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# MBA Language Policy

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***NB: This Language Policy applies to applicants of the 21J and 21D MBA Classes. For all other MBA Classes, please use this document as a reference only and be sure to contact the MBA Admissions Office for confirmation.***

*Last revised in September 2019. Please note that this Language Policy document is subject to change regularly and without prior notice.*

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# INSEAD Language Proficiency Measurement Scale

INSEAD uses a four-level scale which measures language competency. This is in line with the Common European Framework of Reference for language levels (CEFR). Below is a table which indicates the proficiency needed to fulfil INSEAD language requirement.

To be admitted to the MBA Programme, a candidate must have a “fluent” level in English. A candidate also needs to validate at least a “practical” level of knowledge of a second language as soon as possible when they join the programme. These two languages are referred to as your “Entry languages”.

A candidate must also validate at least a “basic” level of understanding of a third language before graduation. This will be referred to as “Exit language”.

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION	INSEAD REQUIREMENTS
Native	Ability to communicate spontaneously, very fluently and precisely in more complex situations. <b>Equivalent to C2 on CEFR scale.</b>	
Fluent	Ability to communicate very fluently and precisely in complex situations. <b>Equivalent to C1 on CEFR scale.</b>	Minimum Required Level for English Proficiency
Business	Ability to interact with a degree of fluency and communicate on a wide range of subjects including in a professional context. <b>Equivalent to B2 on CEFR scale.</b>	
Practical	Ability to understand and communicate on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure etc. <b>Equivalent to B1 on CEFR scale.</b>	Minimum Required Level for Entry Language
Basic	Ability to communicate in a simple and direct exchange of information on routine matters. <b>Equivalent to A2 on CEFR scale.</b>	Minimum Required Level for Exit Language
Beginner	Ability to communicate in a simple way, using familiar, everyday basic phrases. <b>Equivalent to A1 on CEFR scale.</b>	

## **Native Languages - Please note the following:**

- ✓ The definition of a native language is the first language you have been exposed to from birth and the language in which you consider yourself most fluent and skilled. Therefore, it is not necessary for you to certify your declared native language.
- ✓ Your native language will automatically be listed in your final transcript and cannot be changed once you have declared it in your application.
- ✓ You may declare a second native language in your application. Please note that proof will be required to validate your second declared native language.

# Summary of INSEAD MBA Language Requirements

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## Entry Language Requirement

There are 2 Entry Language requirements:

- ✓ A candidate must be fluent in English
- ✓ A candidate must have at least a B1 “Practical” level of knowledge in a second language

The certification requirements will differ for each candidate, depending on whether English is your native language or not.

*(More details can be found on pages 5 & 6.)*

## Exit Language Requirement

### **Exit Language validation is a requirement to graduate**

You are required to certify an ability to speak a third, commercially useful, language at A2 “Basic” level in order to graduate from the programme.

The Exit language requirement does not need to be certified before the start of the programme. This can be done any time before or during the MBA Programme (only up to the end of P3 if you are taking a test with FL&C).

Please note that if your Exit language requirement has not been fulfilled by the end of the MBA Programme, your MBA diploma will not be awarded at the time of graduation.

*(More details can be found on page 7.)*

# English Proficiency Certification

**If English is not your native language**, then official English certification must be sent with your application.

Only the following methods are considered as acceptable means of certification for English Language proficiency.

- **A UNIVERSITY DEGREE** - *a minimum of one full-time academic year, taught exclusively in English, with a diploma received from that host university (an exchange programme does not qualify.)*

The transcripts should clearly mention the language of instruction is English to complete an application.

- **TOEFL\***

[www.toefl.org](http://www.toefl.org) Internet-based test (*recommended minimum score: 105*)

- **PTE Academic\***

<https://pearsonpte.com> (*recommended minimum score: 72*)

- **TOEIC\***

[www.toeic.com](http://www.toeic.com) Listening & Reading (*recommended minimum score: 950*) **AND** Speaking ((*Recommended minimum score: 190*) & Writing sections (*recommended minimum score: 170*))

- **CPE\* - Certificate of Proficiency in English**

<http://www.cambridgeesol.org/exams/cpe.htm> (*recommended minimum score: Grade B*)

- **IELTS Academic\***

[www.ielts.org](http://www.ielts.org) (*recommended minimum score: 7.5*)

\* *To be valid, the acceptable tests above must be less than two years old, prior to the application deadline, to which you are applying.*

The combination of your native language and your proof of English proficiency is sufficient means to satisfy the 2 Entry language requirement.

