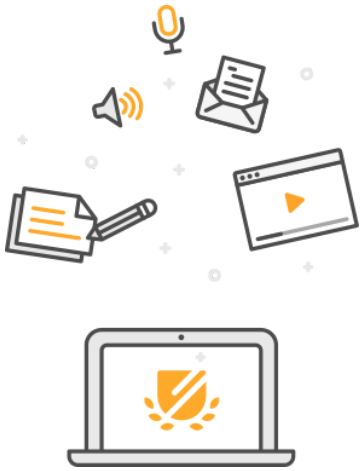
duolingo english test



New Accepting Institution
GETTING STARTED GUIDE

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A Letter from Luis

Greetings!

Welcome to the Duolingo family! We launched the Duolingo English Test in 2016 as part of our mission to lower barriers to education. Since then, we have grown tremendously with the support of innovative institutions around the world like yours.

As a former international applicant from Guatemala, I am so grateful for the work that you do—access to education positively changed the course of my life. Today, there are so many inspiring and intelligent international students that, with access to education, will transform our communities and institutions.

You are doing important work, and hopefully the Duolingo English Test can support your efforts. In this guide you can learn more about the tool and how to use it.

If you have any questions about Duolingo or the Duolingo English Test, don't hesitate to reach out to us.

Thanks for joining us in our mission. We wish you and your students success in the coming year.

With gratitude,

Luis von Ahn
Founder and CEO, Duolingo

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Duolingo English Test Summary

The Duolingo English Test is a modern language proficiency tool designed for today's international students and institutions. It offers an English proficiency score, video interview, and writing sample in an accessible, efficient, and secure testing experience.

Brought to you by Duolingo, the world's most popular online language learning platform, the Duolingo English Test supports Duolingo's mission to make education accessible to all. The online test is available anywhere, anytime from a computer with a webcam and microphone.

The test is designed to measure the entire spectrum of English language ability from basic to very proficient. These levels correspond to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). Scores are reported out of 160 in 5-point increments.

The Duolingo English Test is a computer adaptive test; test items vary based on the test taker's performance in real time. The questions draw from a very large pool of test items, so every test experience is unique.

The proficiency score is calculated by a computer adaptive engine, while the entire test session is certified by a human proctor to verify the test taker's identity and detect instances of rule breaking. The results, including video interview and writing sample, are available within 48 hours of the test session.

Using the latest research and technology, the Duolingo English Test is an innovative testing experience that provides a comprehensive picture of English language ability.

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Implementing the Duolingo English Test

Below outlines how acceptance of the Duolingo English Test is implemented at an institution.

1. Creation of the institution's results dashboard

- Description: Duolingo creates a results dashboard that is accessible via login credentials where you can review Duolingo English Test scores, video interviews, and writing samples.
- Timeframe: < 24 hours

2. Institution listed in test taker sharing options

- Description: Test takers can select your institution by name when sharing certified results.
- Timeframe: < 24 hours

3. Communication of acceptance of the Duolingo English Test

- Description: The Duolingo English Test is listed on the institution's international applicant and student webpages as appropriate. In addition, email invites can be sent to international candidates informing them of the testing option. Example copy for the website and emails can be found later in this guide.
- Timeframe: As soon as possible

4. CRM integration of Duolingo English Test results (optional)

- Description: The Duolingo English Test results can automatically flow into your CRM. There is a turnkey integration with the Slate reader. Other CRMs require configuration of a public API.
- Timeframe: Varies; Can be complete within 24 hours

5. Purchase of test coupons (optional)

- Description: The institution can purchase test coupons on behalf of candidates. Results are automatically shared with their results dashboard.
- Timeframe: Varies; Can be available instantly via the dashboard

6. Training for admissions office

- Description: Personalized training for those that work with international applicants, to train them on the test Can be booked in 30-minute or 1-hour slots, and typically delivered remotely
- Timeframe: As soon as possible (depending on availability)

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Test Overview

An international candidate can take the Duolingo English Test online anywhere, anytime—no traveling to a test center or appointment needed. They can take the test from any computer with an internet connection, a webcam, and microphone.

The registration fee is $49 USD, and the test can be completed in under an hour. The results are certified within 48 hours of test session completion, and they are immediately available to send to an unlimited number of institutions for no additional cost.

