



# Oakswood College

Empowering Through Education



## ESOL

### *Policy*

PROMOTING EXCELLENCE • ENSURING COMPLIANCE  
SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITY



GOVERNANCE



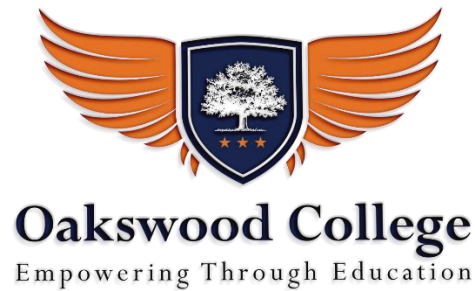
QUALITY



COMPLIANCE



EXCELLENCE



*(Trading name of Oakwood Group Ltd)*

## English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Policy

### Document Control & Version History

<b>Document Title</b>	English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Policy
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<b>Policy Owner</b>	Head of Academic Affairs
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<b>Applies To</b>	Applicants, enrolled students requiring ESOL support, academic staff, admissions staff, student support services, and programme teams involved in English language assessment and support
<b>Version</b>	1.0
<b>Supersedes</b>	New Policy
<b>Related Policies</b>	Admissions Policy; Student Attendance and Engagement Policy; Support Through Studies Policy; Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy; Assessment Policy



**Oakwood College**  
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<b>Document Title</b>	English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Policy
<b>Document Location</b>	Oakwood College Policy Repository
<b>Regulatory Reference</b>	Office for Students (OfS) Conditions of Registration; UK Quality Code for Higher Education; Equality Act 2010; relevant English language and widening participation guidance



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## **1. Purpose**

This policy sets out Oakwood College's approach to the English language support, assessment and progression of students whose first language is not English, including applicants who may benefit from ESOL provision. It should be read alongside the College's Admissions & Recruitment Policy and the requirements of Buckinghamshire New University (e.g. International Students Policy) and other awarding bodies as applicable to the relevant programme of study. English language competence is recognised as essential to independent learning, academic integrity, assessment engagement and effective participation in higher education.

The College is committed to ensuring that all students have the English language competence necessary to engage fully in their studies, participate safely and effectively in academic life, and achieve successful outcomes. The College also recognises that some applicants may require additional language support to meet the demands of higher education study in English.

## **2. Scope**

This policy applies to:

- applicants whose first language is not English;
- home students whose linguistic background indicates that additional English language support may be beneficial;
- applicants referred to pre-sessional or diagnostic English language support;
- students progressing from ESOL or equivalent provision into degree-level study.

This policy does not replace the College's admissions criteria or academic regulations, but supports their consistent and fair application.

## **3. Policy Statement**

Oakwood College will admit students to programmes of study only where it is satisfied that applicants either:

- already possess the English language proficiency required to succeed on the course; or
- can realistically achieve the required standard through approved support mechanisms.

The College will set and apply English language requirements in a transparent, proportionate and academically justified manner, taking account of:

- the level and content of the programme;

- the language demands of teaching, learning, assessment and placement;
- the requirements of the awarding body;
- UKVI and sponsor compliance requirements;
- the need to ensure that students are not placed at an unfair academic disadvantage.

Where applicants do not yet meet the required English language standard, the College may offer an appropriate pathway, including pre-sessional English, in-sessional support, diagnostic assessment, or progression from recognised ESOL provision, where this is academically appropriate and operationally approved.

#### **4. Regulatory Context**

The College's approach to English language proficiency is informed by Office for Students regulatory expectations, including Conditions B1, B2 and B3 where relevant, which require providers to ensure that students are assessed effectively and that academic regulations appropriately reflect the level and content of the course.

The College will therefore ensure that:

- English language proficiency requirements are appropriate to the course;
- students are not admitted without demonstrating a level of English language proficiency that indicates a reasonable prospect of success;
- assessment methods are capable of evidencing relevant English language competence where required;
- policies and procedures are applied consistently and fairly;
- any exception to standard English language requirements must be approved by an authorised senior academic decision-maker and retained within the applicant record.

#### **5. English Language Entry Requirements**

The College will maintain an approved schedule of minimum English language entry requirements aligned to programme level, awarding body expectations, and UKVI requirements.

