

# English Language Proficiency Standards in the BC Transfer System

*Prepared by Dr. Fiona McQuarrie, Special Projects Coordinator, BCCAT*

*July 2019*



**BCCAT**

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# Executive Summary

The number of non-native English speakers enrolling in BC's post-secondary system has likely increased in recent decades. This has led to concerns about whether such students have adequate English-language proficiency for academic success. Since it is impossible to accurately identify non-native English speakers in BC Transfer System (BCTS) member institutions' admissions processes, this study focuses on three questions related to the measurement of English-language proficiency:

- (1) The standardized measures of English-language proficiency used in BCTS members' admissions processes that are not related to completion of BC high school English 12 or its equivalent, including transfer credit from other institutions;
- (2) the minimum scores on these assessments that are accepted by BCTS members for admission to programs designed to improve students' English-language skills; and,
- (3) the level of English-language proficiency required for students in English-language upgrading programs at BCTS member institutions to enrol in credit-bearing undergraduate academic courses.



*There are five standardized tests accepted as measures of English-language proficiency for admission to more than half of BCTS member institutions. This study compares the acceptable minimum marks or grades on each of these tests across institutions.*

The study reviews the extensive research literature that explores measures of English-language proficiency used for admissions and whether there is any relationship between these and students' subsequent academic performance.

There are five standardized tests accepted as measures of English-language proficiency for admission to more than half of BCTS member institutions. This study compares the acceptable minimum marks or grades on each of these tests across institutions. Additionally, 22 BCTS member institutions accept transfer credit from other institutions as meeting English-language proficiency requirements for admission, so the study compares each institution's requirements for accepting such credit.

The study also compares the minimum marks or grades on standardized tests that BCTS members require for admission to their institution's English-language upgrading programs. 20 BCTS member institutions permit students in these programs to simultaneously take academic (credit) courses, and the study also outlines the conditions around this permission at each institution.

Based on the literature review and the analysis of institutional data, the study makes six recommendations.

- (1) BCTS member institutions should consider making all English-language proficiency admission criteria available to all applicants, regardless of whether they are domestic or international applicants.
- (2) BCTS member institutions should consider recording all data relevant to an applicant's fulfilling the English-language proficiency requirement for admission.
- (3) BCTS member institutions that accept transfer credit as an indicator of English-language proficiency should consider whether the content and evaluation criteria of the course(s) at sending institutions reflect the receiving institution's desired level of proficiency.
- (4) BCTS member institutions should consider clearly stating minimum English-language proficiency scores for admission to English-language upgrading or academic preparation programs, or consider establishing a minimum score if none currently exists.
- (5) BCTS member institutions should consider reviewing the English-language pre-requisites and/or admission standards for lower-level courses, especially those courses which non-native English speakers might be directed to.
- (6) BCTS member institutions that permit students in English-language upgrading or academic preparation programs to simultaneously enrol in credit courses should consider reviewing students' academic performance in these courses, particularly in comparison to students in the same courses that are enrolled in other programs.

# Introduction

The number of non-native English speakers enrolling in BC's post-secondary institutions has likely increased in recent decades. It is difficult to locate data that definitively prove this trend, but general demographic data make it reasonable to assume that the number is rising. There is more linguistic diversity among the Canadian population in general (Statistics Canada, 2017); additionally, data from British Columbia indicate that high school students from non-English-speaking households undertake post-secondary studies within one year at a higher rate than high school students from English-speaking households (Student Transitions Project, 2018).

*There is more linguistic diversity among the Canadian population in general. There are also increasing numbers of international students studying in Canada.*

There are also increasing numbers of international students studying in Canada. In the 2016/17 academic year, 12% of students enrolled in Canadian post-secondary institutions were students from outside of Canada (Statistics Canada, 2018), and as of December 2018, there were 572,415 international students in Canada, a 16% increase over 2017 (Canadian Bureau for International Education, 2018). In June 2018, the Canadian government implemented the Student Direct Stream program, which expedites study permit approvals for students from China, India, the Philippines, and Vietnam (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2018); combined with concerns about discrimination and hostility towards immigrants in the United States, this program is expected to make Canada even more attractive as a destination for international students from these populous countries (Semotiuk, 2019).

However, these trends have been accompanied by concerns about non-native English speakers' ability to function at the level of English-language proficiency generally expected in Canadian post-secondary education (e.g. Friesen & Keeney, 2013). These concerns are also indicated by the fact that between 2002 and 2018 the BC Council on Admissions & Transfer (BCCAT) commissioned 14 different studies on various aspects of student English-language proficiency in the BC post-secondary system. These studies have examined such topics as the relationship between institutional English-language proficiency standards and the proficiencies outlined in the Canadian Language Benchmarks; English-language proficiency test scores as a predictor of students' academic success; and factors affecting the academic performance of English as a Second Language (ESL) and English Language Learner (ELL) students in lower-level English courses. A similar range of topics is evident in the published literature relating students' English-language proficiency to their post-secondary academic experiences.

For reasons that are explained in the methodology section of this report, it is impossible to reliably identify non-native English speakers enrolled in BC's post-secondary institutions. It is also impossible, both within the BC-specific data and in general, to meaningfully correlate measures of students' English-language proficiency with their academic success. Thus, this research addresses the issue of BC post-secondary students' English-language proficiency by examining three uses of English-language proficiency standards within the BC Transfer System:

- (1) The measures of English-language proficiency used in admissions processes that are not related to completion of BC high school English courses or their equivalent, but including transfer credit from other institutions;

- (2) the minimum scores on these assessments that are accepted for admission to programs designed to improve students' English-language skills; and,
- (3) the level of English-language proficiency required for students in English-language upgrading programs to enrol in credit-bearing undergraduate academic courses.

These examinations follow the BCCAT mandate to “facilitate admission, articulation, and transfer arrangements among BC Transfer System member institutions, as well as to conduct research on student and credit mobility” (BCCAT, 2017, p. 2). Comparisons of policies and practices in these three areas will be useful to BC Transfer System (BCTS) member institutions in assessing their own expectations for students' English-language proficiency. Assessing these expectations will also be a relevant issue for many BC post-secondary institutions in light of recent changes to BC's K-12 curriculum, including the provincial “literacy assessment” that will replace from the provincial English 12 examination currently used by most BC post-secondary institutions as a measure of BC students' English-language proficiency. Comparisons of institutional policies and practices across the province may also generate institutional or system-wide discussion on whether institutions' admission standards are ensuring that students have adequate reading, writing, listening, and speaking English-language skills for post-secondary success.

It should be noted that this study was originally envisioned as a review of pre-requisites for lower-level English post-secondary courses. BCCAT's June 2018 call for expressions of interest on the topic of English-language proficiency standards identified one component of the proposed research as “a review of general admission and first-year English course pre-requisites for non-native speakers of English”. While the review of general admission standards is part of this revised study, the review of first-year English course pre-requisites is not. There are two reasons for this. First, while deficiencies in students' English-language skills may be more apparent or more problematic in English courses, deficiencies in students' English-language skills can affect their performance in courses in all disciplines. Restricting the scope of the study to first-year English courses would not capture the broader effects of students' potentially inadequate English-language skills. Also, most first-year English courses have a range of pre-requisites for admission, and it is difficult to find courses that specifically identify certain pre-requisites as applicable only to non-native English speakers.

The second reason for not reviewing first-year English course pre-requisites is to avoid the problematic perception that an institution's English department or program bears the responsibility for addressing students' English-language deficiencies. The curriculum of every BC post-secondary institution's English program includes courses, or elements of courses, intended to improve students' reading, writing and comprehension skills. However, every BCTS member institution also has a statement to the effect of “English is the language of instruction” on its website or in its policies. This implies that all faculties and programs should be involved in developing students' English-language skills — because all students, regardless of their individual demographic characteristics, will need support in improving their English-language skills at some point during their studies (Heng Hartse, 2018). Faculty members in English and related programs may have specific disciplinary expertise related to improving students' English-language skills, but expectations of students' English-language proficiency, along with providing resources for students to help them meet those expectations, should be consistent across all faculties and programs.

In addressing these issues, this study will first review the literature on English-language proficiency in post-secondary education. The focus of the study will then turn to a comparison of standardized measures of English-language proficiency used as admission standards by BC Transfer System member institutions. The results of that comparison will then be used as the basis for recommendations for further action.



# Literature Review

As previously mentioned, there is a great deal of published research exploring different measures of students' English-language proficiency, and exploring the effects of English-language proficiency on students' academic experiences. Much of this research has been conducted in specific settings or has focused on students in specific demographic groups; these results may not be generalizable to other settings or other demographics. Therefore, the discussion in this section will focus on general topics and themes that emerge from this body of literature as a whole.

## *Assumptions Associated with Proficiency*

One area of this research focuses on unpacking the implicit assumptions underlying the role of English-language proficiency in post-secondary education. In English-language post-secondary institutions, proficiency in English is often implicitly equated with general academic potential or ability, with higher levels of proficiency considered indicators of greater potential or ability (McNamara, Morton, Storch & Thompson, 2018). This research generally acknowledges the importance of students having appropriate English-language skills for programs that are delivered in English, and for programs in which students are expected to write, speak, discuss, and present in English. However, it also points out that there are several hidden assumptions underlying the focus on students' English-language skills – or, more often than not, deficiencies in such skills – in assessing academic potential.

First, this focus reinforces the perception of English as the appropriate language for academic study and discourse. Privileging English and English-language academic work may perpetuate attitudes related to colonialism, and downgrade the contributions of academic work in other languages (Tomic, 2003). Second, the “academic English” that is normally used in universities is a distinctive form of English which does not recognize vernacular, regional, non-North American, or non-European forms of English as “correct”, even though ideas and discourse may be communicated eloquently and thoughtfully in these forms (Gu & So, 2014). Despite this insistence on correct “academic English”, however, the conventions of acceptable “academic English” also vary between disciplines, and even between schools of thought within a discipline, in such areas as argumentation style and organization of ideas (McNamara, Morton, Storch & Thompson, 2018).

Third, judging students' academic potential on the basis of their proficiency in English may frame those students in terms of their deficiencies rather than their strengths. A student with inadequate English-language skills could be very proficient in other languages, could have extensive cultural expertise associated with knowledge of those languages, or could have strong academic skills in subjects where English-language proficiency is less critical to success — for example, in science-related disciplines where writing lengthy academic essays is not a common requirement for students (Keefe & Shi, 2017).

*In English-language post-secondary institutions, proficiency in English is often implicitly equated with general academic potential or ability, with higher levels of proficiency considered indicators of greater potential or ability.*

Viewing students only in terms of their English-language abilities devalues the other potential contributions or abilities of these students. A move toward recognizing students for more than their deficiencies in English can be seen in the identifier “English as a Second Language” (ESL) being joined by terms such as “English as an Additional Language” (EAL), “English Language Learners” (ELL), “English Language Studies” (ELS), and “Multilingual Learners” (MLL).

*Several themes emerge from this research, the most prominent being that these tests are not intended as tests of the ability to function in English in an academic context, but as tests of general English proficiency.*

## *The Use of Proficiency Tests in Admissions*

A great deal of research explores how post-secondary institutions use English-language proficiency test scores in determining admissions. Several themes emerge from this research, the most prominent being that these tests are not intended as tests of the ability to function in English in an academic context, but as tests of general English proficiency. For example, Educational Testing Services (ETS), which designs and administers the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language), clearly states that the test is intended “to evaluate the English proficiency of people whose native language is not English” (Norris, 2018, p. 6), although ETS has also claimed that the test measures “the kind of integrated English skills students will actually use in an academic setting” (ETS, 2011, p. 3).

However, despite such claims, many researchers contend that it is problematic to use scores from these types of tests as institutional admission criteria. These contentions arise from a number of different sources. Some studies have indicated that institutions’ determination of minimum English-proficiency test scores for admission has more to do with “prevailing market forces”, such as competition with other institutions to attract potential students, than it does with any “formal standard-setting exercise” (O’Loughlin, 2011, p. 151). Others have noted that these tests are not structured as pass/fail tests, but instead as assessments of English-language proficiency on a continuum, and that setting a minimum test score for the purpose of admission essentially turns these tests into pass/fail mechanisms; the “fail” occurs for applicants whose scores do not meet the minimum and thus are denied admission (Ginther & Yan, 2018). In the context of such discussions, it has also been noted that there are applicants for whom English is a second language, but who completed Grade 12 in a Canadian high school or in an English-language secondary school system. These students, as second-language learners, may struggle with academic English, but may not have equitable access to university-sponsored support services because they were not admitted, or could not apply to be admitted, on the basis of an English-language proficiency test score (Fox, 2005).

Other research on the role of proficiency tests in admission decisions has examined how test scores are used in the admission process – for example, whether test scores are part of a holistic assessment of the applicant’s qualifications, or if they are used as a hurdle (e.g. if an applicant does not have the minimum required test score, their application is rejected regardless of their other qualifications). Comparative tests of different admission decision-making processes, using the same applicant information in each process, have shown that the structure of the process has a significant impact on choices even when the applicant information is identical. Thus, English-language proficiency test scores may have different effects on admissions decisions depending on the stage of the application process at which these

scores are assessed (Childs, Ferguson, Herbert, Broad & Zhang, 2016). Along similar lines, many of the commonly used English-language proficiency tests are scored both overall and on individual components: usually, reading, writing, speaking, and listening. However, some universities use only the overall score as the measure of English-language proficiency in their admissions process (Read, 2015), which reduces the potential to identify specific language-related skills that might need support or which could be built on during the student's enrollment. The policies of the testing company, such as whether or when test-takers can retake the test, or whether they can choose to retake only components of the test, can also affect how accurately the test score represents the applicant's English-language proficiency (Hamid, 2016).

Another theme in this part of the literature is the potential for students to cheat on English-language proficiency tests, either in cheating while taking the test – sometimes with the assistance of individuals administering the test – or in submitting fraudulent test scores. There have been several recent high-profile cases of students in Canada and elsewhere submitting test results which they obtained by purchasing a faked test report or paying someone else to take the test for them (e.g. Main, 2016; Teunonio & Keung, 2019). There is also evidence of systemic fraud in how some English-language proficiency tests are administered or scored (Tyre, 2016). A Google search of “how to cheat on [name of test]” will produce numerous eye-opening results. This is not to say that English-language proficiency tests are more or less susceptible to cheating than other forms of assessment, or other materials that are usually requested for admission applications, but the potential for fraud should be noted – particularly when a specific test score may mean the difference between an applicant receiving or not receiving the opportunity for a better life through higher education.

