



Center for English as a Second Language (CESL) – English Language Endorsement

Approval for Graduate Departments

To Whom It May Concern:

As you may know, international students seeking admission into the University of Arizona have to fulfill an English language proficiency requirement. This is often achieved by attaining one of the university benchmark scores on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) examination. The minimal benchmark scores for these examinations at the graduate level are currently as follows:

Graduate Admission

- TOEFL paper test – 550
- TOEFL internet test (IBT) – 79
- IELTS composite score – 7

In 2005, the University of Arizona Graduate Council voted to approve CESL Endorsement as another option for students to fulfill the English language requirement for admission. When students apply for CESL Endorsement, a committee of ESL professionals considers the student's most recent TOEFL or IELTS results, while also considering a portfolio of their work at our center that contains the following elements:

- **The student's grades.** Students who receive CESL Endorsement have a minimum GPA of 3.0.
- **An oral interview.** Independent of the student's grades, students applying for CESL Graduate Endorsement are interviewed by CESL's Endorsement Committee. The student's oral proficiency is evaluated based on the Common European Framework (CEFR - <http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/exams/cefr/>) and students who receive CESL Graduate Endorsement earn a minimum score of B2.
- **A timed writing.** Independent of the student's grades, students applying for CESL Graduate Endorsement complete a timed writing. CESL's Endorsement Committee also evaluates the student's written proficiency based on the CEFR (see link above) and students who receive CESL Endorsement earn a minimum score of B2.
- **Instructor feedback.** Each of the student's instructors submits a feedback form indicating their overall impression of the student's English abilities based on 8 weeks of instructional contact with the student, as well as their assessment of the student's ability to succeed at the graduate level.

Graduate students may only apply for endorsement once they are in one of CESL's most advanced program, the University Track. CESL Endorsement allows such students to fulfill the English language requirement through a comprehensive, data-driven process that is based on the candidate's performance in a minimum of 180 hours of instruction over the course of an eight-week session. For students who experience test anxiety, this process is far superior to relying on results from a 2-3 hour examination.

Because graduate departments have different admissions requirements, you are being given this form so that the student presenting it knows that CESL Endorsement will be accepted by your department to fulfill the English language requirement for admission if CESL decides to endorse the student.

Of course, your department retains full rights to evaluate the candidate's academic readiness for full admission. If you have an application for a student who already does meet all of your academic admissions requirements except English, you may conditionally admit the student. The student would then study at CESL (tuition paid by either the student or his/her sponsor) until s/he can fulfill the English requirement, either through CESL Endorsement or by attaining one of the exam benchmark scores mentioned above. Typically, conditional admission and CESL Endorsement is good for one year.

Please fill out the information below and give it back to the student. I encourage you to make a copy for your own records as well. If you would like more information about CESL's English Language Endorsement, please visit

<http://www.cesl.arizona.edu/endorsement>. You can also contact Steven Randall at randall@email.arizona.edu (621-6211) or Rebecca Riley at rnoreen@email.arizona.edu (621-5892) with questions.

Thank you,



Suzanne Panferov, Ph.D., CESL Director

Your name (printed): _____ Title: _____

Your signature: _____

Date: _____

Phone number: _____

Email address: _____

Student Name: _____

Graduate Department	Program	Degree
_____	_____	_____

Will your department accept CESL's English Language Endorsement? (circle one)

- Yes
- No (If no, please explain why.)

Please return this form to CESL with the student or fax directly to us at 621-9180.

Next steps: Once the student has received notification of receiving endorsement, the CESL Admissions Office will send notification to the Graduate College. If the student is not endorsed, s/he will either continue to study at CESL and apply again for endorsement, or retake either the TOEFL or IELTS exam.