

English Language Policy Statement for International Learners

Date approved:	26/09/2025	Date policy will take effect:	26/09/2025	Date of Next Review:	26/09/2026
Approving Authority:	Academic Council				
Responsibility:	Registrar's Office				
Consultation undertaken:	The International Office, Admissions Office, School of Business and Humanities (responsible for English language delivery).				
Supporting documents, procedures & forms of this policy:	Appendix 1 – International Fees and Entry Requirements.				
Reference(s)	Not applicable.				
Expiry Date of Policy (if applicable)	Not applicable.				
Audience:	Public – accessible to anyone				
Category:	Student Centred Learning Teaching and Assessment				

Version Control and Change History

Version Control	Date Effective	Approved By	Amendment(s)
1.0	26/09/2025	Academic Council (Meeting No. 201; Motion 201.15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Policy was developed to ensure compliance with the requirements of the TrustEd Ireland (International Education Mark) statutory quality mark (Higher Education Pathway). <p>Policy statement approved for the first time.</p>

1.0 Purpose of this Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy statement is to set out Dundalk Institute of Technology's fair, transparent, and consistent requirements and standards for evaluating the English language ability of its international applicants to the Institute, in line with the relevant Institute admissions policies, and to describe the Institute's policy and procedures for English language support to enrolled international learners.

2.0 Context

Dundalk Institute of Technology (referred to as DkIT) is the leading provider of higher education in the Northeast of Ireland. The Institute has developed extensive experience in the design and delivery of English language education to its international learners, since it commenced international recruitment in 2002.

The Institute has responded to the needs of its international learners by creating 3 English language Foundation Programmes. Dundalk Institute of Technology is the awarding authority in each case:

- **Certificate in Foundation Studies with Intensive English** (Level 6 on the NFQ). This is a full taught programme, delivered over two semesters with a credit value of 60 ECTS;
- **Certificate in Foundation Studies** (Level 6 on the NFQ); This is a full-time taught programme, delivered over two semesters, with a credit value of 60 ECTS;
- **Certificate in Pre-Sessional English** (Level 6 on the NFQ). This is a full-time taught programme, delivered over one semester, with a credit value of 30 ECTS.

The Institute has also developed English language modules at Bachelor and Higher Diploma level (Levels 7 and 8 on the NFQ) for international learners and for incoming Erasmus+ exchange students.

Programmes at the Institute are delivered in English (with the exception of modern-language electives, taught on selected Bachelor Degree programmes).

The Institute is committed to the internationalisation of its curricula and to the promotion of international mobility opportunities for its students, researchers, staff and stakeholders. The Institute aims to provide high standards of quality in all of its international activities. A range of policies, procedures, and processes exist to support the recruitment, admission, and retention of its international learners at [Policies and Procedures | DkIT – Dundalk Institute of Technology](#)

The Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012, as amended, established a Higher Education Code of Practice for higher education providers for the provision of programmes of education and training to international learners. The statutory International Education Mark (IEM); designated by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) as TrustEd Ireland, is designed to safeguard international learners and to ensure provision of a high-quality learning experience from student enrolment through to programme-completion.

By committing to upholding the principles of the Higher Education Code of Practice, the Institute is seeking to achieve the TrustEd Ireland Quality Mark for Higher Education to demonstrate its commitment to meeting national higher education standards of a quality learning experience for the Institute's international student cohort. The Institute is committed to ensuring that its enrolled international learners receive the highest standards of education, training, academic and extra-curricular supports.

As part of the TrustEd Ireland Quality Mark authorisation process, the Institute has developed this English Language Policy Statement for compliance with the "[QQI Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Higher Education to International Learners](#)". This policy sets out English language entry requirements for international learners (whose first language is not English) and takes into account the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

3.0 Scope

The scope of this policy is all accredited programmes of study delivered by Dundalk Institute of Technology to its International Learners, leading to major- and non-major awards from Level 6 to Level 10 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

In accordance with the principles of the Higher Education Code of Practice, this policy documents English language entry requirements and the Institute's provision of supports in English for Academic Purposes, and the Institute's Quality Assurance arrangements for its English Language programmes.

The Institute's English language entry requirements may not be the same as the English language requirements of the Immigration Service Delivery of Ireland.

4.0 Definition of an International Learner

An international learner is defined in Section 2 of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 as “a person who is not an Irish citizen, but who is lawfully in the state primarily to receive education and training.” An International learner within the Irish higher education context is further defined as:

being in the state, enrolled on a programme leading to a major, or non-major award included in the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ);

OR

being in the state enrolled on an English language programme;

OR

Being a learner outside of the state, enrolled on a programme leading to an award included in the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

For the purposes of establishing the Higher Education Code and QQI's role in authorising higher education providers to use the IEM, the above definitions include the following categories of learners:

- EU/EEA/Swiss learners in the state undertaking programmes that lead to major, or non-major awards that are included in the NFQ;
- Non-EU/EEA/Swiss learners in the state undertaking programmes leading to major, or non-major awards that are include in the NFQ;
- Learners outside the state enrolled on programmes that lead to major, or non-major awards included in the NFQ, whether offered in transnational education settings, and/or through remote, fully online modes of learning.