The test is divided into three sections:

1. **Introduction and onboarding** *~10 minutes*
    - Orients the test taker to the test format and rules
    - Tests the computer's camera, speakers, and microphone
    - Verifies test taker's identity with a government issued-photo ID

2. **Computer adaptive test** *~35 Minutes*
    - Evaluates reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills
    - Test item difficulty adapts based on performance
    - Responses to the writing prompt and video interview will be shared along with the results.

3. **Video interview** *~10 Minutes*
    - Test takers are shown two questions, from a pool of hundreds, and given 30 seconds to choose which to answer.
    - Video interview questions allow for 1 - 3 minutes responses and writing sample questions allow for 3 - 5 minutes responses.
    - Test takers can review their responses to the video interview and writing prompts before sharing with institutions.

To see a short summary of the test experience, watch a video overview. For more information about the test requirements, visit our applicants page.

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Test Process

Although the Duolingo English Test is taken from home, the results are still proctored through remote human proctors and artificial intelligence. The information below outlines the steps from a test being taken through being provided for review for institutions.

1. Testing *~1 hour*

- Description: Test taker visits the applicants page and completes the test in a quiet, well-lit room. The test requires a computer with a webcam and microphone.
- Responsibility: Test Taker

2. Proctoring ~24-48 Hours

- Description: Recorded test sessions are immediately sent to the Duolingo proctoring team where multiple human proctors watch each test session. In addition, computer vision and biometrics authentication help verify the test taker's identity and identify instances of rule violations. Certified results are returned to the test taker.
- Responsibility: Duolingo

3. Sharing

- Test takers select the institutions to which they want to send their results. They can share with an unlimited number of institutions for free.
- Responsibility: Test Taker

4. Receiving

- The institution receives an email notification that says "[Name] has shared their Duolingo English Test score with you" and results will immediately be available within the dashboard. The results may be available via an admissions CRM through an API integration.
- Responsibility: Institution

5. Reviewing

- Test results can be accessed on either the Duolingo English Test dashboard or via an institutional CRM to review the proficiency score, video interview, and writing sample of each test taker.
- Responsibility: Institution

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Security and Integrity

Duolingo recognizes that reliable and secure test results are critical to the institutions who use them. Therefore, the integrity of the Duolingo English Test is the highest priority.

Since the Duolingo English Test is administered in a more accessible way, it calls for innovative security protocols. As a result, the Duolingo English Test integrates a series of advanced security measures so that you can be confident in the results. In addition, Duolingo is committed to ongoing enhancements as technology evolves.

The protocols below are integral to **preventing violations**.

PREEMPTIVE MEASURES

The onboarding section details the test rules to prevent activities that will invalidate results. The following are examples of actions that are not allowed:

- Interacting with anyone during the test
- Use of headphones or earbuds
- Looking off screen
- Moving out of frame of the camera
- Accessing any outside material or devices

INNOVATIVE DESIGN AND ADAPTIVE ADMINISTRATION

The innovative design of the Duolingo English Test guarantees that each test session is unique.

The test items are constructed using machine learning and natural language processing technologies which allow for the generation of an extremely large pool of test items compared to traditional exams.

The test difficulty and sequence of questions adapts to each test taker. There is no set number of questions. The test ends when the grading engine has reached a confidence threshold in the test taker's score.

BROWSER LOCKDOWN

If a test taker attempts to access another application or plugin during the test, the test session will end automatically, and they will have to restart the test.

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Security and Integrity (Cont.)

The additional protocols below are integral to **detecting violations**.

THREE-TIERED IDENTITY VERIFICATION

The test taker's identity is verified by a trained human proctor and supported by computer vision and artificial intelligence by comparing an approved government-issued photo ID, a picture of the test taker, and a video of the test session.

SOPHISTICATED DATA FORENSICS

Analytics identify invalid results through irregular response patterns. Integrated test items are designed to detect rule breaking.

ADVANCED PROCTORING PROCESS

In order to certify the results, trained human proctors review each test session for 75+ different behaviors in a three-stage monitoring process. For additional security, this process is also supported by computer vision techniques and artificial intelligence. Using the test video, audio, and screen recording, proctors examine:

- The test taker's environment
- Eye movement
- Background noise
- Irregular behavior
- And other confidential behaviors and activities

VIDEO INTERVIEW AND WRITING SAMPLE

Permanent video interview and writing sample are shared with accepting institutions to ensure congruity by comparing score with the test taker's productive skills. The video interview also serves as a record of identity verification.