## *Proficiency Test Scores and Academic Performance*

Studies attempting to link English-language proficiency test scores used for admission with students' subsequent academic performance have produced mixed results. While some studies have shown a positive correlation between test scores and subsequent GPA (e.g., Fass-Holmes & Vaughn, 2015), others have not found any meaningful correlations between test scores and GPA, or between test scores and graduation rates (e.g. Simner & Mitchell, 2007), while others have found weak correlations between test scores and GPA. Some studies indicate a general relationship between students' scores and grades when these are analyzed in groups; students whose test scores fall into higher or lower bands (e.g. top 25% or bottom 25% of scores) tend to get correspondingly higher or lower grades (Cho & Bridgeman, 2012).

Several researchers have attempted to explain why this research has not produced definitive answers. One reason that has been proposed is that institutions may not record information that would allow them to track the performance of students admitted on the basis of an English-language proficiency test score, i.e. the students are recorded as meeting the language proficiency requirement for admission, but there is no notation of how that requirement was met. This lack of precision makes it difficult to accurately track these students' subsequent academic performance, and using proxy indicators such as country of origin may not accurately identify these students (Andrade, Evans & Hartshorn, 2014). Andrade et al (2014) also note that there are variations across institutions in the amount and type of supports offered to students struggling with English-language skills, in addition to limited data on whether or how often students use these supports, which makes it difficult to conduct assessments of the impact of such interventions on students' GPAs.

Other researchers suggest that individual students' personal characteristics have more to do with their academic success than their English-language proficiency at the time of admission. Phakiti, Hirsh and Woodrow (2013) analyzed data from international ESL students enrolled in an Australian foundation studies (pre-admission) university program. They found that the students' own motivation, self-efficacy (belief in their own capacity for success), self-regulation (monitoring their own performance and actively strategizing to improve it), and personal values affected their academic performance, as measured by GPA, more strongly than their English-language proficiency. The academic requirements of the individual student's program of study may also affect their academic success, as reflected in their GPA, independent of the student's English-language proficiency (Cho & Bridgeman, 2012).

Fox (2005) examined the academic performance of students for whom English was a second language but who attended English-language secondary school. She found that students with more years of English-language secondary school study were more likely to have satisfactory GPAs and take more credits, and were less likely to receive academic warnings for unsatisfactory academic performance. The strongest predictor of academic performance in Fox's study was the student's high school GPA. However, students with more years of English-language high school study were also more likely to request a program change during their first two years of university.

Some researchers have pointed out challenges in using GPA as a measure of students' academic performance. Although GPA is widely used by institutions for this purpose, because it can be derived from easily available data reflecting evaluations of students' academic work, it is an imperfect measure of academic performance (York, Gibson & Rankin, 2015). As an average, it does not identify student performance in individual academic courses, which might be a more valuable indicator of the student's range of ability or learning. For example, students with weak writing skills may try to avoid taking courses which they perceive as requiring too written work (Marshall & Marr, 2018). A student in that situation might have low grades in writing-intensive courses and higher grades in less writing-intensive courses, but that variation in skill would not be identified through a measure that averaged all of the student's course grades. Thus, if GPA is a relatively simplistic measure of overall academic performance, it is questionable to correlate it with admissions criteria to determine whether the criteria are reliable predictors of academic potential.

York et al (2015) also suggest that "academic success" is a multi-faceted construct that encompasses such factors as student satisfaction with their learning, their attainment of learning outcomes, their acquisition of skills and competencies, and their ability to persist until they complete their desired credential. GPA can be used as a proxy measure for academic achievement, but it does not capture achievement of these other factors. The suggestion that GPA is an imperfect measure of academic performance is borne out in other research: for example, the finding that GPA may not be a reliable basis for comparison of student performance across semesters or years, and that it also may not be calculated identically at all institutions, which reduces the potential validity of inter-institutional GPA comparisons (Westrick, 2017).

These issues lead to another theme in the literature: the use of post-admission assessments to identify English-language proficiency issues that might affect students' academic performance. The post-admissions assessments most often mentioned are similar in structure and application to DELNA (Diagnostic English Language Needs Assessment) at the University of Auckland (von Randow, 2010). A key feature of DELNA and similar assessments is that these are taken by all new students, not only by international students or students admitted on the basis of English proficiency other than high school completion. These assessments are also designed as a low-risk diagnostic tool, rather than as a test or as a pass/fail performance standard. The DELNA process starts with an online vocabulary and editing exercise, which is mandatory for all new students, with the outcome communicated to students via email. Students whose results in the online tests indicate English-proficiency issues (approximately 27% of test takers) are encouraged to

meet with an advisor to be directed to appropriate support services, or encouraged to sign up for an additional assessment, after which an advisor will work with a student to develop strategies to address specific problem areas. While students are not required by the University to take any further steps after receiving the results of their online assessment, some programs have mandated this follow-up for students wanting to enrol or to continue in their programs (von Randow, 2010).

Institutions also have experimented with different forms of academic support of students with English-language challenges. The findings of the literature in this area are difficult to generalize, because of variance in the demographics, motivation, abilities, and academic interests of the students that have been studied. However, several broad themes are identifiable in this research. The first is the type of academic support services that institutions choose to offer. Institutions' choices of the services offered for students may be influenced by factors such as resource constraints or strategic priorities (King & McQuarrie, 2018) and thus may not directly address or take into account students' actual needs. This is a particularly challenging issue in relation to providing appropriate supports for international students, whose support needs may vary depending on their English-language proficiency and their familiarity with different teaching and learning styles (Wang, 2018). The type of academic support services that universities offer to English-language learners seem quite consistent across institutions; the most common types of support identified by Andrade et al (2014) were skill centres, coursework, tutoring, workshops, and modules. 85% of the institutions surveyed in this study offered support in the form of skill centres and coursework; however, there was a clear distinction between required and optional language support, with coursework and "other" the only two forms of support that were required by more than 50% of the respondents.

A second theme is how to get students to use the academic support services that the institution provides. International students who are studying full-time may understand the value of academic support, but may not have time to access academic support services because of the significant amount of time they already spend on reading, studying and comprehending English-language course materials. As previously mentioned, some students are also reluctant to seek help because they fear that asking for help may be seen as a sign of weakness or incompetence. One study (Fenton-Smith & Michael, 2013) addressed the reluctance issue by requiring students to use an academic support service as part of a class assignment. More than half of the 155 students in the class attended one-to-one consultations on language issues or a library learning service, with less than 10% choosing a more social-oriented activity. The majority of respondents attended their chosen service for the first time, and reported that even though they were required to use the service, it was productive enough that they would voluntarily use the service again. This emphasizes the importance of not only communicating to students the academic value of using such services, but also the importance of providing services in ways that are accessible and attractive to students. This last point is also emphasized in studies such as Nakamaru's (2018) study of English-language learners' experiences at a university writing centre. The findings of this study highlighted the potential disconnect between tutors' view of the issues that students should address in their writing and the students' view of what caused them the most difficulties in English-language writing; students were dissatisfied when they felt that tutors were not listening to them about the problems that motivated the students to seek help with their academic writing.

*The type of academic support services that universities offer to English-language learners seem quite consistent across institutions; the most common types of support (have been identified as) skill centres, coursework, tutoring, workshops, and modules.*

Finally, this part of the literature also includes examples of strategies that may be effective in supporting the academic success of students who are non-native English speakers, or in improving students' English-language skills. The primary theme in this part of the literature is the benefits of synergy between English-language instruction and discipline-specific instruction. One example of this type of synergy is collaboration between English-language specialist instructors and instructors in specific programs or courses, particularly programs or courses that are popular with international students or that are challenging for non-native English speakers. English-language instructors and discipline-specific instructors share effective teaching practices and visit each other's classes; this allows instructors in both areas to design complementary course content and to understand the learning that students are acquiring throughout the entire program (Zappa-Hollman, 2018).

Another common form of support is in scheduling regular tutorials for students outside of class time, with these tutorials focusing on language and terminology used in the discipline, rather than on concepts; these tutorials can also address reading, note-taking, and exam strategies that are most effective in that particular discipline. This type of support can be extremely helpful for students in courses with difficult vocabularies or unfamiliar cultural references (Nguyen, Williams & Trimarchi, 2015). Tutorials, review sessions, or other supplemental meetings can also be valuable for courses in which students are encouraged to keep in-class vocabulary notebooks (Dubinar, 2017); in addition to actively involving students in their learning during class by having them identify terminology which is new or unfamiliar to them, reviewing the notebooks in the out-of-class session directs assistance to course components that the students themselves have identified as being problematic. Additionally, program-specific initiatives such as in-class writing assessments, followed by referrals to appropriate English-language support services within the program or within the institution, can also assist students with English-language challenges that may affect their future academic performance (Larcombe & Malkin, 2008).

## *Internationalization and Students' English-Language Skills*

A consistent theme in this literature is the internationalization of higher education in English-language post-secondary systems (e.g. North America, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand) and the resulting issue of English-language proficiency requirements that may be challenging for non-native English speakers. While this literature usually does not speak specifically of the impact of internationalization in relation to English-language proficiency measures or to English-language admission standards, it does speak to issues that could reasonably be expected to arise with increased numbers of students from non-English speaking countries.

Some of the discourse around internationalization of post-secondary education explores institutional motivations for internationalization, such as broadening the educational and research experiences of students from the university's home country (Chankseliani, 2018). Institutions who decide to "internationalize" may have to consider whether "internationalization" means offering their programs as currently structured to students from other parts of the world, or whether it means broadening their curricula and practices to include multiple types of knowledge and assessments (Vinther & Slethaug, 2013). Other researchers contend that internationalization activity in post-secondary institutions occurs primarily "on a commercial basis to augment revenues" (Sawir, Marginson, Forbes-Mewett, Nyland, & Ramia, 2012, p. 435) since international students usually pay higher tuition fees. Recruiting international students has thus become attractive to post-secondary institutions as a way to counteract decreasing financial support from governments (Glass & Lee, 2018). However, international student enrollment numbers can change quickly because of variables beyond the institution's control, such as immigration policies or perceived hostility toward foreigners, and this uncertainty can intensify competition between institutions to ensure steady enrollments of international students (Taylor &

Cantwell, 2015). As noted by O’Loughlin (2011), intensified competition may affect institutional decisions, such as setting English-language proficiency admission requirements to compete with other institutions also seeking international student enrollments.

Internationalization of the student body has affected not only admissions processes but also other aspects of post-secondary education. Many institutions have invested more heavily in language support services, such as skill centres, tutoring and workshops, to address academic difficulties experienced by students with lower English-language proficiency; nearly 75% of the US institutions surveyed by Andrade et al (2014), in addition to providing support services, also had added required coursework for non-native English speakers. However, nearly 30% of those same institutions indicated that they felt they were not able to offer adequate amounts of support services. Some observers have also alleged that institutions may pressure instructors and programs to pass substandard work by international students with low English-language proficiency, in order for the institutions to keep receiving those students’ tuition fees and to continue attracting international students (Haigh, 2014).

Another part of this literature addresses the experiences of instructors and faculty members in teaching courses with increasing amounts of cultural diversity and varied levels of English-language proficiency among the students. This literature also encompasses the experiences of instructors teaching classes at so-called “franchise degree” programs, where post-secondary institutions partner with an institution in another country to offer a degree in that country (Healey, 2013), and the experiences of instructors teaching at satellite campuses, which are campuses in other countries but which are operated directly by the university (Bennell & Pearce, 2003). The issues that arise in this literature include instructors feeling that students do not have sufficient English-language skills to function at the level of study they are enrolled in (Marshall & Marr, 2018); students having trouble keeping up with the pace of lectures in English and struggling to comprehend lectures delivered by instructors with different accents in spoken English (Quan, Smailes & Fraser, 2013); the challenges for instructors in managing varying culturally-based preferences and expectations around learning styles and academic practices (Maringe & Sing, 2014); and the challenges for instructors in effectively conveying material that may be language-intensive, may use specialized terminology, may require nuanced interpretations or understandings, or may be based in foundational culture-specific knowledge (Dove & Bryant, 2016). Instructors also report that their institutions do not provide sufficient support services for students who are non-native English speakers (e.g. Gallagher & Haan, 2018).

*Internationalization of the student body has affected not only admissions processes but also other aspects of post-secondary education. Many institutions have invested more heavily in language support services... to address academic difficulties experienced by students with lower English-language proficiency.*

The literature also addresses the perception that non-native English speakers are more likely to engage in academic misconduct, such as plagiarism and cheating on assignments or exams. Plagiarism and similar problems may occur with non-native students because of different cultural understandings of what is and is not acceptable in academic work (James, Miller, & Wyckoff, 2019). One study of academic misconduct cases at an American university indicated that while the number of academic misconduct cases increased as the number of international students increased, it was impossible to determine whether the increase was simply because of the larger number of international students or

because of any tendency of international students to commit academic misconduct more often than domestic students (Fass-Holmes, 2017). The results of the analysis in this study did, however, indicate more academic misconduct by male international students than by female international students, and different rates of academic misconduct between students from different countries.

## *The Student Experience*

The final theme of the literature in this review is the experience of students who were admitted to a post-secondary institution on the basis of an English-language proficiency test score. This literature focuses mostly on the experiences of international students or students who are recent immigrants, while acknowledging that “international” and “immigrant” are not homogeneous demographic groups, and that experiences of international students or immigrant students may vary depending on the individual student’s linguistic or cultural heritage.

Collectively, the literature in this area conveys substantial frustration and discontent from these groups of students. There is acknowledgement of the benefits from studying in an English-language post-secondary institution or in an institution in a different country, such as the opportunity to experience different cultures and societies, the opportunity to learn in different ways than the students would experience in their country of origin, and access to a wider range of employment opportunities after graduation. But the literature also conveys that for many of these students these benefits may be outweighed by the negative side of their post-secondary experience.

A major frustration expressed by students is that they were admitted to their post-secondary institution because they met the institution’s standard of English-language proficiency – i.e. their test score met or exceeded the stated minimum for admission – but they still struggle to function at the level of English proficiency needed to be successful in their program of study (Su & Harrison, 2016). This discrepancy may occur because students enrol in programs on the basis of misguided advice from an agent or recruitment agency, or do not understand the admissions process in a different post-secondary system. Thus, they may end up in a course of study that does not interest them or that requires stronger English-language skills than they have (Redding, 2013). But struggling students may also feel that the post-secondary institution has misled them in terms of the level of English-language proficiency that is truly necessary for academic success at that institution (Haugh, 2016). Additionally, academic information in English is often difficult to navigate or comprehend for non-native English speakers. A study of 335 post-secondary institutions’ online information for international students indicated that almost three-quarters of this information was written at a 3rd-year undergraduate reading level, not at a level appropriate for new students who were not native English speakers; additionally, 91% of the institutional websites that were analyzed had information in English only (Taylor, 2018).

