

## **VOCATIONAL ENGLISH FOR SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES (VESOL) TEMPLATE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Vocational English for Speakers of Other Languages (VESOL) Template must be completed by institutions offering VESOL program/courses to supplement and augment ACCET Document 3.1 – Analytic Self-Evaluation Report (ASER), which incorporates the ACCET Standards for Accreditation (Document 2). The template expands upon the ACCET Standards specifically referenced herein by adding Specific Field Criteria and Supplemental Questions/Statements, in order to elicit a more relevant and valid self-evaluation of the institution and to emphasize those standards where unique characteristics are identified.

### **VESOL PROGRAMS/COURSES**

Vocational ESOL courses/programs serve postsecondary students whose native language is not English, whose primary residence is inside the United States, and whose purpose for training is to enhance their job-related skills and opportunities. English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) is the main subject being taught in these programs. Institutions must identify the vocational language and employment-related needs of students prior to enrollment and admit only students who require instruction in English in order to facilitate use of existing knowledge, training, or skills in the search for gainful employment. Institutions must demonstrate that: (1) instruction will lead to a certificate and (2) students will receive placement assistance upon completion of the program.

### **SPECIFIC FIELD CRITERIA & SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS/ STATEMENTS**

#### **STANDARD I – MISSION, GOALS, AND PLANNING**

**The institution has a mission and goals that are compatible with the mission, scope, and standards of ACCET and has an effective planning process to enhance and improve the institution and its education, training, and services.**

**A. Mission: The institution clearly states its mission and makes it public. The mission defines the purpose of the institution and provides a definitive basis upon which to deliver and assess its education and training programs. The institution establishes and utilizes specific criteria to measure whether it is achieving its mission. The education and training provided by the institution are consistent with its mission, and the rationale for offering this education is documented by either an assessment of projected need and/or successful market experience.**

*Specific Field Criteria for Vocational English for Speakers of Other Languages: An institution clearly identifies the educational objectives of its Vocational English for Speakers of Other Languages programs, which are consistent with the institution's mission. The institution identifies whether its VESOL program are: (1) English for Vocational Purposes (EVP), which*

*are either stand-alone English language programs or English taught in conjunction with vocational programs for purposes of preparing graduates for general employment or (2) English for Specific Purposes (ESP), which are stand-alone English programs for purposes of providing the language skills necessary to prepare graduates for employment in specific professions or vocations.*

**Supplemental Questions/Statements for Vocational English for Speakers of Other Languages:**

- Describe the educational objectives of each VESOL program and identify whether the program is English for Vocational Purposes (EVP) or English for Specific Purposes (ESP), as defined above.
- How do these VESOL programs support the institution's mission?

**STANDARD II – GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

**The institution is capably and responsibly managed.**

- A. Governance: The institution has a clearly identified and accountable governance structure which delineates authority for the approval of institutional policies and responsibility for the overall direction and effectiveness of the institution. This management structure ensures the integrity and capability of the institution and its compliance with statutory, regulatory, and accreditation requirements.**

**Specific Field Criteria for Vocational English for Speakers of Other Languages: *An institution that enrolls non-immigrant visa students is approved by the appropriate federal agencies and has an effective framework and written policies to ensure compliance with the regulatory requirements of these agencies. The institution has systems (such as internal reporting mechanisms) for the collection, review, and reporting of the maintenance of non-immigrant student status. The institution provides non-immigrant students with information on the responsibilities of maintenance of status. The school officials with primary responsibility for the institution's compliance with immigration regulations demonstrates a thorough knowledge of regulations concerning issuance and reporting requirements. These officials receive the training and resources necessary to stay current on federal regulations.***

**Supplemental Questions/Statements for Vocational English for Speakers of Other Languages:**

- If applicable, who is the Principal Designated School Official (PDSO) for the organization? How many additional Designated School Officials (DSOs) are on staff?
- If applicable, how does the institution stay current on immigration issues? Who is responsible for monitoring operations to ensure compliance with DHS regulations?

## STANDARD IV – CURRICULUM DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

The institution's curriculum design and instructional materials are up-to-date, educationally sound, and appropriate for the expected outcomes of the program/courses.

- A. Educational Goals and Objectives:** The institution's programs and courses have appropriate educational goals and objectives. The curriculum content and learning experiences are preplanned and present a sound, systematic, and sequential educational methodology. Sufficient and appropriate knowledge and skill elements are included to meet the specific and measurable performance outcomes expected for the courses and programs.

