



Ahmet Palazoglu
Chair, Assembly of the
Academic Senate
Faculty Representative,
UC Board of Regents
Academic Senate

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April 1, 2026

Academic Senate Division Chairs

Re: New Scale and Minimum Score for the Internet-Based Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL iBT)

Dear Divisional Chairs:

On behalf of the Academic Council, I am pleased to transmit the attached letter from the Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools ([BOARS](#)) regarding a recent update to the minimum score for the Internet-based Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL iBT).

As described in the BOARS letter, the Educational Testing Service has introduced a new scoring scale for the TOEFL iBT effective January 21, 2026, prompting BOARS to establish a revised systemwide minimum score of 4.5. This change is intended to align with the new scoring framework and maintain consistency in expectations for English language proficiency across approved examinations.

I ask that you please share this information with your Committee on Admissions, as well as other interested faculty on your campus, as appropriate.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Ahmet Palazoglu
Chair, Academic Council

cc: Academic Council
Provost & Executive Vice President Newman
Vice President & Vice Provost Gullatt
Associate Vice Provost and Executive Director Yoon-Wu
Senate Division Executive Directors
Senate Executive Director Lin



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BOARD OF ADMISSIONS AND RELATIONS WITH SCHOOLS (BOARS)
David Volz, Chair
david.volz@ucr.edu

March 6, 2026

Ahmet Palazoglu
Chair, Academic Council

RE: New Scale and Minimum Score for the Test of English as a Foreign
Language Internet-Based Test (TOEFL iBT) Exam

Dear Chair Palazoglu,

On behalf of UC’s Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS), I am writing to inform the Divisions about BOARS’ recent decision to establish a new minimum score for the Test of English as a Foreign Language internet-based test (TOEFL iBT) exam. Effective January 21, 2026, the Educational Testing Services’ (ETS’) scoring scale for the TOEFL iBT exam changed from the traditional 0-120 scale (includes whole-point increments) to an updated 1-6 scale (includes half-point increments). Based on the traditional 0-120 scale, UC’s systemwide minimum score for demonstrating English language proficiency is 80 for undergraduate admissions, and Divisions have the flexibility to increase their minimum score above 80 based on their campus goals and needs. Therefore, UC’s minimum score needed to be adjusted to align with the updated 1-6 scale. More information and ETS’ alignments of the current vs. new scoring scale can be found [here](#).

During their meetings on January 9th and February 6th, BOARS discussed the new scoring scale for the TOEFL iBT Exam and reviewed [background information and preliminary data](#) provided by UCOP’s Office of Undergraduate Admissions. BOARS discussed the advantages and disadvantages of setting a minimum of 4.0 vs. 4.5 on the new scale, including consideration of a pilot period during which data will be collected to assess whether BOARS’ new minimum score needs to be readjusted. Based on UCOP’s recommendations and BOARS’ deliberations, during

their meeting on March 6th BOARS unanimously voted in favor of establishing a new minimum TOEFL score (using the new scale) of 4.5 without the need for a pilot period. Although a score of 4.5 may exclude some applicants who would have met the benchmark based on the traditional scale (see Table 2 within UCOP's brief), this minimum score will ensure 1) that students have sufficient English language preparation when they matriculate to UC and 2) consistency in performance need to demonstrate proficiency across the different English language exam options, including the International English Language Testing System and Duolingo English Test (see Table 3 within UCOP's brief). Consistent with existing policy, Divisions will continue to have the flexibility to increase their minimum score above 4.5 based on their campus goals and needs.

Thank you for your assistance in conveying this information to the Divisions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Volz', with a stylized flourish at the end.

David Volz, Chair
BOARS