



English Language Centre Academic Governance Guidelines for Pre-sessional Courses

A guide to the academic policies and procedures relating to Pre-sessional English courses

Directorate of Student Experience and
Enhancement

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Section 1 – Purpose.....	3
Introduction	3
University policy on assessment	4
English Language Centre local practices and contexts	4
Section 2 – Module and course assessment.....	8
Approval of assessment methods.....	8
Preparation of assessments	9
Formative assessment.....	9
Summative assessment.....	9
Face-to-face, online and blended assessments	10
Feedback on assessment to students	11
Timing of assessments	12
Archiving of assessments	12
Section 3: Examinations, practical assessments, coursework and group work	13
Examination conduct.....	13
Practical assessment conduct	17
Coursework conduct	18
Group work conduct	19
Assessment security.....	19
Extenuating circumstances	20
Reasonable adjustments.....	22
Re-sits and resubmissions.....	22
Section 4 - Marking & moderation.....	23
Assessment criteria and grading rubrics	23
Marking procedures	23
Benchmarking and standardisation of markers.....	25
External academic advisors.....	26
Section 5 - Progression, awards and failures	26
Pre-sessional progression	26
Failures	31
Communicating results and decisions from the Board of Examiners.....	31

Additional Learning Provision	31
Section 6 - Appeals and complaints	32
Appeals procedure	32
Complaints procedure.....	32
Appendices.....	33
Appendix 1: ELC student permission form.....	33
Appendix 2: Examination conduct information for students	35
Appendix 3: Benchmarking and standardisation procedures.....	37
Appendix 4: Communication of results to students	40
Appendix 5: Additional Language Provision (ALP) Programme	44

Section 1 – Purpose

Introduction

The English Language Centre (ELC) Academic Governance Guidelines for Pre-sessional (PSE) Courses has been written as a statement of the philosophy and principles underlying the ELC’s activities in the delivery of our PSE courses. The focus is largely on a range of assessment-related matters but also covers related teaching and learning activities and administrative procedures.

The guidelines are intended to inform both staff and students as well as individuals outside the ELC such as external advisors, where applicable, and accrediting reviewers such as BALEAP (British Association of Lecturers of English for Academic Purposes). As such, it has been informed by not only the University of Liverpool Code of Practice on Assessment (CoPA), but also by assessment guidelines from a range of external professional bodies, including QAA, British Council, BALEAP, Cambridge & Trinity language assessment and more.

These guidelines apply from the current date through to the end of the 2022/23 Academic Year. It is updated and considered annually at the ELC Board of Studies, with oversight provided by the University’s Academic Quality and Standards Division (AQSD). If alterations or exemptions to procedures outlined in this document are required to respond to unforeseen changes in circumstances and at such a time that

it is not possible to await the convening of a full Board of Studies, these alterations and exemptions may be approved by Chair's action.

Should you have any queries about these guidelines, please contact:

elc@liverpool.ac.uk

University policy on assessment

The University of Liverpool has a comprehensive CoPA which underlies and informs these ELC-specific guidelines. Details of this, and all related appendices, can be found online at:

<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/aqsd/academic-codes-of-practice/code-of-practice-on-assessment/>

The ELC owns a number of credit-bearing modules, which are subject to the UoL CoPA. However, the PSE courses which the ELC runs are not credit-bearing and so do not fall under the remit of the UoL CoPA. These courses are specifically designed to prepare international students for study at a UK university through the medium of English. Many PSE students will hold a conditional offer from their chosen programme, requiring them to satisfactorily pass the PSE assessments.

Due to the unique nature of the PSE courses, and the high-stakes assessments which students must take, the decision was taken to create specific Academic Governance Guidelines for the ELC to supplement and clarify areas where the UoL CoPA does not cover the specific circumstances of the PSE courses.

English Language Centre local practices and contexts

A brief outline of relevant terms and how they are used within the context of the ELC, and within this document. Related documents and policies will give further details for each, such as the terms of reference or membership lists for various bodies.

English Language Centre (ELC)

The ELC does not sit within an academic faculty, but rather in the Directorate of Student Experience and Enhancement (SEE). Teachers within the ELC are on academic teaching contracts and hold English language teaching qualifications

recognised by external accrediting bodies, such as the British Council and BALEAP. The ELC has teaching and learning activity taking place year-round, with the busiest period typically falling in the summer.

The ELC is responsible for the following **courses** and **modules**:

- In-sessional English (ISE) courses and modules
- PSE English courses
- International Summer School modules
- a small selection of English language related modules.

Courses are non-credit-bearing and generally subject only to internal scrutiny, moderation and approval within the ELC, whereas **modules** are credit-bearing and subject to the more formal procedures which apply to all University accredited modules.

Courses will have a Senior Academic Lead (SAL), an Academic Lead (AL) and/or Coordinator(s) and teachers. Some **modules** in the ELC will have a module leader, who is often, though not always, the teacher and assessor for the module as well. These Academic Governance Guidelines focus specifically on the PSE courses.

Pre-sessional English Course (PSE)

PSE is a course specifically designed to prepare international students for study at university level in the UK. Many students who have not obtained the English language level (e.g. IELTS score or equivalent) required for direct entry to their chosen programme may receive an offer conditional on their passing the PSE course. The PSE course is not credit-bearing but is benchmarked to the B2 level on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for language levels. Assessments on the PSE course, therefore, function as gate-keeping assessments for entry onto University programmes, to ensure that those students accepted have the level of English required by the specific department or school they wish to study at. Language level is tied to the textual outcomes of the course which are broadly aligned to the integrated skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

PSE courses run throughout the academic year, with six entry points at which students may join. Minimum language level requirements are set for each entry point, increasing throughout the year, and linked to the language requirements of the student's destination programme. For example, a student requiring an IELTS level of

7.0 for entry to their programme will need an IELTS score of 5.0 with no more than one band at 4.5 minimum to join the 40-week course, or a score of 6.5 with no band below 6.5 to join the 6-week course. Further information on these requirements can be found on the ELC website: <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/english-language-centre/pre-sessional-english-courses/entry-requirements/>

The entry points are as follows:

- 40-week course (Stage 1) – beginning of academic year/ October
- 30-week course (Stage 2)
- 20-week course (Stage 3) – first set of gate-keeping assessments/ June
- 12-week course (Stage 3.5)
- 10-week course (Stage 4)
- 6-week course (Stage 5) – final set of gate-keeping assessments/ September

The final set of assessment results are provided to the University Admissions team and used to determine entry to programmes.

Secure English Language Tests (SELTs)

There are a number of SELTs approved by the UK government for visa and immigration purposes. The most common reference for language requirements for UK universities is the **International English Language Testing System (IELTS)**. **Pearson Academic** and **LanguageCert** are also accepted.

Board of Studies (BoS)

The ELC BoS meets quarterly, roughly in October, January, April, and July. It is the body charged with the ultimate responsibility within the ELC for assuring and enhancing the quality of teaching, learning and assessment for all taught provision delivered by the Centre. Membership of the BoS constitutes ELC SALs, ALs, summer coordinators, teaching staff, student representatives and invited members from other faculties and departments within the University. The BoS is a forward-looking body, primarily concerned with maintaining and enhancing the teaching, learning and assessment standards of the ELC, maintaining and enhancing the mechanisms allowing the scrutiny of those standards, and with scrutinising and approving action plans for ELC activity, such as the development of new modules, or significant changes to existing assessments.

Course Committees

These consist of the ELC Director, SALs, ALs, summer coordinators, and teachers on any specific course running (e.g., 20-week PSE) and other invited stakeholders such as student representatives. The Course Committee will meet at least once per iteration of the course, but may meet more frequently, as determined by its members. The primary function of the Course Committee is to review the teaching, learning and assessment for that provision, and to use data collected to propose action plans or changes to improve or enhance the standards on that course. These will then be taken forward to the next BoS for scrutiny and approval.

Board of Examiners

A Board of Examiners (BoE) will be convened to consider and approve marks from each ELC specific assessment period, usually within one week of the final assessment of the period. Currently, this includes:

- 20-week PSE gatekeeping assessments (June)
- Final PSE gatekeeping assessments (early September)

An additional BoE may be convened as necessary for assessments on other modules and courses. The BoE for 20-week PSE assessments will consist of the SAL and AL. As the PSE is not credit-bearing, it is exempt from the requirement for an external examiner. The final BoE held in September is attended by the ELC Director, SAL, summer Coordinators, and representatives from departments, Admissions and International Recruitment.

