

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY FOR J-1 SCHOLARS

The U.S. Department of State requires all J-1 program sponsors to ensure that “The exchange visitor possesses sufficient proficiency in the English language, as determined by an objective measurement of English language proficiency, successfully to participate in his or her program and to function on a day-to-day basis.” ISSS must receive documentation demonstrating a prospective J-1 Scholar’s English proficiency before we can issue the requisite DS-2019 form. In order to comply with this requirement, scholars have the following options:

- 1) Scores from one of the following English tests that are not more than 2 years old and meet or surpass the listed minimum test score.

English Test	Min Score	Website
TOEFL	65	https://www.ets.org/toefl/ibt/register
IELTS	6	https://www.ielts.org/en-us/book-a-test/how-do-i-register
CEFR	B2	http://cambridgemichigan.org/test-takers/tests/ ECCE, ECPE, MELAB, or MET
ACTFL OPI or ACTFL OPIc	Intermediate Mid	https://www.languagetesting.com/ltiapi/index/products/ (Due to their swift turn around time and ease of access Language Testing International is recommended when a scholar does not have another means to document English language. Average cost is \$105-159)
TOEIC	650	https://www.ets.org/ept_directory

Please note: these scores have been determined to be the minimum required to meet the U.S. Department of State’s regulations for J-1 Exchange Visitors. ISSS encourages departments to additionally conduct their own analysis of the visitor’s English language ability to determine whether the visitor possesses the proficiency level needed to successfully engage in the proposed activities.

- 2) Evidence the visitor has completed a Bachelor’s or graduate degree within the past 15 years at a recognized institution of higher learning in the U.S. or a country where the language of instruction is English.
 - a. For U.S. degrees, a diploma or transcript indicating degree conferred
 - b. For non-U.S. institutions, a transcript in English showing degree conferred. If transcript does not note English as the language of instruction, an official letter from the institution’s registrar confirming that the visitor attended the institution and the medium of instruction was English must be submitted as well.

- 3) Provide a letter from the Human Resources office of an accredited U.S. school, international school, or a school where the language of instruction is English confirming that the visitor has, within the last five (5) years, taught at the institution. If the school is not in the U.S. or in an English language-speaking country, the letter must specify that the language of instruction is English. The letter must be on institution letterhead and signed.
- 4) Evidence the visitor is a citizen or lawful permanent residency holder of a country where the official language is English as documented by a passport or LPR card. See list of countries below.

Anguilla	Cayman Islands	Lesotho	St. Kitts & Nevis	Swaziland
Antigua and Barbuda	Dominica	Liberia	St. Lucia	Tanzania
Australia	Fiji	Malawi	St. Vincent &	Tonga
Bahamas	Gambia	Malta	the Grenadines	Trinidad & Tobago
Barbados	Ghana	Mauritius	Seychelles	Turks & Caicos Is
Belize	Gibraltar	Micronesia	Shetland Islands	Uganda
Bermuda	Grenada	Montserrat	Sierra Leone	United Kingdom
Botswana	Guyana	Namibia	Singapore	Vanuatu
British Virgin Islands	Ireland	New Zealand	Solomon Islands	Wales
Cameroon	Jamaica	Nigeria	South Africa	Zambia
Canada (except Quebec)	Kenya	Papua New Guinea		Zimbabwe

- 5) Provide a letter from the Human Resources office of the firm confirming the visitor's employment dates and that the firm conducts business exclusively in English. The letter must be on firm letterhead, signed, and show that the visitor was employed for a period of at least two (2) years, within the last five (5) years.
- 6) If the visitor currently holds J-1 status and is transferring to UNC from another institution it will be presumed that they have met the English proficiency requirement already.