

English Proficiency Policy - Higher Education

Policy Code: STU-014 **Version:** {_UIVersionString} **Effective Date:** 21 August 2017

Purpose:

This policy outlines the process by which higher education students and staff of the College may have language, literacy and numeracy issues effectively addressed.

Definition of “College” – *In the higher education sector, ACPE Limited trades as The Australian College of Physical Education (ACPE); Australian College of Natural Medicine Pty Ltd trades as Endeavour College of Natural Health (Endeavour); Study Group Australia Pty Limited trades as Martin College and Martin Higher Education (Martin HE). For the purpose of this policy, any reference to ‘College’ or ‘the Colleges’ should be considered a reference to each or any of these respective entities or trading names.*

Scope:

- All Higher Education Students
- All Academic Staff (including Contractors)
- All Admissions and Student Services Staff

Policy Statement:

All courses at the College are delivered in the English language. It is essential that a student has language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) skills sufficient to successfully complete assessments at the higher education level as reflected in the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).

It is also essential that academic staff have LLN skills sufficient to communicate course content to students in a manner that is clearly understandable. The College provides clear information to each prospective student and staff member on enrolment about language, literacy and numeracy requirements including the provision of assessments that are recommended if students self-identify as having difficulties.

Student LLN skills are not assumed upon admission and students who identify as having a LLN concern may be asked to attend an appraisal session with an external organisation.

English Proficiency Requirements and Support

Higher Education Students

Students who identify with English as a Second Language (ESL) or who demonstrate difficulty with the English language during their course admission process or studies are eligible to register for the [ESL Program](#) which includes the provision of 'reasonable adjustments' to assist a student with English difficulties to equally participate in College life and course requirements. An example of reasonable adjustment for students with English difficulties may include providing additional exam time or allowing a dictionary to assist in completion of an exam.

ALL Higher Education applicants or students for whom English is an additional language **including permanent residents and citizens** must have a grasp of the English language appropriate to higher education study, and will be required to show evidence of English language proficiency to a certain level depending on the degree and College entity. These levels have been set to ensure the student will have the ability to successfully engage in study in their selected field. At the discretion of each College, prospective or current students may be required to undertake an assessment of English language at their own cost and, depending on the course of enrolment, achieve a result at least equivalent to:

All courses at Martin HE:

- IELTS 6.0 (overall score)
- Cambridge English: Advanced (CAE 169-175)
- Pearson (PTE) Academic Score of 51
- Paper based (PBT) TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) score of 550
- Internet based (iBT) TOEFL score of 79.

All courses at ACPE (excluding Education qualifications), Endeavour Bachelor of Health Science (Nutritional and Dietetic Medicine), Bachelor of Complementary Medicine:

- IELTS 6.5 (overall score)
- Cambridge English: Advanced (CAE 176-184)
- Pearson (PTE) Academic Score of 59 (overall score)

- Paper based (PBT) TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) score of 577
- Internet based (iBT) TOEFL score of 90.

All other Bachelor degrees at Endeavour:

- IELTS 7.0 (overall score)
- Cambridge English: Advanced (CAE 185-190)
- Pearson (PTE) Academic Score of 65 (overall score)
- Paper based (PBT) TOEFL score of 600
- Internet based (iBT) TOEFL score of 100.

ACPE Education Degrees:

- IELTS 7.5 (overall score) with no score below 7.0 and a score of no less than 8 in speaking and listening.

English test results must be no more than two (2) years old. After provision of scores above, if it is identified that a students' English language skills are not proficient, the student may be required to undertake a further test: this may include a Basic Key Skills Builder test supplied by the College, or an external test at the students' cost.