# MBA Entry Language Requirement

**If English is your native language**, we do not require proof to certify your level of English.

To satisfy the 2 Entry language requirement, you will need to provide acceptable means of certification of your second Entry language as soon as possible.

## Acceptable means to certify competence for the Entry requirement

(other than English):

- **Second native language** **Fluent**  
Examined only on a case-by-case basis and requires evidence of actual use (i.e. schooling or higher education, not just "language spoken at home", or "mother's/father's native language", or "work experience").
- **Final Secondary School Exam** **Fluent**  
Exam and schooling must be conducted in the language:  
E.g. Brevet or Baccalauréat to validate French; Immersion programme in Canada; Abitur for German; Maturita for Italian, (for Singaporeans) GCE "A" level or "O" level for Mandarin, Tamil & Malay; Secondary Education Certificate for Hindi or other national Indian languages (10<sup>th</sup> grade minimum) and for Afrikaans, etc.
- **University education** **Business**  
a) Conducted in the language (certification required).  
b) A university major or minor in the language.
- **Certification from state-recognised cultural or commercial bodies currently known to INSEAD** **According to performance**  
You are free to choose which Entry/Exit languages you declare, but it is your responsibility to ensure that the languages you choose are compatible and can be tested (both oral and written) by an official institution. Only certificates from official bodies\* are recognised as acceptable means of certification for the Entry and Exit language requirement and must be less than 2 years old from the application deadline to which you apply.  
*\* Please check your private language institution for validation with your Admissions Officer.*
- **Written and oral tests with FL&C (by appointment only – see Useful Links page 8 for FL&C details)** **According to performance**  
Language Evaluation Tests (written and oral) are available by appointment with FL&C. The written test can be taken during INSEAD test sessions (please contact FL&C to know the dates), or in the future student's country of residence.  
To organise a written test in the country of residence, the future student must find a "Proctor" (e.g.: from a reputable and recognised language school or university). The proctor must be approved by FL&C. Any charges requested by the proctor for their services remain the student's responsibility. The oral test can be organised either face to face or via *Skype*. Appointments for tests must be made one month in advance. Test results are sent directly to the MBA Admissions at INSEAD.

# MBA Exit Language Requirement

In order to make the most of your INSEAD experience, both academically and socially, we strongly encourage you to put as much time and effort into improving your Exit language before the start of the programme.

## Exit language validation is a requirement for Graduation

To be eligible for Graduation, students must validate at least A2 “Basic” level of knowledge in a commercially useful language which is the official language of a country other than one’s native or Entry language.

*Please note that you cannot change your Exit language once declared to the MBA Admissions Office.*

The Exit requirement can be certified by using the same means available for validating the Entry requirement as detailed on page 6.

*NB. Students going to Wharton in P5 should plan on certifying their Exit language prior to the exchange in order to fulfil the language requirement in time for graduation.*

Please note that we take into account linguistic similarities between the Exit language and the declared Entry language.

*For example INSEAD will not allow the following combinations:*

*Danish-Norwegian-Swedish*

*Finnish-Estonian*

*Bahasa Indonesia-Bahasa Malaysia*

*Dutch-Afrikaans*

*Slovak-Czech*

*Croatian-Serbian-Bosnian-Macedonian*

*Mandarin-Cantonese-Taiwanese-Hokkien*

*Hindi-Urdu*

*(Several Indian national languages are also linguistically similar – please check with the Admissions Office for confirmation.)*

## Useful Links and FAQs

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**Please find below some useful documents to help you prepare your languages for studying on the INSEAD MBA Programme.**

[MBA Language Partner, FL&C](#)

[Official Language Tests recognised by INSEAD](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions](#)