The BoE will consider marks and progression results for the cohort of students, taking into account any decisions regarding extenuating circumstances or exemptions from late penalties and reports or recommendations from the Academic Integrity Committee (AIC) as appropriate. If the BoE is satisfied that the standards have been upheld, they should then approve the examiners' recommended marks.

Extenuating Circumstances and Exemptions from Late Penalties

In the event of any student submitting a claim for extenuating circumstances or exemption from late penalties in relation to the specific assessments covered by the BoE, decisions will be made before the relevant BoE; usually in the same week. The Extenuating Circumstances Committee (ECC) consists of 2-4 members of ELC staff; where possible, not the same members who will sit on the upcoming BoE. They will

consider the claims and evidence submitted by students and decide as to whether to uphold the claim. When a claim is upheld, the ECC will inform the PSE SAL and Coordination team who then decides on a course of action for the student affected. Before informing the student of this decision, it is first presented to the ECC for approval. Details of any such cases are finally presented to the BoE.

Academic Integrity Committee (AIC)

The AIC will also meet, if necessary, before but in the same week as a BoE. The AIC will usually consist of the PSE SAL, summer coordinators and/or team leaders who will consider any issues of academic misconduct. They will consider evidence submitted, ensure that standards are being applied fairly, and make recommendations for penalties to the BoE.

Section 2 – module and course assessment

Approval of assessment methods

The ELC adopts both formative and summative assessments where appropriate. A range of assessment techniques are used, and they aim to allow students the opportunity to demonstrate the achievement of the specified intended learning outcomes (ILOs). The methods adopted aim to be rigorous, reliable and equitable facilitating differentiation between achievement at the threshold and other levels. Despite the short nature of the courses at the ELC, care is taken to ensure that adequate time is provided for students to reflect and act on the feedback given. Efforts are also made not to over-assess the students.

PSE courses are assessed using methods appropriate for the level of study, the subject material, the method of delivery and the ILOs. There is a formal process through which the form of assessment for each course is agreed and approved in advance, which includes discussion and approval by the Course Committee.

At the ELC we follow the principle of constructive alignment, meaning that each course of study is carefully designed to support the students in achieving the stated ILOs. The assessment methods will also be closely aligned to the content of the course and its ILOs. A key consideration in this is the use of assessment practices which promote, encourage and support effective and active learning on the part of our students.

Preparation of assessments

The questions and tasks set in coursework and examinations each year are agreed through a process of internal scrutiny. Exams, assessments and coursework tasks are written by members of the PSE Development Group (PDG), where they will be scrutinised, checked and piloted where required. Assessments are informed by subject benchmarks and the standards and frameworks of external accrediting bodies where appropriate. Additional checks come through collaboration and approval by the SAL, AL and summer coordinator(s), with a meeting of the Course Committee. Proposals for new or substantially changed assessments on the PSE courses must also be presented to the BoS for approval at least 6 months before the proposed assessment is to take place. Where this is not possible, they must be submitted for chair's action.

Formative assessment

Formative assessment is intended to monitor and enhance students' learning. It may take a variety of forms; teachers' verbal comments on class participation, written comments or suggestions on an assignment draft, or a score or grade from a practice test or exam. Formative assessment does not contribute to the overall mark or grade, but students are encouraged to reflect and act upon formative assessment opportunities and feedback to help improve their performance.

Summative assessment

Summative assessment is intended to consolidate and evaluate students' learning and contributes to the overall course or module mark. A range of different types of summative assessment is used within the ELC and is clearly communicated to the students prior to the assessment.

1) Centre examinations

A test or assessment exercise which is timetabled and invigilated locally by the ELC. These may include but are not limited to:

- Written exams / timed essay writing
- Multiple Choice Question tests
- Timed tests of reading and listening language skills, which may include a variety of tasks such as MCQs, note-taking, sequencing, labelling

2) Assessed coursework

A piece of work or task completed individually outside of formal timetabled sessions. These may include but are not limited to essays, projects and reports.

3) Assessed group work

A piece of work or task completed as part of a group or team outside of formal timetabled sessions. These may include but are not limited to essays, projects, reports and presentations.

4) Presentations

These are an important part of the learning process and regularly form part of the assessments at the ELC. Assessed presentations may take the form of either an individual or group presentation, usually to an audience including peers and tutors. Under certain circumstances, presentations may be recorded and submitted electronically for assessment.

5) Practical assessments of skills

The form of these assessments will depend on the skills to be assessed. At the ELC the most common are assessments of spoken language skills, which often include interviews and guided group seminar discussions.

Face-to-face, online and blended assessments

Assessments such as exams, presentations, seminars and interviews may be conducted face to face on the University campus with examiners and other students. Some assessments are also submitted online, usually through Turnitin, providing an additional layer of back-up for data, ease of marking and moderating for staff, and transparency and ease of access to marks and feedback for students. On occasions where students submit a hard copy of coursework, or take a face-to-face assessment, they may also be required to submit a digital copy of the assignment or related files through the online platform.

Assessment on some courses and modules may also be entirely online, with students only required to submit digital files for assessment, and even practical skills assessments and presentations may take place online through University approved conferencing software, such as Microsoft Teams.

Students who attend courses or modules on the University campus have ample access to computers provided by the University and internet access to allow them to undertake and submit assessments online as necessary or required.

Students taking blended or fully online courses or modules are asked to confirm that they have the necessary technology and reliable internet access to allow them to undertake both their daily studies, and their assessments online.

Feedback on assessment to students

The ELC has a number of principles relating to academic feedback with the aim that students are provided with:

- Feedback that is **individualised** to the student and their work;
- Feedback that is **constructive** and helps students understand how it relates to assessment criteria; and
- Feedback that is **specific** and designed to help students see their strengths and areas for improvement.

At times, individual feedback will be supplemented with generic feedback that can be provided more quickly. Generic feedback is given to all students about general performance in a particular assessment.

Feedback on both formative and summative assessments is a crucial part of the learning process. At the ELC, careful consideration is given to the type, frequency and amount of feedback given to students over the duration of a course or module. Students receive written and oral formative feedback from their teacher, indicating clearly how to improve their performance in a particular task or assessment. In addition, students are regularly encouraged to provide some level of guided peer feedback to each other on tasks or activities, to maximise learning opportunities.

On PSE courses, students have regular tutorial meetings with their teachers. These are frequent opportunities for teachers to provide tailored feedback to individual students, and for students to request feedback on specific areas.

As far as possible, opportunities for feedback are included during the course design. Formative feedback to support learning may be given during in-class activities, and on drafts, proposals, and summative assessments. Where mid-course assessments are planned, they are scheduled to allow for students to receive timely feedback before the next or final assessments are due. Whenever assessments are set,

students are told when and how they will receive feedback; usually no later than 5 working days after submission. The purpose of providing feedback will also be explained and students will be informed of who to contact should they want to discuss the feedback they receive.

Teachers on PSE courses are given specific guidance as to the feedback which should be given to students. In many cases, this takes the form of a formalised schedule outlining various pieces of work which should be submitted by students during the course of study, along with the type, amount and focus of the feedback required for each, as well as deadlines for returning feedback. This information is disseminated during teacher induction periods, and may also be included in staff handbooks, to ensure that teachers are aware of and follow the same guidelines.

Timing of assessments

The scheduling of assessments endeavours to balance the need to provide learning opportunities and feedback to students without unduly increasing the assessment burden. Care is taken to spread assessments out, to avoid all assessments falling in the final week of the course, particularly where there are several different assessments, as on the PSE course. As these courses are often much shorter and more intensive than typical university modules or programmes, this also allows students multiple opportunities to demonstrate the ILOs. This is particularly important, as the timescales involved in PSE courses usually means that there are no re-sit opportunities.

The timing of assessments is determined by the SAL, AL and the coordination team/PDG in collaboration with the Course Committee as appropriate, and also takes into consideration issues such as the time needed to input results and convene a BoE before the end of the PSE course, teacher and student workloads, and issues of security, including the timed release of questions or topics to prevent students from recording or sharing questions.

Archiving of assessments

Assessment tasks and papers are archived for at least 5 years after their use. Where tasks or papers are re-used or re-purposed, students are required to submit via Turnitin so that any instances of academic misconduct can more easily be identified.

