

English Language Proficiency Requirement for J-1 Visa Sponsorship

OIS is required to collect evidence that J-1 exchange visitors have sufficient English language proficiency to fully participate in their proposed activities.

J-1 scholars can waive out of taking an English language proficiency test if:

- they are a citizen of one of the countries listed below;
- they have earned a university degree in the U.S. or one of the countries listed below; or
- they are currently enrolled or have earned a degree in a program of study where English is the primary language of instruction.

If the scholar does not meet one of the exemption criteria, they are required to provide test scores from a standardized English language proficiency test recognized by UMB. The scores must meet the minimum identified and not be more than two years old. Required documentation for each English language proficiency criteria is provided below.

CITIZENSHIP

Scholars who are citizens of one of the following countries.

Anguilla	Eswatini	Nigeria
Antigua	Gambia	Sierra Leone
Australia	Ghana	Singapore
Bahamas	Grand Turks and Caicos Islands	South Africa (English-speaking, i.e. not Afrikaans)
Barbados	Grenada	St. Kitts-Nevis
Belize	Guyana	St. Lucia
Bermuda	Ireland	St. Vincent
Botswana	Jamaica	Tanzania
British Virgin Islands	Kenya	Trinidad and Tobago
Canada (English-speaking, i.e. not Quebec)	Lesotho	Uganda
Cayman Islands	Liberia	United Kingdom
Dominica	Montserrat	Zambia
	Namibia	Zimbabwe
	New Zealand	

Required Documentation: Copy of passport

EDUCATION

Scholars who have earned a degree from an accredited institution of higher education from one of the countries listed above or from an accredited institution in the United States.

Required Documentation: Copy of Diploma

- OR -

Scholars who have earned a degree from a program of study where English is the primary language of instruction (even if the country is not listed above).

Required Documentation:

- Document from school's registration office that confirms your degree was conferred **AND** that English is the primary language of instruction of either the school or the program of study.

- OR -

Scholars who are currently enrolled in a degree program where English is the primary language of instruction.

Required Documentation: Letter on letterhead from academic institution where scholar is enrolled that:

- Describes the writer's familiarity with the exchange visitor's English language ability,
- Attests that English is the primary language of instruction of the school or program of study, **AND**
- Provides supporting documentation about the school that demonstrates recognition of its degrees and its authority to operate under the education laws of the country where it is located.
 - [Download Sample Letter](#)

STANDARDIZED ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEST SCORES

Required Documentation: Score report from one of the following tests demonstrating achievement of the minimum score or above for that test **AND** demonstrates that test was taken within the past two years.

- [Duolingo English Test](#) - minimum score of 115 [make scores available to University of Maryland, Baltimore – Graduate]
- [TOEFL iBT](#) - minimum of 80 on internet-based test; minimum of 550 on paper-based test.
- [IELTS](#) - minimum of 7.0 total bandwidth

Scholars who do not currently have one of the above qualifications are encouraged to take the Duolingo English Test, which is low-cost and easily accessible online.