*Specific Field Criteria for Vocational English for Speakers of Other Languages: All VESOL programs define specific objectives for sequential performance levels, with each level having clearly delineated language skills. Language proficiency levels are defined in accordance with sound educational standards and practice for VESOL programs (e.g. beginner, intermediate, advanced) and nuances thereof (pre-intermediate, upper intermediate, etc.). Each level consists of clearly delineated language skills that support the vocational needs of the targeted student population. Student-to-instructor ratios for programs are maintained at a level commensurate with the training presented and sound educational practice.*

### **Supplemental Questions/Statements for Vocational English for Speakers of Other Languages:**

- For each program, identify: (a) the hours of instruction each week, (b) the total number of weeks, (c) the total number of clock hours, (d) the number of language proficiency levels, and (e) the length of each level in clock hours and weeks.
  - Describe how the pre-planned curriculum addresses language skill development (reading, writing, speaking, listening, etc.) across proficiency levels. Provide a copy of written learning outcomes for one proficiency level for each program.
  - Describe how the educational objectives of each VESOL program specifically address the vocational needs of students to ensure sufficient and appropriate vocational knowledge and skill elements.
- B. Program/Instructional Materials:** Program materials, including syllabi, lesson plans, instructional guides, and texts demonstrate the appropriate scope, sequence, and depth of each program or course in relation to the stated goals and objectives. Instructional materials, including supplementary textbooks, software, learning activities, visual aids, electronic links, and other teaching tools support the goals and objectives. All materials are up to date, readily available, and facilitate positive learning outcomes.

*Specific Field Criteria for Vocational English for Speakers of Other Languages: The instructional materials for a VESOL program support vocational language development and facilitate the employability of enrolled students.*

**Supplemental Questions/Statements for Vocational English for Speakers of Other Languages:**

- From among the list of primary and/or supplemental texts/instructional materials, identify and elaborate on those texts/materials that specifically address the vocational elements of the curriculum.

**STANDARD V – INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY AND RESOURCES**

The institution utilizes appropriate and effective instructional methods and other resources to ensure sound instructional delivery, which may be provided through a variety of delivery modes, including traditional classroom/lab instruction, interactive distance learning, and blended instruction.

- A. **Instructional Methods:** Instructional methods encourage active and motivated responses from students. Written policies and procedures are in place to ensure that the curricula are followed and that there is consistency of application by all instructional staff. The instructional methodology is consistent with contemporary training industry standards and appropriate to the educational goals and curricular objectives, facilitates learning, and serves the individual learning needs and objectives of students. Instructional methods provide encouragement, challenges, and learning opportunities for all enrolled students, taking into consideration different learning abilities and styles, prior levels of achievement, and different learning modalities such as visual, audio, and kinesthetic.

*Specific Field Criteria for Vocational English for Speakers of Other Languages: Institutions employ classroom methods in which instructor use of language is minimized and student use of language is maximized.*

**STANDARD VI – QUALIFICATIONS AND SUPERVISION OF INSTRUCTIONAL PERSONNEL**

The institution ensures that qualified instructors, under professional and capable direction, effectively deliver educational and training services.

- A. **Qualifications of Instructional Personnel:** Instructional personnel possess the appropriate combination of relevant educational credential(s), specialized training and/or certification, work experience, and demonstrated teaching and classroom management skills, which qualifies them for their training assignments. Instructional personnel meet all relevant accreditation, federal, state, local, and/or industry-specific requirements.

**Specific Field Criteria for Vocational English for Speakers of Other Languages Programs:** *The institution maintains written policies that define the minimum levels of education, training, and experience required of instructors. Instructional staff must have at least: (1) a bachelor's degree with a minimum of three months of full-time equivalent ESOL or foreign language classroom teaching experience or (2) a bachelor's degree along with a certificate in teaching ESOL or a foreign language that includes a practice teaching component. Instructional staff also must demonstrate near-native proficiency in English.*

## **STANDARD VII – ADMISSIONS AND STUDENT SERVICES**

**The institution recruits and enrolls only qualified students who can reasonably be expected to benefit from the education and training services and provides student services appropriate to their needs.**

- A. Recruitment:** Informational and promotional materials, advertising, and representations made by or on behalf of the institution for recruiting purposes make only justifiable and provable claims regarding the courses, programs, costs, location, instructional personnel, student services, outcomes, and other benefits. All communication with prospective students is ethical, honest, and consistent with ACCET policies. The institution does not state or imply that employment, occupational advancement, and/or certification and licensing are guaranteed.

