



Graduate School

English Language Requirements: Guidelines for IELTS Discretionary Exemptions.

If you are applying to undertake a Higher Degree by Research at Southern Cross University (SCU) and wish to seek an exemption from the IELTS requirements, please refer to the following guidelines. These outline the criteria for discretionary approvals of IELTS exemptions, which must be reported to the SCU Academic Board.

Important: Applicants from non-English speaking backgrounds or countries must provide an IELTS score if they cannot meet the requirements or are not from one of the listed countries.

1. IELTS

Proficiency in English is essential for undertaking a Higher Degree of Research, which requires clear academic writing, comprehensive literature reviews, effective communication with peers and supervisors, successful publication in international journals, and collaboration with global researchers.

Applicants whose first language is not English are required to achieve an International English Language Test Score (IELTS) Academic (or equivalent), with a minimum of:

Writing: 7.0	Reading: 6.5	Listening: 6.5	Speaking: 6.5
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2. Eligibility Criteria for IELTS Discretionary Exemption

English-Speaking Background:

SCU may accept prior studies completed in English to meet their English language requirements where applicants are from an English-speaking country or background. Applicants who have completed a tertiary qualification in English must be:

- Citizens of English-speaking countries, e.g., USA, UK, Canada, or
- Permanent Residents of English-speaking countries, or
- Individuals with a minimum of ten years in an English-speaking country and who have completed secondary or tertiary education in an English-speaking country.

Non-English-Speaking Background:

SCU recognises some academic qualifications completed in English speaking (USA, UK, Canada) and non-English speaking countries such as Germany, Hong Kong, Singapore, Philippines, South Africa, Switzerland, Denmark, Sweden and Norway. An IELTS exemption **may** be approved at the discretion of the Dean, Graduate School if the applicant's tertiary qualifications are:

- Completed in English, and **no more than two years ago** at the time of the submitted application at SCU.

Important: - Applicants who are not from or have not completed a qualification in one of the above English and non-English speaking backgrounds or countries **must provide an IELTS score**.

3. Where the applicant's IELTS score falls short – special consideration

If a candidate's IELTS scores fall just short of the requirements, special consideration can be sought from the Dean, Graduate School, providing the IELTS scores are **no less than 6.5 and** subject to the following conditions:

- The candidate has a first-authored publication in English
- The candidate has proof of qualifications undertaken in English.
- Proof of participation in a completed or currently ongoing language course is only rarely accepted as proof of proficiency.