TITLE: *ENGLISH LANGUAGE POLICY*

COLÁISTE CHEATHARLACH
NAOMH PÁDRAIG
CARLOW COLLEGE
ST. PATRICK'S

Effective Date	15 November 2023	Version	1.1
			Appendix 1 updated to include LanguageCert Academics as an approved test for English language proficiency.
Approved By	Academic Council	**Date Approved**	15 November 2023
		Review Date	8 March 2028 *or as required*
Superseded or Obsolete Policy / Procedure(s)		**Owner**	
1 – *English Language Policy* (8 March 2023)		Office of the Registrar	
Initial Issue			

1. Purpose of Policy

The purpose of the *English Language Policy* is to ensure procedures and criteria used in the assessment and recognition of qualifications and provision of supports for learners whose first language is not English are transparent, coherent and reliable. Carlow College, St. Patrick's (hereafter Carlow College) is committed to providing all learners with a positive learner experience from the first point of engagement through to graduation or exit. As such, the College is committed to conducting its affairs in a transparent and equitable manner that aligns with best practice.[1]

2. Scope of Policy

This Policy is applicable to all learners whose first language is not English seeking admission to programmes of education at Carlow College leading to certified awards recognised under the National Framework of Qualifications. Carlow College provides programmes of education leading to certified awards at levels 7, 8 and 9 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

3. Policy Statement

Carlow College welcomes applications from prospective learners with the academic potential to succeed in their chosen programme of study, regardless of their background. All applicants are required to meet general entry requirements, including proficiency in English language. Applicants whose first language is not English must provide evidence of English language proficiency as part of the application process (see Appendix 1: *English Language Requirements*

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[1] *Policies and Criteria for the Validation of Programmes of Education and Training* (Dublin: QQI, April 2016), pp. 32-3 and the Lisbon Recognition Convention (LRC).

for Admissions to Carlow College, St. Patrick's for further details). English language certificates must be awarded within the two years prior to entry at Carlow College. In exceptional circumstances, results in examinations other than those published may be accepted as proof of competence in English language. This may include non-native speakers of English who have completed their education through the medium of English in a country where English is the official language.

Please note that English language requirements are not the same as the English language requirements for Irish Immigration purposes. For more information regarding English language and Irish Immigration requirements, please click on the following link: https://www.irishimmigration.ie/coming-to-study-in-ireland/english-language-requirements-for-study-visas/.

Learners whose first language is not English may require some additional supports to assist them in achieving the best possible results in their assessments and in fully engaging with programme activities (see Appendix 2: *Supports for Learners Whose First Language is Not English*).

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Applicants: Applicants are responsible for completing their application for entry honestly and for producing relevant documentation as required.

Office of the Registrar: The Office of the Registrar holds responsibility for all matters, including Quality Assurance, in relation to Admissions and Entry Requirements. Admission to a programme is conducted through the Admissions Office. The Office of the Registrar is responsible for monitoring procedures and ensuring that processes are upheld.

Admissions Office: The Admissions Office will ensure that minimum entry requirements are met by all applicants and liaise with applicants where required.

International Office: The International Office is responsible for dealing with enquiries and applications from potential international learners and ensuring that entry requirements are met where required.

Academic Resource Office: The Academic Resource Office, through the co-ordination and delivery of disability and general learning support services, supports learners in their academic development and assists with the achievement of their learning goals. The Academic Resource Office will co-ordinate supports for enrolled learners if required.

5. Associated Documentation

- Appendix 1: English Language Requirements for Admissions to Carlow College, St. Patrick's
- Appendix 2: Supports for Learners Whose First Language is Not English.

6. Referenced Policies

- *Assessment of Learners Policy*
- *Equality Policy*
- *Learner Admission, Recognition and Progression Policy*
- *Quality Assurance Policy*
- *Teaching and Learning Policy*

Monitoring and Review

The Policy shall be monitored annually and reviewed formally every three years by the Office of the Registrar.

Appendix 1: English Language Requirements for Admissions to Carlow College, St. Patrick's

English Language Requirements for Admissions to Carlow College, St. Patrick's

Applicants whose first language is English must have an Irish Leaving Certificate (or equivalent) with a Grade O6 or better in Ordinary Level English. Applicants whose first language is not English must be able to provide evidence that their spoken and written level of English is adequate for the programme for which they have applied.[2] The relevant certified documentation to support this must be provided as part of the application process:

1. An approved English language qualification or test result (see below for list of approved qualifications and test results). The qualification or test result shall have been awarded no more than two years prior to the proposed date of enrolment, and attained at the one time;

ENGLISH LANGUAGE QUALIFICATIONS AND TESTS RECOGNISED BY CARLOW COLLEGE[3]

English Proficiency Qualifications	Minimum Achievement Level Required for Level 6 – 9 Entry
Irish Leaving Certificate	Grade O6 or better in Ordinary Level English
High School Diploma (United States)	Grade C or better in English (senior year results)
GCSE	O Level English at Grade C or above English Language at Grade C or above English Literature at Grade C or above CSE Grade I Pass in English
TOEFL Paper Based Test	570
TOEFL Computer Based Test	233

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[2] In accordance with *Policies and Criteria for the Validation of Programmes of Education and Training* (2017), the minimum requirement for a non-native English speaker is greater or equal to B2+ in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. This must be evidenced by one of the standards listed above

[3] In exceptional circumstances, results in examinations other than those published may be accepted as proof of competence in English language. This may include non-native speakers of English who have completed their education through the medium of English in a country where English is the official language. Applicants should check with the International Office for more details.

