minimum 59)	72 (Reading 18, Listening 17, Speaking 20, Writing 17)	N/A	N/A	B2: minimum of 28 in each of the 4 components
Pre-Masters one year programme -	60 overall (minimum 59)	72 (Reading 18, Listening 17, Speaking 20, Writing 17)	N/A	N/A	B2: minimum of 28 in each of the 4 components
Pre-Masters Accelerated four-month programme	65 overall (minimum 59)	79 (Reading 18, Listening 17, Speaking 20, Writing 21)	169-175	Pass in all components	B2: minimum of 33 in each of the 4 components
Undergraduate programmes	65 overall (minimum 59)	79 (including reading 18, listening 17, speaking 20, and writing 21)	169-175	Pass in all components	B2: minimum of 33 in each of the 4 components
Postgraduate STEM and Design programmes	65 overall (minimum 59)	79 (Reading 18, Listening 17, Speaking 20, Writing 21)	169-175	Pass in all components	B2: minimum of 33 in each of the 4 components
Postgraduate non-STEM programmes	65 overall (minimum 59 for reading, listening and speaking with minimum 63 in writing)	79 (Reading 18, Listening 17, Speaking 20, Writing 21)	169-175 with 175 in writing	Pass in all components	B2: minimum of 33 in the reading, listening and speaking components and 34 in the writing components
Postgraduate Research	68 overall with a minimum of 63 in each component	Overall score of 85, including reading 20, listening 19, speaking 20 and writing 21	176-184	N/A	N/A

Other acceptable alternatives for student visa requirements:

- Students from majority English speaking countries.
- Students who have studied in majority English speaking countries no more than 5 years before the enrolment date of their degree programme at HWU.
- Postgraduate students who provide evidence that previous degree studies have been conducted with English as the medium of instruction can also be accepted in line with requirements listed on <https://www.hw.ac.uk/study/entry/english-language-requirements.htm>.
- Undergraduate students who have taken A Levels or International Baccalaureate (IB) qualifications and other high school qualifications as outlined on <https://www.hw.ac.uk/study/entry/english-language-requirements.htm>.
- Successful completion of a HWU Pre-Sessional English programme within 19 months of the enrolment date of their degree programme with HWU.
- International students who have studied in the UK at private pathway providers/university foundation or pre-masters programmes or language schools are not required to provide a SELT as long as the report from their previous institution gives clear indication of the student's level and how this equates to IELTS or CEFR.

Further specific guidance on what can/cannot be accepted as an alternative to a SELT is provided on the [University's](https://www.hw.ac.uk/study/entry/english-language-requirements.htm) website at <https://www.hw.ac.uk/study/entry/english-language-requirements.htm>

Bachelor's Degree Accelerator Foundation one year programme and Pre-sessional English students:

Student Visa students (UK bound) on these programmes MUST provide evidence of their level with a SELT, i.e an IELTS, PTE Academic or LanguageCert test (UKVI versions) from a UKVI approved centre, or, if in the UK, a Trinity ISE II. The University is not permitted to make its own assessment of the student's level for these programmes.