Concerns about potentially inadequate English-language skills appear to be particularly pronounced for international students, who, in addition to experiencing stress because of language challenges, are well aware that they are paying much more in tuition fees than domestic students. This combination can make students feel like “cash cows” (Cantwell, 2015), i.e. that they have been recruited by the post-secondary institution for the tuition revenue they generate and not necessarily because the institution wants to provide them with a meaningful educational experience (Guo & Guo, 2017). This attitude is also expressed by students who have been directed by the post-secondary institution into preparatory English-language programs intended to improve linguistic proficiency. Students may see these programs as a waste of time, effort and money, and as a barrier to their academic progress. These programs generally do not result in academic credit and add to the length of time the student must be enrolled, and be away from their home, in order to earn a degree (Odo, D’Sylva, & Gunderson, 2011).



Problems related to language proficiency may also arise in coursework. Students who feel their English is not adequate to participate in class activities, or who are hesitant to contribute to discussions in English, may fear resentment from other students, particularly in group projects or other activities where students' contributions are collectively assessed (Strauss, U-Mackey, & Crothers, 2014; Ding, Bosker, Xu, Rutgers, & van Heugten, 2015). Students also experience cultural challenges in that course content may be based on the assumption that students are familiar with specific political, social or economic systems: systems which may be familiar to domestic students but not to international students (Nguyen, Williams & Trimarchi, 2015). The structures and conventions of the English language may also challenge students in written work, particularly when these differ from their native language in such areas as how logical arguments are constructed or ideas are phrased (Heng, 2018). Ironically, new international students are often directed toward introductory-level courses which are considered "easier", but these courses often focus on introducing students to discipline-specific jargon or terminology, which may be complex or which may use words in ways that have different meanings from their usual meanings. For example, the word "lemon" may be used as a term for malfunctioning products rather than to identify a type of citrus fruit. These variations in meaning and terminology can make even introductory courses extremely difficult for non-native English speakers (Nguyen et al, 2015).

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Students whose previous education was in another language may be resentful if their written or oral work in English receives lower grades than they are accustomed to, or if they feel that instructors are not providing them with sufficient support to help them improve their English (Haugh, 2016; MacGregor & Folinazzo, 2018). If students are used to an educational system in which asking for help is not a norm, or is interpreted as an indication of academic weakness, they also may be reluctant to use support services for non-native English speakers even if these could help them improve their academic performance (Caplan & Stevens, 2017).

Students' language proficiency also plays a role in cultural integration, and in their opportunities to improve their linguistic skills through experiences outside the classroom. Students who lack confidence in their English-language abilities may gravitate toward spending time with students who also speak the same native language, or who come from the same culture (Quan, Smailes & Fraser, 2013). While these social networks can feel safe or comfortable for these students (Rose-Redwood & Rose-Redwood, 2013), they can also inhibit the development of students' English-language skills, because the students are not extensively interacting outside of class with domestic students or native English speakers. This effect may be particularly noticeable for students in English-language upgrading program or "pathway colleges" that separate non-native English speakers from the general student body while preparing them for admission to the parent institution; students in these programs may have little or no opportunity to interact with domestic students either in or outside of classes (McCartney & Metcalfe, 2018). Some studies suggest that students' inhibitions about speaking English will intensify with increases in the number of participants in the student's social network that speak the student's native language but not English (Su & Harrison, 2015). Non-native English-speaking students spending time mostly with others who speak the same native language can be perceived by native

*Students with English-language proficiency challenges use a range of strategies to counteract the academic difficulties they may encounter. Students who struggle with English may be inclined to choose programs or courses that they perceive as having fewer or less rigorous requirements for reading and writing.*

English speakers as an unwillingness to participate in or disinterest in social activities, which may have further negative implications for how these students are perceived. Students understand the potential disadvantages of being seen as unfriendly, but value the benefit of mutual support and encouragement of other students in the same situation (Heng, 2018).

Cultural practices and values may also affect how international students interact with other students; for example, Chinese students who have been taught to avoid “losing face” by not making mistakes in public and valuing collective interests over individual interests may stay silent during classroom or social discussions, which may be interpreted as unwillingness to participate rather than not wanting to disrupt conversation by making imperfectly phrased statements (Yang, 2017). However, following such cultural norms may then cause further problems for students, in that speaking in class or in group discussions can help them improve their English-language skills as well as their confidence in speaking English (Doherty, Kettle, May & Caukill, 2011). Some international students report that visual cues such as clothing (e.g. hijabs) or facial features can cause domestic students to make demeaning assumptions about their English-language skills (Guo & Guo, 2017).

Finally, students with English-language proficiency challenges use a range of strategies to counteract the academic difficulties they may encounter. Students who struggle with English may be inclined to choose programs or courses that they perceive as having fewer or less rigorous requirements for reading and writing. Fox (2005) observed that, in the group of ESL students she studied, the rate of enrollment in Mathematics programs was over three times higher than it was among the entire student body at that university. She also noted that SL students who took one Mathematics course were more likely to take more courses in that subject later on. Other strategies employed by non-native English speakers that are mentioned in the literature include retaking courses to get better grades; taking online courses rather than face-to-face courses, especially self-paced online courses that allow the student to process the material at their own rate; and relying on friends or peers for academic support, including to recommendations for courses or instructors that may be more accommodating of varying levels of English-language proficiency.

# Data Collection

The original scope of this study focused on English-language proficiency measures specific to “students for whom English is an additional language”. However, a methodological challenge in pursuing this research direction is that non-native speakers of English may not be clearly identified in the application processes of most BC Transfer System member institutions. There are some application categories, such as international applicants, where it could reasonably be assumed that applicants are not native English speakers, but there are other categories which could also encompass non-native English speakers. For example, applicants from both within and outside Canada may be non-native speakers of English but may have completed BC Grade 12 English or an equivalent course. Recently, several BC Transfer System members have also indicated that they will accept BC English 12 First Peoples as equivalent to BC English 12 for the purposes of satisfying English-language proficiency admission requirements; this recognizes that students within the BC secondary and post-secondary systems may have an Indigenous language as their first language.

Admissions practices of individual BCTS member institutions may also make it difficult to precisely identify non-native English speakers applying for admission. Some institutions may note that an applicant met the English-language proficiency requirement for admission without recording how the student met that standard (e.g. test score, BC Grade 12 English, equivalent of BC Grade 12 English in another jurisdiction). Institutions that record a student’s test score as satisfying the admission requirement for English-language proficiency may simply indicate that the score met or exceeded the required minimum, without recording the numerical score itself. And although BC has a well-developed system to collect post-secondary institutional data across the province – the Ministry of Advanced Education’s Central Data Warehouse – these collected data in this system only record admission on the basis of BC Grade 12 English completion, completion of pre-requisite English courses at a BC college, or “other”. This makes it difficult not only to precisely identify applicants who are non-native English speakers, but also to explore in depth any potential relationships between how an applicant met the English-language proficiency requirement and their subsequent academic progress or performance.

Given these constraints, it was necessary to rethink what the proposed study was attempting to accomplish. There may be a broader issue of whether BC’s post-secondary institutions are ensuring that all applicants and entrants have adequate English-language skills to succeed in post-secondary studies. Non-native English speakers such as international students may be perceived, correctly or not, as the demographic group that has the most difficulty in functioning in English at an appropriate post-secondary level. This concern may be reflected in the proposed outcomes for the original study, which framed two of the four planned objectives as “specific to students for whom English is not a first language”. But such framing makes these outcomes difficult to achieve because not all BC post-secondary institutions can accurately identify non-native English speakers in admissions or enrollments.

However, there is value in comparing the English-language proficiency standards most likely to be used by international students applying for admission to BCTS member institutions. While these comparisons will not capture the measures of English-language proficiency that might be relevant to all non-native English speakers, they are a reasonable way to assess the English-language proficiency of a large number of this demographic

*Some BCTS member institutions may note that an applicant met the English-language proficiency requirement without recording how the student met that standard.*

group, given the increasing numbers of international students in the BC post secondary system. Thus, the data collection for this project involved the standardized tests that are commonly used as measures of English-language proficiency in the admissions process of BCTS member institutions.

Data were collected from the institutional websites of all 39 BC Transfer System member institutions. In addition to completion of BC ENGL 12, some other measures of English-language proficiency commonly used by these institutions were omitted from the data collection, either because they were likely to be less relevant to applicants who were non-native English speakers, or because there was too much variation among the possible choices in that category to make any meaningful comparisons. These measures are:

- Completion of a high-school English course in Canada or elsewhere that is accepted as equivalent to BC ENGL 12
- Completion of advanced placement or dual credit courses such as those in the International Baccalaureate and Advanced Placement programs
- Completing a designated English-language program or course at a private English-language institution, in BC or elsewhere
- In-house admission and/or placement tests

Thus, the data that were collected are:

- The number of standardized tests accepted by the institution as measures of English-language proficiency for the purposes of admission
- The names of the standardized tests that are accepted for this purpose
- The score or grade on each test that is required to meet the institution's English-language proficiency requirement
- Whether there are any conditions on acceptance of the test score or grade, e.g. minimum scores or grades on specified test components; when the test was taken
- Whether the institution offers conditional admission or some other form of admission to applicants not achieving the required score or grade on a standardized test; if so,
  - what score or grade is required for that type of admission
  - what conditions must be fulfilled for full admission
- Whether the institution offers an English upgrading program to applicants not achieving the required score or grade on a standardized test, and whether students in these programs are permitted to take undergraduate academic credit courses while enrolled in the program
- Whether the institution accepts transfer credit from other BC Transfer System member institutions as fulfilling the English-language proficiency requirement for admission, and, if so, under which conditions

These data were collected between November 2018 and February 2019. The data relate to admission to the institution; it should be noted that applicants to an institution may want to gain admission to a specific program at that institution. Individual programs within an institution may have higher standards for admission than the institutional admission standards, or may have additional admission requirements that applicants must meet.

# Data Analysis

The analysis of these data will be organized around the three parts of this study identified in the Introduction.

- 1) *The measures of English-language proficiency used in admissions processes that are not related to completion of BC high school English courses or their equivalent, but including transfer credit from other institutions*

[Appendix 1](#) shows the English-language proficiency tests whose scores are accepted as proof of English-language proficiency by BC Transfer System member institutions, ranked by frequency. There are five standardized tests whose results are accepted by more than half of the 39 BCTS member institutions. These are the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), the Canadian Academic English Language Test (CAEL), the Pearson Test of English (PTE), and the Language Proficiency Index (LPI). The study of 117 US schools by Andrade et al (2014) showed similarities to these findings, with the most commonly used tests by those institutions being TOEFL (100% of respondents), IELTS (94%), and the PTE (8%). The US schools also accepted results from the SAT test (35%) and ACT test (25%) which both include English proficiency components.

[Appendix 2](#) shows the number of tests accepted by each institution as meeting English-language proficiency standards. It is important to note that this table shows the number of different tests accepted by each institution; an individual applicant would generally only be permitted to submit results from a single test or measure. 37 of 39 BCTS member institutions accepted results from multiple tests; the majority of BCTS members accepted results from between four and six different tests. These frequencies are somewhat different from the results of the survey by Andrade et al (2014); 47% of their respondents accepted only two tests, 27% accepted four tests, and 11% accepted three tests. The slightly higher average number of tests accepted by BCTS member institutions may be because BC attracts international students from a wide range of countries and regions. Thus, the number of acceptable tests may reflect the desire or need to accommodate applicants with access to different tests or testing.

It became apparent in collecting these two sets of data that BCTS member institutions had different practices around whether different categories of applicants could utilize English-proficiency test scores in their applications. For example, some institutions only presented information about TOEFL or IELTS on the parts of their website directed to international students, while others included this information in their general descriptions of admissions requirements. This raised the question of, for example, whether a BC student with English as their first language, but who did not complete BC ENGL 12, would be permitted to submit an English-language proficiency test score as evidence of their English-language proficiency. [Appendix 3](#) describes institutional policies in relation to such questions.

The data in [Appendix 3](#) indicate that some institutions accept English 12 equivalencies such as proficiency test scores for all categories of applicants, while other institutions accept these equivalencies only from international applicants, from applicants with some or all of their previous education in a language other than English, or from applicants whose first language is not English regardless

*It became apparent (that) BCTS member institutions had different practices around whether different categories of applicants could utilize English-proficiency test scores in their applications.*

of their citizenship or language of previous education. Some institutions that presented information on English 12 equivalencies on their webpage for international student did not explicitly state whether proficiency test scores could only be used by international applicants.

The next step in the analysis was to compare the test scores required for admission at each institution. This comparison was conducted for only the five most commonly accepted tests. The minimum required scores from TOEFL, the test accepted by all BCTS member institutions, are presented in [Appendix 4](#). The computer-based TOEFL (TOEFL CBT) was discontinued in 2006 (Educational Testing Services, 2007) and replaced with the Internet-based TOEFL (TOEFL iBT), but is included in this table because some BCTS member institutions list the TOEFL CBT as one of their English-language proficiency admission criteria.

The data in [Appendix 4](#) indicate that 37 BCTS member institutions accept scores from the TOEFL iBT, with 76 as the lowest required overall score and 90 as the highest; 22 institutions specify minimum required scores on one or more of the test's four components. For comparison, the minimum acceptable overall TOEFL scores at the schools surveyed by Andrade et al (2014) ranged from 30 to 104. 21 institutions accept scores from the TOEFL PBT (Paper-Based Test), with 530 as the lowest required score and 580 as the highest; eight institutions specify minimum required scores on test components. Andrade et al (2014) reported minimum scores at the institutions they surveyed as ranging from 397 to 613. Nine institutions accept scores from the TOEFL CBT, with 197 as the lowest required score and 230 as the highest. Finally, two institutions indicate that they will consider TOEFL scores as part of an application but do not specify a minimum acceptable score.

[Appendix 5](#) presents the minimum acceptable scores from IELTS, the second most commonly accepted test among BCTS member institutions. 37 of 39 institutions accept scores from this test. The minimum required overall test scores range from 5.5 to 6.5; Andrade et al (2014) reported minimum required scores ranging from 3.0 to 7.5. 27 institutions also require minimum scores on specified test components, and, since there are two versions of the IELTS (General Training and Academic), 12 institutions specify that the test score must be from the Academic IELTS.

[Appendix 6](#) presents the minimum acceptable scores from CAEL, scores from which are accepted by 26 BCTS member institutions. The minimum acceptable scores from this test are less widely distributed than those of other tests, with accepted minimum scores ranging from 50 to 70. As with TOEFL and IELTS, several institutions also require minimum scores on certain test components, and/or set conditions such as the date the test was taken for the scores to be admissible.