Assessed student work, including exam papers, submitted coursework and audio/video recordings of presentations etc. are all archived for at least one year

after the student has completed their studies with the ELC. This allows for external accrediting bodies to check and verify our standards and procedures.

Additionally, we may request students' permission to use their anonymised work for teacher training or standardisation purposes, or to develop learning materials for students in the future. When we do so, we use a standard permission form – see Appendix 1.

All archived material is stored securely on the University's server, in a folder with limited access, in accordance with GDPR.

Section 3: Examinations, practical assessments, coursework and group work

This section sets out the specifics of the different types of assessment employed by the ELC, and the policies and procedures relating to how each assessment type is conducted. Students receive information in their student handbooks and assessment briefs for each particular assessment. The briefs include the ILOs to be assessed, the assessment format(s), submission or exam dates, FAQs, and assessment criteria and/or rubrics as appropriate. This information is usually provided at the beginning of the period of study during an assessment talk and quiz which covers all the assessment information. Students are encouraged to ask questions of their teachers and/or course coordinators during and after this talk.

Examination conduct

Examinations are timetabled within the course or module. Students are provided with all the relevant information, including date, time, location, permitted items, procedure, rules and regulations prior to the exam. This information is usually disseminated in multiple formats, including assessment talks, detailed assessment briefs or in-class handouts, Q&A sessions with teacher, practice test(s) to familiarise students with procedures, information on exam conduct in the Student Handbook, and on the cover page of exam papers. Appendix 2 is a copy of ELC exam rules which are included in Student Handbooks and/or assessment briefs for all courses making use of this type of assessment.

Any written exams that take place in a classroom or lecture theatre on the University campus are subject to normal University examination conditions (see Section 7 and Appendix D of the UoL CoPA). Students must arrive to the specified location on their timetable in good time, bringing with them their Student ID card and only those items requested or permitted; e.g. clear water bottle, clear pencil case containing pens and pencils. Any unauthorised items must be submitted to the exam invigilator for safekeeping during the exam.

Exams are usually invigilated by one member of staff in the case of small groups (< 20), or by at least two staff members for larger groups. If teachers invigilate exams, efforts are made, where possible, to ensure that they do not invigilate their own students. Invigilators are given clear detailed instructions by the AL/ Coordinator, team leader and/or PDG on their duties and relevant policies and procedures. Invigilators are required to pay close attention to the conduct of examinees and are not permitted to undertake any other work or activity such as marking, reading or using a smartphone during the exam. Students may not take any notes or papers from the exam hall. Exam scripts and notes are collected by the invigilators and retained by the ELC.

During assessment periods, there is always a member of staff on call for issues and queries, and if needed to allow individual invigilators to take comfort breaks. These Assessment Leads are members of the Coordination team, PDG and/ or SAL. Teachers/invigilators are briefed as to how to contact them as needed, e.g. by phone or Teams chat. The decision as to whether to permit late-arriving students to enter the exam room is determined by the type of exam and agreed jointly between the invigilator(s) and the available Assessment Lead on the day.

General guidance for late arrivals and early finishers:

- No late arrivals or early departures should be permitted in listening examinations, due to disruption for other candidates.
- Spoken interviews or presentations can be delayed for up to 5 minutes at the examiner's discretion, as long as this does not prevent them from adhering to ongoing time slots for other candidates. For students whose lateness was due to unforeseen circumstances or IT issues (for online assessments) the assessment team shall endeavour to reschedule to a later slot within the same 24-hour period, with some questions or topics reserved for such issues.

- Reading, writing and MCQ tests or exams: Students may be permitted to enter up to 15 minutes late, but are not given any additional time in the exam. Early finishers may leave before the last 15 minutes of the exam, provided they have completed the exam to the best of their ability and handed in all exam materials/papers/notes to the invigilator.

Attendance to an examination is taken as a declaration that a student is 'fit to sit'; that is, by presenting themselves for the examination, the student agrees that they are well and able to undertake the assessment. The ELC does not accept any declarations after an examination that the student was unwell, or unfit to take the exam. Any student taken ill before the examination must contact the ELC / their tutor as soon as possible to let them know, and are required to complete an extenuating circumstances form, providing documentary evidence of their illness.

Sudden illness

In the unlikely event of a student being suddenly taken ill during an examination, they should notify the invigilator(s) immediately. This usually requires the student to leave the exam for their own health and safety, and to minimise disruption to other candidates. Any such students must leave their exam paper and other materials behind. The invigilator is required to note the incident on their exam paper. The affected student is to be contacted by a member of the assessment team, usually within 24 hours, to check on their well-being and to arrange for an alternative assessment as soon as possible.

Where feasible, the student is offered an alternative exam, consisting of a new/different question or topic, or using resit options from previous years' assessments. If these alternative assessments fall beyond the end of the course or module, the final score is calculated by using mid-stage exam/assessment scores for that module/skill and other performance data if necessary.

Suspected cheating in an in-person exam

The invigilator notes the potential issue along with candidate number/seat number and time. Where a second invigilator is available both should attempt to observe the suspicious behaviour.

If both invigilators are satisfied that there seems to be a case of suspected cheating, they should both note it as above. In the case of suspected cheating with one student in possession of unauthorised material, e.g., smartphone/watch, notes, the

main invigilator should then ask the student to accompany them outside the venue, taking with them everything from the student's desk, including coat, bag, and anything on the floor nearby. If possible, another invigilator should also accompany them.

The main invigilator then informs the student what was observed, and that it will be reported to the BoE. The student is asked to cooperate and informed that refusal to do so will also be reported to the BoE. The main invigilator can ask the student to hand over any material they were observed using, including asking them to turn out their pockets, or roll up their sleeves. Photographic evidence should be taken, if possible, but only with the student's consent. The main invigilator should also check the items removed from the student's desk for unauthorised material. Any such material found, or handed over by the student, should be kept as evidence by the main invigilator. The student can request its return from the BoE after its submission as evidence. Once this interview is complete, whether or not the student cooperates, they can be permitted to return to complete the exam. The invigilator should mark their exam script to note the point the student was spoken to about suspected cheating. The student will not be allowed any extra time as a result of this investigation.

The invigilator should write a report, detailing the incident, for submission to the BoE. If they are satisfied that the student provided a valid explanation or evidence to show they were not cheating during the interview, they should note that in their report, and the BoE should take into consideration that the student, if innocent of cheating, was disturbed during the examination.

If two invigilators have not clearly been able to observe cheating, a student should not be removed from the exam room. At the end of the examination, if the second invigilator has not been able to observe cheating, but is satisfied that the student is behaving suspiciously, the invigilators may ask the student to remain behind at the end of the exam to discuss what was observed and follow up as above. If there is insufficient evidence to challenge a student during or at the end of the examination, but the invigilator believes there was suspicious behaviour, they should note this on the student's exam sheet and submit a written report detailing what was observed. This may be the best course of action in the case of suspected cheating/ collusion between a number of students, where it is difficult to determine the level of involvement.

When the exam papers are marked, the markers are asked to identify and flag any additional evidence of cheating/copying between students. If the invigilators' reports are substantiated, the student may be asked to attend a meeting, prior to the AIC, with at least two members of senior ELC staff and asked to account for their behaviour. If all the members of staff involved, from the invigilators and markers to the Coordinators and SAL, are satisfied that the student committed a deliberate act of cheating, then a report will be submitted by the AIC to the BoE along with any evidence collected. The BoE, if they uphold the judgement, will have the power to apply the agreed penalty as noted in the ELC Academic Integrity Guidelines.

Suspected cheating in online examinations

The invigilator notes the potential issue along with student number(s) and time.

When there are two invigilators, the invigilator who notices the suspicious behaviour should inform the second invigilator of their concerns via a message on Teams. The student should be allowed to continue the exam. If either or both invigilators are satisfied that there seems to be a case of suspected cheating, the first invigilator should report it to the course coordinator immediately after the online exam.

A meeting should be set up with student and at least two members of academic staff, usually the AL/ Coordinator and/or SAL, in order to explain what was observed and to allow the student time to respond and account for their behaviour. This meeting should take place before the AIC. At the AIC, if all staff involved (invigilators, markers, coordinators and SAL) are in agreement that the student committed a deliberate act of cheating, a report with evidence and recommendations for an agreed penalty will be submitted by AIC to the BoE. The BoE, if they uphold the judgement, will have the power to apply the agreed penalty as noted in the ELC Academic Integrity Guidelines.

