# ENGLISH LANGUAGE POLICY

## Approved by: UOW College Academic Board | Date: 15 September 2015

## Date Effective: 15 September 2015 | Date of Next Review: September 2017

## Document No: POL-UOWC-24 | Revision: 2

## Custodian: English Language Centre Manager

### Supporting Documents, Procedures & Forms:
- Admissions Policy
- Curriculum Review Policy
- Course Review Procedure
- Subject Review Procedure

### References & Legislation:
- Australian Qualifications Framework 2013 (AQF)
- Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
- Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act)
- Good Practice Principles for English language proficiency for international students in Australian universities (2009)
- Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2011 (HESF)
- National Standards for ELICOS Providers and Courses
- National Standards for Foundation Programs
- UOW Standards Framework
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1 Purpose of Policy

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure UOW College commitment to the preparedness of students and the quality of their communication skills, including English language proficiency.

1.2 This policy has been developed in response to the legislative requirements of the HESF, Course Accreditation Standards, the regulatory requirements of the Australian Qualifications Framework, and the pedagogical requirements of the Good Practice Principles for English language proficiency for international students in Australian universities (2009)

1.3 Exemption from this policy for a particular course may be granted by the UOW College General Manager where there is clear evidence that the cohort does not require the support stipulated by the policy.

2 Scope of Policy

2.1 This policy applies to all students undertaking UOW College Academic or Vocational courses.

2.2 This policy also applies to all UOW College staff, and those employed by our educational partners who have responsibility for designing and delivering UOW College courses and programs.

2.3 English language courses delivered at UOW College are designed to develop the English language proficiency and communicative competencies of students.

3 Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word/Term</th>
<th>Definition (with examples if required)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advanced (and fluent) English</td>
<td>Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
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<tr>
<td>controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices. This reflects the competencies of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, Level C1.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Course</td>
<td>A program of study that includes those courses leading to higher education and vocational awards and non-award courses.</td>
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<tr>
<td>English Language Proficiency</td>
<td>Refers to a student’s ability to comprehend and create meaning effectively in the social, academic and professional contexts to which their education relate.</td>
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<td>English Language Proficiency Requirements</td>
<td>The minimum English language proficiency requirements for students to be admitted to a course at UOW College.</td>
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<td>Learning Outcomes</td>
<td>Statements of the knowledge, understanding and skills students are expected to achieve as a result of engagement with the content of the Subject or course.</td>
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<td>Staff</td>
<td>Full-time, fixed term, part-time, sessional and casual employees of UOW Enterprises.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Any person who is enrolled in any course or program offer at, or in conjunction with, the College. For vocational, this may be referred to as learner.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>A staff member (whether permanent, sessional, or casual) who carries out teaching or training responsibilities under the authority of a Head of Program, Course Coordinator or Subject Coordinator.</td>
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<td>Upper-Intermediate English</td>
<td>Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options. This reflects the competencies of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, Level B2.</td>
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4 Policy Principles

4.1 Responsibility for the ongoing assessment and development of student’s communication skills, including English language proficiency, is shared between students, teachers and UOW College.

4.2 Academic and Vocational courses at UOW College are conducted in the upper-intermediate, to advanced and fluent levels of English and students are expected to comprehend, learn, and communicate effectively within this environment.

4.3 The quality assurance of students’ communication skills development is most appropriately and successfully achieved as part of the assurance of learning with a course.

4.4 UOW College students can expect appropriate access to facilities, resources, and materials that help their development of communication skills, including English language proficiency.

5 Admissions

5.1 UOW College will set English language proficiency requirements for admission at a standard that allows students to fully participate in their studies at UOW College.

5.2 The UOW College Academic Board will regularly monitor and review the English language proficiency requirements for each course with respect to student performance to ensure they remain current and valid.

5.3 The biannual UOW Comparative Student Outcomes report will include data on international student performance by entry pathway and English language qualification.

5.4 Internal student tracking within and among English language courses is regularly carried out by UOW College and is reported through the governance structure to the UOW College Academic Board.

6 Assuring English Language Development in Coursework Studies

6.1 Consistent with the requirements of the AQF, HESF, and the National Standards for Foundation Programs, and the UOW Standards Framework, all UOW College
courses will be designed to explicitly foster and assess students’ development and achievement of the communication skills embedded within the course learning outcomes, including English language proficiency. This will be achieved through the following measures.

6.1.1 Students will be provided with the opportunity to obtain feedback and further develop their communication skills across a wide range of purposes, audiences, and contexts relevant to the discipline by ensuring variety in communicative assessment tasks.

6.1.2 Course learning outcomes will clearly articulate the development and achieve of written and oral communication skills, including English language proficiency, appropriate to the level and qualification type.

6.1.3 Selected subjects within a course will explicitly foster and assess students’ development and achievement of specific aspects of the course learning outcomes pertaining to communication skills, including English language proficiency, through the design of the learning environment, assessment activities, and teaching strategies and resources.

6.1.4 Early assessment and/or teacher feedback within a course will be used to identify students at risk due to English language proficiency.

6.1.5 Students identified at risk due to English language proficiency will be provided with additional support.

7 Roles & Responsibilities

Student Responsibilities

7.1 Students are responsible for:

a. addressing their own language development needs,

b. acting on feedback provided about their English language proficiency, and

c. making use of available resources for language development provided by UOW College.

Academic Quality Manager Responsibilities

7.2 The Academic Quality Manager, in conjunction with the relevant Head of Program are responsible for:
a. ensuring course learning outcomes clearly articulate the achievement of communication skills, including English language proficiency appropriate to the qualification level and qualification type, and

b. ensuring selected subjects within a course are designed to explicitly foster and assess students’ development and achievement of communication skills, including English language proficiency.

**Head of Program Responsibilities**

7.3 The relevant Head of Program is responsible for:

a. identifying which subjects within a course will explicitly address the development of students' communication skills, including English language proficiency,

b. reviewing learning outcomes to ensure they explicitly address students’ communication skills, including English language proficiency,

c. ensuring that across selected subjects, students have the opportunity to develop their communication skills across a wide range of purposes, audiences and contexts relevant to the discipline by ensuring variety in communicative assessment tasks, and

d. liaising with language providers to arrange for appropriate language development provision.

7.4 The relevant Head of Program is also responsible for providing:

a. specific discipline staff with the opportunities to develop their understanding of the role of language in learning and of approaches that may be used to develop and assess the communication skills including the English language proficiency of their students,

b. assistance to staff who teach in courses with large cohorts of students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds or literacy levels, and

c. assistance to staff who teach subjects identified as explicitly developing student English language proficiency.

**Subject Coordinator Responsibilities**

7.5 Subject Coordinators of core or selected subjects are responsible for:
a. ensuring learning outcomes are embedded into subjects to foster communication skill development appropriate to the course and level of qualification,

b. engaging in appropriate forms of feedforward and feedback processes that provide students with constructive feedback and opportunities to develop their communication skills,

c. developing assessment tasks and criteria that explicitly address students’ communication skills, and where appropriate, identify students at risk due to English language proficiency, and

d. where appropriate, liaise with language providers to ensure relevant and timely support is provided to students at risk.

8 Version Control and Change History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version Control</th>
<th>Date Effective</th>
<th>Approved By</th>
<th>Amendment</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>15 September 2015</td>
<td>UOW College</td>
<td>New Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Academic Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>21/07/2016</td>
<td>Compliance Officer</td>
<td>Minor change only – College branding and document formatting updated.</td>
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