Appendices [7](#) and [8](#) present the minimum acceptable scores from the Pearson Test of English (PTE) and the Language Proficiency Index (LPI), scores from which are accepted by approximately 50% of BCTS member institutions. Acceptable minimum scores on the PTE range from 42 to 65, and acceptable minimum scores on the LPI range from a rating of level 4 to level 5 on the Essay component; some institutions also specify a minimum numerical score for the Essay and/or for other components.

In assessing these comparisons, it is important to keep in mind that the BC Transfer System includes institutions with different mandates, serving different geographic regions, and with programming that targets different student interests. Thus, exceptionally high or low acceptable test scores, or certain conditions around the admissibility of test scores, should be viewed with the caveat that these may be appropriate for the specific circumstances of the institution.

The final set of data collected in this part of the analysis was on BCTS member institutions who accepted transfer credit as proof of English-language proficiency. [Appendix 9](#) lists the 22 member institutions (53% of BCTS membership) who accept this measure of proficiency for the purposes of admission, and describes the conditions that must be met for this credit to be considered proof that the applicant has sufficient English-language proficiency. As can be seen, there are many different conditions around this measure of proficiency, in terms of the number of required credits or courses that must be completed, the type of institution where the credits or courses must be taken, and the transferability of the courses.

*(2) the minimum scores on these assessments that are accepted for admission to programs designed to improve students' English-language skills*

35 BCTS member institutions (90%) offer English upgrading or preparatory programs to applicants who do not meet the institution's English-language proficiency requirement for admission. The conditions for admittance to these programs, including the minimum test score(s) required for admission, are outlined in [Appendix 10](#). These programs include both programs to improve students' English-language proficiency prior to them enrolling in academic courses, and programs in which students have English-language learning supports while enrolled in sections of academic courses offered specifically for that program. Typically the latter program involves the first-year curriculum of a degree program, after which students who have achieved a stated level of proficiency enrol in "regular" sections of the second year of the degree.

*(3) the level of English-language proficiency required for students in English-language upgrading programs to enrol in credit-bearing undergraduate academic courses*

22 of the BCTS member institutions who offer English-language upgrading programs permit students in these programs to take academic credit courses while enrolled in these programs. [Appendix 10](#) describe the structures of these programs, identifies when their students can enrol in academic courses, and describes the number and type of courses that these students are permitted to enrol in.

Most BCTS member institutions that permit such enrollments restrict them to students who are in the more advanced stages of these programs, and all of them restrict the number of academic courses or credits that can be taken. While the descriptions of some programs are not clear on the maximum number of courses or credits that are permitted, three courses and/or nine credits are the maximum among the specified amounts. In addition, many institutions either have a list of specific courses that students in these programs are permitted to enrol in, or require the student to receive approval from program staff or advisors before enrolling in an academic course.

*Thirty-five BCTS member institutions (90%) offer English upgrading or preparatory programs to applicants who do not meet the institution's English-language proficiency requirement for admission.*

# Discussion

The literature review and the data presented in Appendices 1 through 10 indicate several important considerations for BCTS member institutions in assessing students' English-language proficiency.

First, the literature review indicates that standardized test scores are not reliable predictors of students' academic potential or subsequent academic performance, and also may not be reliable measures of students' proficiency in the form of English used in academic contexts. English-language proficiency tests also generally do not address the test-taker's knowledge of cultural contexts or discipline-specific terminology, which may affect a student's ability to function effectively in an English-speaking academic context. That being said, the standardized tests commonly used by BCTS member institutions as measures of applicants' English-language proficiency have existed for many years, have been regularly revised, and are usually administered in secure environments. Using scores from these tests saves institutions the significant cost and effort that would be involved in developing, verifying, administering, marking, and maintaining their own measures of English-language proficiency. In other words, while existing English-language proficiency tests may not be entirely suitable as tests of students' ability to function in English in an academic setting, they seem to be accepted as admissions criteria because of the lack of preferable, more reliable or more cost-effective alternatives.

Second, there are variations across the BCTS in the types of tests and the test scores that are accepted as measures of applicants' English-language proficiency. As noted in the data analysis, at least some of this variation is likely due to the different mandates and target student demographics of each institution. Since institutions within the BCTS are not identical, it follows that their admission criteria are also not identical. However, the ease of transfer between BCTS member institutions may affect institutions' attempts to ensure that their students have relatively consistent levels of English-language proficiency. For example, a student could theoretically be admitted to a BCTS member institution that accepts lower English-language proficiency test scores for admission, and then meet another institution's English-language proficiency requirement using transfer credit, without achieving the test scores that would be required if the student were to apply directly to that institution. This scenario is somewhat plausible given that more than half of BCTS member institutions will accept transfer credit from other institutions as fulfilling their own English-language proficiency requirement. As another example, a student who struggles with the level of English-language proficiency required in a course at one institution could use transfer agreements to receive credit for an equivalent course from another BCTS member institution. Even though the courses may be considered similar enough to be transferable, the institutions may have different levels of English-language proficiency requirements, and thus the hypothetical student could receive credit for a course that they would not be able to pass if they took it at their home institution.

Third, at many institutions it is unclear whether certain categories of applicants may use proficiency test scores as proof of English-language proficiency, and/or which types of students may enrol in English-language upgrading or academic preparation programs. As noted in the data analysis, at some institutions information on proficiency test scores is clearly directed toward international applicants, while at other institutions all measures of English-language proficiency are presented in a single list, leaving it up to the applicant to choose the proficiency measure they will use in their application for admission. There also may be non-native English speakers applying for admission as domestic students, or in other categories that exclude international applicants, but at many institutions, English-language upgrading or academic preparation programs are either specifically noted as being accessible only to international students, or it is not clearly communicated whether non-native English speakers in any admission category, or native English speakers who lack confidence in their English-language proficiency, may enrol in these programs. Since it may



*The literature makes some important points about viewing students in terms of their whole range of abilities, and not labeling them as academically deficient or unqualified simply because of their English-language proficiency.*

be difficult to accurately identify applicants for whom English is an additional language, or who face other challenges in their English-language proficiency, the restriction of these programs to international students and/or the lack of clarity on which students may participate in them may be problematic.

Fourth, while nearly all institutions state minimum English-language proficiency test scores for admission to the institution, not all institutions state minimum test scores for admission to English-language upgrading or academic preparation programs. This may be because a more holistic approach to assessing applications is appropriate for these programs. Applicants may have other skills or qualifications, such as proficiency in multiple languages, that would not necessarily be reflected in an English-language proficiency test score but which would indicate their capacity to acquire the desired level of English-language proficiency. However, regardless of applicants' other capabilities, students must still have a functional level of English to succeed in programs that are delivered in English. It may be problematic for institutions to admit students with low levels of proficiency who would require a significant amount of improvement to have any reasonable chance of academic success.

Fifth, of the 35 BCTS member institutions that offer English-language upgrading programs, 22 of those institutions (63%) permit students enrolled in those programs to also enrol in academic (credit) courses. This permission is restricted primarily to advanced students, and usually restricted to enrollment in a certain number of credits or in certain courses. This strategy makes sense in that it offers students an opportunity to familiarize themselves with academic practices and expectations of English-language coursework, while still having access to the academic support and resources of the upgrading program. However, permitting this type of enrollment may place students who lack the minimum level of English-language proficiency for full admission in the same courses as students who have achieved or exceeded that level. Such potentially wide variations in English-language skills could be challenging for instructors and for peers, and could also affect the student's chances of successfully completing the course. The literature also suggests that introductory or lower-level courses – which are the type of courses that students in English-language upgrading programs would likely be directed towards – can be exceptionally challenging for non-native English speakers or international students, because of the discipline-specific terminology that these courses often introduce, and because of the implicit assumptions of familiarity with relevant cultural or social contexts.

Finally, the literature makes some important points about viewing students in terms of their whole range of abilities, and not labeling them as academically deficient or unqualified simply because of their English-language proficiency. Along similar lines, the extensive literature on addressing students' English-language difficulties is evidence that both native and non-native English-language speakers struggle with the conventions and expectations of English-language academic communication. This suggests a more holistic view of English-language skill development as part of learning for all post-secondary students, whether that development takes the form of the student acquiring a higher level of English-language proficiency or the student refining their essay or research writing skills.

# Recommendations

Based on the results of the literature review and the data analysis, we make the following recommendations. We recognize that some of the practices we propose may already be in use at some BCTS member institutions, but we present them for the benefit of all BCTS member institutions and all readers of this report.

- 1) BCTS member institutions should consider making all English-language proficiency admission criteria available to all applicants, regardless of whether they are applying as domestic or international applicants. This flexibility would allow applicants to use the proficiency measure that best fits their individual circumstances. Institutions could also select a common set of English-language proficiency measures to be used by all applicants, but set different required admission scores for each measure for different types of programs, such as trades, certificates, diplomas, and degrees. The latter method not only establishes measures of proficiency appropriate for specific types of programs, but also indicates to applicants the level of English-language proficiency that will be expected if they intend to complete more than one program at the institution (e.g. enrolling in a degree program after completing a certificate or diploma).

Institutions could also consider implementing mandatory post-admission English-language diagnostic assessments for all admitted students. This would allow the institution to verify all students' English-language proficiency, regardless of the proficiency measure that the student used for admission, and also allow the institution to direct students to appropriate resources for their English-language skill development.

- 2) BCTS member institutions should consider recording all data relevant to an applicant's fulfilling the English-language proficiency requirement for admission, e.g. the test or measure used by the applicant, and the score on that test or measure. Although test scores and academic performance cannot be meaningfully correlated, detailed information such as this may be useful in other types of analyses, e.g. exploring whether students admitted on the basis of a particular test score or a range of test scores are more likely to complete a credential, or whether scores from a specific measure are consistent with the English-language proficiency students demonstrate in their academic work after admission. English-language proficiency scores could also be assessed in relation to other measures of academic activity, such as students changing their status in a course from "credit" to "audit", or the frequency of course failures and retakes.
- 3) BCTS member institutions that accept transfer credit as an indicator of English-language proficiency should consider whether the content and evaluation criteria of the course(s) at sending institutions reflect the receiving institution's desired level of proficiency. One way to ensure consistency among the transfer credit accepted as proof of English-language proficiency is to specify the transferring courses that are acceptable, e.g. "completion of a course or courses transferring to [receiving institution] as [a specific course from the institution's

*We recognize that some of the practices we propose may already be in use at some BCTS member institutions, but we present them for the benefit of all BCTS member institutions and all readers of this report.*

own lower-level English curriculum]”. Establishing equivalency in this form avoids the difficulty of maintaining or ensuring comparability across other measures such as a certain number of credits, appropriate course levels, and/or the required characteristics of sending institutions. BCTS member institutions could also review the academic performance of students using transfer credits as proof of English-language proficiency, and revise their policies around this admission criterion if students completing certain courses or transferring courses from specific institutions are not demonstrating the desired level of English-language proficiency.

- 4) BCTS member institutions should consider clearly stating minimum English-language proficiency scores for admission to English-language upgrading programs, or consider establishing a minimum score if none currently exists. Even if an English-language proficiency score will be considered along with other factors in the admission decision, students still must be able to function in English to make the best use of all of their skills during their academic career. Students’ chances for academic success may be improved if institutions establish minimum English-language proficiency scores that applicants must meet regardless of any other qualification.
- 5) BCTS member institutions should consider reviewing pre-requisites and/or admission standards for lower-level courses, especially those courses which non-native English speakers might be directed towards. As noted, despite these courses being classified as introductory courses, their terminology and concepts can be challenging for non-native English speakers and/or for students unfamiliar with the relevant cultural or social context of the course material. Another possibility is to restructure the delivery of these classes to facilitate learning by non-native English speakers or international students, e.g. by adding supplemental sessions to the course to address students’ self-identified challenges with the material, or having classroom instruction by both English-language specialists and disciplinary specialists to develop students’ linguistic and cultural knowledge along with their subject knowledge.
- 6) BCTS member institutions that permit students in English-language upgrading programs to simultaneously enrol in credit courses should consider reviewing students’ academic performance in these credit courses, particularly in comparison to students in the same courses that are enrolled in other programs. While students in upgrading programs may expect to enrol in credit courses as soon as possible, if their performance is collectively and significantly different from other students’ performance in the same courses, the institution may want to reconsider the value of permitting these simultaneous enrollments. Alternatively, the institution could review the specific courses designated for such simultaneous enrollments, and determine their appropriateness for students in upgrading or academic preparation programs. Institutions could also consider other methods of gradually introducing students to the institution’s academic practices and standards, such as enrolling these students in courses for audit rather than credit.

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# Appendix 1:

## Standardized Tests Accepted by BCTS Member Institutions as Meeting English-Language Admission Requirements, by Frequency

Name of Test	Number of Institutions Accepting Scores from this Test as Meeting English-Language Proficiency Requirement For Admission (n=39)
Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)	39 (100%)
International English Language Testing System (IELTS)	37 (95%)
Canadian Academic English Language Test (CAEL)	26 (66%)
Pearson Test of English (PTE)	22 (56%)
Language Proficiency Index (LPI)	21 (53%)
Michigan Language Assessment (MELAB)	14 (36%)
In-house placement or proficiency test	13 (33%)
Cambridge English: Advanced (C1)	8 (20%)
Canadian Language Benchmarks	6 (15%)
Cambridge English: First (B2)	5 (13%)
Canadian Test of English for Scholars and Trainees (CanTEST)	4 (10%)
EIKEN	4 (10%)
Other measures accepted by three or fewer institutions: Comprehensive English Language Test [CELT] (3), Accuplacer (2), Canadian English Language Proficiency Index Program [CELPPI] (2), Canadian Second Language Institute Pathways (1), DAAD (1), Oxford Placement (1)	

## Appendix 2:

Number of Tests Accepted by Each BCTS Member Institution as Meeting English-Language Admission Requirements

Number of Tests	Number of Institutions Accepting This Number of Tests (n=39)
13	1
12	3
10	2
9	2
8	2
7	2
6	5
5	7
4	8
3	3
2	3
1	1

## Appendix 3:

### English 12 Equivalencies Accepted in Different Applicant Categories at BCTS Member Institutions

Name of Institution	Equivalencies to English 12 Accepted for All Categories of Applicants?	Specifications
Acsenda School of Management	No	Only international applicants must provide proof of equivalency.
Alexander College	Yes	
Athabasca University	No	Proof of equivalency is required for “applicants whose native language is not English, or who have not completed their secondary or post-secondary education in English-speaking countries as specified by the Office of the Registrar”.
BC Institute of Technology	No	Proof of equivalency is required from all applicants without English 12 who completed high school in a non-English-speaking country.
Camosun College	No	Equivalencies are only described in international student section of admissions policy.
Capilano University	Yes	
Coast Mountain College	Some	Alternatives to English 12 are listed for both domestic applicants and international applicants.
College of New Caledonia	Some	Alternatives to English 12 are listed for both domestic applicants and international applicants. Some measures are listed as acceptable for international applicants but not listed as acceptable for domestic applicants, and vice versa.
College of the Rockies	Yes	
Columbia College	Yes	
Coquitlam College	Yes	
Corpus Christi College	Some	International applicants “have the option” of submitting scores from one of three equivalency measures.
Douglas College	Yes	
Emily Carr University of Art & Design	No	Equivalencies are only accepted from applicants whose first language is not English, regardless of immigration status or citizenship, with some exceptions (e.g. completion of specified IB or AP courses)

Data collected from institutional websites January 2019.