**Specific Field Criteria for Vocational English for Speakers of Other Languages:** *An institution that recruits students from outside the United States uses marketing/sales methods that may include: (1) the establishment of overseas admissions offices, (2) appointment of counseling agents, (3) attendance at educational fairs, and/or (4) advertisement on websites, radio, television, social media, the internet, and other mediums.*

### **Supplemental Questions/Statements for Vocational English for Speakers of Other Languages:**

- Describe all of the communication channels through which potential students receive promotional information (e.g., personal contacts, advertising, official organizations, public fairs, the educational establishment, websites, and overseas representation).
- Does the institution make use of recruiting agent(s) in other countries? If so, describe the relationship between the institution and the agent(s), including the type of agreement signed. Provide a copy of the agreement or contract between the institution and the recruiting agent(s), including the provisions to ensure that agents operate and communicate to prospective students in an honest and ethical manner.
- If applicable, how does the institution ensure its compliance with DHS regulations regarding the recruitment and admission of international students?

- B. Admissions/Enrollment:** The institution's written policies for admissions and enrollment are clearly stated, defined, and in compliance with statutory, regulatory, and accreditation requirements. Reliable and regular means are utilized to ensure that, prior to acceptance, all applicants are able to benefit from the education and training services, consistent with ACCET policies. The enrollment process, including any online process, is preplanned, effective, and regularly monitored by the institution to ensure its integrity.

The written enrollment agreement, contract, or application, as applicable, is furnished to appropriate parties before any payment or obligation is made and clearly identifies: the rights, obligations, and responsibilities of all parties. This document includes: (1) all costs stated in clear and explicit language, and (2) cancellation and refund policies that comply with statutory, regulatory, and accreditation requirements.

*Specific Field Criteria for Vocational English for Speakers of Other Languages: An institution establishes and publishes minimum admissions requirements for a VESOL program, including at a minimum: (1) basic English literacy, including the comprehension of simple phrases and vocabulary, and (2) oral communication skills at the beginner level or above, which are sufficient for the prospective student to perform job-related entry-level tasks. During the admissions process, the institution verifies and documents that an applicant meets these prerequisites through valid and reliable testing and interviews. The institution's enrollment documents (including enrollment agreements and catalogs, as applicable) are to be provided in a language the applicant understands. If these enrollment documents are not translated into the applicant's native language, the applicant must sign an attestation that s/he was provided the enrollment documents and given ample opportunity to review and understand the terms and conditions of enrollment, including the institution's refund policy, prior to signing the enrollment documents.*

**Supplemental Questions/Statements for Vocational English for Speakers of Other Languages:**

- Provide copies of the institution's written policies and procedures for assessing applicants based upon the established minimum admissions requirements.
  - Describe how the institution ensures that applicants understand the enrollment documents, including the enrollment agreements and catalogs, providing supporting documentation as applicable.
  - Provide sample copies of documentation representative of the institution's methods for recording prior employment or training experiences that form the basis for each applicant's set of knowledge and skills.
- D. Student Services:** Student services are provided consistent with the mission and learning objectives of the institution and include such services as student orientation, academic and non-academic advising, tutoring, job placement assistance, extracurricular activities, and housing, as applicable.

**Specific Field Criteria for Vocational English for Speakers of Other Languages:** *The institution provides to international students a broad range of support services such as housing, cultural orientation, and activities, etc.*

**Supplemental Questions/Statements for Vocational English for Speakers of Other Languages:**

- If applicable, provide sample promotional literature that describes the support services offered to international students.
- If applicable, describe housing assistance that the institution provides to students in arranging homestays, campus housing, apartments, or other housing arrangements. Describe the process for securing, assessing, and continually evaluating student housing. Who is responsible for these tasks? How does the institution verify students' satisfaction with their accommodations? Provide sample documentation.
- Describe the orientation provided prior to arrival and/or on-site. How does the institution assist students through their stay with problems arising from linguistic breakdown, cross-cultural differences, or overly high or false expectations? Does the institution assist students' cultural adjustments to living abroad by providing orientation (both written and oral) to students regarding the local community, customs, and regulations?
- If applicable, provide a copy of the information the institution disseminates to students regarding the availability of health insurance coverage.

**STANDARD VIII – STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT**

**The institution utilizes appropriate and educationally sound methods to assess student performance, attendance, and achievement.**

- A. Performance Measurements: Performance measurements are written, periodically evaluated, and updated to ensure instructional effectiveness. The institution has a sound, written assessment system that contains a set of defined elements, such as grading scale, weighting factors, tests, quizzes, reports, projects, attendance, and participation, that are appropriately related to the performance objectives of the program or course. The institution clearly and effectively communicates the assessment system to students at orientation and/or the beginning of the course/program.**

**Specific Field Criteria for Vocational English for Speakers of Other Languages:** *Valid and reliable assessment instruments are consistently administered by the institution, including during the initial assessment of all enrollees for placement into appropriate levels.*

*The institution measures the success of its programs against recognized benchmarks by providing documented evidence of at least one of the following: (1) a valid and reliable exit*