The following categories of learners are not part of the scope:

- Erasmus+ exchange students;
- Learners enrolled on study-abroad programmes that do not lead to awards included in the NFQ;
- Learners enrolled on continuous professional development programmes and other professional training programmes, that do not lead to awards included within the NFQ;
- Learners of Great Britain and Northern Ireland undertaking programmes that lead to major, or non-major awards included in the NFQ.

5.0 Policy Statement Principles

The Institute is committed to:

- The sustained development of Internationalisation as part of its mission to create a multicultural, globally diverse and inclusive learning environment that supports all students and staff to grow and reach their full potential;
- Providing comprehensive and fair English language requirements for admission to programmes;
- Providing English language supports to support international learners to achieve their full potential;

- Upholding the quality assurance structures in place for English language programme design and delivery;
- Upholding the principles of the *QQI Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Education and Training to International Learners* – to ensure ethical delivery of all services and supports associated with international recruitment.

6.0 English Language Requirements for Admission

DkIT requires international applicants to meet minimum requirements in English language competence as follows, in order that the learner can succeed in their programme of study:

Higher Certificate in Foundation Studies with Intensive English (Level 6): IELTS 4.5;

Higher Certificate in Foundation Studies (Level 6): IELTS 4.5;

Ordinary Bachelor Degree (Level 7): IELTS 5.5;

Honours Bachelor Degree (Level 8): IELTS 6.0;

Taught Master Degree (Level 9): IELTS 6.5.**

The Institute also accepts a range of internationally-recognised English examinations as an alternative to IELTS certification (see Appendix 1: International Fees and Entry Requirements).

Conditional offers of a programme-place may be given to non-CAO applicants who meet all admission criteria, except English language proficiency. Applicants must however demonstrate to have met the English language requirement in order to be admitted to a programme.

Verified English Language certification scores must be dated within two years of application submission.

The Institute reserves the right to review its English language requirements for admission to a programme on an ongoing basis.

English entry requirements will be reviewed to align wholly, or in part with the EU sectoral benchmark document.

7.0 Appeals

Applicants who wish to appeal a decision regarding their English qualification can submit an appeal, where supporting evidence can be provided of substantial new information which may have affected a decision on the application (with reasons for not having submitted at application-stage) or where there was a believed procedural irregularity in the way that the application was processed.

8.0 Provision of Supports in English for Academic Purposes (EAP)

Enrolled international learners at DKIT can avail of an extensive suite of English language supports offered at the Institute. These currently include:

Dedicated English language support to enrolled international learners through a series of incremental English language modules delivered at Bachelor level from semester 1 to semester 8 inclusive, by the School of Business and Humanities. Each module attracts a value of 5 ECTS credits;

Dedicated non-credit-bearing English language support to international learners enrolled on Master Degree programmes within the School of Business and Humanities of up to 3 hours tuition per week;

Provision of English language support from English Language teaching Staff at DkIT, who are qualified to Master Degree level in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL);

Provision of free, drop-in tutorials by the Student Learning and Development Centre (SLDC) in a range of areas in English, including Essay-writing; Report-writing; Referencing; Citing and Plagiarism; Study Skills, and Groupwork skills. Students can also avail of individual student consultations and structured one-to-one workshops on request. The range of academic supports provided by the Centre can be viewed at [Student Learning & Development Centre / Student Services / Student Life / DkIT - Dundalk Institute of Technology](#);

Participation by the Student Learning and Development Centre (SLDC) in International Welcome Days, hosted by DkIT International Office. New international students meet with Staff from the SLDC at International Welcome Days and learn about the academic support services available to them. International Student Ambassadors are invited to attend at International Welcome Days and to attend at Academic Induction, to help ease new students' transition into an English-medium learning environment;

Provision of a series of academic supports on the DkIT Moodle virtual learning environment at [DkIT Moodle / DkIT - Dundalk Institute of Technology](#);

Provision of academic support services from DkIT Library as part of Academic Induction for new students. Learners are provided with a range of print- and electronic materials to support English language and academic development. Details of the support service at [DkIT Library / DkIT - Dundalk Institute of Technology](#)..

The Institute recognises that it is not in the interest of an applicant to be admitted onto a programme of study, where they are unlikely to succeed, due to an English language deficit.

9.0 Quality Assurance Arrangements for English language Programmes

DkIT operates an integrated system for Quality Assurance and Enhancement, which informs the Institute's Strategic Plan. The Institute is responsible for the academic standards of awards made in its name, and for ensuring that the quality of the student learning experience, both undergraduate and postgraduate is exemplary, in order that students can meet the required standards.

DkIT assures and enhances the quality of its core activities of teaching, learning, research, engagement and service delivery through its regular review and continuous improvement process, as outlined in its Quality Assurance and Enhancement

Framework at [The Quality Office at Dundalk Institute of Technology / Registrars Office / Professional Services / DkIT - Dundalk Institute of Technology](#)

As part of its review of its English language programmes, the School of Business and Humanities, which coordinates the delivery of English language in the Institute, conducts Student Focus Groups as part of its student feedback monitoring process for Programmatic Review. Programme Board Reports, Student Feedback and External Examiners feedback form part of the quality assurance feedback process.

DkIT International Office convenes a yearly Focus Group with representative international students to garner feedback on the international student experience. International students are also invited to provide written feedback to DkIT International Office on their student experience by completion of a short survey.