Please note: certain professional bodies have English language requirements which must be satisfied prior to registration and practice in the field (e.g. Chinese Medicine Board of Australia for Acupuncturists; New South Wales Education Standards Authority for Teachers). As the College's course entry requirements meet professional body English language requirements for registration, the College takes great care in ensuring students meet those requirements and will seek further testing of **any** student (domestic or international) who may be identified as struggling with English language skills. If the student fails to meet the requirements after further testing, the student will be required to enter into an Intervention Strategy to support further skill building.

Staff

Academic staff who identify with ESL must have a grasp of the English language appropriate to teach in higher education, and will be required to show evidence of appropriate English language proficiency. This level has been set to ensure the staff member will have the ability to successfully impart knowledge to students at the appropriate academic level through all forms of communication. At the discretion of the College, prospective Higher Education academic staff who demonstrate difficulty with English

language may be required to undertake an assessment of English language at their own expense and achieve a result at least equivalent to:

- IELTS 7.0 (overall score)
- Cambridge English: Advanced (CAE 185-190)
- Pearson (PTE) Academic Score of 66 (overall score)
- Paper based (PBT) TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) score of 587
- Internet based (iBT) TOEFL score of 95.

English test results must be no more than two (2) years old. After provision of scores above, if it is identified that a prospective staff member's English language skills are not proficient, the College reserves the right not to employ that person.

Current staff teaching in a Higher Education course who are identified as having English difficulties (such as through student feedback) may be required to undertake an assessment of English language at the expense of the College. If the results outlined above are not achieved by an existing staff member, the College may take appropriate action such as reassigning the teacher to a lower level subject or course (e.g. moving from higher education teaching to VET training), reassigning the teacher to administrative duties while English levels are increased, and/or enrolling the staff member in further English classes.

Support Options

It is important to note that Assistance with English language is available to all students including those for which English is the first language.

A number of differing support options for students can be implemented and MAY include the following:

- Additional testing to determine level of English support required (usually using the Basic Key Skills Builder (BKSB) test internally, but could include external testing at the student's cost)
- Pairing the student with a study mentor or buddy that demonstrates well developed English language skills
- Additional self-study review
- One-on-one tutoring
- Additional examination time.

If a tutor or buddy with the necessary expertise or resources to provide assistance is unavailable then it is appropriate to refer students to local language support services. In special circumstances it may become appropriate to use the services of an external

specialist to develop a specific language program such as AMES. Information on AMES is available at: <http://www.ames.edu.au/>. Students are expected to cover any costs involved in order to access external English language support.

The College acknowledges its responsibility to support students with LLN difficulties within the scale and scope of its operations. Consequently College lecturers and supervisors are urged to use direct or indirect strategies to assist students experiencing difficulties and register the student as 'At Risk' (SAR) with Student Services for appropriate follow up and assistance where required. All members of the College's Student Learning Services team have the requisite knowledge to address LLN skills and advice from these academic support staff can be sought by higher education staff if necessary.

Language, Literacy & Numeracy Strategies

The LLN Strategy at the College recommends individual and group support to enhance learning for students. The following strategies are implemented:

- Provision of concurrent assistance with Student Learning Services team
- Planning teaching
- Provision of study buddy, mentor, coach
- Modifying learning materials where appropriate that do not compromise the integrity of the assessment
- Referral to external agencies for literacy and numeracy courses
- Providing flexibility in learning and assessments delivery modes, scheduling and access to support services
- Access to 'Study Skills' workshops
- One-on-one tutoring if appropriate.

The College employs a number of teaching and learning strategies including the use of verbal explanations, diagrams/charts, group presentations, demonstrations, incorporation of workplace materials, modelling and activities to assist with differing student learning styles and requirements.

Complex Terminology

Where it is a requirement of course learning outcomes, students may require specific language and terminology. College lecturers are required to implement appropriate strategies where applicable including attendance at '*Specialist Terminology*' workshops conducted on campus. Where lack of expertise risks a successful outcome for the student

the matter should be referred to the Director, Student Services and Retention via the Student At Risk (SAR) process for intervention strategies and referral.

