



The following Motions and Documents were considered by the General Faculties Council at its Monday, January 27, 2020 meeting:

Agenda Title: **New Members of GFC**

CARRIED MOTION:

TO RECEIVE:

The following ex officio member, to serve on GFC for a term beginning January 1, 2020 and extending for the duration of the appointment:

Brenda Hemmelgarn, Dean, Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry

FINAL Item 4

Agenda Title: **Proposed Increase to Minimum English Language Proficiency Entrance Requirement for Graduate Programs, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research**

CARRIED MOTION:

THAT General Faculties Council approve the proposed increase to the FGSR English Language Requirement as recommended by the GFC Executive Committee, as submitted by the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research and as set forth in attachment 3, for implementation for Fall 2021 admissions and to be published in the 2020-2021 Calendar.

FINAL Item 5

New Members of GFC**MOTION I: TO RECEIVE:**

The following ex officio member, to serve on GFC for a term beginning January 1, 2020 and extending for the duration of the appointment:

Brenda Hemmelgarn, Dean, Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry

FINAL Item No. 5
**Governance Executive Summary
 Action Item**

Agenda Title	Proposed Increase to Minimum English Language Proficiency Entrance Requirement for Graduate Programs, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
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Motion

THAT General Faculties Council approve the proposed increase to the FGSR English Language Requirement as recommended by the GFC Executive Committee, as submitted by the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research and as set forth in attachment 3, for implementation for Fall 2021 admissions and to be published in the 2020-2021 Calendar.

Item

Action Requested	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approval <input type="checkbox"/> Recommendation
Proposed by	Brooke Milne, Dean and Vice Provost, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
Presenter(s)	Brooke Milne, Dean and Vice Provost, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

Details

Responsibility	Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
The Purpose of the Proposal is (<i>please be specific</i>)	The proposal is before GFC to increase the minimum IELTS band score for graduate admission.
Executive Summary (<i>outline the specific item – and remember your audience</i>)	<p>FGSR is proposing to raise the minimum IELTS band score from 5.5 to 6.0. The minimum overall IELTS score would remain at 6.5.</p> <p>The increase is proposed in order to align the FGSR minimum with the proposed new undergraduate level. Graduate students at this University should meet the same English Language proficiency requirement as the undergraduate students that many of them will be teaching. It is also important for FGSR to stay competitive with other top universities in Canada.</p> <p>Higher ELP scores will ensure graduate students are better prepared to undertake graduate studies and research in English.</p> <p>Many graduate programs currently require higher scores than the FGSR minimum – these are reflected in their calendar entries.</p> <p>This increase is being proposed for implementation for Fall 2021 admissions.</p>
Supplementary Notes and context	<This section is for use by University Governance only to outline governance process.>

Item No. 5

Engagement and Routing (Include meeting dates)

Consultation and Stakeholder Participation (parties who have seen the proposal and in what capacity) <For information on the protocol see the Governance Resources section Student Participation Protocol >	<u>Those who are actively participating:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
	<u>Those who have been consulted:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of the Registrar September 3 2019 Policy Review Committee (sub-committee of FGSR Council), which includes GSA representation and the Office of the Student Ombuds September 4 2019
	<u>Those who have been informed:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">
Approval Route (Governance) (including meeting dates)	FGSR Policy Review Committee September 4, 2019 FGSR Council October 16, 2019 ASC November 21, 2019 APC November 27 (for information) GFC Executive Committee January 13, 2020 GFC January 27, 2020

Strategic Alignment

Alignment with <i>For the Public Good</i>	Values We value excellence in teaching, research, and creative activity that enriches learning experiences, advances knowledge, inspires engaged citizenship, and promotes the public good. We value learners at all stages of life and strive to provide an intellectually rewarding educational environment for all. Build GOAL: Build a diverse, inclusive community of exceptional students, faculty and staff from Alberta, Canada, and the world.	
Alignment with Institutional Risk Indicator	Please note below the specific institutional risk(s) this proposal is addressing.	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Enrolment Management <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty and Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Funding and Resource Management <input type="checkbox"/> IT Services, Software and Hardware <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership and Change <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/> Relationship with Stakeholders <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reputation <input type="checkbox"/> Research Enterprise <input type="checkbox"/> Safety <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Student Success
Legislative Compliance and jurisdiction	Post-Secondary Learning Act (PSLA) GFC Academic Standards Committee Terms of Reference GFC ASC Subcommittee on Standards Terms of Reference GFC Executive Committee Terms of Reference GFC Terms of Reference	

Attachments (each to be numbered 1 - <>)

- Attachment 1 Case for Action
- Attachment 2 Comparison chart
- Attachment 3 FGSR Calendar Change Request form

Prepared by: Maria Chia, Graduate Governance and Policy Coordinator, mchia@ualberta.ca

**Changes to the Graduate ELP requirement
Case for Action
Fall 2019**

Context:

For graduate programs, FGSR sets a minimum standard for English Language Proficiency. Departments may set their own ELP standards as higher than that of FGSR. These higher minimum requirements are reflected in their individual calendar entries.

Currently, 49 of 72 graduate programs have an approved higher ELP standard. Only 23 use the FGSR minimum requirement for admitting students. A further seven currently list a minimum IELTS band score of 5.5 in their entrance requirements.