Practical assessment conduct

Practical assessments such as interviews and guided seminar discussions may take place in a suitable location on the University campus or be conducted online through a video-conferencing platform, such as Microsoft Teams. In either case, they are timetabled, and students informed in advance.

Students must have their Student ID card, or other photo ID if permitted, ready to present to the examiner / interlocutor. For online assessments, students are also asked to confirm that there is no one else in the room, that they are not recording the

assessment on their end, and that they are not receiving any help from another source. As for formal examinations, the 'fit to sit' policy applies to practical skills assessments also.

Practical assessments are recorded wherever practicable for marking and moderation purposes with one or two examiners per assessment where possible. When an assessment has one examiner, they act as both interlocutor and first examiner. Where there are two examiners, the interlocutor is the second examiner. It is not always possible for all students in a module or course to undertake a practical assessment simultaneously. For this reason, a pool of tasks, texts, questions, or prompts are developed, of equivalent status to prevent any student gaining an unfair advantage. The schedule of their use throughout the assessment period is released to the examiners, and assessment time slots need to be strictly adhered to. Students who arrive late to their assessment may be allocated an alternative slot at a later time, using a reserve question or task from the pool. This provision is at the discretion of the examiners and course coordinator jointly.

Coursework conduct

Students are required to submit assessed coursework (formative and summative) by the deadline set. Submission deadlines are chosen carefully to allow students enough time to complete the coursework following reasonable time-management strategies, and for the work to be marked and feedback given before the next assessment is due, or by the end of the course or module.

Late submission of coursework may be permitted, unless it would allow the student to benefit from feedback given to other students. If late submissions are allowed, the following standards are usually applied:

- 5% of the total marks available for the assessment will be deducted from the assessment mark for each 24-hour period following the submission deadline, up to a maximum of 120 hours.
- Work assessed below the pass mark will not be penalised for late submission of up to 120 hours.
- Coursework submitted more than 120 hours after the submission deadline will receive a mark of zero.
- Students may request exemption from late penalties for any coursework that has the opportunity for late submission using the Exemption from Late Penalties Form, which must be submitted before the original deadline.

Exemption from late penalties may be granted, but only up to the point when feedback to other students would benefit the late-submitting student.

Whether students submit coursework electronically or by hard copy, they **must** complete a Declaration of Academic Integrity, confirming that they are aware of and understand the ELC Academic Integrity Guidelines, and that they have acted honestly, without plagiarism, collusion or other unethical behaviour. All work submitted by students must be their own work. It is prohibited to pay or ask another person or service to write or create essays, projects, or any other type of assessed work. For more information, see the Academic Integrity Guidelines.

Group work conduct

The same submission and academic integrity guidelines apply to the submission of groupwork as to individual coursework. It should be made clear to the students that officially sanctioned groupwork for assessment does not fall under the definition of collusion.

Students are provided with clear detailed information about any assigned groupwork assessments during their course or module, including:

- How students are assigned to groups and whether/how they can request a change
- General assessment information such as assignment rubric and assessment criteria, contribution of the group assignment to the overall mark, due date and submission details.
- How the assessment is marked (anonymously or not, and why), moderated, and feedback given
- Students' responsibilities as part of the group, and what support and procedures are in place if there are issues

For further information and guidance, see Appendix G of the UoL CoPA.

Assessment security

Every effort is made to ensure the security of assessment. Students must present their University student ID card (or other photographic ID where permitted) for identification at exams, presentations and practical assessments. Assessment is anonymous, with students only identified by their student number, wherever feasible in the case of written assessments. This is not possible for the suite of spoken

assessments. Assessment questions, tasks and texts are stored in an encrypted folder on the University database, with limited access among staff. The release of assessments is strictly timed and controlled as far as possible to prevent any unauthorised sharing or dissemination to students. Examiners and invigilators are given guidance and training to ensure they are fully competent to conduct the assessments.

Extenuating circumstances and exemption from late penalties

The ELC's approach to extenuating circumstances and exemption from late penalties in relation to assessments and examinations is based on the University's guidelines which can be found here:

https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/media/livacuk/tgsd/code-of-practice-on-assessment/appendix_M_cop_assess.pdf For the PSE courses, the procedures and guidelines laid out in these Academic Governance Guidelines are followed. In the event of a situation arising in relation to extenuating circumstances on the PSE courses that is not covered within this document, the UoL guidelines will be followed.

Absence from examination / late submission of assessment

A student who is unable to attend an exam **MUST** inform the AL or Course Coordinator who will assist or advise on applying for extenuating circumstances. Any student unable to submit their coursework by the deadline due to unforeseen medical or exceptional circumstances has the option to apply for an exemption from late penalties.

Forms for both circumstances are available online and on Teams. Students are required to send their extenuating circumstances or exemption from late penalties application form to elc@liverpool.ac.uk **before** the examination or assessment deadline in order for the application to be considered by the Extenuating Circumstances Committee.

For extenuating circumstances to be considered, students are required to submit evidence of 'good cause' such as a medical note. In line with wider University policy, it is not possible for students to self-certify sickness absence from assessments.

Extenuating Circumstances may include:

- Illness affecting the student.
- Bereavement.

- Serious illness affecting a close family member.
- Unforeseeable or unpreventable events.

The following are examples of issues/events which **are not** regarded as extenuating circumstances:

- Failure to attend an exam / submit an assessment due to misreading the instructions.
- Events such as holidays and weddings.
- Attending an external exam such as IELTS.
- Inadequate planning and time management.
- Any event that could reasonably have been expected or anticipated such as sporting events, pressures from paid employment, or other study commitments.

If the ECC judges that the absence or non-submission is acceptable and therefore authorised, one member of the ECC will inform the Co-ordination team who will arrange for a later or alternative assessment within the assessment period for the module or course (including a deadline extension where judged appropriate). If this arrangement is deemed appropriate by the ECC, they will inform the student of the outcome. If this is not feasible, the marks from one assessment can represent the mark for the skill or module overall. The recommendations will be passed to the relevant BoE for approval.

Performance in examinations / assessed work

The ELC operates a 'fit-to-sit' policy, meaning that if a student attends an exam or submits an assessed piece of work on the required day, that is taken as a declaration that they are fit to be assessed. All work is marked on merit and existing problems that were not notified to the course coordinator or module leader **before** the exam or assessment are normally not taken into account.

If a student's performance in an exam or assignment is unexpectedly affected by illness or other unforeseen events **during** an assessment, this could be considered extenuating circumstances.

However, in exceptional circumstances, where the ECC judges that it was not feasible for a student to apply before the deadline or examination, the Committee will

consider requests for extenuating circumstances or exemption from late penalties without the student informing the ELC in advance.

The deadline for the submission of such claims is 24 hours after the end of the final assessment of the course the student is taking.

Reasonable adjustments

Students with an ongoing medical condition or a disability that may affect their ability to study or their performance in assessments, are advised to notify their teacher and/or AL/ Coordinator or module leader as soon as possible. They may also contact the Disability Support Team directly disteam@liverpool.ac.uk so that the appropriate support can be put in place.

More information about support available to international disabled students is available here:

<http://www.liverpool.ac.uk/studentssupport/disability/internationaldisabledstudents/>

Re-sits and resubmissions

For the majority of PSE courses, the timeframes involved are such that it is not possible to provide opportunities to re-sit or resubmit an assessment. Students are clearly informed at the start of their studies whether or not there is the possibility to re-sit or resubmit work in the event of either extenuating circumstances or failure. On the PSE course, gate-keeping assessments determine progression to the next phase of study, or onto University courses or programmes, usually within one or two weeks of final assessments.

To compensate for this, ELC courses typically offer at least two opportunities for assessment in each module, strand or skill. Should a student miss the earlier of the assessments this allows time for the assessment to be rescheduled to a later date within that period. Where a student misses the final assessment, if their extenuating circumstances or exemption from late penalties claim is upheld, the ECC may recommend that the mark from an earlier assessment is scaled to represent the overall mark for that module or skill. The ELC also takes extra precautions to identify and support students who may be at risk of failing to ameliorate the lack of re-sit/resubmission opportunity. These measures include tracking attendance and following up with habitually absent students, regular tutorials, support meetings with course coordinator if necessary, and individual learning plans for additional support.