LLN Assessment

Whilst preferable, LLN testing for students is not mandatory under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), however provision is to be made for assessments where it is requested and appropriate (particularly for those students studying Education). The College reserves the right to determine how and to whom the assessment is provided. The following points should be noted:

- Experienced and qualified lecturers understand which content and curriculum may prove difficult or challenging and what specific skills are required
- Lecturers are expected to identify Students At Risk (SAR) and know when to refer to Student Services for appropriate follow through and intervention
- Students may indicate or self-disclose their LLN requirements and be referred to the Access and Equity Program if English is a Second Language (ESL)
- Students may ask for additional support during their program of study.

The College's higher education courses require proficiency in LLN skills and may require additional support.

On Enrolment

On enrolment, the Admissions Advisers provide prospective students with information about the teaching and learning environment and seek to gain an insight into the learning styles and language preferences of the applicant. The College uses this information to make informed choices about a prospective students' capacity to meet the course requirements and to ascertain if additional support is required. The Admissions Adviser will discuss the prospective student's LLN capabilities and may recommend an external assessment occur before admission. Any persons who have concerns are encouraged to discuss these as soon as possible with their local Student Services Team.

Further Resources

The Reading Writing Hotline

The Reading Writing Hotline (the Hotline) provides a national service for adults seeking English language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) information, advice and support.

The Hotline provides information on:

- adult reading, writing and numeracy classes held locally across Australia or via correspondence
- becoming a literacy volunteer
- adult LLN teaching and learning resources
- Commonwealth-funded programs for Centrelink clients
- Commonwealth-funded English as an additional language programs for migrants
- literacy and numeracy in the workplace for employers.

Further information is available at the Reading Writing Hotline website (<http://www.literacyline.edu.au/>) or phone 1300 6 555 06.

Queensland

- *Executive Officer, Community Learning and Skilling*
Department of Employment and Training (07)3247 0278
www.det.qld.gov.au
- TAFE Language Literacy Services (07) 3234 1666
- Southbank TAFE (07) 3244 5014

Victoria

- Specific Learning Difficulties Association of Victoria (SPECO) Inc
494 Brunswick Street
North Fitzroy, Victoria 3068
(03) 9489 4344
spelduic@bigpond.com.au

Western Australia

- TAFE International Western Australia
Level 7, 190 St Georges Terrace
Perth, Western Australia, 6000
(08) 9320 3746
skill@tiwa.com.au

Related Procedures:

Not applicable

Further Information:

Definitions:	Student – is an individual person who is formally enrolled to study at the College. The individual person is that who appears on the College’s documents such as enrolment, admission and payment documents, and who is assigned an individual student ID.
Related Policies:	Disability and Special Needs Policy Student At Risk (Academic Standing) Policy - HE
Benchmarking:	Southern School of Natural Therapies Swinburne University
Supporting Research and Analysis:	Not Applicable
Related Documents:	Intervention Strategy Intervention Form
Related Legislation:	Not Applicable
Guidelines:	National Reporting System (NRS) Test Benchmarks for Educational Function Levels (EFL) http://www.nrsweb.org/foundations/related_documents.aspx

Policy Author:	Jennifer Osborne, Director, Student Services
Policy Owner:	Director, Student Services & Retention
Contact:	Director, Student Services & Retention
Approval Body:	Approved by: Executive Director, Higher Education Meeting Date: 03 November 2016 (in line with Admissions Policy requirements already approved by Academic governing bodies)
Policy Status:	Harmonised – all SGA brands now covered
Responsibilities for Implementation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directors of Education • Director, Student Services & Retention • National Student Recruitment Manager • Admissions Advisers • Academic Staff • Program Leaders / Heads of Department • Student Services
Key Stakeholders:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directors of Education • Director, Student Services & Retention • National Student Recruitment Manager • Admissions Advisers • Academic Staff • Program Leaders / Heads of Department • Student Services • Applicants • Students