Name of Institution	Equivalencies to English 12 Accepted for All Categories of Applicants?	Specifications
Fairleigh Dickinson University	No	All applicants must submit proof of equivalencies, with the exception of applicants from specified countries.
Fraser International College	Yes	
Justice Institute of BC	No	Equivalencies are only accepted from international applicants whose first language is not English.
Kwantlen Polytechnic University	Yes	
Langara College	Some	Alternatives to English 12 are listed for both domestic applicants and international applicants. Some measures are listed as acceptable for international applicants but not listed as acceptable for domestic applicants, and vice versa.
LaSalle College	No	Regardless of country of birth or citizenship, temporary or permanent status, all applicants whose first language is not English must demonstrate competency in the English language. Applicants can submit proof of high-school education in an English-language system as proof of equivalency; international applicants must take a placement test and submit proof of equivalency.
Nicola Valley Institute of Technology	No	A TOEFL score is required for applicants for whom English was not the language of instruction for the last three years of their education.
North Island College	Yes	
Northern Lights College	Yes	
Okanagan College	No	Equivalencies must be provided by all applicants whose first language is not English.
Quest University	Yes	All applicants must participate in an English-language interview, the results of which form a significant part of the admission decision.
Royal Roads University	No	Equivalencies must be provided by all applicants whose first language is not English.
Selkirk College	No	Equivalencies must be provided by all applicants who did not complete secondary school in an English-language system.
Simon Fraser University	Yes	
Trinity Western University	Some	English 12 equivalencies are only mentioned in information for international applicants.
Thompson Rivers University	Yes	
Thompson Rivers University – Open Learning	Yes	

Data collected from institutional websites January 2019.

Name of Institution	Equivalencies to English 12 Accepted for All Categories of Applicants?	Specifications
University of BC	Yes	
University Canada West	Yes	Applicants graduating from English-language systems “may” be required to provide proof of equivalency. Measures of equivalency that are not listed will be accepted if it is determined that the demonstrated proficiency is equal to an IELTS score of 6.5.
University of the Fraser Valley	Yes	
University of Northern BC	No	Equivalencies are required from students whose first language is not English.
University of Victoria	Yes	
Vancouver Community College	Yes	
Vancouver Island University	Yes	
Yukon College	Yes	
Yorkville University	No	Equivalencies are required from students whose first language is not English.

Data collected from institutional websites January 2019.

## Appendix 4:

### TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) Minimum Scores for Undergraduate Admission or Admission to Academic (credit) Courses at BCTS Member Institutions

Name of Institution	Internet-Based Test (iBT) (maximum possible overall score 120; maximum possible section score 30)	Paper-Based Test (PBT) (maximum possible overall score 677; maximum possible Test of Written English [TWE] score 6.0)	Computer-Based Test (CBT) (maximum overall score 300, maximum possible Test of Written English [TWE] score 6.0)	Conditions	Notes
Acsenda School of Management	84	560	Not accepted		
Alexander College	80 overall, with minimum 19 R/W and 18 L/S	550 overall, with minimum 4.0 TWE	213 overall, with minimum 4.0 TWE		
Athabasca University	80 overall, with minimum 20 W	Not accepted	213 overall, with min 4.5 TWE	For applicants who have not completed secondary or post-secondary education in English-speaking countries	
BC Institute of Technology	82	Not accepted	Not mentioned		
Camosun College	88 overall, with minimum 20 R/W/L/S	570 overall, with minimum 5.0 TWE	Not mentioned	Score must be from test taken within the last two years.	
Capilano University	83	560	Not mentioned		TOEFL, ELA, IELTS, CAEL or PTE test score required for applicants whose first language is not English or whose previous education was in a language other than English

Data collected from institutional websites in January 2019.

Name of Institution	Internet-Based Test (iBT) (maximum possible overall score 120; maximum possible section score 30)	Paper-Based Test (PBT) (maximum possible overall score 677; maximum possible Test of Written English [TWE] score 6.0)	Computer-Based Test (CBT) (maximum overall score 300, maximum possible Test of Written English [TWE] score 6.0)	Conditions	Notes
Coast Mountain College	80 overall, with minimum 20 R/L/W/S	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Score must be from test taken within the last year.	
College of New Caledonia	80 overall, with no band less than 17	Will accept on case-by-case basis	Will accept on case-by-case basis		
College of the Rockies	80	Not mentioned	Not mentioned		
Columbia College	79 overall, with minimum 19 on two of three of R/W/L	550 overall, with minimum 4.0 TWE	213, with minimum 4.0 on TWE	Score must be from test taken within the last two years.	
Coquitlam College	86	570	230		
Corpus Christi College	83	550	Not mentioned		
Douglas College	83	Not mentioned	Not mentioned		
Emily Carr University of Art + Design	84 overall, with minimum 20 R/L/S and minimum 18 W	Not mentioned	Not mentioned		For students whose first language is not English, regardless of status or citizenship
Fairleigh Dickinson University	79	550	213		
Fraser International College	79 overall, with minimum 18 W	Not mentioned	Not mentioned		
Justice Institute of BC	83	560	220		
Kwantlen Polytechnic University	88 overall, with minimum 20 R/W/L/S	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Score must be from test taken within the past two years.	
Langara College	80 overall, with minimum 18 L/S and minimum 20 R/W	550 overall, with minimum 4.0 TWE	213 overall, with minimum 4.0 TWE		

Data collected from institutional websites in January 2019.

Name of Institution	Internet-Based Test (iBT) (maximum possible overall score 120; maximum possible section score 30)	Paper-Based Test (PBT) (maximum possible overall score 677; maximum possible Test of Written English [TWE] score 6.0)	Computer-Based Test (CBT) (maximum overall score 300, maximum possible Test of Written English [TWE] score 6.0)	Conditions	Notes
LaSalle Institute	75	530	197		
Nicola Valley Institute of Technology	Not mentioned	550 overall, with minimum 4.0 TWE	213 overall, with minimum 4.0 essay		
North Island College	80 overall, minimum 19 R/W/L/S	550	Not accepted	Score must be from test taken within the past two years.	
Northern Lights College					TOEFL score is mentioned as a consideration in assessing applications, but no required score is stated.
Okanagan College	79	550	213	Score must be from test taken within the past two years.	
Quest University	90	580	Not mentioned		
Royal Roads University	79 overall, with minimum 18 R, 23 W, 19 L/S	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Score must be from test taken within the past two years.	
Selkirk College	80	Not accepted	Not accepted	Score must be from test taken within the past two years.	
Simon Fraser University	88 overall, with minimum 20 R/W/L/S	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Students admitted on the basis of a TOEFL score are required to complete FAL X99 (Foundations of Academic Literacy) by the end of the third enrolled term.	

Data collected from institutional websites in January 2019.



Name of Institution	Internet-Based Test (iBT) (maximum possible overall score 120; maximum possible section score 30)	Paper-Based Test (PBT) (maximum possible overall score 677; maximum possible Test of Written English [TWE] score 6.0)	Computer-Based Test (CBT) (maximum overall score 300, maximum possible Test of Written English [TWE] score 6.0)	Conditions	Notes
Trinity Western University	88 overall, with minimum 21 R/W/L/S and TWE 5	Not mentioned	Not mentioned		
Thompson Rivers University	88 overall, with minimum 20 R/W/L/S	570 overall, with minimum 4.5 TWE	Not mentioned		
Thompson Rivers University – Open Learning					Students are asked to “self-assess” English proficiency and discuss plans with an Enrolment Services Officer prior to enrollment. TOEFL iBT is listed as an accepted form of assessment. Courses/programs may have specific English proficiency prerequisites.
University of BC	90 overall, with minimum 22 R/L and 21 W/S	Assessed on a case-by-case basis	Not accepted	Score must be from test taken within the past two years. All scores must be from a single sitting of the test.	
University Canada West	88 overall, with minimum 20 R/W/L/S	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Score must be from test taken within the past two years.	
University of the Fraser Valley	88 overall, with minimum 20 R/W/L/S	570 overall, with minimum 4.0 TWE	Not mentioned		

Data collected from institutional websites in January 2019.

Name of Institution	Internet-Based Test (iBT) (maximum possible overall score 120; maximum possible section score 30)	Paper-Based Test (PBT) (maximum possible overall score 677; maximum possible Test of Written English [TWE] score 6.0)	Computer-Based Test (CBT) (maximum overall score 300, maximum possible Test of Written English [TWE] score 6.0)	Conditions	Notes
University of Northern BC	90 overall, with minimum 20 R/W/L/S	570	230	Score must be from test taken within the past two years.	
University of Victoria	90 overall, with minimum 20 R/W/L/S	575	Not mentioned	Score must be from test taken within the past two years.	
Vancouver Community College	80 overall, with minimum 20 R/W/L/S	Not mentioned	Not mentioned		This score is considered equivalent to a 'pass' grade in ENGL 12.
Vancouver Island University	88 overall, with minimum 30 R/W/L/S	550 overall, with no section below 66	Not mentioned		
Yukon College	79 overall, with minimum 19 R/W/L/S	Not mentioned	Not mentioned		
Yorkville University	80	550	Not mentioned		

R=reading W=writing L = listening S = speaking

Minimum=minimum score required on specific test component

Not mentioned = not explicitly discussed

Not accepted = specific statement that scores from this test are not accepted

Data collected from institutional websites in January 2019. At the time of writing, these institutions had not verified their information in the table: Acsenda, Alexander College, Camosun College, Capilano University, Fairleigh Dickinson University, Fraser International College, Justice Institute of BC, LaSalle College, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, Northern Lights College, Royal Roads University, and the University of the Fraser Valley.

#### NOTES:

The listed scores are for admission to the institution or for admission to academic or university transfer programs. Different scores may be required for admission to specific programs within the institution.

If an institution accepts multiple TOEFL scores for admission (e.g. different TOEFL scores are considered equivalent to different grades or percentages in BC ENGL 12), the listed score is the lowest score accepted as equivalent to completion of BC ENGL 12.

## Appendix 5:

### IELTS (International English Language Testing System) Minimum Scores for Undergraduate Admission or Admission to Academic (Credit) Courses at BCTS Member Institutions

Name of Institution	Minimum Required Test Score (maximum possible overall test score is 9.0; scores/bands are expressed in whole numbers [ e.g. 7.0] or in half numbers [e.g.6.5])	Conditions	Notes
Acsenda School of Management	6.5 overall with no band less than 6.0	Score must be from Academic IELTS	
Alexander College	6.0 overall with no less than 6.0 in W		
Athabasca University	6.0 overall		
BC Institute of Technology	6.0 overall for academic courses requiring ENGL 12 or CMNS 12		
Camosun College	6.5 overall with no less than 6.5 R/W and 6.0 L/S	Score must be from Academic IELTS	
Capilano University	6.5 overall with no band less than 6.0	Score must be from Academic IELTS	TOEFL, ELA, IELTS, CAEL or PTE test score required for applicants whose first language is not English or whose previous education was in a language other than English
Coast Mountain College	5.5 overall with no band less than 5.5	Score must be from Academic IELTS	This score is considered equivalent to ENGL 11
College of New Caledonia	6.0 overall with no band less than 5.5		For international students
College of the Rockies	6.0 overall with no band less than 6.0	Score must be from Academic IELTS	
Columbia College	6.5 overall with at least 6.0 W		
Coquitlam College	6.5 overall with at least 6.0 W		
Corpus Christi College	6.5 overall	Score must be from Academic IELTS	For international students
Douglas College	6.5 overall	Score must be from Academic IELTS	
Emily Carr University of Art + Design	6.5 overall with no band less than 6.0	Score must be from Academic IELTS	For students whose first language is not English, regardless of status or citizenship.

Data collected from institutional websites in January 2019.

Name of Institution	Minimum Required Test Score (maximum possible overall test score is 9.0; scores/bands are expressed in whole numbers [ e.g. 7.0] or in half numbers [e.g.6.5])	Conditions	Notes
Fairleigh Dickinson University	6.0 overall		
Fraser International College	6.0 overall with no less than 6.0 R/W and 5.5 S/L		
Justice Institute of BC	6.5 overall	Score must be from Academic IELTS and must be from test taken within the past two years	
Kwantlen Polytechnic University	6.5 overall with no band less than 6.0	Score must be from test taken within the past two years	
Langara College	6.5 overall		For international students
LaSalle Institute	5.5 overall		
Nicola Valley Institute of Technology	Minimum 6.0 in R/W/S/L		
North Island College	6.0 overall with no band less than 5.5. For students accepted through Student Direct Scheme (SDS) visa program, required score is 6.0 overall with no band less than 6.0.		Scores of 6.0 or more in R/L are considered equivalent to completion of ENGL 104 (Foundations of Academic Writing).
Northern Lights College	6.0 overall with no band less than 5.5		
Okanagan College	6.0 overall with no band less than 6.0		
Quest University	Minimum of 6.5 in R/W/S/L		
Royal Roads University	6.0 overall with no less than 6.0 W/S and 5.5 L/R		For admission to year 1 of academic studies; admission to year 3 requires 6.5 overall with minimum of 6.5 in W/S and 6.0 L/R
Selkirk College	6.0 overall with no band less than 5.5. Proposed change to 6.5 overall with no band less than 6.0 for some programs.		Test must be taken within the past two years.
Simon Fraser University	6.5 overall with no band less than 6.0		
Trinity Western University	6.5 overall with no less than 6.0 W		

Data collected from institutional websites in January 2019.

