



Simon Fraser University
Maggie Benston Centre 1100
8888 University Drive
Burnaby, BC V5A 1S6

TEL 778.782.3042
FAX 778.782.3080

gradstudies@sfu.ca
www.sfu.ca/grad

MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION Senate

DATE **October 27, 2023**

FROM Mary O'Brien,
Chair of Senate Graduate Studies Committee
(SGSC)

RE: Graduate General Regulation 1.3.3 English Language Competence

For Approval: At its meeting on November 6, 2023, SGSC reviewed and approved the revision Graduate General Regulation 1.3.3 English Language Competence. This gives rise to the following motion, effective **Summer 2024**:

Motion 1:

That Senate approve the revisions to Graduate General Regulation 1.3.3 English Language Competence, effective Summer 2024.

MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION Mary O'Brien, Chair of Senate **DATE** October 11, 2023
Graduate Studies Committee
(SGSC)

FROM Michelle Grahame, Associate Director,
Graduate Admissions, Records, and
Registration 

RE: Graduate General Regulation (GGR)
Revision: 1.3.3 English Language
Competence

Motion:

That SGSC approve the revisions of GGR 1.3.3 English Language Competence, effective Summer 2024.

Summary of Revisions and Rationale:

Addition of the Duolingo English Test (DET) as an option to meet the university minimum English language test and score requirements. SFU recently extended the Duolingo pilot for undergraduate admissions through to Fall 2024. Additionally, more graduate schools at other Canadian institutions have begun to accept DET in response to the challenges faced by international applicants and a need for greater accessibility to English testing options. The proposed minimum score for graduate admission is higher compared to undergraduate admission to align with the overall higher minimum English requirements for graduate studies.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Add DET as a provisional option through Fall 2026 under GGR 1.3.3 to meet the minimum test and score requirements for English Language Proficiency for graduate studies at SFU.

Recommendation 2: Minimum overall score of 130 with a minimum of 120 in each section.

Overview of Benefits for Applicants:

- Test can be completed in under 1 hour
- Results provided within 48 hours
- Lower cost than other tests and a fee waiver program to support students in need
- No limit or additional charges for sending to multiple institutions

Score Information

- Scale of 10 to 160
- Overall score and subscores to demonstrate proficiency in specific area
 - Note, areas are broken down differently than other English test the four areas include:*
 - **Literacy** – ability to read and write
 - **Comprehension** – ability to read and listen
 - **Production** – ability to write and speak
 - **Conversation** – ability to listen and speak
- Score certificate has its own unique and secure link

Score Comparison

- Minimum 125 overall score for the DET to be used for SFU undergraduate admissions.
 - *Minimum test scores requirements for tests accepted by SFU Graduate Admissions are slightly higher than undergraduate admissions. Therefore, the recommended minimum DET score for grad is 130.*
- IELTS, TOEFL, Cambridge comparison with minimum requirements as per GGR 1.3.3, source: <https://englishtest.duolingo.com/institutions/scores>

| | DET | IELTS | DET | TOEFL | DET | Cambridge |
|---------------------|---------|-------|-----|-------|-----|---|
| Overall | 130-135 | 7.0 | 125 | 93 | 130 | 193 (C1 Advanced) 200 (C2 Proficiency) |
| <i>Area/Section</i> | 120-125 | 6.5 | | | | |

Acceptance at Other Canadian Institutions

| Institution Name | DET Accepted (Y/N) | Accepted Regularly, Provisionally, Unclear (R/P/U) | Minimum Overall Score | Minimum Area Score |
|------------------|--------------------|--|-----------------------|--------------------|
| SFU | N | | | |
| UBC Vancouver | N | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| UVic | N | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| U Alberta | Y | P | 120 | 100 |
| U Calgary | Y | P | 125 | 105 |
| U Saskatchewan | Y | P/U | 115 | 95 |
| UBCO | Y | P | 125 | 115 |
| U of T | N | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Royal Roads | Y | R | 115 | 110 |
| Concordia | Y | P | 120 | 120 |
| UNBC | Y | U | 105 | 105 |
| Trinity Western | Y | R | 140 | 140 |

General Graduate Regulation Change 1.3.3

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| <p>Summary of change: To add the acceptance of Duolingo English Test (DET) to meet the English Language Competency Requirements.</p> |
| <p>Rationale for change: Other Canadian institutions accept or plan to accept the DET as a valid English Language Proficiency test. In an effort to be consistent with other universities as well as SFU undergraduate admissions, who have extended their pilot, the addition of the DET will be valuable. The DET is beneficial for prospective students/applicants as the test can be completed in under 1 hour and the results are available within 48 hours along with the lower cost in comparison to the other tests. It is also beneficial for the institution because of the high level of security, accessibility for applicants, which will result in reducing barriers as well as intuitive dashboard. The proposed minimum score of 130 is slightly above the minimum of 125 accepted for SFU undergraduate admissions, which aligns with the higher minimum English requirements for graduate studies.</p> |
| <p>Effective term and year: Summer 2024</p> |
| <p>Will this change impact current students? If yes, what is the plan for current students? N/A</p> |

| FROM | TO |
|--|---|
| <p>1.3.3 English Language Competence</p> <p>[...]</p> <p>All other international applicants will be required to achieve a minimum score on one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International English Language Test System (IELTS Academic, not the general test) 7.0 overall with a minimum of 6.5 in each section • Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) 93 or better is achieved with a minimum of 20 in each section • Canadian Academic English Language Assessment (CAEL) overall 70, with a minimum of 60 in each section | <p>1.3.3 English Language Competence</p> <p>[...]</p> <p>All other international applicants will be required to achieve a minimum score on one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International English Language Test System (IELTS Academic, not the general test) 7.0 overall with a minimum of 6.5 in each section • Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) 93 or better is achieved with a minimum of 20 in each section • Canadian Academic English Language Assessment (CAEL) |

| | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pearson Test of English – Academic (PTE) 65 overall score, with a minimum of 60 in each section • Cambridge English Qualifications: C1 Advanced with a minimum score of 193, or C2 Proficiency with a minimum score of 200 <p>[...]</p> | <p>overall 70, with a minimum of 60 in each section</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pearson Test of English – Academic (PTE) 65 overall score, with a minimum of 60 in each section • Cambridge English Qualifications: C1 Advanced with a minimum score of 193, or C2 Proficiency with a minimum score of 200 • Provisionally through the Fall 2026 admission cycle: Duolingo English Test (DET) 130 overall with a minimum of 120 in each section. <p>[...]</p> |
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