

NSW INSTITUTE OF TEACHERS

Policy for English Language Testing of New Scheme Teachers for Provisional and Conditional Accreditation

1. BACKGROUND

The *Institute of Teachers Act 2004* provides for the accreditation of new scheme teachers who meet the initial teacher education requirements for Provisional and Conditional accreditation, specified in the Professional Teaching Standards.

Element 4 of the Professional Teaching Standards states that *Teachers communicate effectively with their students*.

Consequently, minimum levels of proficiency in speaking, listening, reading and writing are requirements for entry to teaching in NSW schools.

This policy sets out processes and criteria for the use of teacher accreditation authorities in determining that teachers entering teaching in NSW meet these minimum levels of proficiency.

Within the framework of this policy, teacher accreditation authorities have the right to choose which type of English language testing is conducted for persons seeking employment as teachers.

A teacher accreditation authority is not required to accept results of an English test conducted by or on behalf of another teacher accreditation authority.

In addition, a teacher accreditation authority has the discretion to refer any applicant to an accepted English language test.

These provisions apply to all teachers seeking Provisional or Conditional accreditation for teaching in NSW schools.

Teacher accreditation authorities are responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy.

This policy will be subject to review by the Quality Teaching Council whenever one of the accepted English language tests is revised.

2. ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY FOR PROVISIONAL OR CONDITIONAL ACCREDITATION

If the first language of an applicant for accreditation is not English, teacher accreditation authorities are to sight evidence that:

1. the person gained the majority of his or her qualification in English in a country where English is the main language (see Section 4 *Exceptions*), or
2. the results of an accepted English language test indicating reading, writing, speaking and listening proficiency at or above the minimum levels of achievement set out below have been achieved.

3. ACCEPTED ENGLISH LANGUAGE TESTS

The tests and results which are accepted by the NSW Institute of Teachers are listed below.

3.1 International English Language Testing System (IELTS)

The IELTS test for academic purposes is an appropriate test for prospective teachers. The Institute requires that the applicant needs to attain a minimum overall score of 7.5 including a minimum result of 8.0 in both the speaking and listening modules and 7.0 in reading and writing.

The test is widely accepted as an international standard for English language skills. Testing and locations can be found at <http://www.ielts.org/>.

3.2 Professional English Assessment for Teachers (PEAT)

The applicant must have Band A in each of the four areas: speaking, listening, reading and writing.

This test has been developed for teachers intending to teach in the NSW Department of Education and Training (DET). DET requires relevant teachers to undertake the PEAT. The DET has advised that Band A is required for teaching in government schools. It is available at the University of NSW Institute of Languages. The website is <http://www.lang.unsw.edu.au/PEAT/>. Only the DET may refer teachers to undertake PEAT.

3.3 International Second Language Proficiency Rating (ISLPR)

The applicant must have a score of at least 4+ in each of the four areas: speaking, listening, reading and writing.

This test was originally developed as the ASLPR (Australian Second Language Proficiency Rating). It was developed at Griffith University and is available in a form specifically designed to test language proficiency in the teaching context. The website is <http://www.islpr.org>.

4. EXCEPTIONS

The following applicants generally do not need to complete one of the approved language tests:

- applicants for whom English is their first language
- applicants who have gained the majority of their qualifications in English, in a country where English is the main language. These countries are: Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Republic of Ireland, United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland), Republic of South Africa and the United States of America
- applicants who can provide evidence that they have successfully taught in English in a school in a country where English is the main language for a substantial period of time.

5. CURRENCY OF RESULTS

The Institute has accepted the advice of the test providers regarding the length of currency of results.

Applicants who submit results from IELTS must submit results from a test taken within a period of two years of their application for provisional or conditional accreditation.

Applicants who submit results from ISLPR must submit results from a test taken within a period of twelve months of their application for provisional or conditional accreditation.

A successful PEAT does not lose currency.