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Test Scores and Interpretation

The Duolingo English Test is designed to assess real-world language ability by measuring reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. Each test taker's proficiency is reported as a holistic score on a scale from 10 – 160. The scores align to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), an international standard of language proficiency.

For each level on this scale, we provide a description of English abilities and examples of the functional skills a test taker should possess.

CONCORDANCE

In addition, we have conducted research to develop tools that make it easier for you to compare Duolingo English Test results with TOEFL iBT® and IELTS® academic module results. Based on the research that links Duolingo English Test scores to the overall TOEFL iBT and IELTS scores, Duolingo has developed a concordance table to help you make well-informed proficiency decisions. For a precise view on concordance, visit our scores page.

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Research and Efficacy

The Duolingo English Test was built using the latest research and technology to make it accurate, reliable, and practical for test takers and institutions.

CORRELATION

The research conducted to date has produced evidence that the Duolingo English Test scores are substantially correlated with other popular English test scores. The correlations between the Duolingo English Test and both the TOEFL and IELTS are above 0.76 and statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). Meanwhile, the most recent study relating these two tests' scores to each other reports a correlation of 0.73 (ETS, 2010). This indicates that the Duolingo test construct is aligned with TOEFL and IELTS as well as they are aligned with each other.

RELIABILITY

The reliability of a test score is an indicator of the extent to which the one score that the test taker is using can be trusted to be consistent. Two of the methods in which the Duolingo English Test score consistency is evaluated are internal consistency and test-retest reliability (La Flair & Settles, 2019).

The internal consistency of a test is an indicator of the extent to which the items on the test are measuring the same ability. This measure is bound between 0 and 1. The internal consistency is $r = 0.91$, which indicates a high degree of confidence in the test's internal consistency.

Test-retest reliability is a measure that indicates the extent to which a test taker would receive the same score should they take the test again (within a reasonably short time frame). This measure is a correlation coefficient, bound between -1 and 1. The test retest reliability of the test is $r = 0.85$, which is moderate to high for a computer-adaptive test. Such coefficients typically range from 0.8 to 0.9 for standardized tests with identical forms (non-adaptive).

PREDICTIVE VALIDITY

Perhaps most importantly, recent research has indicated that the Duolingo English Test may even outperform more popular tests where it counts the most—predicting how the ESL faculty who support international students on campus will rate the English proficiency and the support needs of incoming international students (Ishikawa, Hall, & Settles, 2016).

Duolingo is committed to continuing its own research and collaborating with accepting institutions and independent researchers to further validate the Duolingo English Test and substantiate previous findings.

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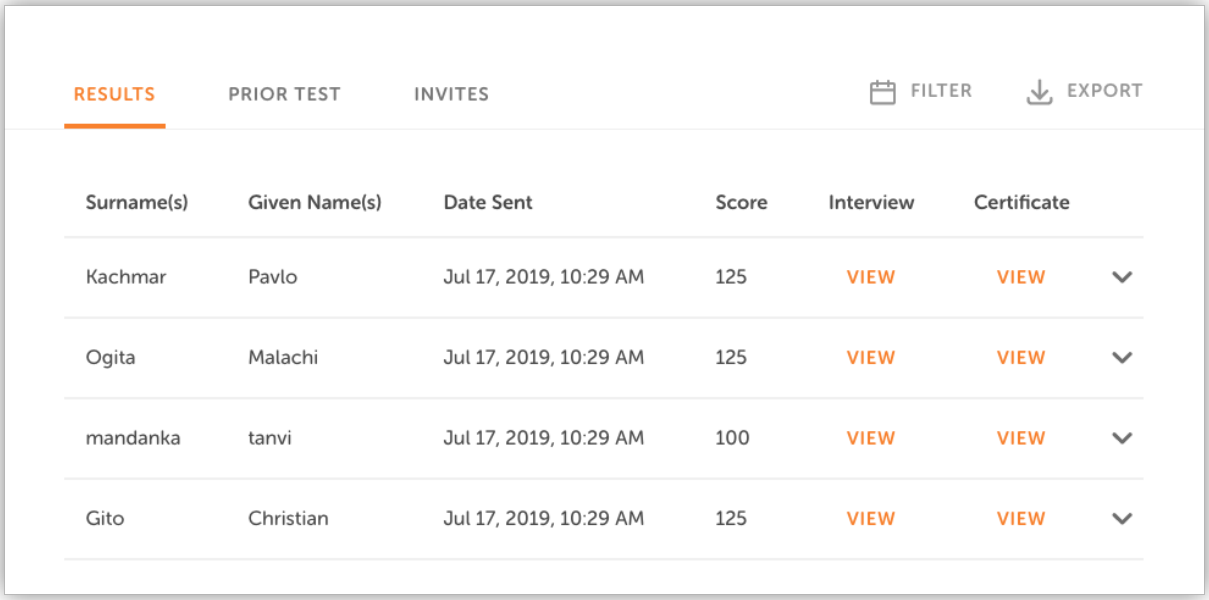
Dashboard