Background:

In February 2018 FGSR Council discussed a proposal to raise the IELTS minimum band score from 5.0 to 6.0. Some council members saw the increase as a mechanism to better student success; others felt there could be significant impact on programs admitting students with band scores between 5.0 and 6.0. Council was also encouraged to look at our U15 comparators, many of whom require higher band scores.

The conversation continued at September 2018 Council. It was felt at the time that a jump in band score from 5.0 to 6.0 was too large to be absorbed all at once. It was further suggested that individual departments could raise their minimum requirements if they chose.

In October 2018 FGSR Council approved an increase in the IELTS minimum band score to 5.5 to align with the minimum requirement for undergraduate students. It was felt graduate students should meet at least the same minimum requirements as the undergraduate students many of them teach.

In March 2019 FGSR Council approved an increase to TOEFL, CAEL and Pearson minimum overall scores, and TOEFL, MELAB and Pearson minimum band scores, in order to align with the undergraduate values and to bring FGSR in line with our comparators.

Proposed increase:

FGSR is now proposing to raise the IELTS minimum band score from 5.5 to 6.0 on the same grounds as our previously approved increases:

- Our minimum band score of 5.5 is among the lowest requirements of our comparators. Raising our minimum band score to 6.0 would better align with our comparators. Our current overall requirement of 6.5 puts us level with the majority of our comparators, although three require higher scores.
- The Registrar's office is proposing an increase to the undergraduate IELTS minimum band score to 6.0. It has been established at FGSR Council that graduate students should meet the same ELP standard as undergraduates.

Consultation

This proposal was reviewed at the FGSR Policy Review Committee on September 4, 2019. There were no objections raised. Membership on PRC includes representation from GSA and from the Office of the Ombuds. The Ombuds noted it is to the students' advantage to enter a graduate program requiring a higher ELP value at the start, as often they meet with students who have progressed to the writing stage of their program and then encounter difficulty with the language.

The proposal was passed by FGSR Council October 16, 2019. There were no objections raised.

Comparator English Language Proficiency Requirements
Accurate as of August 2019

	Current undergrad minimum requirement	Current FGSR minimum requirement (individual departments may require higher scores)	Proposed FGSR change	UBC Graduate admissions	University of Toronto Graduate admissions	McGill Graduate admissions	McMaster Graduate admissions	Waterloo Graduate admissions	Queens Graduate admissions	UWO Graduate admissions	U Calgary Graduate admissions
TOEFL (ibt) OVERALL	90	90 **		90	93	86	92	90	88	86	86
TOEFL minimum band score	minimum band score of 21	minimum band score of 21**		22 (reading, listening) and 21 (writing, speaking)	22 in writing, speaking	no band less than 20		25 in writing and speaking	24 writing, 22 speaking and reading, 20 listening	No band less than 20	no band score less than 20
IELTS OVERALL Score	6.5	6.5		6.5	7.0	6.5	6.5	7.0	7.0	6.0	6.5
IELTS Minimum band score	minimum band score of 5.5***	minimum band score of 5.5 *	Minimum band score of 6.0 for publication in the 2020-2021 calendar and effective for Fall 2021 admissions	6.0 each component	at least 6.5 for each component		5.5 in each section	6.5 in writing and speaking			no section less than 6.0

*Increase in IELTS minimum band score from 5.0 to 5.5 was approved by Academic Planning Committee December 12, 2018 for implementation for Fall 2019 admissions.

** Increase in TOEFL overall and band scores for implementation for Fall 2020 admissions and for publication in the 2020-2021 Calendar. Approval pending GFC Sept 23 2019

*** RO is proposing an increase to the undergraduate IELTS minimum band score to 6.0 for the 2020-2021 calendar and to be effective for Fall 2021 admissions

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2020-2021 University of Alberta Proposed Calendar Graduate Program Changes:

FGSR is proposing the following change to the minimum acceptable English Language Proficiency scores:

- Raise the minimum IELTS band score to 6.0

This change is proposed to keep FGSR minimum ELP scores level with the minimum acceptable undergraduate scores, and is for publication in the 2020-2021 calendar and for implementation for Fall 2021 admissions.

Current ** (sections highlighted in grey were approved by the Board Sept 23, 2019 for publication in the 2020-2021 calendar and for Fall 2020 admissions)	Proposed
Regulations of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research [...] English Language Requirement [...] The FGSR minimum acceptable scores are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TOEFL: total score of 90 with a score of at least 21 on each of the individual skill areas (internet-based) or equivalent • MELAB: 85 with a minimum band score of 80 and a minimum score of 3 on the speaking component • Academic IELTS: 6.5, with at least 5.5 on each test band. • CAEL: overall 70 with at least 60 on each subtest. • PTE Academic: 61 with a minimum band score of 60. [...]	Regulations of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research [...] English Language Requirement [...] The FGSR minimum acceptable scores are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TOEFL: total score of 90 with a score of at least 21 on each of the individual skill areas (internet-based) or equivalent • MELAB: 85 with a minimum band score of 80 and a minimum score of 3 on the speaking component • Academic IELTS: 6.5, with at least 6.0 on each test band. • CAEL: overall 70 with at least 60 on each subtest. • PTE Academic: 61 with a minimum band score of 60. [...]
Justification: See Case for Action Approved by: FGSR Council October 16 2019	