

ENGLISH LANGUAGE INFORMATION



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You (and everyone else aged 16 or over who is accompanying you) need to meet English language requirements for your application to be approved under the Skilled Migrant or Business categories. If you're applying under one of the Residence from Work categories, you won't need to meet English language requirements but your partner and children will.

This guide outlines the minimum standard of English for each category and how you, your partner and children can meet it. If you, your partner or your children don't provide an IELTS certificate to prove you or they meet the minimum standard, please be aware that we can ask you to provide one. In some cases, if you don't meet the minimum standard of English you can pre-purchase English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) tuition – English language study that you complete when you get to New Zealand.

Being able to speak and understand English to a high level will help you obtain a job in New Zealand and successfully settle here. We strongly recommend that, even if you meet the English language requirements for your category, you obtain ESOL tuition when you arrive in New Zealand if you don't have a minimum level 7 score across all bands in your IELTS test.

MINIMUM STANDARDS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE

1. SKILLED MIGRANT CATEGORY

Principal applicants
You meet the minimum standard of English under the Skilled Migrant Category if:

1. your IELTS certificate has an overall band score of at least 6.5 in the General or Academic Module. The certificate needs to be no more than two years old; **or**
2. your recognised qualification was taught entirely in English. If you gained the qualification in New Zealand, it needs to have a minimum completion time of at least two years unless it is a post graduate qualification. If it is a post graduate qualification, you need to have an under-graduate qualification that can score you at least 50 points; **or**
3. you're currently working in skilled employment in New Zealand and have been for at least 12 months. You need to be able to score points for the employment; **or**
4. you otherwise meet the minimum standard. (See *Definitions*.)

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Partners & Children

Your partner and each of your children aged 16 and over need to either meet the minimum standard of English or pre-purchase ESOL tuition (see *How much does ESOL tuition cost?*). They meet the minimum standard of English if:

1. their IELTS certificate shows an overall band score of at least 5 in the General or Academic Module. The certificate needs to be no more than two years old; **or**
2. their recognised qualification was taught entirely in English. If your partner or child gained the qualification in New Zealand, it needs to have a minimum completion time of at least two years unless it is a post graduate qualification. If it is a post graduate qualification, your partner or child needs to have an under-graduate qualification that can score them at least 50 points; **or**
3. they have an English speaking background. (See *Definitions*); **or**
4. they otherwise meet the minimum standard. (See *Definitions*.)

Your **partner** also meets the minimum standard if they're currently working in skilled employment in New Zealand and have been for at least 12 months. Your partner needs to be able to score points for the employment. Please note that you will only get bonus points for your partner's skilled employment in New Zealand if they meet the minimum standard of English language set for principal applicants (as above).

2. BUSINESS CATEGORIES

- **Investor**
- **Entrepreneur**
- **Employees of Relocating Businesses (ERB)**
- **Long Term Business Visa (LTBV)**

If you are applying under any of the business categories you will need to meet a minimum standard of English **unless you meet the exception described in the box on page 3.**

If you are applying under the Investor, Entrepreneur or ERB categories, your partner, and your children aged 16 or over, will also need to meet a minimum standard of English or pre-purchase ESOL tuition to the required level (see *How much does ESOL tuition cost?* below for the amount of ESOL you will need to pre-purchase).

If you have applied under the LTBV category, your partner and children are not required to meet the minimum level of English at the time you lodge your application. Should they later be included in a residence application, however,

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they will need to show they can meet a minimum standard of English at that time, or pre-purchase ESOL tuition.

Minimum standard of English

You, your partner, and each child aged 16 years and over meet the minimum standard of English if you/they provide:

1. an IELTS certificate showing an overall band score of at least 5 in the General or Academic Module. The certificate needs to be no more than two years old; **or**
2. evidence of an English speaking background. (See *Definitions*); **or**
3. evidence of otherwise meeting the minimum standard. (See *Definitions*)

Exception to above: Entrepreneur applicants who held a work visa or permit granted under the LTBV category prior to 20 November 2002.