You can review all of the Duolingo English Test results you've received on your institution's dashboard by logging in with your username and password at englishtest.duolingo.com/dashboard.



The dashboard contains the following information:

RESULTS

This tab contains results from the *current version* of the test.

- **Surname(s)** - Test taker's surname as it appears on their ID
- **Given Name(s)** - Test taker's given name as it appears on their ID
- **Date Sent** - The date and time (UTC) the test was sent to the institution
- **Score** - Proficiency score on a scale out of 160. For more information about scores visit englishtest.duolingo.com/scores
- **Interview** - Click this button to review the video interview and writing sample in a new window
- **Certificate** - Displays the score, name, date, picture of test taker, and a short description of their abilities with the English language
- **[v] Symbol** - Expands the row to reveal additional information about the test taker

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Dashboard (Cont.)

- **Picture** - Picture of the test taker from the time of the test
- **Email** - Email address associated with the test taker's account
- **Date of Birth** - Test taker's birthday as it appears on their ID
- **Coupon** - The coupon code used by test takers to receive a full or partial discount on the test. If blank, no coupon was applied. See the "Test Coupons" section in this guide for more information.
- **Applicant IDs** - These are optional numbers supplied during the sharing process that helps institutions match the result to an existing application, e.g. Common or Coalition App ID.
- **"Add notes..."** - An optional text field is available so an institution may take notes on any test taker on the dashboard.

PRIOR TEST

This tab contains results from the prior version of the test which was on a 100-point scale and does not include scored, long-form speaking and writing. Learn more.

INVITES

This tab tracks the status of students you have invited to take the test. To invite students to take the test, click "SEND INVITE" on the top-left.

FILTER

Results can be filtered in a date range by clicking "Filter by Date". Select the date range, and then click "Okay". Filters can be removed by clicking the (Remove) on the bottom.

EXPORT

A spreadsheet of all results, or a filtered subset, can be downloaded in .CSV format by clicking "EXPORT". The video interviews and writing samples will be accessible via a URL in the spreadsheet.

NAVIGATING

The dashboard will display 10 results at a time arranged by the test date. To move between results pages, click [<] or [>].

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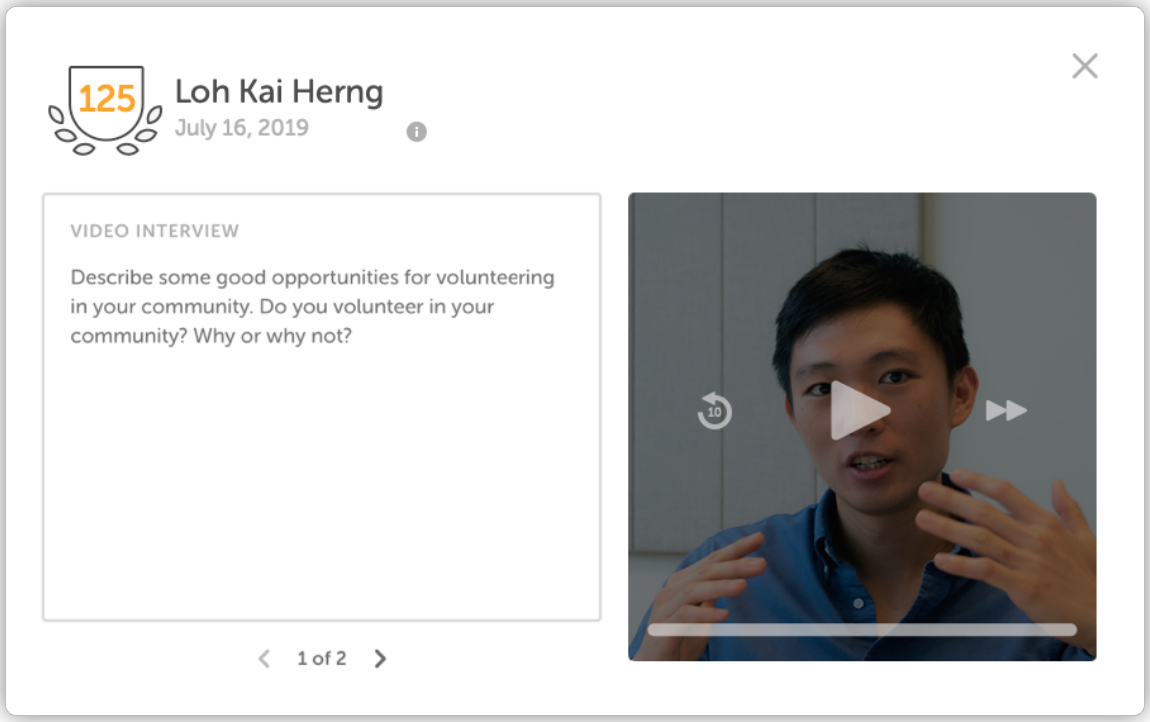
Video Interview and Writing Sample