The approved schedule of English language requirements and recognised equivalencies will be maintained through institutional academic governance processes.

The College will publish clear English language entry requirements for each course or subject area. These requirements may vary according to:

- undergraduate or postgraduate level;
- discipline-specific demands;
- professional or statutory requirements;
- visa and sponsorship requirements;
- the need for spoken, written, reading and listening competence.

Acceptable evidence of English language proficiency may include:

- approved secure English language test results;
- prior study in English where this is recognised by the College and/or the awarding body;
- approved qualifications or equivalences;
- successful completion of recognised pre-sessional provision;
- other evidence accepted through academic and admissions approval processes.

Where internal assessment methods are used, the College will ensure that processes are standardised, documented, and conducted by appropriately trained staff. Records of assessments and decisions will be retained in accordance with institutional record-keeping requirements.

## **6. ESOL and Pathway Support**

The College may provide or recognise ESOL or related English language support for applicants and students who would benefit from it. Such support may include:

- diagnostic assessment;
- pre-sessional English;
- in-sessional academic language support;
- study skills and academic communication support;
- progression pathways into degree-level study.

Where ESOL or English language support is offered, it will be aligned with academic standards and designed to support, rather than replace, the English language proficiency required for successful higher education study.

Relevant staff involved in English language assessment and admissions decision-making will receive appropriate guidance and training.

## **7. Admissions and Progression**

Applicants who do not meet the standard English language entry requirement may be considered for admission where:

- they have successfully completed approved English language preparation;
- they demonstrate an acceptable level of competence through recognised alternatives;
- the relevant course leader, admissions authority or designated academic decision-maker confirms that the applicant has a reasonable prospect of academic success;
- any additional conditions set by the awarding body are met.

Progression from ESOL or pre-sessional provision into a College course will be subject to the successful completion of any stated requirements, including attendance, assessment, and minimum achievement thresholds.

## **8. Student Support**

The College will aim to provide appropriate support for students who need to develop their English language skills during their studies. Support may include:

- academic English workshops;
- one-to-one or small-group language support;
- digital and written guidance;
- referral to student support services;
- signposting to external support where appropriate.

Support arrangements will be inclusive and designed to promote retention, progression and student success.

## **9. Responsibilities**

### **Admissions and Recruitment**

Admissions staff are responsible for applying English language entry requirements consistently and for ensuring that applicants receive clear information about any required evidence, pathway options or conditions of offer.

### **Academic and Learning Department**

The Academic and Learning Department is responsible for ensuring that programme-specific English language expectations are appropriately reflected in course design, assessment and student support arrangements.

### **Compliance and International Student Teams**

Compliance and international student teams are responsible for ensuring that English language arrangements remain aligned with Student visa sponsorship requirements and institutional records.

### **Students**

Students are responsible for engaging with any required English language support, meeting agreed conditions of offer, and taking reasonable steps to develop the language skills needed for successful study.

## **10. Equality and Fairness**

The College will apply this policy fairly and consistently and will have due regard to equality, diversity and inclusion obligations. Where a student has a protected characteristic or learning support need that may affect language assessment or progression, reasonable adjustments and lawful alternatives will be considered where appropriate and permitted.

Any exception to standard English language requirements will be considered on an individual basis and must be supported by evidence, approved through the relevant process, and documented.

## **11. Monitoring and Quality Assurance**

The College will monitor the effectiveness of English language admissions and support arrangements through relevant quality assurance and academic governance processes.

Monitoring activities will normally include review of:

- continuation, completion and progression data;
- attainment outcomes;
- academic misconduct trends;
- student feedback;
- admissions exception patterns;
- the effectiveness of ESOL and academic language support;
- outcomes for students admitted through alternative English language pathways.

Relevant findings will be reported through institutional quality assurance and academic governance structures and may inform enhancements to admissions, support and student success arrangements.

## **12. Review**

This policy will be reviewed regularly, and approved by Academic Board to ensure continued alignment with:

- Oakwood College admissions arrangements;
- Oakwood College International Student policy;
- the requirements of the awarding body;
- OfS regulatory requirements;
- UKVI sponsor compliance requirements;
- institutional quality assurance and academic regulations.