Section 4 - Marking & moderation

The ELC takes the marking and moderation of PSE assessments very seriously. This section outlines the procedures and standards followed to ensure our assessments are both rigorous and fair, maintaining academic standards and judging student performance against those standards and subject benchmarks.

Assessment criteria and grading rubrics

Assessment tasks are clearly defined and related to the ILOs. For each individual assessment, the following are clearly defined:

- Purpose of the assessment
- Marking criteria
- Qualitative marking descriptors
- Proportion of total marks
- Whether failure in one assessment may be compensated by higher marks in other components
- Any penalties for failing to meet or exceeding the word count
- Expectations of what is necessary to pass at the threshold and obtain higher marks

Marking schemes and sample answers are provided where appropriate, to staff only, or in some instances to both staff and students. Subject benchmarks are also used where relevant, particularly in respect of language levels, where the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) is directly linked to marks and informs the assessment criteria.

Marking procedures

Where possible, marking is anonymous, with students identified only by their student number. If anonymous marking is not possible, a clear rationale should be provided for this in the assessment information. Common reasons include the use of presentations or seminar discussions as a mode of assessment, or a requirement for

the teacher who gave feedback on a draft assignment to also mark the final submission.

Double marking

For the majority of PSE assessments, one or more internal examiners/markers are appointed from the academic team. Double marking means that, in addition to a first marker, another member of staff independently marks the student's work.

Assessments are double marked where feasible and appropriate, and this is common practice within the ELC. **Assessment tasks which are double marked do not need to be moderated (see below).**

Where there are two markers, the first marker has responsibility for the marking as a whole. These examiners are responsible for the marking of the assessment in relation to the specified criteria, marking scheme, descriptors and marks scale. Procedures are in place for determining the mark in the event of disagreement between two markers. The SAL/ course coordination team are responsible for the assessment as a whole.

Moderation

Moderation, the examination of selected pieces of work from an assessment task, takes place to verify the level and consistency of the marking. Suitably qualified academic staff, coordinators, team leaders, or their equivalent and/or SALs can all act as moderators. Moderation of the marking of the internal examiner(s) is undertaken according to the following rules:

- Any assessment component which contributes to 20% or more to the overall module mark must be moderated.
- Where the number of students is less than or equal to 149, at least 25% of all assessment items should be moderated.
- When student numbers are 150-299, at least 15% of assessment items should be moderated.
- When student numbers exceed 300, at least 10% of assessment items should be moderated.
- When there are fewer than 40 items, a minimum of 10 items should be moderated covering the range of achievement, especially at borderlines.

When there are two examiners for an assessment task, each may mark half the assessment tasks and moderate the other half.

If moderation indicates inconsistent marking, all items should be remarked. If the level of marks was incorrect or inappropriate, the marks should be scaled accordingly. In cases where an external advisor is in post s/he should confirm that s/he was satisfied with the moderation procedures and agree with any consequent scaling of the marks. The scaling of marks should be highlighted at the BoE, who also must be satisfied with the moderation procedures.

Checking of computation of marks

Individual pairs of markers are responsible for the accurate recording of marks. When marks are stored electronically, appropriate back-up copies are stored in accordance with GDPR. The majority of ELC assessments will be submitted, marked, and returned online through Turnitin. Scores on Turnitin are then exported into a pre-weighted spreadsheet, before finally being entered onto Banner. Any failing marks on the spreadsheet will be checked for data-entry errors, including confirmation with the first marker. If a failing mark is confirmed, the assessment will be triple marked.

Procedures for the identification and investigation of unusual patterns of the distribution of marks

The AL and Coordinator(s) are responsible for identifying unusual patterns of distribution such as particularly low/high pass rates. The identification of such patterns will occur during post-test analysis and is usually conducted by members of the PDG. Results are submitted as a brief report to the Course Committee and Board of Studies, highlighting any unusual patterns and making any necessary recommendations as to the method of mark scaling.

Requests for re-marking

The ELC follows the defined procedure for double marking and moderation as set out above. Assessed work will not be re-marked at students' request. This will only be done if the ELC is instructed to do so by the University following a formal appeal. See Section 6 – Appeals and Complaints for further details. Students may only lodge an appeal in specific circumstances; it is not an opportunity to negotiate their mark.

Benchmarking and standardisation of markers

On any course or module where more than one internal examiner is assigned to an assessment, it is necessary for the examiners to standardise their application of the

assessment criteria to ensure that students' work is being assessed fairly. This usually consists of understanding the standards via samples of student work with accompanying commentaries, and a number of additional samples to which each marker applies the criteria individually, before comparing their marks against the standards agreed by the benchmarking team. Where discrepancies are noted, markers are encouraged to understand their differences through discussion with other markers and the Coordination team and adjust their application of the criteria accordingly. Standardisation of markers takes place for each different assessment requiring the application of assessment criteria. The responsibility for the standardisation of markers / examiners lies with those responsible for assessment and, if different, the Coordination jointly.

Procedures for benchmarking and standardisation are outlined in Appendix 3.

External academic advisors

Currently, as PSE courses are non-credit bearing, there is no requirement for the PSE courses to have an external examiner. However, the ELC appreciates the value of an impartial perspective on teaching, learning and assessment, and so seeks to recruit an academic outside the ELC in the role of a 'critical friend' or advisor where feasible. Unlike an external examiner whose focus is on the endorsement of marks awarded, the aim is for the academic advisor to scrutinise PSE in terms of its teaching and learning processes and offer suggestions for further enhancement or alternative ideas.

Section 5 - Progression, awards and failures

This section explains the procedures involved in considering and approving marks, deciding and applying any additional measures, and communicating results to students.

Pre-sessional progression

There are two main points of gate-keeping assessment on the PSE course which determine student progression. Students who have entered the PSE at the 40-week,

30-week and 20-week entry points all sit the same in-year assessments during the 20-week course to determine progression to the final 10-week stage. Students with a higher initial level of English may enter the PSE course at the 12/10/6-week stage without passing through this first gate-keeping assessment. However, all PSE students take the final assessments during the last weeks of the summer course in August/September. These final assessments serve a dual role. The first is to ensure that all progression outcomes are compliant with the requirements of UKVI Student Route Visa Premium Sponsor status. The second is to provide sufficient information to the University's Admissions team to allow them to determine that the students' language proficiency is equivalent to the direct entry requirements for their chosen programmes.

In-Year Progress Review Meetings

Students on the 40- and 30-week course (Stage 1 & 2) who are a concern in terms of progress are flagged with the PSE AL and Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) are drawn up and agreed with the students as a form of support plan. Students meet with the AL usually every two weeks to discuss additional work completed. For students who fail to meet the 50% pass mark in their end-of-stage assessments, Progress Review Meetings are held with the PSE AL and/or SAL at the end of each stage. Notes are taken during these meetings and emailed to the student for confirmation.

In-Year Assessment and Progression

The 20-week PSE assessments take an integrated approach to assessing the four skills (listening, reading, writing, and speaking) and serve as gate-keeping assessments to determine students' readiness to progress to the final summer 10-week PSE course. Marks are finalised on the assessment spreadsheet in the final week of the 20-week course. The BoE receive recommendations from the Academic Integrity Committee as applicable. All results are sent to the BoE by the Data & Systems Team. Students are anonymised and identified by student number only.

Tutors write individual reports which include the breakdown of marks and feedback for each student. After being checked by the AL, the reports and marks are shared with students in the final 1-1 tutorial on the penultimate or last day of the stage. Emails with marks and reports are sent to any absent students.

[Assessment Suites with full percentage reporting](#)

For these assessments, a percentage score is attached to each individual assessment. Students who achieve an overall score of 50% or higher pass and proceed to the final 10-week course or on to their academic programmes. Students who achieve less than 50% in one or more assessments are considered at the BoE.

Those who achieve less than 50% in **one** assessment can proceed if

- Overall score was higher than 55%
- And, the one failed score was within the tolerance range of 4% i.e., 46 – 49%

Students taking the In-Year PSE Assessment **cannot** proceed to the final stages of the PSE if:

- Two or more assessments are below 46%
- The score for one assessment is below 40%

Assessment Suites including Pass/Fail grading

Within these suites of assessment, one or more assessments provide a pass/fail score, while others may yield a percentage score. A maximum of half (usually 2 out of 4) of the assessments may be scored as pass/fail.

