



OFFICE OF THE ASSOCIATE VICE-PRESIDENT, ACADEMIC

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www.sfu.ca/vpacademic**MEMORANDUM**

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<b>ATTENTION</b>	Senate	<b>DATE</b>	February 5, 2021
<b>FROM</b>	Wade Parkhouse, Chair Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies	<b>PAGES</b>	1/1
<b>RE:</b>	Duolingo English Test (DET) (SCUS 21-15)		

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Action undertaken by SCUS on February 4, 2021 gives rise to the following recommendation:

Motion:

That Senate approve the extension of the Duolingo English Test pilot on an interim basis for the Fall 2021 term through to Fall 2023.



OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR  
Student Services

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**MEMORANDUM**

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ATTENTION      SCUS      DATE      January 22, 2021  
FROM      Kathryn Verkerk  
                 Registrar and Executive Director, Student  
                 Enrolment *pro tem*  
RE:      Duolingo English Test to fulfill English Language Requirement

Proposal

Student Recruitment and Admissions will continue to accept the Duolingo English test (DET) on an interim basis (Fall 2021 through to Fall 2023; spring, summer, and fall terms) from students in countries where no other English proficiency test is available in order to satisfy the English Language Requirement for undergraduate admission.

Background

Due to the continued outbreak of COVID-19, accessibility to in-person English Language exams continues to be a challenge. As a result, applicants from many parts of the world have limited options to fulfill SFU's English Language Requirement for admission. While some of our current approved English Language Requirement exams are available online, they remain difficult to access, particularly from a financial perspective.

Many institutions across Canada (see below) continue to allow students to use the DET to satisfy their English Language Admission Requirement. The Duolingo English test is an online English proficiency assessment for international students and recognized globally as a [comparator](#) to the IELTS and TOEFL iBT exams.

As a stop gap measure, SFU's Student Recruitment and Admissions office allowed students to use the DET in response to the COVID-19 pandemic for undergraduate admission in Fall 2020. Based on the data, two students registered at SFU in Fall 2020 using the DET for admission. Of note, the Fall 2020 numbers are small due to the timing of allowing DET for admission, which was after the document deadline. SFU has unofficially received 97 exam results between August 2020 and Jan. 25, 2021, and of those applicants, 43 have achieved a score of 125 or higher.

Student Recruitment and Admissions recommends to continue requiring a minimum score of a 125 (which aligns with the University of British Columbia ELAS requirement). We will review the results holistically alongside the applicant's other required admission documents and confirm that the DET video and writing samples demonstrate a strong command of English language. According to test validity studies a minimum score of 115 on the DET equates to a minimum IELTS score of a 7.0 (SFU requires a minimum overall of 6.5) and a minimum TOEFL iBT score of 92 (SFU requires a minimum overall score of 88).

During the pilot period, we will review first-year performance metrics of students who used the DET for admission in comparison to other ELAS tests to determine if the DET could be an ongoing option for SFU undergraduate admission.

The following Canadian institutions continue to accept the exam:

- Concordia University
- Dalhousie University
- McGill University
- Mount Allison University
- University of Alberta
- University of British Columbia
- University of Calgary
- As well as [several others \(160+ institutions in Canada\)](#)

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathryn Verkerk". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large loop at the end of the last name.

Kathryn Verkerk