If you held a work visa or permit granted under the LTBV category prior to 20 November 2002, you and your dependants meet the minimum standard of English if you each provide:

1. an IELTS certificate showing a band score of at least 4 in each of the 4 components of the General or Academic Module. The certificate needs to be no more than two years old; **or**
2. evidence of an English speaking background. (See *Definitions*); **or**
3. evidence of otherwise meeting the minimum standard. (See *Definitions*).

ESOL pre-purchase

If you don't meet the minimum standard as outlined above, you and your dependants must all pre-purchase ESOL tuition. As the table below shows, an applicant's IELTS score across all four bands determines the amount payable for pre-purchased ESOL tuition. If an IELTS certificate is not supplied, the maximum charge applies.

| Overall Band score | Charge to be paid | ESOL entitlement |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| 3.5 or more but less than 4 | NZ\$1,700 | NZ\$1,500 |
| Less than 3.5 | NZ\$3,350 | NZ\$3,000 |

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3. RESIDENCE FROM WORK CATEGORIES

- **Talent (Accredited Employers) Residence Policy**
- **Talent (Arts, Culture and Sports) Residence Policy**
- **Priority Occupations List Residence Policy**

If you are applying under one of these policies you are not required to meet English language requirements. However, your partner and any of your children aged 16 or over who are included in your application need to meet the same English language requirements as partners and children of principal applicants under the Business Categories (above). They may either show they meet the minimum standard or pre-purchase ESOL tuition.

DEFINITIONS

English speaking background

You are considered to have an English speaking background if you can provide evidence that you have either completed one of the following:

- all primary and at least 3 years of secondary education at a school or schools that taught in English;
- at least 5 years of secondary education at a school or schools that taught in English; or
- a course taught in English that took at least 3 years and lead to a tertiary qualification.

OR you hold one of the following qualifications:

- a General Certificate of Education (GCE) 'A' Levels from Britain or Singapore with a minimum C pass. Your pass needs to include English Language or Literature or Use of English;
- an International Baccalaureate – full Diploma in English medium;
- a Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English with a minimum C pass;
- a Hong Kong Advanced Level Examinations (HKALE) including a minimum C pass in Use of English;
- STPM 920 (Malaysia) with an A or B pass in English literature;
- University of Cambridge in collaboration with University of Malaya, General Certificate of English (GCE) 'A' levels with a minimum C pass. Your pass needs to include the subjects English or General Paper;
- South African Matriculation Certificate, including a minimum D pass in English (Higher Grade);

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- South African Senior Certificate, including a minimum D pass in English (Higher Grade), endorsed with the words 'matriculation exempt';
- A New Zealand tertiary entrance qualification gained on completing the seventh form.

Partners and children of Residence from Work & Business Categories applicants

You may be considered to meet the minimum standard if you can show you have been lawfully employed in New Zealand for at least one year (self-employment does not qualify) in a job where English is the language used. You will need to provide a letter from your employer(s) giving a contact phone number and address. The letter must state your occupation and dates of employment, and confirm that English is the main language used in your job.

Otherwise meeting the minimum standard

You are considered to otherwise meet the minimum standard if you can satisfy us that your circumstances show you are a competent user of English. These circumstances may include (but are not limited to):

- the country in which you live
- the country(ies) in which you have previously lived
- how long you have lived in each country
- whether you speak any language other than English
- whether your family speaks any languages other than English
- the nature of your current and previous employment and whether it required skill in English
- the nature of your qualifications and whether studying for them required skill in English.

ESOL TUITION INFORMATION

Why do I need to pre-purchase ESOL tuition?

If you are the partner or child (aged 16 and over) who has been included as the non-principal applicant in a Skilled Migrant Category, Business category or Residence from Work category application, then you must meet the minimum standard of English required to settle successfully in New Zealand.

If you do not meet the minimum standard of English then we will require you to pre-purchase English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) tuition.

This means that you will need to take up English language classes at a later date to meet the minimum standard of

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English. You also need to pay in advance for the English language tuition before your residence visa or permit is issued or granted.