Students who achieve an overall score of 50% or more in percentage-based assessments, and a pass for pass/fail assessments, pass and proceed to the final PSE stages. Students who achieve less than 50% or a fail in any of the assessments are considered at the BoE.

Those who achieve less than 50% in one assessment can proceed if

- All other assessments are 'pass' or a score of more than 50%
- And the one failed score was within the tolerance range of 4% (46-49%)

Those who receive a 'fail' in one assessment can proceed if

- All other assessments are 'pass' or a score of more than 50%
- And the average score for any percentage-based results is higher than 55%

Students taking the In-Year PSE Assessment **cannot** proceed to the final stages of the PSE if:

- Two or more assessments are below 50% or a fail

Students who do not pass the In-Year Assessment will be offered a meeting with the PSE AL or SAL to discuss alternatives, including withdrawal from the PSE course.

Where necessary, students will also be referred to the International Advice and Guidance team: <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/studentssupport/international/>

End-of-Year Assessment and Progression

Marks are finalised on the assessment spreadsheet in the final week of the 10-week and 6-week courses. Reports for all students are written by tutors and checked by the Coordinator(s). On the penultimate day of the course, the ELC sends pass and fail results to the University Admissions Team. Usually on the next day, the BoE meet to consider borderline fails and receive advice and recommendations arising from the Extenuating Circumstances Committee process and Academic Integrity Committee meetings as applicable. All results are shared with the BoE by the Data & Systems Team. Students are anonymised and identified by student number only.

End of Pre-sessional Results Process (ELC → Admissions)

<p>Thursday – Penultimate day of PSE course</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ELC enter all marks into Banner by 12 midday. • Confirmation of PASS & PROCEED sent to Admissions by 3pm. • Confirmation of all FAILS sent to Admissions by 3pm.
<p>Friday – Final day of PSE course</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSE BoE 3:30-5:00pm to consider all remaining results. • Confirmation of DECISIONS from BoE to be made by the departmental representative (Accept; Reject but offer alternative; Reject) and sent to Admissions by the following Monday 5pm. • The departmental representative should copy in the BoE secretary into the confirmation email.
<p>Monday – Wednesday after end of PSE course</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ELC send PSE marks to students (from elc@liverpool.ac.uk) before 12pm, Monday. • Admissions process results and send offer outcomes to students after 12pm, Monday. • UG/PGT students advised they will receive the offer outcome by Friday. • Students holding PhD offers advised that they will be contacted directly by their department.

By Friday after end of PSE course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided that students have met all the conditions and accepted their academic offer, all UG/PGT students will receive the unconditional offer letter and CAS before 5pm Friday. • Students advised of IAG/ELC drop-in on Friday if needed.
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To progress onto their chosen programme of study, students must meet both the UKVI Language requirements by passing all PSE assessment areas with a minimum score of 40%. Additionally, they must also meet the specific requirements of their intended department and programme, which are usually higher than the minimum.

UKVI English Language requirements

A score of 40% on the **end-of-year** pre-sessional assessments equates to the CEFR low B2 (B2-) level. In order to meet the UKVI English language requirements for a Student Route visa, **students must score 40% or more on all PSE assessments which assess the four sub-skills** (reading, writing, speaking and listening), although entry requirements for their chosen academic degree might be much higher than 40%. Students receive information from their intended department about the conditions of their offer when offered a place on the PSE course.

If a student does not score 40% on any of the PSE assessments, they are not allowed to progress to their academic course and have to return home (if in the UK) unless they are able to sit an English language exam and obtain the scores needed for direct entry onto the academic course.

University of Liverpool's English Language requirements

Full details of the University of Liverpool's English Language requirements can be found here:

<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/study/international/apply/english-language/>

Corresponding Pre-sessional marks are shown below.

Academic Programmes Entry requirements	CEFR score	Overall Pre- sessional Score (%)
Overall 6.0, nsl 5.5 (profile A)	B2 -	40-49

Overall 6.5, nsl 5.5 (profile B)	B2	50-59
Overall 6.5, nsl 6.0 (profile C)	B2	
Overall 6.5, nsl 6.5 (or specific skills at 6.5) (profile D)	B2 +	60-69
Overall 7.0 (profile E)	C1 -	70-79
Overall 7.5 (profile F)	C1	80-89

Failures

In most instances, PSE courses provided by the ELC cannot offer the possibility for students to re-sit or resubmit an assessment, due to time constraints and other logistical issues. The ELC makes every effort to compensate for this through a variety of means, including:

- Regular tutorials
- Spreading assessments throughout the course or module to balance the assessment load
- Small class sizes allowing for direct support and frequent, clear formative feedback from teachers
- Monitoring of student progress
- Support via ILPs for students identified as at risk of failing

Students who do fail the course are informed as soon as possible, and provided with appropriate support and guidance, such as visa advice from IAG or meeting with the SAL/coordinator to discuss alternative paths.

Communicating results and decisions from the Board of Examiners

As noted in the table above, the ELC Data and Systems Team inform students of their results on the Monday morning following the BoE. Sample emails can be found in Appendix 4.

Additional Language Provision

For students who have been identified as at risk of poor outcomes on their academic programmes based on their PSE final assessment scores, additional In-sessional

support is provided via the programme of Additional Language Provision (ALP). For more details of this, see Appendix 5.

Section 6 - Appeals and complaints

Appeals procedure

The University has procedures for students to appeal about their assessment marks. **However, this does NOT mean that students are able to appeal against the academic judgement of their work.**

A student can appeal if they think there was a problem with the way the examination or assessment was carried out (e.g. a printing error in the examination) or if they believe the ELC has not made the correct decision in a case of Academic Misconduct, or Extenuating Circumstances. Appeals should be directed in the first instance to the ELC Director.

Read more about the University's policies on appeals here:

[Assessment appeals Assessment appeals- Student Administration - University of Liverpool](#)

Complaints procedure

The ELC is committed to listening and being responsive to student views and needs. Students have the right to lodge a complaint if they feel that their legitimate expectations are not being met. Complaints should initially be raised as near as possible to where the issue occurred, so students are advised to bring any problems or questions to the relevant person. They are provided with a helpful guide of contacts, outlining who they should approach first in the event of any issues with various areas, such as course material, accommodation, or visas.

- Refer to the **ELC Suggestions, Compliments and Complaints** document available on the ELC website:

[202122_ELC,Suggestions,compliments,and,complaints.pdf \(liverpool.ac.uk\)](#)

and from ELC Reception on the ground floor of 1-7 Abercromby. This document provides a summary of the University of Liverpool Complaints Policy and Procedure, [Student complaints - Student Administration - University of Liverpool](#), which the ELC will always follow.

- For issues and complaints relating to assessment on a PSE course or module, students are encouraged to raise the issue initially with their teacher. In many instances the teacher can help to resolve the issue, but if not, the student can make an appointment to see the AL or Coordinator. If they cannot resolve the student's complaint, they will refer it to the Course SAL or to the ELC Director.
- In the event that a teacher or other member of staff feels the need to complain or register concern about any issues they are encouraged to do so. Again, issues should initially be raised locally in the first instance, so a member of staff with a concern relating to assessment should normally begin by contacting a member of the assessment team or the course coordinator / module leader. It is generally recommended as good collegial practice to discuss any concerns directly and informally with the person(s) concerned where possible. If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved through dialogue, the member of staff may then escalate the complaint, following the normal procedures and chain of command outlined in the ELC Staff Handbook, and University policies.

Appendices

Appendix 1: ELC student permission form

Pre-sessional students at the English Language Centre (ELC) produce oral and written work as part of the course and the formal assessments. This work enables teachers to provide feedback and evaluate your progress. We also ask you to give us feedback on our services and the quality of teaching by completing online questionnaires. Your teachers may also record your lessons to allow you to review classes later. We also record the Welcome Talk and Assessment & Progression Talk for any absent students and the SSLCs for administrative purposes. All your oral

assessments will also be recorded. These videos will be stored on Microsoft Teams and Stream platforms, in accordance with their privacy and data protection policies.

The questions below ask for your consent/permission to use your work, assessments and recordings for various teaching, learning and research purposes outlined below. Your consent is optional.

Use of your words [optional consent]

For the purposes of teaching, training and research, the University may wish to use your words or some short quotes from your work, assessment or feedback. Such uses may include:

- Using your words to help future teachers understand and use our assessment criteria
- Using your words to help future students understand the requirements of an assessment task by showing examples and/or paragraphs
- Using your words as part of in-house action research and/or teacher development sessions, or external conference papers

Your name and personal examples will not be used and anonymity will be guaranteed.