FORMAT

Video Interview

For the video interview, test takers are presented 2 question topics. They have 30 seconds to choose 1 question in which to respond. Their response will require speaking for 1-3 minutes.

Hover over the playback window to reveal controls.

- **Play/Pause**
- **Rewind 10 Seconds**
- **Skip to Answer** – Jump to the recorded response by clicking the >> arrows
    - **Next Question** – Jump to the next question by clicking the >| arrow

Writing Sample

For the video interview, test takers are presented 2 question topics. They have 30 seconds to choose 1 question in which to respond. Their response will require writing for 3-5 minutes.

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CRM Integration

SLATE INTEGRATION

If you are an institution that uses Slate as your CRM, you can integrate Duolingo English Test results in a couple easy steps.

In order to view the scores shared with your institution on the Slate dashboard, the contact who manages the Slate account at your institution will need to configure your Slate account using an API key and Import URL. These will be provided by your Duolingo representative.

Detailed instructions on this process can be found in this Slate article.

PUBLIC API

For other CRM's, you can integrate Duolingo English Test results through an easy-to-integrate API.

For more information, visit englishtest.duolingo.com/api. If you have any questions about integrating results into your admissions software, contact your Duolingo representative.

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Use Cases

Because of its accessibility, integrated video interview and writing sample, and rapid turnaround of results, the Duolingo English Test is an effective tool for various uses. This section will explore some of the general and proactive use cases.

GENERAL USE

This category is for consistent usage based on admissions criteria or institution workflows. Commonly, the Duolingo English Test would be listed on a prospective student website and marketing material.

- English proficiency requirement
- Interview service
- Placement test

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GENERAL USE - ENGLISH PROFICIENCY REQUIREMENT

The Duolingo English Test is a fully acceptable alternative to the TOEFL, IELTS, or other standardized tests. In this way, institutions typically set a minimum score threshold using the concordance table or other information. Then, they make applicants aware of this option by placing this information under their admissions requirements for international applicants on their website or in their applicant guides when they request information.