How do I pre-purchase ESOL tuition?

If your residence application is approved-in-principle, we will let you know the amount of ESOL tuition that you need to pay.

We will collect the ESOL tuition money on behalf of the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC), which is the government agency that is responsible for purchasing and arranging English language tuition for new migrants.

The payment that you make will include the administration charges of Immigration New Zealand and TEC.

We will send you two copies of an Agreement and Schedule to complete for each person that has to take the ESOL tuition.

The Agreement and Schedule explain the conditions of your ESOL tuition and also give information about TEC.

After you complete the Agreement and Schedule, you must return one copy with the tuition payment to the Immigration New Zealand office that is processing your residence application. You can keep the other copy for your records.

We will send you a receipt for the payment made by you.

Please keep your receipt and the Agreement and Schedule in a safe place. You will need to take them with you when you enrol for your English classes.

What happens if I don't complete my ESOL tuition within the required time?

If you do not complete your ESOL tuition within the required time, you will not get a refund of the money already paid by you and you will need to pay for any ESOL tuition you wish to take in the future.

How much does ESOL tuition cost?

As the table below shows, an applicant's IELTS score across all four bands determines the amount payable for pre-purchased ESOL tuition. If an IELTS certificate is not supplied, the maximum charge applies.

| Overall Band score | Charge to be paid | ESOL entitlement |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| 4.5 or more but less than 5 | NZ\$1,700 | NZ\$1,500 |
| 4 or more but less than 4.5 | NZ\$3,350 | NZ\$3,000 |
| 3.5 or more but less than 4 | NZ\$5,000 | NZ\$4,500 |
| Less than 3.5 | NZ\$6,650 | NZ\$6,000 |

What happens if I don't pay my ESOL tuition charge?

If you do not pay us the required amount within six months, your residence application may be declined.

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Do I have to complete my tuition within a certain time?

If you purchase ESOL tuition in New Zealand, you must complete the tuition within three years from the date of payment. If you purchase ESOL tuition outside New Zealand, you must complete the tuition within three and a half years from the date of payment.

When can I get a refund of my ESOL tuition money?

ESOL tuition money may only be refunded if you and your family do not take up residence in New Zealand. In these circumstances, you need to write to your nearest NZIS branch requesting a refund within six months after your residence visa expires. If approved, we will refund the money to the person who made the original payment. Before a refund is given, we must be satisfied that you and your family:

- have not taken up residence in New Zealand; and
- do not hold valid residence visas or returning residents' visas.

What should I do when I am ready to start my English language tuition?

You must contact the Tertiary Education Commission who can help you find the right English class for you.

TEC will provide details about courses in the area closest to where you live through their English for Migrants course directory.

Then you can contact the training providers who are running the courses for further information. You can also visit the training providers before you choose a course.

Whenever you enrol for ESOL tuition, you will need to take your passport, the Agreement and Schedule and your receipt of tuition fees with you. The training provider who is running the course will show you how to enrol.

How can I contact the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC)?

You can contact TEC by

- Freephone: 0800 376 569. They currently have staff who can speak Mandarin and Cantonese.
- Email: emailefm@tec.govt.nz
- Website: www.tec.govt.nz - select Education and Training from the bar at the top of the page. Then select English for Migrants from the table of links.

Who else can help me to choose the right English class?

- National Association of ESOL Home Tutor Schemes
Some ESOL Home Tutor Schemes provide pre-paid English classes
Visit their website: www.esolht.org.nz

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- New Zealand Correspondence School provides ESOL correspondence courses for beginners, intermediate and advanced levels.
Visit their website: www.correspondence.school.nz

- Citizens Advice Bureaux (CAB)
CAB staff is trained to help new migrants and can advise which organisations near to your home offer ESOL classes.
Freephone: 0800 FOR CAB (0800 367 222) or
Visit their website: www.cab.org.nz

- Family and Friends
You can ask your family and friends. They may know the best class for you to join.