Your words will not be used while you are a student on the course.

Please tick the statement that applies. You can change your decision at any time by notifying your Course Coordinator.

I agree to my words being used for teaching, training and research purposes.

I don't agree to my words being used for teaching, training and research purposes.

Name: _____ **Student Number:** _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Use of your video recordings [optional consent]

This question asks for your permission to keep access to any lesson, meeting and assessment videos after the end of the course. We confirm that their use will only be within the University of Liverpool, and only for teaching & learning, teacher

development and research purposes (that is, we ask your permission to use the recordings to improve our courses and classes for future students and teachers).

Videos that we keep will:

- Be stored safely, either on Microsoft platforms or on secure University of Liverpool servers.
- Never be uploaded to the internet or shared outside of The University of Liverpool by ELC staff.
- Be deleted once they have been used for training and research (usually after one year).
- Only be used for educational purposes, as described above.

You can change your mind at any time in the future, and let us know by contacting us at elc@liverpool.ac.uk

Please tick the statement that applies.

Yes, I agree to allow the ELC at the University of Liverpool to keep video recordings of lessons, meetings and assessments that I have attended on the Pre-session course, and to use them for teaching & learning, research and training purposes.

No, I don't agree to allow the ELC at the University of Liverpool to use video recordings of lessons, meetings and assessments that I have attended on the Pre-session course for teaching and learning, research and training purposes.

Data & Privacy Statement

We understand that students may have downloaded recordings of lessons for their own study purposes. We would like to remind you that under GDPR data protection laws it is not allowed to share these recordings on social media, or in any other form that cannot be controlled. You should make sure to delete any lesson recordings once you have finished using them.

I understand and agree to protect the data and privacy of my classmates and teachers by not sharing any recordings of lessons.

Appendix 2: Examination conduct information for students

During the Pre-sessional Course, you will be assessed by a combination of examinations and coursework. An example of coursework is an essay/report that you work on at home before handing in to your tutor.

It is very important for you to be aware that the University of Liverpool, like all universities, has strict rules and guidelines about **Examination Behaviour**.

The English Language Centre has its own guidelines for examination behaviour, which are based on those of the University:

- You **must** attend all exams unless prevented by illness or other extenuating circumstances.
- You **must** arrive in good time for the exam (at least 10 minutes before). you may not be allowed to take the exam if you arrive late. If you arrive late and are allowed to enter the exam, you **will not** be allowed extra time.
- You **must** enter an exam room in silence and put any bags and coats where you are asked to.
- You **must** switch off any mobile phone, smart watch or similar electronic data storage or communication devices and leave them in your bag.
- You **must not** have any unauthorised material with you at your exam desk or on your person whilst under examination conditions, including books, manuscripts, calculator cases, or a mobile phone or any other electronic data storage device.
- You **may** take into an exam room any pens, pencils, erasers, rulers, pencil sharpeners. However, these **must** be placed in a clear plastic bag. You **must not** bring in any pencil case or box for these items.
- You **must not** disturb other candidates.
- You **must** follow any instructions given by an invigilator.
- You **must not** communicate with any other candidate in an exam room.
- You **must not** impersonate another exam candidate or allow yourself to be impersonated.
- You **must not** leave the exam room until your exam answer book has been collected and **must not** take out of the exam room any other item provided unless you are allowed to do so.
- You **should** write clearly.

- If you have a disability and need adjustments made to your exam arrangements, you **should** speak to the ELC as soon as possible during the course.
- You **may** take into an exam room a clear plastic bottle of water. you **must not** bring in any other type of bottle and no other drink or food, unless you have a declared medical condition and have been given permission to do so.

In brief: Pre-sessional exams are official University exams. Failure to follow exam guidelines may result in you receiving a score of 0% for that exam.

Additional rules relating to online exam conduct are as follows:

- You **must not** find information on the Internet when taking reading and listening assessments.
- You **must not** use translation apps or closed captions in listening exams.
- You **must not** allow other people into the room where you are attending the online exam.
- If you have any technical difficulties, you **must** contact the coordinator or technical support team as soon as possible.

Appendix 3: Benchmarking and standardisation procedures

To ensure the fair and consistent assessment of work by in-year and summer Pre-sessional (PSE) teachers, efforts are made to implement the following benchmarking and standardisation procedures as far as possible. However, these procedures may differ slightly due to the nature of the assessment.

Benchmarking

1. Benchmarking takes place in the preceding stage and includes a minimum of three members of the PSE team (coordinators/ Academic Lead (AL), team leaders, teachers, course developers and Senior Academic Lead (SAL).
2. The selection of student work is determined by
 - Student consent
 - The need to benchmark and standardise marking of work with a range of scores

3. The benchmarking team individually assess work from at least four students using the marking criteria and then meet to discuss and agree the benchmarked scores.
4. The person responsible for organising the session makes notes of comments and examples from the benchmarking team to include in the accompanying commentary. This and the responsibility for leading the standardisation session is usually shared by the benchmarking team.

Standardisation

Teachers are usually standardised for each module assessment with work from a minimum of three and a maximum of four students. The standardisation sessions tend to be scheduled during the pre-course teacher induction and all PSE teachers take part. Occasionally, further standardisation sessions are held closer to the marking period for teachers assessing specific modules. For all the sessions, teachers assess the work of three students before attending the standardisation session.

30-week PSE course

1. For the first student, the AL provides teachers with the overall score, individual marks for each Intended Learning Outcome (ILO), marking criteria and an accompanying commentary which provides a rationale for the scores and examples. However, teachers can choose to assess this first student **with or without** the scores and commentary.
2. For the second student, teachers first assess the work and award scores **before** referring to the benchmarked scores provided by the coordinator. In the standardisation session, teachers discuss the scores awarded by the benchmarking team and the coordinator shares the commentary.
3. For the third student, teachers add their scores to a non-anonymised MS Form (shared by the AL) before the session. Teachers discuss their scores before the AL shares the benchmarked scores and commentary.
4. Teachers need to assess work from a fourth student if their score for the third student is out by 6% or more from the score awarded by the benchmarking team (e.g., 62 and 68%) from the score awarded by the benchmarking team, or if the score is in a different band. Scores are added to a second MS Form.
5. All teachers have access to the work by the fourth student if they want additional practice. In this case, teachers put the scores in a second MS Form and ask the AL to share the benchmarked scores and commentary.

6. Scores are saved in the coordination channel of the relevant Team.

20-week and summer standardisation

1. For the first student, the AL/ Coordinator provides teachers with the overall score, individual marks for each ILO, marking criteria and an accompanying commentary. Teachers choose to assess this first student **with or without** the scores and commentary. The accompanying commentary provides information on the marking approach taken by the benchmarking team and the rationale for the scores alongside examples and is used as a way of setting expectations. This is in the form of a fully annotated script for the summer Research Project (RP).
2. For the second and third student, the AL/ Coordinator provides teachers with the overall score, individual marks for **two ILOs** for each student's work, marking criteria and an accompanying commentary. Teachers award scores for **the remaining ILOs** and add these to a non-anonymised MS Form provided by the coordinator. Scores for student 2 and 3 are presented in the standardisation session. Again, the accompanying commentary provides information on the marking approach taken, rationale for scores and examples. For the RP, this commentary is in the form of partially annotated/marked scripts.
3. For the fourth student, their work is assessed **live** in the standardisation session in which teachers add their scores for all ILOs to a non-anonymised MS Form shared by the AL/ Coordinator. Teachers discuss their scores before the AL/ Coordinator shares the benchmarked scores and accompanying commentary (fully annotated script for RP).
4. If a teacher's score for the fourth student is out by 6% or more from the score awarded by the benchmarking team (e.g., 62 and 68%) or if the score is in a different band, the teacher is required to assess work by a fifth student. The teacher concerned is approached individually via Teams chat by the coordinator. Scores are added to a second MS Form and are discussed with the teacher after submission.
5. All teachers have access to the work from the fifth student if they want additional practice. In this case, teachers put the scores in a second MS Form and ask the coordinator to share the benchmarked scores and commentary.
6. Scores are saved in the Coordination channel of the relevant Team.