*proficiency exam (which is generally an external exam) administered to students who complete at least 12 weeks of language training, and/or (2) a comparison of the institution's current curriculum with a recognized language framework [the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), the Canadian Framework of Reference for Languages, the Global Scale of English (GSE), the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE), or the Defense Language Institute (DLI)], along with level advancement assessments completed by the institution's students that demonstrate the alignment of the institution's curriculum with the recognized framework. The institution must demonstrate that it compiles, analyzes, and utilizes the data obtained from measuring its programs against recognized benchmarks to improve the institution and its training and services.*

**Supplemental ASER Questions/Statements for Vocational English for Speakers of Other Languages:**

- Which testing instrument is used for initial assessment to determine the applicant's English skills for placement into skill levels? If this instrument was developed in-house, describe the process by which it was developed and demonstrate that the testing instrument is valid and reliable. Either way, explain how test results are correlated to the proficiency levels embodied in the institution's own system of sequential performance levels.
- Describe how the institution measures the success of its programs against recognized benchmarks by providing documented evidence of at least one of the following: (1) a valid and reliable exit proficiency exam (which is generally an external exam) administered to students who complete at least 12 weeks of language training, and/or (2) a comparison of the institution's current curriculum with a recognized language framework [the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), the Canadian Framework of Reference for Languages, the Global Scale of English (GSE), the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE), or the Defense Language Institute (DLI)], along with level advancement assessments completed by the institution's students that demonstrate the alignment of the institution's curriculum with the recognized framework.
- If applicable, identify the exit proficiency exam utilized, including the publisher and version of the testing instrument.
- Demonstrate that the institution analyzes the data obtained from measuring its programs against recognized benchmarks and utilizes it to improve the institution and its programs, by providing an example of enhancements made as a result of this data analysis.

**C. Student Progress: The institution effectively monitors, assesses, and records the progress of students utilizing the sound and clearly defined assessment system established by the institution. Semester credits, quarter credits, clock hours, and/or continuing education units are used to denote the successful completion of the education and training services.**

**Student progress is documented consistently in accordance with institutionally established performance outcomes and is communicated to all students. Students are informed of their progress on a regular and timely basis. The institution publishes a clear description of its requirements for satisfactory student progress and utilizes sound written policies and procedures to determine student compliance with these requirements and to document the results.**

***Specific Field Criteria for Vocational English for Speakers of Other Languages:*** *The institution has a written satisfactory progress policy consistent with ACCET requirements. Students demonstrate normal progress through academic levels in a sequential manner (e.g. intermediate follows beginner, etc.). Progression to the next performance level is determined by the institution based on written criteria that are specific and measurable for evaluating language competency and educationally sound. The evaluation must include reading, writing, listening, and speaking, unless the published program objectives clearly specify a narrower focus (e.g. speaking). Levels may be repeated by a student, based on a sound written and well-documented rationale established by the institution. Documented individualized learning plans must be prepared by the institution and available for those students who are required to repeat a level more than once.*

**Supplemental ASER Questions/Statements for Vocational English for Speakers of Other Languages:**

- Describe the appropriate, specific, and measurable criteria (academic and attendance) used by the institution to determine whether a student advances to the next performance level, and identify who is involved in the determination. Demonstrate that the institution evaluates language competency, including reading, writing, listening, and speaking, unless the published program objectives clearly specify a narrower focus. Attach a copy of the written policy provided to faculty and to students regarding level advancement.

**IX. INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

**The institution utilizes appropriate methods of evaluation to assess institutional effectiveness and to ensure that student outcomes are consistent with the institution's mission and the benchmarks established by the Accrediting Commission.**

**D. Completion and Job Placement:** Written policies and procedures are followed that provide effective means to regularly assess, document, and validate the quality of the education and training services provided relative to completion and placement rates, as applicable.

- **Completion:** The number of participants who complete the programs and courses in which they enroll is consistent with the benchmarks established by the Accrediting Commission.

- **Job Placement:** Institutions offering vocational programs provide job placement assistance to graduates and document the results to enhance the effectiveness of the training services provided. The quality of such programs is validated by positive training-related outcomes consistent with the benchmarks established by the Accrediting Commission.

*Specific Field Criteria for Vocational English for Speakers of Other Languages: All vocational ESOL programs, including EVP and ESP, document both completion and placement according to this standard. The institution's graduates are placed in employment appropriate to their skills, work experiences, and/or prior training. ESP programs show evidence that their graduates are placed in the fields specifically related to their vocational training.*

**Supplemental ASER Questions/Statements for Vocational English for Speakers of Other Languages:**

- For ESP programs, provide copies of the written policies and procedures demonstrating how the institution determines the nature of a training-related placement relative to the information obtained at the admissions stage concerning each student's pre-existing knowledge, training, or skills, as well as their stated, personal vocational objectives.