

GRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE REPORT

ACTION REQUESTED:

- Recommendation**
Decision
Discussion/Direction
Information

DATE: **September 24, 2024**

FROM: **School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies**

SUBJECT: **English Language Proficiency – Duolingo English Test**

COMMITTEE MANDATE:

In accordance with Section III of the Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) Terms of Reference it has the responsibility to “establish, oversee, and periodically review the graduate academic, admissions, and scholarship procedures, guidelines, and directives; and revise when appropriate; and provide regular updates to Academic Council; and to review and recommend to Academic Council changes to graduate academic, admissions, and scholarship.”

MOTION FOR CONSIDERATION:

That GSC hereby recommends to Academic Council the approval of the Duolingo English Test from applicants as sufficient evidence of English language proficiency for a trial period for the 2024/25 admissions cycle. The following are the recommended scores for graduate programs:

Health Sciences (MHSc), Education (MA, MEd, EdD), MITS, MBAI, MFDA – Minimum score of **130**

All other graduate programs – Minimum score of **120**

BACKGROUND/CONTEXT & RATIONALE:

The Duolingo English Test has emerged over recent years as one of the more prominent English Language Proficiency tests globally. The test is recognized by more than 5,000 universities. Duolingo provides greater access to students as the test can be administered online, has a lower cost than alternate tests, and students receive responses within 48 hours. The test has a number of enhanced security features compared to other proficiency tests to ensure integrity of exam results.

The Duolingo assesses students' language skills in literacy, comprehension, production, and conversation to produce a score between 10 and 160. The test includes two components:

- Adaptive Test – A series of different questions to evaluate English skills. Questions are administered dynamically from a database of hundreds of thousands of items. Someone would have to take the test more than 1,000 times to see a question repeated. Question difficulty changes based on performance.
- Writing and Speaking sample – Open-ended prompts that are shared with institutions alongside the score. Test takers are given a prompt and asked to respond at length. The speaking sample allows for a 1-3 minute response, and the writing sample allows for a 3-5 minute response.

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

Current Program Admission Requirements

	CAEL	IELTS	TOEFL (Web based)	TOEFL (paper-based)	English for Academic Purposes (Offered by ELC)	Proposed Duolingo Score
Faculty of Education						
Doctor of Education (EdD)	70	7	92-93	580	Level 6	130
Education (MA)	70	7	92-93	580	Level 6	130
Faculty of Business & IT						
MITS	70	6.5	83-87	560	Level 5	120
MFDA	70	7	83-87	560	Level 5	120
MBAI	70	7	83-87	560	Level 5	120
Faculty of Engineering						
MENg	70	6.5	83-87	560	Level 5	120
MENgM	70	6.5	83-87	560	Level 5	120
MASc	70	6.5	83-87	560	Level 5	120
PhD	70	6.5	83-87	560	Level 5	120
Faculty of Health Science						
MHSc	70	7	92-93	580	Level 6	130
MSN	70	7	92-93	580	Level 6	130
PhD	70	7	92-93	580	Level 6	130
Faculty of Science						
MSc	70	6.5	83-87	560	Level 5	120
PhD	70	6.5	83-87	560	Level 5	120
Faculty of Social Science & Humanities						
MSPI	70	6.5	83-87	560	Level 5	120
MA	70	6.5	83-87	560	Level 5	120
PhD	70	6.5	83-87	560	Level 5	120

CONSULTATION AND APPROVAL:

- Deliberative Body: GSC September 2024 for recommendation.
- Approval Authority: Academic Council: October 2024

NEXT STEPS:

Pending approval of GSC, this recommendation will be presented to the Academic Council for approval. After approval by the Academic Council, this agreement will be for a trial period for the 2024-25 admission cycle.

SUPPORTING REFERENCE MATERIALS:

N/A