



TUS

**Technological University of the Shannon:
Midlands Midwest**

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Lár Tíre Iarthar Láir

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TUS English Language Policy 2024 - 2029



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1.0 Introduction

The Technological University of the Shannon (hereafter referred to as TUS or the Technological University), has a vision that through internationalisation it will be recognised as a premier Technological University that promotes and embeds global perspectives in all its activities. This is achieved through the commitment of the TUS community to an internationalised curriculum, transnational research and international education partnerships, and the development of an extensive staff and student mobility network.

TUS is committed to compliance with the *QQI Code of Practice for the Provision of Programmes of Higher Education to International Learners* (the HE Code of Practice)^[1], consistent with the requirement of the *Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act, 2012*^[2]. The HE Code of Practice provides a basis for the development of a comprehensive policy framework for provision of education, training and related supports to international learners. Accordingly, TUS is committed to compliance with the HE Code of Practice and to ensuring a quality experience for international learners from enrolment through to the completion of their programme of education and training.

The general language of instruction and assessment at TUS is English, unless the programme of study or module involves another language. To support the successful participation of the learners in their chosen programme, the HE Code of Practice mandates that a Providers' entry requirements shall clearly specify English language proficiency requirements for applicants whose first language is not English. This shall include reference to the benchmarks used in assessing proficiency requirements and, like other entry requirements, support the successful participation of international learners in their chosen programmes. The International Education Mark (IEM) is a statutory quality mark and part of a suite of legislative measures designed to protect international learners and has been designated by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) as TrustEd Ireland^[3]. In complying with the HE Code of Practice, TUS is committed to enhancing the quality of the service and supports made available to international learners and to demonstrating this through successful achievement of the TrustEd Ireland Quality mark.

2.0 Purpose

The purpose of this Policy, and associated Policy Statement, is to set out the TUS English language policy principles and to outline the assessment of English language proficiency including fair, transparent and consistent requirements and standards for

evaluating the English language ability of international learners applying for admission to TUS. It also sets out the TUS approach to the provision of support and development of English for academic purposes and the quality assurance arrangements for English Language Programmes.

3.0 Scope

TUS provides programmes of education leading to certified awards at levels 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). The TUS English Language Policy applies to all programmes of study leading to academic qualifications awarded by TUS. The Policy outlines the TUS approach to the recognition of assessment of English language proficiency, provision of support and development of English for academic purposes as well as Quality Assurance arrangements for English language programmes.

It should be noted that English language requirements for University entry are not the same as the English language requirements for Irish Immigration purposes.

4.0 Definition of an International Learner

Section 2(1) of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act, 2012, as amended^[2], defines an international learner *‘as a person who is not an Irish citizen but is lawfully in the state primarily to receive education and training’*. In relation to the establishment of codes of practice for the purpose of QQI authorising providers to use the international education mark Section 60(1) of the Act further defines an international learner as one who:

- is in the state enrolled on a programme leading to an award included within the NFQ;

or

- is in the state enrolled on an English language programme;

or

- is a learner outside the state enrolled on a programme leading to an award included within the NFQ.

For the purposes of establishing QQI's role in authorising Higher Education Providers to use the IEM, the *QQI Policy on Authorisation to use the International Education Mark*^[4] sets out the categories of learners that these definitions include, as follows:

- EU/EEA students in the state undertaking programmes that lead to major or non-major awards that are included within the NFQ;

- Non-EU/EEA students in the state undertaking programmes leading to major or non-major awards that are included within the NFQ;
- learners outside the state enrolled on programmes that lead to major or non-major awards included within the NFQ, whether offered in transnational education settings and/or through remote, fully online modes of learning.

For the purposes of establishing QQI's role in authorising a Higher Education providers to use the IEM, the *QQI Policy on Authorisation to use the International Education Mark*^[4] notes that these definitions do not include:

- Erasmus exchange students;
- learners enrolled on study abroad programmes that do not lead to awards included within the NFQ;
- learners enrolled on continuous professional development programmes, and other professional training programmes, that do not lead to awards included within the NFQ.
- citizens of Great Britain and Northern Ireland undertaking programmes that lead to major or non-major awards that are included within the NFQ.

5.0 Policy Statement

5.1 Policy Statement Principles

TUS is committed to internationalisation, creating a positive and enriching environment for students to study, learn, and grow on an international scale. TUS welcomes applications from all prospective learners with the academic potential to succeed in their chosen programme of study.

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 [Section 5.2. Assessment of English Language Proficiency](#)).

