



## ACCET Document 3.ESOL – English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Template

### Introduction

The English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Template must be completed by institutions offering avocational ESOL programs. The template supplements and augments ACCET Document 3.2 – Analytic Self-Evaluation Report, which incorporates ACCET Document 2 – Standards for Accreditation. The template expands upon the ACCET Standards specifically referenced herein by adding *Specific Field Criteria* and *Supplemental Questions/Statements* to elicit a more relevant and valid self-evaluation of the institution and emphasize those standards where unique characteristics are identified.

**English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programs** are English language courses or programs offered for avocational purposes. English for Speakers of Other Languages is the main subject taught in these programs, which include, but are not limited to, Intensive English Programs. Students attend avocational ESOL programs for a variety of reasons, the most common being (1) to prepare for study at American colleges, universities, or other educational institutions and (2) to enhance their language skills for personal or professional development.

### Standard II – Governance and Management

The institution is capably and responsibly managed.

- A. Governance: The institution has a clearly identified and accountable governance structure, appropriate to the size of the institution and consistent with ACCET requirements, that 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 ESOL: 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 enrolls students under the appropriate visa status, which is (a) an F visa for academic and language (avocational) programs, (b) a J visa for visitor exchange programs, and (c) an M visa for vocational and/or technical programs, consistent with federal requirements. An institution may enroll students in other visa categories in accordance with the requirements of the specific visa, such as B visa holders in programs that are avocational or recreational in nature. 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 demonstrate 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 ESOL:

- Identify the type of non-immigrant visa(s) (e.g., F, J, M, B) used to enroll students in each program offered by the institution, as applicable.
- Identify the Principal Designated School Official (PDSO) and the Designated School Officials (DSOs) as listed on the institution's I-17.
- How does the institution stay current on immigration issues? Who is responsible for monitoring operations to ensure compliance with DHS regulations?
- If the institution is regulated, licensed, or approved by a state agency, provide that agency's contact information. Include a copy of any regulations and/or standards relating to the state's oversight of institutions offering ESOL programs, along with a narrative of how the institution monitors its compliance with such standards. Provide copies of documentation evidencing the institution's compliance with the agency's regulations and/or standards (e.g., evidence that the institution's cancellation and refund policy is consistent with the state's policy).

#### **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 and measurable educational goals and objectives. The curriculum content and learning experiences are preplanned and present a sound, systematic, and sequential learning experience for students. The content and length of programs ensure that sufficient and appropriate knowledge and skills elements are included to meet the specific and measurable performance outcomes expected for the courses and programs. The institution must demonstrate that the length of the program is appropriate to provide a student with the requisite knowledge and skills of the courses and programs.

*Specific Field Criteria for ESOL: All ESOL 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 ESOL English programs (e.g., beginner, intermediate, advanced) and nuances thereof (pre-intermediate, upper intermediate, etc.). Student-to-instructor ratios for ESOL programs are maintained at a level commensurate with the training presented and sound educational practice.*

#### **Supplemental Questions/Statements for ESOL:**

- 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.

## **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 engagement by students. Written policies and procedures are in place to ensure that the curricula are followed and consistently applied by all instructional personnel. 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/ activities 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 ESOL: The institution employs classroom methods in which instructor use of language is minimized and student use of language is maximized. The schedule of ESOL instruction (1) is educationally sound, (2) facilitates language development, and (3) avoids excessive breaks in instruction that impede student language progression.*

## **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 qualify them for their training assignments. Instructional personnel meet all relevant accreditation, federal, state, local, and/or industry-specific requirements.

*Specific Field Criteria for ESOL: 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 ESL or foreign language classroom teaching experience or (2) a bachelor's degree, along with a certificate in teaching ESL or a foreign language that includes a practice teaching component. Instructional staff also must demonstrate near-native proficiency in English. Transcripts and/or other pertinent documentation are on file to support the qualifications of instructors and document that instructional staff meet these minimum requirements.*

## **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:** All advertising, promotional materials, and representations made by or on behalf of the institution for recruiting purposes, including web content, catalogs, and social media postings, make only justifiable and provable claims regarding the courses, programs, costs, location(s), instructional personnel, student services, outcomes, and other benefits. All communications with prospective students are 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 ESOL: 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) the 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 ESOL:

- Describe all of the communication channels through which potential students receive promotional information (e.g., personal contacts, advertising, official organizations, public fairs, admissions staff, 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, and/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, at a minimum, (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 ESOL: 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 their native language, applicants must sign an attestation that they were 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 Question/Statement for ESOL:

- If applicable, describe how and when the institution provides non-immigrant students with information on the responsibilities of maintenance of their student status.
- D. Student Services: Student services are provided consistent with the mission and programmatic learning objectives of the institution and include such services as student orientation, academic and non-academic advising, tutoring, career services/job placement assistance, extracurricular activities, and housing, as applicable.

*Specific Field Criteria for ESOL: The institution provides international students with a broad range of support services, such as housing, cultural orientation, and activities.*

Supplemental Questions/Statements for ESOL:

- 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.
- Does the institution provide assistance to students who wish to continue their studies in American universities, colleges, or other educational institutions? If so, describe the assistance given students in choosing the appropriate institution and completing the application process.
- Describe the orientation provided, both prior to arrival and 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.
- Describe any other services provided by the institution.

**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 an educationally sound, written assessment system that appropriately relates to the performance objectives of the program or course and includes, at a minimum, the grading scale, grading criteria and

weighting, and means of assessment such as tests, quizzes, reports, projects, and participation. 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 ESOL:* 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, 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 Questions/Statements for ESOL:

- 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, 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 (through an exit proficiency exam or comparison of the curriculum against a recognize framework) and utilizes the data to improve the institution and its programs. Provide 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 an educationally 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, as well as the consequences for failure to meet these requirements, and utilizes sound written policies and procedures to determine student compliance with these requirements and to document the results.

*Specific Field Criteria for ESOL: 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). Progression to the next performance level is determined by the institution based on written criteria that are educationally sound and specific and measurable for evaluating language competency. 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, provided that the student's maximum cumulative total length of language training is no more than 36 months at 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 Questions/Statements for ESOL:

- 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.