

ACADEMIC GUIDANCE 6:

**Support for the development of English language skills
available to Postgraduate applicants to Kingston University**

2011-2012

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CURRENT LANGUAGE LEVEL	RECOMMENDED PREPARATION
<p>Below IELTS 5.5/TOEFL 520 CB TOEFL 190</p>	<p>Continuation of study at a local language school to include attendance at an IELTS or TOEFL preparation course. Take/ retake IELTS examination.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>If student wishes to come to the UK: advise attendance at a British Council accredited language school (e.g. St George International or Wimbledon School of English) to achieve IELTS 5.5 or 6.0 (4 – 6 months plus depending on current English level).</p> <p>THEN</p> <p>Enrol for Graduate Certificate or KU Pre-Sessional English Language Course. This is important to enable the student to gain the necessary academic experience.</p>
<p>IELTS 5.5/TOEFL 520 CBTOEFL 190</p>	<p>Apply for Graduate Certificate in English & Research Skills one year course, starting in the September of the year <i>prior to</i> commencement of postgraduate studies.</p>
<p>IELTS 6.0. /TOEFL 540 CBTOEFL 207</p>	<p>Apply for January entry of Graduate Certificate in English & Research Skills. If student passes the Graduate Certificate they will have met the English language entry requirements for progression onto their postgraduate course in September/October.</p>
<p>IELTS 6.5 & / or below 6.5 on the writing and reading tests TOEFL 570 /CBTOEFL 230</p>	<p>8 Week Pre-Sessional strongly advised before entry to any linguistically demanding course or any course requiring a dissertation of over 5,000 words.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>6 – 4 week Pre-Sessional for all Master's courses requiring IELTS 6.5 as their entry requirement.</p>
<p>IELTS 7.0. /TOEFL 600 CBTOEFL 250</p>	<p>Students with the entry requirements but from countries with very different methods of teaching & learning benefit from attending the KU 4-week Pre-Sessional course.</p>

NB Applicants must be advised that the above options incur separate fees additional to the cost of their postgraduate programme

Notes

The current advisory postgraduate English language entry standards are:

IELTS 7.0. Note that some Faculties/Schools accept IELTS 6.5
TOEFL 600 + minimum 5 of on the Test of Written English (TWE)
CB TOEFL minimum 250
Cambridge Proficiency pass at Grade C or above
GCSE English language pass at minimum grade C

- IELTS is the preferred test as it is widely recognised as being a more reliable indicator of a student's English language ability within the academic context.
- The overall IELTS and CBTOEFL (computer based TOEFL) scores are obtained by averaging the results obtained from individual tests in speaking, listening, reading and writing. TOEFL is a multiple choice test with no written component – hence our requirement for the separate test of written English.
- It is important to note the individual scores for each of the four language skills. Some students will score highly in speaking and listening and less well for reading and writing.
- It is generally accepted that, at postgraduate level, the scores for reading and writing are more accurate predictors of a student's academic English language level.

Band Descriptors

Both IELTS and TOEFL provide band (or score) descriptors, which provide a very general guide to performance. The following extracts are taken from their publicity¹.

1 IELTS Band 6 (all skills)

Has generally effective command of the language despite some inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings. Can use and understand fairly complex language, particularly in familiar situations.

2 IELTS Band 7 (all skills)

Has operational command of the language, though with occasional inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings in some situations. Generally handles complex language well and understands detailed reasoning.

CB TOEFL writing Score 5 (one 30 minute essay)

An essay at this level may address some parts of the task more effectively than others, is generally well organised and developed, uses details to support a thesis or illustrate an idea, displays facility in the use of language, demonstrates some syntactic variety and range of vocabulary.

On Enrolment:

All students can join the English Language Support Programme which provides one 2 hours EAP class and language tutorials in Semester 1 and 2 x 2 hour classes in Semester 2. Attendance at In-Sessional courses can prove problematic for many postgraduate students due to the intensity of taught masters courses. Postgraduates should prepare thoroughly prior to the start of their course. They are then able to take advantage of the in-sessional provision to support rather than to enable their studies.

For further information contact b.atherton@kingston.ac.uk (English Language Support)

¹ www.ielts.org/format.htm accessed 9/12/2002
www.toefl.org accessed 9/12/2002