Moderation of marking

If a teacher's scoring of the 5th student does not fall within the standardised tolerance range, for additional support during first marking, AL/ Coordinators and/or team leaders moderate the marking of the work of the first two students. Teachers can also request this moderation support from a member of the Coordination team.

Appendix 4: Communication of results to students

Pass and Proceed Email

Dear [name of student],

Now that you have had time to reflect on the Pre-sessional English course at the ELC, we hope you found it beneficial and useful for your future studies. Not only has the course prepared you for academic study, but hopefully your confidence and digital literacy has improved as well as a result.

Your results were approved at the Exam Board on the 10th September and the breakdown of your Pre-sessional English course results can be seen in the table below. Along with the tutor feedback you received throughout the course, your results should give you a clear indication of your achievement and progress but also the areas and skills you need to work on in the future.

Overall Mark	50
Research Project assessment mark	53
Seminar Discussion assessment mark	45

If you are an offer holder with University of Liverpool, provided you have met all conditions and accepted your academic offer, your unconditional offer letter and CAS will be sent to you by email. If you have not received this email by 5pm on Friday 17th September, please contact elcadm@liverpool.ac.uk.

If have applied to a different University and you need to convert your Pre-sessional English course results to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages or IELTS, please see the table below.

Overall Pre-sessional Score (%)	CEFR score	IELTS conversion
80-89	C1	Overall 7.5
70-79	C1-	Overall 7.0
60-69	B2+	Overall 6.5, specific skills at 6.5
50-59	B2	Overall 6.5, nsl 6.0
		Overall 6.5, nsl 5.5
40-49	B2-	Overall 6.0, nsl 5.5

Some students have been allowed to progress to their academic programme but on the condition of additional language provision (ALP). This is because they achieved a score under 50% overall or in either one of the assessments. ALP is an extra service offered by the University which is designed to maximise your ability to engage with and do well in your chosen academic course. This extra support is compulsory, and your attendance will be monitored. Non-attendance will be reported to your department who may use this information at their own Exam Boards. If you are one of these students, you will receive an email about this and an invitation to an ALP Team.

You will also receive a Certificate of Completion and Report for the Pre-sessional course and this will be sent by email. Please continue to check your emails in the coming days and weeks for further information from the University about your studies.

Wishing you all the best with your future academic career.

ELC Team

Fail email (failure to achieve the 40% UKVI minimum)

Dear [name of student],

The Exam Board met on the 10th September and we can confirm the breakdown of your results in the table below.

Overall Mark	39
Research Project assessment mark	34
Seminar Discussion assessment mark	47

Unfortunately, this means that you have not met the minimum 40% score required by UKVI and you will not be allowed to progress to your chosen academic programme.

If you have applied to a different University and you need to convert your Pre-sessional English course results to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages or IELTS, please see the table below.

Overall Pre-sessional Score (%)	CEFR score	IELTS conversion
80-89	C1	Overall 7.5
70-79	C1-	Overall 7.0
60-69	B2+	Overall 6.5, specific skills 6.5
50-59	B2	Overall 6.5, nsl 6.0
		Overall 6.5, nsl 5.5
40-49	B2-	Overall 6.0, nsl 5.5

0-39	B1+	Overall 5.5 nsl 5.0
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Although you have not met the English language requirements of your academic programme, you will receive a Certificate of Completion by email and we hope that the Pre-sessional course has been useful in improving your understanding of academic language and skills, and that you will be better equipped for any studies that you might take in the future.

We understand that this must be a difficult and stressful time for you, so if you need some support or advice on your next steps, please make an appointment with the International Advice and Guidance team or a member of the ELC. You can contact International Advice and Guidance and the ELC on the emails below:

iagteam@liverpool.ac.uk

elc@liverpool.ac.uk

Wishing you all the best for the future.

ELC Team

Fail and possible alternative programme email

Dear [name of student],

The Exam Board met on the 10th September and we can confirm the breakdown of your results in the table below.

Overall Mark	63
Research Project assessment mark	62
Seminar Discussion assessment mark	64

Unfortunately, this means that you have not met the entry requirements required by your department and you will not be allowed to progress to your chosen academic programme. However, you may be offered an alternative programme, and you will be informed by Admissions this week if this is the case.

If you have applied to a different University and you need to convert your Pre-sessional English course results to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages or IELTS, please see the table below.

Overall Pre-sessional Score (%)	CEFR score	IELTS conversion
80-89	C1	Overall 7.5
70-79	C1-	Overall 7.0
60-69	B2+	Overall 6.5, specific skills 6.5
50-59	B2	Overall 6.5, nsl 6.0
		Overall 6.5, nsl 5.5
40-49	B2-	Overall 6.0, nsl 5.5
0-39%	B1+	Overall 5.5 nsl 5.0

Although you have not met the English language requirements of your academic programme, you will receive a Certificate of Completion by email. If you need some support or advice on your next steps, please make an appointment with the International Advice and Guidance team or a member of the ELC. You can contact International Advice and Guidance and the ELC on the emails below:

iagteam@liverpool.ac.uk

elc@liverpool.ac.uk

Wishing you all the best for the future.

ELC Team

Aims of the provision

To provide tailored language and study skills support to students exiting the PSE course who have been identified as at risk of poor outcomes or disengagement based on their final assessment results profile.

Criteria for entry to the programme

Either:

- (For students requiring 50% pass mark) A score of below 50% overall or in any single assessment included in the final summative assessment suite for the PSE course.
- (For students requiring 60% pass mark) A score of below 60% overall in the final summative assessment suite for the PSE course.
- (For students requiring 70% pass mark) A score of below 70% overall in the final summative assessment suite for the PSE course.

Programme content

1. Each student is offered a 1-hour individual tutorial every two weeks. Students studying the same course may be grouped to allow for longer tutorial meetings. These tutorials are student-led and designed to tackle real-time issues with language and study skills which are impacting each student's confidence in their ability to engage in the work required on their academic course at the time each tutorial takes place. Up to 8 tutorials are available to each student and these are distributed more or less evenly over the two semesters following the progression of the student onto their academic course from PSE.
2. Each student will be advised by their ALP tutor of any specific KnowHow sessions they are required to attend. This will be dependent upon:
 - Any specific weaknesses identified through analysis of the PSE final assessment;
 - Any specific weaknesses which come to light within the fortnightly individual tutorials;
 - The availability of relevant sessions which do not clash with other obligations already timetabled as part of the academic programme.

3. Any student who is eligible to attend a discipline-specific In-session English course as part of their academic programme will be required to attend all sessions of this course.

Length of programme

Acknowledging that some students will settle more quickly into their academic programmes than others, there is a potential exit point at the end of semester one, following the release of semester one results. If, at this point, a student's academic adviser indicates to the ELC that they are no longer judged at risk based on their semester one results and other relevant indicators, then the requirement to attend the programme will cease.

Academic advisers will be contacted at the appropriate time and asked to indicate whether the student(s) for whom they are responsible should continue with the programme or not. Students who do not exit the programme at this point will continue until the end of semester two.

Attendance monitoring

The students on the ALP programme are not registered as ELC students. It is, therefore, appropriate for ELC to record attendance and for the department to which the student is registered to use the attendance data in the manner they deem appropriate.

It is suggested, in the case of failing students who are judged to be struggling as a result of poor proficiency in English, that such data forms part of the data set informing intervention, support and progression decisions.

ALP tutors keep records of attendance at individual tutorials. These records are checked by the ELC Attendance Monitor at the following touch points:

- After tutorial 2 of the programme (Semester one)
- After tutorial 4 of the programme (Semester one)
- After tutorial 6 of the programme (for continuing students in Semester 2)
- After tutorial 8 of the programme (for continuing students in Semester 2)

Attendance at Discipline-specific ISE support and KnowHow classes delivered by the ELC is also recorded, and information related to attendance at classes to which students have been directed will form part of the attendance data.

The attendance of the student over the preceding 4 weeks will be reported to the student's academic adviser at each touch point. A full record of each tutorial is kept and this can also be made available to academic advisers on request.

In the event that a student registered on the ALP programme does not respond to contact from the ELC within four weeks of the programme beginning, the ALP tutor will contact the Programme/Course Director by email, giving information about the student's PSE results, ALP policy and information regarding the attempts to contact the student. It is suggested that the student is encouraged by the Programme/Course Director to engage with the ALP programme. If there is still no engagement, then the student will continue be marked as absent and reported as such at the touch points outlined above.