Name of Institution	Minimum Required Test Score (maximum possible overall test score is 9.0; scores/bands are expressed in whole numbers [ e.g. 7.0] or in half numbers [e.g.6.5])	Conditions	Notes
Thompson Rivers University	6.5 overall with no band less than 6.0		
Thompson Rivers University – Open Learning	Program-specific		
University of BC	6.5 overall with no band less than 6.0	Score must be from Academic IELTS	
University Canada West	6.5 overall with no less than 6.0 W		
University of the Fraser Valley	6.5 overall with no band less than 6.0	Score must be from Academic IELTS	
University of Northern BC	6.5 overall with no band less than 6.0	Score must be from test taken within the past two years. Score must be from Academic IELTS.	
University of Victoria	6.5 overall with no band less than 6.0		
Vancouver Community College	6.5 overall with no band less than 6.0	Score must be from Academic IELTS and from test taken within the past year	This score is considered equivalent to a 'pass' grade in ENGL 12.
Vancouver Island University	Not mentioned		
Yukon College	6.0 overall with no band less than 5.5	Score must be from Academic IELTS	For diploma/certificate programs; for direct admission to undergraduate degree programs, score is 6.0 overall with no band less than 6.0
Yorkville University	6.5 overall		For admission to Vancouver BBA program

R=reading W=writing L = listening S = speaking

Data collected from institutional websites in January 2019. At the time of writing, these institutions had not verified their information in the table: Acsenda, Alexander College, Camosun College, Capilano University, Fairleigh Dickinson University, Fraser International College, Justice Institute of BC, LaSalle College, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, Northern Lights College, Royal Roads University, the University of the Fraser Valley, and Yorkville University.

NOTES: The listed scores are for admission to the institution or for admission to academic or university transfer programs. Different scores may be required for admission to specific programs within the institution.

If an institution accepts multiple IELTS scores for admission (e.g. different IELTS scores are considered equivalent to different grades or percentages in BC ENGL 12), the listed score is the lowest score accepted as equivalent to completion of BC ENGL 12.

## Appendix 6:

### CAEL (Canadian Academic English Language Test) Minimum Scores for Undergraduate Admission or Admission to Academic (Credit) Courses at BCTS Member Institutions

Name of Institution	Score (minimum possible overall score is 10; maximum possible overall score is 90)	Conditions	Notes
Acsenda School of Management	70 overall, with no component lower than 60		
Alexander College	60 overall, with no less than 60 W		
Athabasca University	60 overall	For applicants who did not complete secondary or post-secondary education in an English-speaking country	
BC Institute of Technology	60 overall, with no less than 50 R/W/L/S		
Capilano University	70 overall		TOEFL, ELA, IELTS, CAEL or PTE test score required for applicants whose first language is not English or whose previous education was in a language other than English
Coast Mountain College	50 overall, with no less than 50 R/W/L/S	Score must be from test taken within the last year	
College of New Caledonia	60 overall with no band less than 50		
Columbia College	60-69 overall, with no less than 60 W	Score must be from test taken within the last two years	
Douglas College	60 overall, with no less than 60 W		
Emily Carr University of Art + Design	70 overall		For students whose first language is not English, regardless of status or citizenship
Fairleigh Dickinson University	65 overall		

Data collected from institutional websites in January 2019.

Name of Institution	Score (minimum possible overall score is 10; maximum possible overall score is 90)	Conditions	Notes
Kwantlen Polytechnic University	70 overall, with no less than 60 R/W/L/S	Score must be from test taken within the past two years	
Langara College	60 overall, with no less than 60 on essay		For international students
North Island College	60 overall, with no less than 60 W	Score must be from test taken within the past two years	
Okanagan College	50 overall	Score must be from test taken within the past two years	
Royal Roads University	70 overall, with no less than 70 W and 60 R/L/S		
Simon Fraser University	70 overall, with no less than 60 R/W/L/S		
Trinity Western University	70 overall		
Thompson Rivers University	70 overall, with no less than 60 R/W/L/S		
Thompson Rivers University – Open Learning	Program-specific		
University of BC	70 overall, with no less than 60 S	Score must be from test taken within the past two years. All scores must be from a single sitting of the test.	
University Canada West	70 overall, with no less than 60 R/W/L/S	Score must be from test taken within the past two years.	
University of the Fraser Valley	70 overall		
University of Northern BC	70 overall, with no less than 60 R/W/L/S	Score must be from test taken within the past two years.	
University of Victoria	70 overall, with no less than 60 R/W/L/S	Score must be from test taken within the past two years.	
Vancouver Community College	60 overall, with no less than 60 R/W/L/S		This score is considered equivalent to a 'pass' grade in ENGL 12.
Yorkville University	60 overall		

Data collected from institutional websites in January 2019.

R=reading W=writing L=listening S =speaking

Data collected from institutional websites in January 2019. At the time of writing, these institutions had not verified their information in the table: Acsenda, Alexander College, Camosun College, Capilano University, Fairleigh Dickinson University, Fraser International College, Justice Institute of BC, LaSalle College, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, Northern Lights College, Royal Roads University, the University of the Fraser Valley, and Yorkville University.

NOTES:

The listed scores are for admission to the institution or for admission to academic or university transfer programs. Different scores may be required for admission to specific programs within the institution.

If an institution accepts multiple CAEL scores for admission (e.g. different CAEL scores are considered equivalent to different grades or percentages in BC ENGL 12), the listed score is the lowest score accepted as equivalent to completion of BC ENGL 12.



## Appendix 7:

### PTE (Pearson Test of English - Academic) Minimum Scores for Undergraduate Admission or Admission to Academic (Credit) Courses at BCTS Member Institutions

Name of Institution	Score (minimum possible overall score is 10; maximum possible overall score is 90)	Conditions	Notes
Acsenda School of Management	60 overall		
Alexander College	60 overall, with no less than 60 W		
Athabasca University	59 overall		
BC Institute of Technology	52 overall		
Capilano University	56 overall		TOEFL, ELA, IELTS, CAEL or PTE test score required for applicants whose first language is not English or whose previous education was in a language other than English
Coast Mountain College	42 overall, with no less than 42 R/W/L/S		
College of New Caledonia	59 with no band less than 55		
College of the Rockies	50 overall		
Coquitlam College	60 overall, with no less than 60 W		
Douglas College	56 overall		
Emily Carr University of Art + Design	56 overall		For students whose first language is not English, regardless of status or citizenship
Fairleigh Dickinson University	53 overall		
Kwantlen Polytechnic University	61 overall	Score must be from test written within the past two years	
LaSalle Institute	48 overall		

Data collected from institutional websites in January 2019.

Name of Institution	Score (minimum possible overall score is 10; maximum possible overall score is 90)	Conditions	Notes
North Island College	54 overall with no less than 46 R/W/L/S		
Okanagan College	56 overall with no less than 55 R/W/L/S		
Royal Roads University	60 overall, with no less than 60 W/S and 58 L/R		
Simon Fraser University	65 overall, with no less than 60 R/W/L/S		
Thompson Rivers University	58 overall, with no less than 55 in tests of communicative skills		
Thompson Rivers University – Open Learning	Program-specific		
University of BC	65 overall, with no less than 60 R/W/L/S		
University Canada West	61 overall, with no less than 60 W		
University of the Fraser Valley	61 overall, with no less than 60 W		
University of Northern BC	65 overall, with no less than 60 R/W/L/S	Score must be from test taken within the past two years.	
Vancouver Island University	59 overall, with no less than 56 R/W/L/S		The minimum score is considered equivalent to a C+ in ENGL 12.

R=reading W=writing L=listening S=speaking

Data collected from institutional websites in January 2019. At the time of writing, these institutions had not verified their information in the table: Acsenda, Alexander College, Camosun College, Capilano University, Fairleigh Dickinson University, Fraser International College, Justice Institute of BC, LaSalle College, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, Northern Lights College, Royal Roads University, the University of the Fraser Valley, and Yorkville University.

NOTES: The listed scores are for admission to the institution or for admission to academic or university transfer programs. Different scores may be required for admission to specific programs within the institution.

If an institution accepts multiple PTE scores for admission (e.g. different PTE scores are considered equivalent to different grades or percentages in BC ENGL 12), the listed score is the lowest score accepted as equivalent to completion of BC ENGL 12.

## Appendix 8:

### LPI (Language Proficiency Index) Minimum Scores for Undergraduate Admission or Admission to Academic (Credit) Courses at BCTS Member Institutions

Name of Institution	Score (maximum possible score of 10 in Sentence Structure, 10 in English Usage, 20 in Reading Comprehension, and 40 in Essay; maximum possible essay level is 6)	Conditions	Notes
Alexander College	Essay level 4 and Essay score of 24		
Camosun College	Essay level 5	Score must be from test taken within the last two years	
Capilano University	Essay level 4 and Essay score of 26		TOEFL, ELA, IELTS, CAEL or PTE test score required for applicants whose first language is not English or whose previous education was in a language other than English
Coast Mountain College	Essay level 4		
College of New Caledonia	Essay level 4		
College of the Rockies	Essay level 5		
Columbia College	Essay level 4 and Essay score of 25; at least 50% score on other three components		
Corpus Christi College	Essay level 4		
Douglas College	Essay level 4		
Justice Institute of BC	Essay level 4		
Kwantlen Polytechnic University	Essay level 5 and Essay score of 30	Score must be from test taken within the past two years	
Langara College	Essay level 4 and Essay score of 24		For international students

Data collected from institutional websites in January 2019.

Name of Institution	Score (maximum possible score of 10 in Sentence Structure, 10 in English Usage, 20 in Reading Comprehension, and 40 in Essay; maximum possible essay level is 6)	Conditions	Notes
LaSalle Institute	Essay level 4		
Nicola Valley Institute of Technology	Essay level 4	Score must be from test taken within the past two years	
Okanagan College	Essay level 4 and Essay score of 24	Score must be from test taken within the past two years	
Selkirk College	Essay level 4	In conjunction with a satisfactory oral English-language interview with Selkirk International. Score must be from test taken within the past two years.	
Trinity Western University	Essay level 4		
University of the Fraser Valley	Essay level 5 and Essay score of 30		
University of Northern BC	Under review		
Vancouver Island University	Essay level 4 and a total score of 20 on individual components other than Essay		

Data collected from institutional websites in January 2019. At the time of writing, these institutions had not verified their information in the table: Acsenda, Alexander College, Camosun College, Capilano University, Fairleigh Dickinson University, Fraser International College, Justice Institute of BC, LaSalle College, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, Northern Lights College, Royal Roads University, the University of the Fraser Valley, and Yorkville University.

**NOTES:**

The listed scores are for admission to the institution or for admission to academic or university transfer programs. Different scores may be required for admission to specific programs within the institution.

If an institution accepts multiple LPI scores for admission (e.g. different LPI scores are considered equivalent to different grades or percentages in BC ENGL 12), the listed score is the lowest score accepted as equivalent to completion of BC ENGL 12.

## Appendix 9:

### BCTS Member Institutions Accepting Transfer Credit as Proof of English-Language Proficiency

Name of Institution	Courses or Credits Required to Meet Proficiency Requirement
Acsenda School of Management	Successful completion of 6 credits of post-secondary first-year English studies at a college or university where English is the language of instruction.
Alexander College	BCCAT transferable post-secondary English courses may be used for English placement with a passing grade of D or higher.
Athabasca University	A minimum of 15 credits eligible for transfer credit from a recognized English-speaking university, or one year of transfer credit based on work completed at a non-university post-secondary education, with an overall average of 75 percent (3.0 GPA)
BC Institute of Technology	3 credits of post-secondary English, humanities or social sciences at the required grade level of English for a specific program. For example, 67% in History 100 meets the 67% in English 12 requirement.  Generally, an acceptable course is three hours of lecture per week for one 12-15 week term, and is part of a four-year 120-credit undergraduate degree program.
Camosun College	n/a
Capilano University	6 credits of post-secondary English that transfer to Capilano University
Coast Mountain College	60% in BCIT COMM 0005 or 0015 & COMM 0032 or 0033; or C+ in VCC Communicating Professionally for Health Sciences (ELSK 0950) and/or Academic Prep for Health Sciences (ELSK 0955); or C in VCC ENGL 1101
Columbia College	Present minimum required scores in first-year English taken at another college or at university in British Columbia, listed in the British Columbia Transfer Guide
Coquitlam College	n/a
Douglas College	Currently enrolled or successful completion in a college-level English, Written Communications, Creative Writing or Literature course from an English speaking post-secondary institution. If the course has been completed, a minimum grade of "P" is required.
Emily Carr University of Art + Design	n/a
Fairleigh Dickinson University	n/a
Fraser International College	n/a
Justice Institute of BC	n/a

Information collected from institutional websites February 2019.

Name of Institution	Courses or Credits Required to Meet Proficiency Requirement
Kwantlen Polytechnic University	Completion of 3 credits of undergraduate English (ENGL) with a minimum grade of C- from a recognized post-secondary institution where English is the primary language of instruction.
Langara College	Successful completion of a post-secondary English or Communications course for which Langara College awards transfer credit.
LaSalle Institute	Successful completion of a minimum of 2 semesters or quarters of post-secondary course work at an accredited college or university in which English is the language of instruction. Successful completion is defined as passing all courses for which the student was registered during the two semesters.
Nicola Valley Institute of Technology	Successful completion of a university transferable post-secondary level English course with a minimum grade of C.
North Island College	n/a
Northern Lights College	n/a
Okanagan College	50% or higher in an English literature or composition course at an accredited university or college in Canada.
Quest University	n/a
Royal Roads University	n/a
Selkirk College	n/a
Simon Fraser University	Completion of a 3-unit English (ENGL) course or a certified W (writing intensive) course for which SFU grants transfer credit, with a minimum grade of C-.
Trinity Western University	A final grade of B or higher in 6 credits of post-secondary studies in English courses in an approved English-speaking country equivalent to TWU ENG 103 (Introduction to Fiction) and TWU ENG 104 (Introduction to Poetry and Drama).
Thompson Rivers University	n/a
Thompson Rivers University – Open Learning	n/a
University of BC	Successful completion of six credits of post-secondary first-year English studies at a recognized university in an English-speaking country.
University Canada West	Successful completion of a three-credit academic English course with a minimum C grade from a Canadian post-secondary institution. The credits must be eligible to be transferred to University Canada West as transfer credits.
University of the Fraser Valley	A minimum grade of C- for a course taken at or transferable to UFV as first-year English or as one of CMNS 125, 145, 175, or 251.
University of Northern BC	A final grade of 75% (B) or better in a University Transferable English course.
University of Victoria	Completion of 1.5 or more units of transfer credit for university-level English courses.

Information collected from institutional websites February 2019.