TUS is committed to aligning with the *QQI Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Education and Training to International Learners*^[1] ensuring transparency and compliance with all principles when considering recruitment, marketing, fees and the provision of supports and services. A range of operational procedures are implemented to support recruitment, admission and retention of international learners in programmes of education and research in TUS.

The TUS English Language Policy seeks to:

- 1) support internationalisation and the development of a diverse student body;
- 2) ensure a fair, transparent and consistent admission policy that supports the successful participation of international learners on their chosen programme;
- 3) recognise that it is not in the interest of an applicant to be admitted into a programme of study, on which they are unlikely to be successful, if they do not meet the required level of English language competency;
- 4) provide the basis for the provision of English language support to international learners during their period of study at TUS.
- 5) set out the quality assurance arrangements for English Language programme delivery.

5.2 Assessment of English Language Proficiency

- a) TUS requires international learners to meet certain minimum requirements in English language proficiency to ensure successful participation in its programmes.

This can be demonstrated through an internationally recognised English language proficiency test or prior educational attainment with instruction and assessment through the medium of English.

- b) TUS undergraduate and postgraduate entry requirements for English language proficiency for EU/EFTA/UK applicants align with the sectorally agreed joint document titled Entry Requirements Criteria for EU/EFTA/UK Applicants^[5] for EU students presenting with qualifications (other than the Irish School Leaving Certificate Examination).
- c) The following English Language Proficiency requirements apply for International Learners at TUS:

Entry Level	Requirement	CEFR Equivalent
International Foundation (NFQ L6)	IELTS 5.0	B1
NFQ Level 6, 7 and 8	IELTS 6.0	B2
NFQ Level 9 and 10	IELTS 6.5	C1

International Learners at TUS can avail of an extensive suite of English language supports as outlined in Section 5.3.

- d) English language certificates must be awarded within the two years prior to entry at TUS.
- e) The standard of English required for a programme is defined in the Admissions criteria at programme validation. In certain circumstances, TUS may set the required standard at a higher level in accordance with programme specific needs (such as Professional Regulatory Statutory Body recognition).
- f) Applicants are notified of the English language proficiency requirements through publication of entry requirements on the TUS website.

5.3 Provision of Support and Development of English for Academic Purposes

The TUS Global Office places a particular focus on supports and services for international learners, ensuring that students are welcomed to a supportive environment that encourages integration with the TUS community at large and puts the well-being of students as a central driver.

The English Language Preparation for TUS Programmes cater specifically for the language needs of applicants who intend to study for an undergraduate, study abroad or postgraduate degree at TUS who have reached the academic entry requirements for their chosen programme but do not meet the English language requirements.

- a) The TUS Global Office facilitates a foundation level entry programme, pre-session summer programme and English language support classes, directed at the needs of international learners.
- b) As part of a comprehensive induction programme for international learners, learners whose first language is not English can avail of the Learning Support Unit and the Academic Writing Centre supports. The range of supports are available at:

[Learning Support Unit - TUS](#)

[Academic Writing Centre Link Tree](#)

- c) Inter-cultural training events for new international students are also supported by the TUS Global Office as an ongoing component of International Orientation.
- d) A programme of writing development workshops – ‘English for Academic Purposes’ are offered throughout the year.
- e) One-to-one support sessions are available with the learning support unit/academic writing centre.

- f) Learners can access a range of resources and links to further English language and academic supports on the Moodle pages
- g) The TUS Library holds a variety of print and online learning resources that can assist learners whose first language is not English with the requirements of preparing and writing assignments in English ([Library - TUS](#)).

5.4 Quality Assurance Arrangements for English Language Programmes

- a) The International Foundation Programme and credit bearing English Language modules are subject to the quality assurance arrangements for programmes of education and training as set out in the *TUS Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook*^[6].
- b) Graduates of International Foundation programmes are awarded with a Certificate at Level 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications with 60 ECTS.
- c) Pre-sessional Summer Programme and English Language supports which are not credit bearing are organised in conjunction with the Learning Support Unit/Academic Writing Centre and TUS Global Office.

6.0 Appendix 1. References

1. [QQI Code of Practice for the Provision of Programmes of Higher Education to International Learners](#)
2. [Qualifications and Quality Assurance \(Education and Training\) Act, 2012 \(as amended\)](#)
3. International Education Mark: TrustEd Ireland
4. [QQI Policy on Authorisation to use the International Education Mark](#)
5. [Entry Requirements Criteria for EU/EFTA/UK Applicants](#) ¹
6. [TUS Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook](#)

¹ Link to be revised annually.