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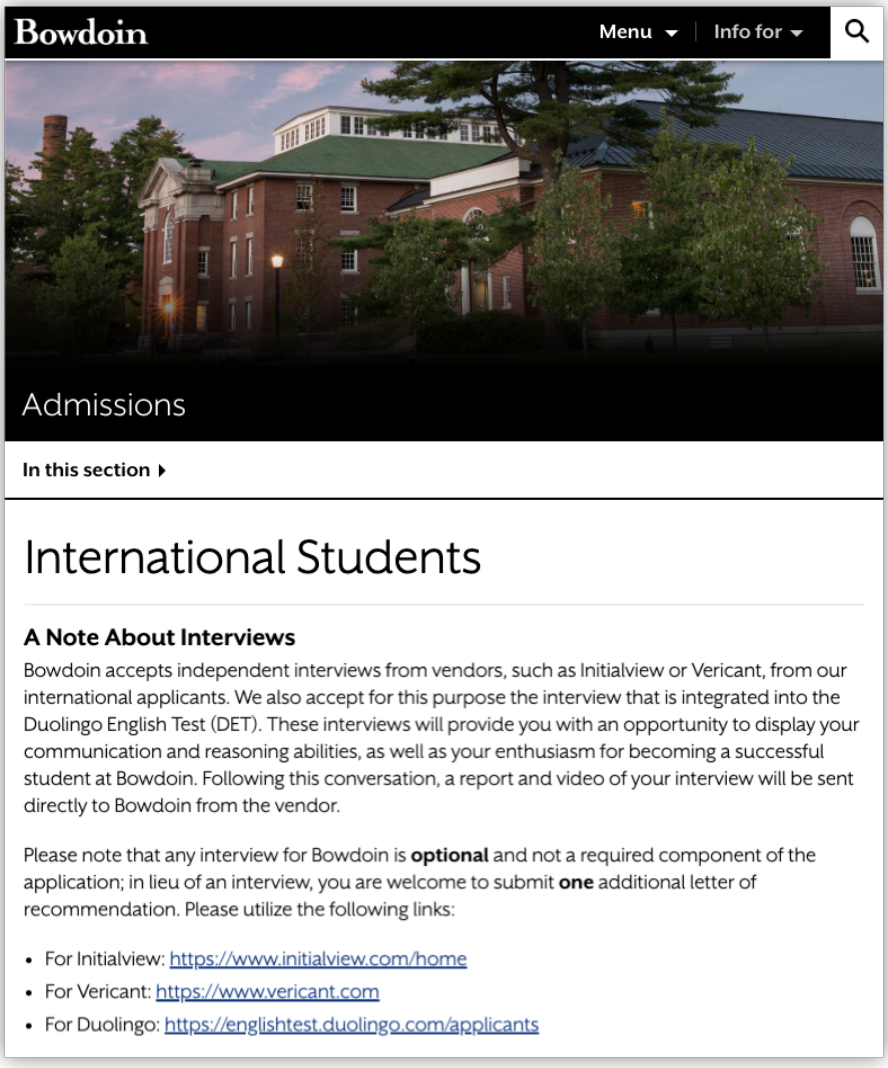
GENERAL USE - INTERVIEW SERVICE

Interview services have grown in popularity over the years. These help provide valuable information about candidates by observing their English production to open response interview questions. These also help verify the candidate's identity and serve as a gauge in the candidate’s interest in an institution. However, these can cost more that $200 and take weeks to schedule. For this reason, institutions are turning to the Duolingo English Test to offer a more convenient and less expensive interview option for applicants. The Duolingo English Test is available on demand and results can be shared with a school within 48 hours. Even if this isn’t required of every applicant, it can be listed as an optional test that will help in evaluating international applications.



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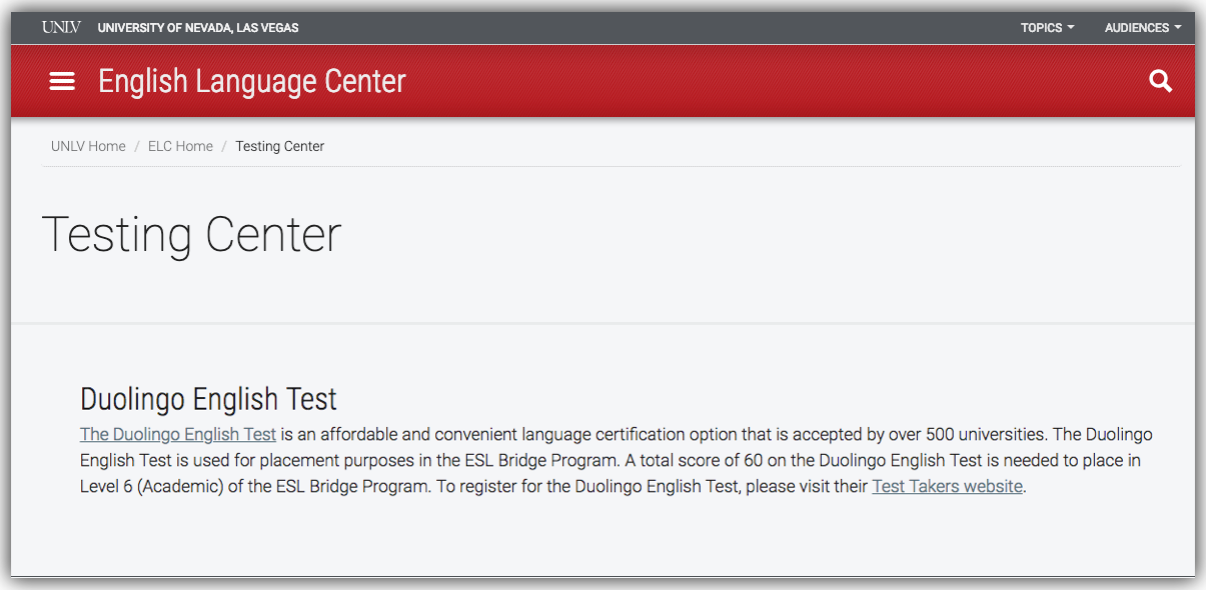
GENERAL USE - PLACEMENT FOR INTENSIVE ENGLISH PROGRAMS