Name of Institution	Courses or Credits Required to Meet Proficiency Requirement
Vancouver Community College	3 credits of undergraduate English, with a minimum grade of 50%, at a recognized post-secondary institution where English is the primary language of instruction.
Vancouver Island University	n/a
Yukon College	n/a
Yorkville University	n/a

Information collected from institutional websites February 2019.

These data exclude equivalencies based on completion of an entire year or more of study at an English-language post-secondary institution.

## Appendix 10:

### Minimum Standardized Test Scores for Admission to English Preparatory or Upgrading Programs at BCTS Member Institutions

Name of Institution	Program	Minimum Test Scores for Admission	Conditions	Notes
Acsenda School of Management	English for Academic Purposes	In-house test: 60-69%; or IELTS: 5.5 with no band less than 5; or TOEFL PBT: 520; or TOEFL iBT: 56; or PTE: 43		Two programs: EAP 3 and EAPP 100. Listed scores are for EAP 3; scores for EAPP admission are higher. Students can also take English pathway programs at one of 10 local private colleges.
Alexander College	English for Academic Purposes	0 to 13 (out of 100) on in-house test for admission to English Foundations 1: Upper Beginner course.		English proficiency test must be written by all applicants without documentation of English proficiency. Test results are valid for two years after the date of writing.
Athabasca University	English Language Proficiency Program	Online English assessment test		Applicants must write this test to determine eligibility for admission to program. Test results also determine which two of four electives students will take.
BC Institute of Technology	International Student Entry Program	In-house admission test		Applicants must write this test for admission and placement in the program. Test results are valid for six months after the date of writing.
Camosun College	English Language Development	In-house assessment test; test is pre-requisite for ELD 032 (Introduction to English Basics), the first course in Level 1 of program.		
Capilano University	English for Academic Purposes	32 on English Language Assessment (ELA) test, or score from EAP Placement Test. Minimum scores for entry to EAP 070 (English for Academic Purposes 1): 440 on TOEFL PBT or 32 on TOEFL iBT; or 77 on English Language Assessment (ELA); or 4.5 overall on IELTS with no component less than 4.0; or 30 CAEL; or 44 on PTE Academic. Students with any of these scores do not have to write the EAP placement test.		All students must have some English language skills to enter the program.

Data collected from institutional websites in January 2019.



Name of Institution	Program	Minimum Test Scores for Admission	Conditions	Notes
Coast Mountain College	English Pathway Program	IELTS Academic score between 5.0 and 6.0		"In preparation for full entry" into trades, business or university transfer program. Program "available on demand".
College of New Caledonia	English as a Second Language (ESL), incorporating English for Academic Purposes	Applicants with IELTS scores below 4.0 can be admitted to CNC ESL Level 1; all applicants' placement is determined by in-house test.		EAP is fourth level of ESL program. Completion of EAP admits applicant to CNC programs without needing TOEFL or IELTS score.
College of the Rockies	English Language Program (ELP)  Conditional admittance (CA)	ELP: IELTS Academic score below 6.0 overall  CA: IELTS Academic score of 6.0 overall with no band less than 5.5		ELP: Students completing ELP and English 90 (with 65%) or Communications 100 (with 65%) or ELP 89 (with 85%) can enrol in academic programs  CA: Students with A- grade in ELP 98 (Academic Skills for College Preparation) can enrol in ENGL 100 (Composition).
Columbia College	English for Academic Purposes		EAP students must complete the program before enrolling in Advanced Academic English (AAE) program. Completion of ENGL 097 (first course in AAE) is considered equivalent to IELTS score of 5.0.	No minimum level of English required for enrollment in university transfer/associate degree program.
Coquitlam College	English Certificate Program (ECP)  University Preparation Program (UPP)	Some students may have to take in-house English Diagnostic Test for admission or placement.		Students must pass Advanced Reading and Advanced Writing courses in ECP to enrol in UPP.
Corpus Christi College	English Bridge Program	"High-intermediate" proficiency equivalent to IELTS 5.0; Level 1 on Corpus Christi College Bridge Program Placement Test; and in-person or phone interview.		Available for both domestic and international students.

Data collected from institutional websites in January 2019.

Name of Institution	Program	Minimum Test Scores for Admission	Conditions	Notes
Douglas College	Academic Preparatory English Program (APEP)	APEP: TOEFL iBT 45; or IELTS 4.5 R/W/L/S; or English Language Learning Acquisition Assessment score; or completion of transferable EAP courses with scores in Reading, Writing, and Aural/Oral		Also English Upgrading (ENGU) courses, with admission/placement through placement test and interview
	Academic College English (ACE)	ACE: IELTS 4.5 or CAEL 10-20		
	Pre-Academic English (PAE)	PAE: IELTS 3.5 or CAEL 10-20		
Emily Carr University of Art + Design	none			
Fairleigh Dickinson University	Pre-University Program	"Intermediate" English-language skills; all new students must take Academic Writing test on arrival in Vancouver.		6 courses including 3 English/writing courses. Admittance to program is also conditional admittance to BS/BA programs. Applicants lacking required proficiency can take English upgrading programs at any of 10 private partner schools in Lower Mainland, but must meet English proficiency requirements before being admitted to FDU.
Fraser International College	UTP Stage 1 (includes English-language component)	IELTS 5.5 overall with no band less than 4.5, or TOEFL 59 overall with 12 R/W		Applicants who do not meet English admission requirements may be eligible to enter English Language and Culture program at SFU (see SFU listing below). FIC can require students who do not meet English proficiency standards to achieve a specified grade in one or more academic or English language courses in their first term. FIC can also deny admission to the student's desired program and allow the student to enrol in an intensive English-language program or other programs at FIC, with the option of admitting the student once they meet the minimum entry requirements for their chosen program.
Justice Institute of BC	none			

Data collected from institutional websites in January 2019.

Name of Institution	Program	Minimum Test Scores for Admission	Conditions	Notes
Kwantlen Polytechnic University	English Language Studies	TOEFL iBT 32 with 12 W/S and 6 L/R; IELTS 4.5 with no sub-score less than 4. Scores for either test must be for a test written within the past two years.  Also has in-house test that provides a placement in appropriate level within the program.		In-house test is recommended for applicants whose first language is not English.
Langara College	Langara English for Academic Proficiency (LEAP)	In-house LEAP placement test after admission is used to place students into appropriate levels of English.		Program is open to domestic and international students. International students must be at least 18 and completed 12 years of formal education.
LaSalle Institute	none			Applicant can take English Pathways Program at any of 21 local private institutions, including Columbia College; each has a stated proficiency level for LaSalle admission.
Nicola Valley Institute of Technology	none			
North Island College	Academic English Language Program	Intermediate 1 level (entry level) requires IELTS 4.0 overall with no band less than 3.5, or TOEFL iBT 21. Proficiency of applicants without IELTS or TOEFL score will be assessed by ESL faculty.		International students only
Northern Lights College	English as a Second Language	Placement through English proficiency test, writing test, and interview with instructor		Students at "upper ESL levels" can take joint ESL/University Transfer program
Okanagan College	English Language Certificate (ELC)  English for Academic Purposes (EAP)	ELC: Admission and placement based on Okanagan College English Language Assessment  EAP: IELTS: 4.5 overall with no band less than 4.0 and no less than 4.5 in readings; or TOEFL iBT 52; or completion of ELC with 65% in specified courses		Applicants must be at least 18 years old. Applicants who are 17 years old can enrol in Spring and Summer sessions of EAP.
Quest University	none			

Data collected from institutional websites in January 2019.

Name of Institution	Program	Minimum Test Scores for Admission	Conditions	Notes
Royal Roads University	Intensive English Program (IEP) International Year (IY) Transfer Preparation Program (for admission into undergraduate Year 3) (TPP)	IEP: IELTS 4.5 or TOEFL 45 or Password 4.5. IY: IELTS 6.0, or TOEFL 79 or Password 5.5. TPP: IELTS 5.5, or TOEFL 60, or Password 5.5.		IEP: IELTS score of 4.5 for three-semester IEP; IELTS score of 5.0 with no less than 5.0 W for two-semester IEP; IELTS 5.5 with no less than 5.5 in each band for one-semester IEP.  TPP: Applicants who do not meet the test score requirements can enrol in two-semester IEP with an IELTS score of 4.5, or enrol in one-semester IEP if IELTS score is 5.0 with minimum 5.0 W
Selkirk College	English Language Program	Placement test. No minimum IELTS or TOEFL score.		Applicants must be 18 years old and have either completed BC Grade 12 or been approved by Selkirk International.
Simon Fraser University	English Language and Culture University Pathway program (joint program with Fraser International College)	IELTS overall score of 5.0 with no band below 4.5. Assessment test in 2nd term of program to assess readiness for FIC.		Applicants must be 18 years old and have a self-declared "low intermediate understanding of English" (per application form).
Trinity Western University	English as a Second Language International Partnership with Trinity Learning Centre: Academic English Study	For both, applicants are conditionally admitted if IELTS score is less than 6.0 or TOEFL iBT score is less than 78.		Students admitted to TWU 1st year can also enrol in University Transition 1, where courses are taught in cohorts with the support of assigned learning coaches.
Thompson Rivers University	Academic ESL	Open to students with IELTS lower than 5.0 or TOEFL iBT lower than 61. Admission to Level 1 (of 5) requires TRU English placement test; minimum TOEFL iBT score of 20 is "recommended". All new students are required to attend testing & orientation week prior to the start of first semester of study.		

Data collected from institutional websites in January 2019.

Name of Institution	Program	Minimum Test Scores for Admission	Conditions	Notes
Thompson Rivers University – Open Learning	none			
University of BC	Conditional admittance program (CA)	CA: CAEC; or CAEL 60 overall with no part below 50; or UBC Certificate in English Language 500; or CPE (CAE) 3; or IELTS Academic 6.0 with no part less than 5.0; or MELAB 80; or PTE 60 overall with no part less than 55; or TOEFL iBT 82 with 20 R/L and 19 W/S (PBT scores assessed on case-by-case basis)	CA: Students in the program must take UBC English for Academic Purposes before enrolling in an academic program	Also Vantage One program: Students take first year of program along with supports to develop English and academic skills. Will be admitted to Arts, Science, Management or Engineering after completing all courses with a 60% average (Management also requires completion of WRDS 150: Research and Writing in the Humanities & Social Sciences)  Admission criteria for Vantage One: TOEFL iBT 70 with no section less than 17; or IELTS 5.5 with 5.0 S/L and 5.5 R/W; or CAEL 50 overall with 40 on speaking test
University Canada West	University Access Program	5.0 for nine-month program 5.5 for six-month program 6.0 for three-month program		
University of the Fraser Valley	English Language Studies (ELS)  University Foundations (UF)	ELS Intermediate level: IELTS 4.5 with min band score of 4.0; or TOEFL iBT score of 42 with no section below 12; or EIKEN Grade 2. Must complete in-house assessment before registering.  UF: IELTS 5.5 with no band less than 5.0; or TOEFL iBT 71 with no section less than 16; or EIKEN Grade 2A with 2400 in Common Scale for English; PTE 46 with 44 W		

Data collected from institutional websites in January 2019.

Name of Institution	Program	Minimum Test Scores for Admission	Conditions	Notes
<p><b>University of Northern BC</b></p> <p><i>[NOTE: these data are for 2018-2019 admission. Program is currently under review and admissions are suspended for 2019-2010 academic year.]</i></p>	<p>English Language Studies</p>	<p>Program levels are Level 10 through 50.</p> <p>TOEFL: iBT 60 for level 30; iBT 72 for level 40; iBT 79 for level 50</p> <p>IELTS: 5.0 for level 30; 5.5 for level 40; 6.0 for level 50</p> <p>In-house test for Levels 10 and 20. In-house test results can also be used to meet admission requirements for higher levels.</p>	<p>TOEFL and IELTS test results must be from tests that were taken within one year of the start of the program.</p> <p>Applicants can be conditionally admitted to a degree program and to ELS. Must receive minimum C in ELS 50 and ELS 170 to enter undergraduate program.</p> <p>Students can qualify for entry to level 20 and higher of program with specific scores on in-house test.</p>	<p>Program is for students that do not have English as their first language</p>
<p><b>University of Victoria</b></p>	<p>University Admission Preparation (UAP)</p> <p>University Pathways Program (UPP)</p>	<p>UAP: IELTS overall 6 with 5.5 R/L/S/W; or TOEFL iBT 79 with no section below 17; or CAEL 60 with no subscore less than 50; or 80% in level 570 (academic or general) in UVic 12-week English intensive program</p> <p>UPP: IELTS 5.5 with 5.0 R/W/L/S; or TOEFL iBT 71 with no section less than 15; or passing grade for level 410 in UVic 12-week English intensive program.</p>	<p>UPP students take first-year classes along with English classes. Students move into 2nd year of Social Sciences, Science or Engineering programs after completion of UAP with a minimum score of 80% and 2.0 GPA. Some courses in degree programs may require higher prerequisite grade for admission.</p>	

Data collected from institutional websites in January 2019.

Name of Institution	Program	Minimum Test Scores for Admission	Conditions	Notes
Vancouver Community College	English for Academic Purposes & University Transfer	VCC Intensive Academic English Reading and Writing (ELSK 0930) with C+ or higher; or IELTS 6.5 with no band below 6; or TOEFL 86; or VCC English Language Assessment with minimum of 16 on essay.	First-year English courses along with language supports	
Vancouver Island University	Academic Preparation (AP) Accelerated Academic Preparation (APP) ESL Pathway (ESLP)	AP and APP: Online Basic English Test, minimum of 17/20  ESLP: a High School diploma; or IELTS 5.0 (no band below 5.0); or TOEFL 61 (no band below 15); or successful AP3 with a B average; conditional acceptance to Vancouver Island University; must pass assessment test on arrival.		
Yukon College	English as a Second Language	Advanced ESL: TOEFL iBT 53 or CLBPT 7 or IELTS 5.5. Students with CLBPT 6, TOEFL iBT 45, or IELTS 5 can register in a non-credit version of Advanced ESL.		Open to both domestic and international students.
Yorkville University	None at BC campus	BBA applicants with IELTS between 6.0 and 6.5 can enroll in Term 1 at Yorkville and in EAP program at a partner organization.		

R=reading W=writing L = listening S = speaking

Data collected from institutional websites in January 2019. At the time of writing, these institutions had not verified their information in the table: Acsenda, Alexander College, Camosun College, Capilano University, Fairleigh Dickinson University, Fraser International College, Justice Institute of BC, LaSalle College, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, Northern Lights College, Royal Roads University, the University of the Fraser Valley, and Yorkville University.