TOEFL Internet Based Test	A minimum score of 90 on TOEFL (IBT) with no less than 21 in writing and at least 19 in all other sections
IELTS (Academic version)	6.5 With no less than 6.0 in any one component of the exam.
DuoLingo	Minimum of 120 with 110 in each sub-score
ESOL	39-50[4]
Pearson Test of English (PTE Academic)	63[5] With a minimum of 59 in all components.
Trinity ISE 3	Minimum of a Merit in each skill category
Oxford Test of English	Minimum score of 130 overall with a minimum score of 125 in each skill
UCLES - University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate:	English at grade C or above (incorporating the Oxford Examining Body's English as a Foreign Language (Higher Paper); Malaysia Cambridge English language – B4 or better.
Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English	Grade C (CEFR Level C1 or C2)
Cambridge Certificate in Advanced English	Grade C (CEFR Level C1 or C2)
Cambridge, First Certificate	Grade A (CEFR Level C1)
EU Countries' Matriculation/School Leaving Examination:	Matriculation/School Leaving Examination from European countries where English is presented as a subject and an acceptable level is achieved. Where the examination has been taken more than two years previously candidates may be required to take a proficiency test. Where an English proficiency test which is scored on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) is presented as part of a school-leaving qualification, the grade must be C1/C2.
English Test for Academic and Professional Purposes (ETAPP)	Grade C1 or better (CEFR Level C1 or C2)

[4] This test is only applicable to EEA Applicants.

[5] Visa-required nationals should note that to comply with current immigration procedures, results of recent IELTS or TOEFL exams must accompany visa applications; please see https://www.irishimmigration.ie/coming-to-study-in-ireland/english-language-requirements-for-study-visas/#minimum for visa requirements.

LanguageCert Academic	LanguageCert Academic 70 overall, with min 65 in each skill

Appendix 2: Supports for Learners Whose First Language is Not English

Supports for Learners Whose First Language is Not English

The English language entry requirements laid down in the *English Language Requirements for Admissions to Carlow College, St. Patrick's* (Appendix 1) are intended to ensure that learners admitted onto our programmes have an adequate level of spoken and written English to successfully complete those programmes. Nevertheless, it is acknowledged that learners whose first language is not English may require some additional supports to assist them in achieving the best possible results in their assessments and in fully engaging with their programme's activities.

The Academic Resource Office has a dedicated Writing Development Tutor to assist learners in their academic writing development. The following supports are offered:

1. As part of a comprehensive induction programme, learners whose first language is not English can avail of an introductory workshop series designed to help familiarise them with studying in an Irish higher education context. Topics to include: 'Academic assessment, formats and expectations at Irish HEIs'; 'Introduction to Academic Writing, Style and Feedback'; 'Researching and Approaching Secondary Sources'; and 'Academic Integrity and Plagiarism'.

2. A programme of writing development workshops – 'English for Academic Purposes' are scheduled throughout semesters one and two. These are targeted at learners whose first language is not English. Topics to include: 'Reading Strategies for Academic Texts'; 'Accuracy in Academic English – Using Appropriate Academic Vocabulary'; 'Using Language to Integrate and Synthesis Reading Sources'; 'Top Tips for Essay Writing Success!'; 'Refreshing and Refining Your Academic Writing Skills'; 'Academic Integrity and Referencing – The Must Haves!'; 'Developing a Thesis Statement and Argument in Any Essay at Any Level'; and 'Language Differences Between Descriptive, Evaluative and Reflective Writing'.

3. Exam preparation workshops targeted at learners whose first language is not English are offered in each semester. Topics to include 'Understanding and Unpacking Exam Questions' and 'Writing for Clarity in Exams'.

4. One-to-one support sessions are available with the Writing Development Tutor to assist learners with academic English and writing development. Learners are invited to book sessions or they can be referred to the service by their Lecturers. Appointments are individually designed to offer support with essay planning, editing, formatting, and refining thesis arguments. Guidance is provided to help understand lecturer's feedback and tips for improving individual writing styles.

5. Learners can access a range of resources and links to further English language and academic supports on the Writing Development section of our Moodle VLE.

6. The P.J. Brophy Library houses a variety of texts that can assist learners whose first language is not English with the requirements of preparing and writing assignments in English for the arts and humanities programmes.