Many schools offer intensive English programs for non-native speakers to prepare them for college coursework or careers. There are various levels of student support based on their English proficiency. The Duolingo English Test can be used at the beginning of the program to place them in the appropriate courses or early benchmarking of their abilities. Since the test is accessed online, these placement tests can be completed pre-arrival. It can also be used in the middle or at the end of the program to measure progress or ensure that they are prepared to begin undergraduate coursework. Like English proficiency requirements, these programs often use concordance or on campus assessment to determine the Duolingo English Test scores that correspond to placement in the appropriate courses or the allocation of support resources.



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PROACTIVE USE

This category is for on-demand usage or on an as-needed basis. The Duolingo English Test will typically be introduced to candidates via email by admissions personnel.

- Candidates missing testing
- Borderline applicants
- Distinguishing between exceptional candidates
- Further evaluating waitlist candidates
- Gauge of interest
- Athletic recruiting
- Reaching new markets
- Scholarship or special interest populations

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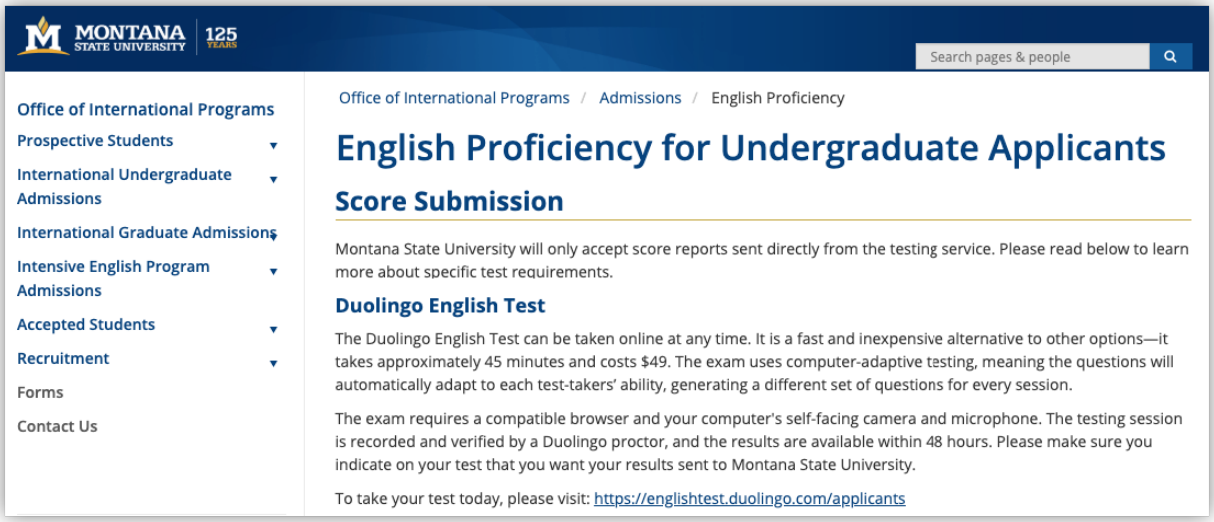
Website Copy

Below is an example of copy you can include on your website. To avoid confusion with the Duolingo language-learning app, it is recommended to hyperlink to englishtest.duolingo.com/applicants.

Duolingo English Test
Minimum score: [Number]

The Duolingo English Test is an online English proficiency test that can be taken online, on demand, in under an hour for only $49. The test is taken online via a computer with a front-facing camera.. The test includes a proficiency score, video interview, and writing sample which are shared with [institution name] when you send your results. Certified results are available within 48 hours of the test session.



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Email Templates

EMAIL TEMPLATE - GENERAL USE

Subject: English test opportunity for [INSTITUTION NAME]

Dear [NAME],

We are writing to inform you of a new language proficiency option available to international applicants starting in fall ‘19. We now accept the Duolingo English Test, a convenient and affordable English proficiency test that can be taken online, on demand, anywhere in the world.