## Appendix 11:

### Academic Credit or Courses during English Upgrading Programs at BCTS Member Institutions

Institution	Program	Program Length/ Structure	Academic Credit for Courses in Program?	Enrol in Academic Courses During Program?
Acsenda	English for Academic Purposes: EAPP 099 and EAPP 100	EAP 3: 12 weeks, 3 courses. Must have a C average (60-63%) with no grade lower than C- (55-59%) to graduate.  EAPP 100: 12 weeks. Must have C+ grade (64-67%) to receive credit.	EAPP 100 = 3 credits in Acsenda programs	EAPP 099: "eligible to complete" 1 academic course  EAPP 100: "eligible to enrol in" up to 2 academic courses  Courses should be pre-approved by academic advisors. Currently eligible academic courses are Basic Math (BMTH 099) and Business Math (BADM 120); Academic Council has been asked to also approve a computer literacy course for this purpose.
Alexander College	English for Academic Purposes	Six levels. ENGL 094/095: Foundational ENGL 096/097: Intermediate ENGL 098/099: Advanced	None	ENGL 098: up to 2 university-level courses  ENGL 099: up to 3 university-level courses
Athabasca University	English Language Proficiency Program	4 courses, 1 required (ENGL 155: Writing Skills), 3 electives (including 1 of ENGL 140: Grammar and ENGL 145: Reading and Writing for Academic Purposes, and 1 of ENGL 177: English for Academic Purposes and ENGL 189: English for Business). 3 courses including ENGL 155 must be completed at Athabasca; no PLAR. Electives are recommended based on pre-enrollment assessment test results.	ENGL 155, ENGL 177, and ENGL 189 = 3 credits each.	Students enrol in the program as unclassified students (not registered in any AU degree, diploma or certificate program). The program is not an undergraduate program, but is a compilation of courses intended to prepare students for further studies, employment or social situations. It is recommended that students obtain a grade of "B" in each course before enrolling in the next course.
BC Institute of Technology	International Student Entry Program	6 levels, 7 weeks each; completion time between 2 months and 12 months depending on placement.	None	No

Data collected from institutional websites in February 2019.



Institution	Program	Program Length/ Structure	Academic Credit for Courses in Program?	Enrol in Academic Courses During Program?
Camosun College	English Language Development: two levels	2 courses at Level 1 and 6 courses at Level 2. Completion time varies depending on individual placement and whether program is taken full-time or part-time.	ELD 103 (Preparatory Academic Writing) and ELD 104 (Preparatory English Literature) = 4 "internal credits" each.	"At the English 092 and 094 level, or the ELD 103 and 104 level, take University Transfer (UT) courses in Business, Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, Psychology, or other languages."
Capilano University	English for Academic Purposes: Intermediate and Advanced levels	2 courses at each level; each course is 15 weeks. Also EAP Pathways with Business and Early Childhood Education (ECE) programs.	EAP 100 = 6 credits; EAP 101 = 3 credits. These may receive elective credits in other Capilano programs.	EAP 100 and 101 may be taken along with ENGL 100 (University Writing Strategies). In Business pathway, students take EAP 090 with BADM 101 (Business Management) and BCPT 123 (Business Computing), and then EAP 100 and 101 with ENGL 100 and BADM 102 (Quantitative Methods). In ECE pathway, students take EAP 090 with EDUC 178 (Caring and Development in Early Year Settings) and then EAP 100 and 101 with ENGL 100 and EDUC 173 (Curriculum Development I).
Coast Mountain College	English Pathway Program	14 weeks	none	No
College of New Caledonia	English as a Second Language, incorporating English for Academic Purposes (EAP)	Fundamental (1 course), Intermediate (4 courses), Advanced (4 courses), and EAP (3 courses plus elective). Courses are 15 weeks long.	none	Advanced students can take 1 "non-language intensive" university-transfer course, maximum of 3 credits. EAP students can take 2 "non-language intensive" university-transfer courses, maximum of 6 credits.
College of the Rockies	English Language Program (ELP)  Conditional admittance (CA)	ELP: Three semesters of 15 weeks each (for completion of English Language Certificate)  CA: Students conditionally admitted take ELP 95 (Interactive Communication for College Preparation) and/or ELP 98 (Academic Skills for College Preparation)	none	ELP: Students enrolled in ELP 98 (Academic Skills for College Preparation) may take other CoR academic courses. Students with 75% or higher in ELP 89 (College Prep English) can enrol in COMC 100 (Written and Oral Communication Skills).  CA: Students must obtain A- in ELP 95 and/or ELP 98 to be admitted to ENG 100 (English Composition).

Data collected from institutional websites in February 2019.

Institution	Program	Program Length/ Structure	Academic Credit for Courses in Program?	Enrol in Academic Courses During Program?
Columbia College	English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and Advanced Academic English	EAP is 7 weeks, 3 courses; Advanced Academic English is 4 months, 3 courses	none	Students in English 097 (Academic English) can take 1 university or high school course.  Students in English 098 (College Preparation) can take 2 university or high school courses.  Students in English 099 (Advanced College Preparation) can take 3 university or high school courses.
Coquitlam College	English Certificate Program (ECP)  University Preparation Program (UPP)	ECP: Beginner, 12 courses; Intermediate, 4 courses; Advanced, 4 courses.  UPP: 9 courses	none	no
Corpus Christi College	English Bridge Program	4 courses of 7 weeks each	None	1 credit course per term, "courses that do not have heavy English or writing requirements"
Douglas College	Academic Preparatory English Program (APEP)  Academic College English (ACE)  Pre-Academic English (PAE)	APEP: 4 courses  ACE: 3 levels of 4 courses each; each level is one semester  PAE: 4 courses in 1 semester; must pass entry exam to be admitted to ACE	none	In ACE, after completing 4 courses at ACE Level 2 and at least 3 of the 4 courses at ACE Level 3, student can enrol in "college-level courses".

Data collected from institutional websites in February 2019.

Institution	Program	Program Length/ Structure	Academic Credit for Courses in Program?	Enrol in Academic Courses During Program?
Fairleigh Dickinson University	Pre-University Program	Six courses over 15 weeks	EPS 1109 (English for Professional Success), DSCI 1134 (Business Math), EGTG 2201 (Applied Calculus), MIS 1045 (Software Applications in Business): 3 credits each  UNIV 1000 (Freshman Seminar): 1 credit	no
Fraser International College	UTP Stage 1 (includes English-language component)	2 terms, 8 courses	none	no
Kwantlen Polytechnic University	English Language Studies, 5 levels	ELS Qualifying, ELST Foundation and levels 1-3	ENGQ 1099 (Writing Skills with Readings) = 3 credits	ELST Level 2: "One university-level course from a list of university courses recommended for this level (3 credits)". ELST Level 3: "Two courses from the following (minimum C grade required in each course): -Two university-level courses from a list of university courses recommended for this level (3 or 6 credits) - ELST 0261 (3 credits) - ELST 0262 (3 credits)"
Langara College	Langara English for Academic Purposes (EAP), 9 levels.	LEAP Foundations (Basics, LEAP 1-2), and Academic Preparation (LEAP 3-8). Seven-week sessions.	none	no
North Island College	Academic English Language Program	Pre-Intermediate (3 courses), Intermediate (6 courses), Advanced (6 courses), and University and College Qualifying Levels (2 courses), plus 7 electives.	none	No, but ESL 092 and ESL 095 with minimum grades of C+ meet English-language requirements for academic admission.

Data collected from institutional websites in February 2019.

Institution	Program	Program Length/ Structure	Academic Credit for Courses in Program?	Enrol in Academic Courses During Program?
Northern Lights College	English as a Second Language	Beginner, Pre-Intermediate, Intermediate, Advanced and Masters levels; 15 weeks per level.	none	"In consultation with the ESL instructors and other relevant course instructors, consideration will be given for students registered in the EAP 060 Level [Masters] program to enroll in one College and Career Preparation course or one University Arts and Sciences course. Course pre-requisites must be met."
Okanagan College	English Language Certificate (ELC)	ELC: 3 semesters; 2 courses in 1st semester and 3 courses each in 2nd and 3rd semesters.	none	"Students at EAP level 3 may take one academic course and at EAP level 4 up to two academic courses provided students meet course prerequisites."
	English for Academic Purposes (EAP)	EAP: 4 semesters; 3 courses (writing, reading, and discussion) per semester.		
Royal Roads University	Intensive English Program (IEP)	IEP: 1 or 2 semesters	Non-EAP courses in IY are 3 credits each.	IY curriculum includes 27 academic credits (one 9-credit course, six 3-credit courses) and 3 EAP courses.
	International Year (IY)	IY: 3 semesters; includes EAP courses and credit courses. Completion leads to admittance to Year 2.		
	Transfer Preparation Program (for admission into Year 3) (TPP)	TPP: 1 or 2 semesters		
Selkirk College	English Language Program, 6 levels	Fundamental [01], Intermediate [02/03], Advanced [04/05], and University/College Preparation [06]. Each level has 2 modules and takes "approximately" 1 semester to complete.	Some credits can transfer into Selkirk College diploma or University Transfer programs.	Level 5 of program includes 1 or 2 approved college classes, to a maximum of 6 credits. Students must have completed at least 1 of the 4 core courses in the Level 5 curriculum to be eligible to enrol in college classes.  Level 6 of program includes 1 to 3 approved college classes, to a maximum of 9 credits. Approved classes depend on student's individual study plan and course pre-requisites.

Data collected from institutional websites in February 2019.

Institution	Program	Program Length/ Structure	Academic Credit for Courses in Program?	Enrol in Academic Courses During Program?
Simon Fraser University	English Language and Culture University Pathway program (joint program with Fraser International College)	8-week program with or without specialization, or 4-week intensive program	None	No
Trinity Western University	English as a Second Language International (ESLI) Partnership with Trinity Learning Centre: Academic English Study (AES)	ESLI: 5 levels ending with Pre-University. Completion time depends on placement. AES: 4 levels of 3 courses each; each level is 5 weeks.	None	ESLI: Completion of Pre-University level meets English-language requirement for admission to UT1 (University Transition Year 1) program, which includes credit courses.
Thompson Rivers University	Academic ESL	5 ESL courses at Levels 1, 2, and 3; 4 ESL courses and 1 academic course at Level 4; 2 ESL courses and three academic courses at Level 5.	None for ESL courses	Academic courses in Levels 4 and 5 can be ESL electives or academic courses. Amount of academic courses in Level 5 is restricted to a maximum of 9 credits.
University of BC	Conditional admittance (CA) program  Vantage One (VO)	CA: 16-week EAL session or 8-week accelerated EAL session. Students are conditionally admitted to their chosen program and have up to 12 months to complete the EAL program (75% grade require in each course for full admittance).  VO: 11-month program, with paths in Arts, Science, Management, and Engineering.	CA: None  VO: Two VO courses (VANT 148 [Vantage College Projects] and VANT 149 [Multidisciplinary Research Project]) transfer to UBC Okanagan.	CA: None  VO: All courses are UBC credit courses
University Canada West	University Access Program, 3 levels	Completion time is 3 to 9 months depending on placement	None	No

Data collected from institutional websites in February 2019.

Institution	Program	Program Length/ Structure	Academic Credit for Courses in Program?	Enrol in Academic Courses During Program?
University of the Fraser Valley	English Language Studies, 4 levels	Intermediate, Advanced, University Foundation (UF), and Qualifying Studies (QS)	none	<p>UF Level 1 students with a GPA of 3.0 or less may take 1 university-level course; UF Level 1 students with a GPA above 3.0 may take 2 university-level courses.</p> <p>UF Level 2 students with a GPA of 3.0 or less may take 2 university-level courses; UF Level 2 students with a GPA above 3.0 may take 3 university-level courses. Acceptable university-level courses are listed here: <a href="https://www.ufv.ca/calendar/current/ProgramsM-P/OPEN_FOUNDATIONS.htm">https://www.ufv.ca/calendar/current/ProgramsM-P/OPEN_FOUNDATIONS.htm</a></p> <p>QS students take development-level courses and university-level courses. QS students must be accepted into a certificate, diploma or degree program by the time they have completed 30 university-level credits in courses numbered 100 and above.</p>
University of Northern BC <i>(program under review)</i>	English Language Studies (ELS), 5 levels	ELS 10-50; each level is 12 weeks long. Completion time depends on placement.	ELS 40 students with of 73% or higher receive 3 elective credits towards a UNBC degree; ELS 50 students with 63% or higher receive 9 elective credits towards a UNBC degree.	no
University of Victoria	University Admission Preparation (UAP)  University Pathways Program (UPP)	UAP: 12 weeks or 4 weeks  UPP: 1 year, 3 streams (Social Sciences, Engineering, and Science)	UAP: 4-week program includes CS 101 (Intro to Canadian Studies)  UPP: each stream includes seven first-year courses, totalling 10.5 credit units	<p>Completion of 12-week UAP with 80% or higher satisfies the university's English proficiency requirement. During this program, students can register for credit courses in the next semester, but cannot take credit courses concurrently.</p> <p>UPP: Students take academic courses along with Academic English courses</p>

Data collected from institutional websites in February 2019.

Institution	Program	Program Length/ Structure	Academic Credit for Courses in Program?	Enrol in Academic Courses During Program?
Vancouver Community College	English for Academic Purposes & University Transfer	6 courses; program runs 3 times a year	Program includes ENGL 1101 and ENGL 1102 which transfer to most BCTS member institutions as 3 credits of 100-level English	No
Vancouver Island University	Academic Preparation (AP), 2 levels  Accelerated Academic Preparation (APP)  ESL Pathway (ESLP)	AP: Levels 4 and 5, each 13 weeks  AAP: 8 weeks, includes Level 5 of AP  ESLP: 2 semesters; each semester includes AAP + university-level courses	none	AP: Students in Level 5 “may be eligible” to take 1 university-level course  ESLP: First semester includes 6 academic courses (3 credits each); second semester includes 2 academic courses (3 credits each). Courses listed here: <a href="https://international.viu.ca/elc/viupathway">https://international.viu.ca/elc/viupathway</a>
Yukon College	English as a Second Language, 2 levels	Intermediate and Advanced, 5 to 15 weeks each	None	Students with CBLPT score of 7 and taking Advanced ESL can take 2 college courses for credit or audit. Students with CBLPT score of 6 and taking Advanced ESL can audit 1 college course.

“Academic credit” in this context is defined as course credit that is applicable to credential programs at the same institution and/or transferable to other institutions.

Data collected from institutional websites in February 2019. At the time of writing, the following institutions had not verified their information in this table: the BC Institute of Technology, Capilano University, College of the Rockies, Fairleigh Dickinson University, Fraser International College, Northern Lights College, Royal Roads University, Simon Fraser University, Thompson Rivers University/TRU-OL, and Yorkville University.



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