The test requires an internet connection and a computer with a front-facing camera and microphone. You should be in a quiet, well-lit room with your computer for about an hour. The registration fee is $49, and you can get started by visiting englishtest.duolingo.com/applicants.

As part of your admissions requirements, you will have until [DATE] to complete the test.

When you receive your results, select [INSTITUTION NAME] from the dropdown menu to share your score with us. You will receive an email notification to confirm once your test has been scored and shared.

If you experience any technical problems with the test, you can contact support by clicking the orange “HELP” button on the bottom right side of your screen, or you can also email them directly at englishtest-support@duolingo.com. Please do not contact the admissions office as we cannot assist you with technical issues.

Thank you, and best of luck on the test.

Sincerely,

[NAME]

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EMAIL TEMPLATE - PROACTIVE USE

Subject: Supplement your application to [INSTITUTION NAME]

Dear [NAME],

Thank you for applying to [INSTITUTION]. As part of our review process, we would like to give you the opportunity to provide additional information about your English ability by taking the Duolingo English Test.

The results from Duolingo allow us to evaluate your English abilities beyond what other testing might provide as we are able to see and hear you, in your own voice, through the video component.

The Duolingo English Test is a fast (under an hour), affordable test ($49 USD) that can be taken online, anywhere in the world. All you need is an internet connection and a computer with a self-facing camera and microphone. Results are available within 48 hours and can be shared instantly with [INSTITUTION]. To get started, visit englishtest.duolingo.com/applicants.

This is an optional supplemental component to our review process that may assist our readers in evaluating your application. If you choose to take the exam, please do so by [DEADLINE]. Thank you in advance for considering this request.

Sincerely,

[NAME]

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EMAIL TEMPLATE - MISSING REQUIRED TESTING

Subject: Action Requested: English Proficiency Requirement for [INSTITUTION NAME]

Dear [NAME],

[INSTITUTION NAME] has not yet received English proficiency results as part of your application. We are writing to inform you of a new testing option available. The Duolingo English Test is a convenient and affordable test that can be taken online, on demand from your home.

The test can be taken online from a computer with self-facing camera and microphone. You should be in a quiet, well-lit room with your computer for about an hour. The registration fee is $49, and you can get started by visiting englishtest.duolingo.com/applicants.

When you receive your results, you can send them instantly for free to [INSTITUTION NAME]. If you experience any technical problems with the test, you can contact support by clicking the orange “HELP” button on the bottom right side of your screen, or you can also email them directly at englishtest-support@duolingo.com. Please do not contact the admissions office, as we cannot assist you with technical issues.

Thank you, and best wishes on your testing experience.

Sincerely,

[NAME]

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Test Coupons

In all use cases, the cost of the test is incurred by the test taker. If an institution wishes to pay for the test on behalf of a test taker, they can purchase test coupons by contacting their Duolingo representative or visiting englishtest.duolingo.com/buy.

For purchases of more than 100 test coupons, there are volume discounts available. Test coupons expire after 1 year.

If an institution wishes to pay for only a portion of the test, partial coupons are available. For more information on bulk purchases or partial coupons, reach out to your Duolingo point of contact.

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Support

We aim to help you and your applicants take full advantage of the Duolingo English Test anytime, anywhere. Our commitment to you includes:

DEDICATED INSTITUTION CONTACT

- You have a dedicated engagement manager (lead point of contact) and additional technical support for on demand support and consultation.

GETTING STARTED AND TRAINING

- Virtual trainings for you and your colleagues are always available on demand. These trainings are highly recommended for new accepting institutions, new team members, or new usage of the test.

EMAIL NOTIFICATIONS

- Automated email notifications from Duolingo when a verified test score is shared with your institution to an email address of your choice.

PRODUCT UPDATES AND RESOURCES

- Quarterly updates via email outlining product updates, announcements, and other resources to help maximize success using the Duolingo English Test and stay in the know for how other institutions are using and benefiting from it.

PRIVACY

- Duolingo adheres to responsible data security practices, and is compliant with all global data security and privacy regulations.

QUICK LINKS

- Frequently asked questions, visit englishtest.duolingo.com/faq
- Technical support for test takers, they should click the orange “Help” button on the bottom right of any screen when they are logged in to their account
- Technical support for institutions, reach out to your Duolingo contact or email institutional@duolingo.com

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