

NCUK

**Pre-sessional
English**

NCUK
UNIVERSITY PATHWAYS



Pre-sessional English

Programme and Module Overview

Bridge the gap. Achieve success.

Overview

The NCUK Pre-sessional English programme is designed for international students who demonstrate strong academic potential but need to enhance their English language skills and level before starting an NCUK academic pathway programme. It acts as a vital bridge, equipping students with the linguistic competence and confidence required to progress to NCUK's International Foundation Year or Master's Preparation (Extended) programmes.

This programme provides a focused and supportive learning environment, ensuring students are not just learning a language but learning how to use English effectively in an academic setting.

Students will study a programme that best suits their needs, based on their current English language ability. The aim is to help students reach the equivalent of IELTS 5.0, which is the standard entry requirement for the NCUK International Foundation Year and NCUK Master's Preparation (Extended) programmes.

Entry requirements

To be eligible for the programme, students will need to meet the following criteria:

- **Pre-Sessional 300:**
IELTS 3.5/CEFR A2 or equivalent.
Students entering at this level will complete the full 300-hour programme (Terms 0-3).
- **Pre-Sessional 200:**
IELTS 4.0/CEFR B1 or equivalent.
Students entering at this level will complete a 200-hour programme (Terms 1-3).
- **Pre-Sessional 100:**
IELTS 4.5/CEFR B1 or equivalent
Students entering at this level will complete a 100-hour programme (Terms 2-3).



Programme structure

The Pre-sessional English programme is divided into a series of terms; each designed to meet students at their current level of English and build progressively towards academic readiness:

- **Term 0 – Foundation Skills:**

For students at CEFR A2 (IELTS 3.5 equivalent), this term focuses on establishing basic English skills and essential study practices, including understanding main ideas from texts, constructing simple sentences, and using high-frequency vocabulary.

- **Term 1 – Core Academic Skills:**

At CEFR B1 (IELTS 4.0 equivalent), students expand their ability to engage with informational texts and tasks, develop paragraph-level writing, and gain confidence in delivering prepared presentations.

- **Term 2 – Academic Context and Communication:**

Building from CEFR B1 (IELTS 4.5 equivalent), students work with more abstract topics like business history, write short essays, deliver extended presentations, and take guided lecture notes.

- **Term 3 – Further Academic Preparation:**

Focusing on themes such as technology and social media, students learn to synthesise information from multiple sources, use more complex language structures, and deliver independent presentations. By the end of this term, students typically reach IELTS 5.0 or equivalent, demonstrating readiness for NCUK academic pathway programmes.

Each term is structured with targeted support and formative assessment to track progress and ensure learners are equipped with the English language and academic skills needed for further study

The Pre-sessional English programme is delivered over a flexible timeframe to meet varying student needs. Study Centres can work with their Programme Delivery Manager to tailor delivery in line with both centre and student needs. The curriculum is tailored specifically for an academic context, moving beyond academic English proficiency to concentrate on the skills essential for success on the NCUK International Foundation Year and NCUK Master's Preparation (Extended) programmes.

Core areas of focus include:

- **Academic Reading & Writing**
- **Listening & Speaking**
- **Critical Thinking**
- **Study Skills**

Duration

The programme adapts to each student's starting English language proficiency level, guiding them step-by-step to reach IELTS 5.0 equivalent.

- **Pre-Sessional 300 (IELTS 3.5 or equivalent):** 300 hour programme
- **Pre-Sessional 200 (IELTS 4.0 or equivalent):** 200 hour programme
- **Pre-Sessional 100 (IELTS 4.5 or equivalent):** 100 hour programme

Assessment, grading & certification

Assessment on the Pre-sessional English programme is carefully designed to track student progress and readiness for academic study. Each term concludes with a formative assessment, which may include coursework portfolios, timed writing tasks, oral presentations, and structured interviews that reflect real-world academic requirements. These assessments help students gain confidence and experience in planning, drafting, revising work, and responding to subject-specific prompts, all under supportive and authentic conditions.

At the end of the programme, students will take a final English language test, which will determine if they can demonstrate the required English proficiency (typically reaching IELTS 5.0 equivalent by the end of Term 3) needed to pass.

Upon successful completion, students receive a digital badge on the NCUK Learn platform. This digital badge verifies their language achievement and can be added to online CVs, LinkedIn profiles, and digital portfolios, providing a flexible, modern credential that is easily shared with universities and future employers.

The programme's assessment timeline is structured around approximately 100 hours of in-class study per 0.5 IELTS band progression, in line with international research and best practices in language education. Progress is monitored throughout via formative activities, with summative proficiency verified by the final English language test at the end of the final term.



Progression

Successful completion of the Pre-sessional English programme (by achieving IELTS 5.0 equivalent in their final English language test) provides students with a seamless transition to their chosen NCUK academic pathway programme. Students will be fully prepared to commence either the NCUK International Foundation Year or the NCUK Master's Preparation (Extended), ready to embark on the next stage of their journey to a world-class university*.

Accreditation

The Pre-sessional English programme enables existing NCUK Study Centres to widen access by admitting students who may not yet meet the required English language proficiency for direct entry onto an NCUK academic pathway programme. Study Centres that have already achieved full accreditation will go through a remote accreditation for Pre-sessional English. This process focuses on confirming that teaching staff and facilities meet the established quality standards.

Study Centre requirements

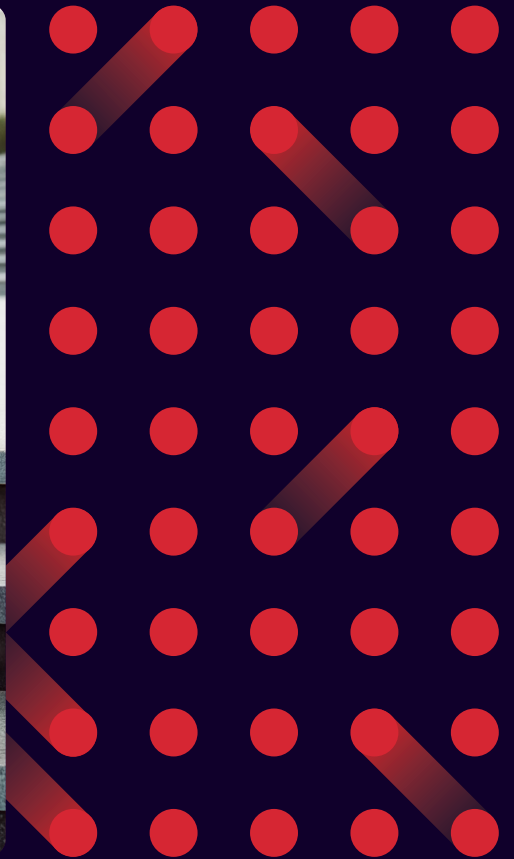
To deliver the Pre-sessional English programme, Study Centres must ensure that appropriate academic and resource requirements are in place. However, no additional requirements are necessary beyond those already established for the delivery of other NCUK academic pathway programmes. If a Study Centre is already delivering the English for Academic Purposes module, it will meet the requirements of the programme.

Teachers should hold a relevant academic qualification to UK graduate level and possess suitable language teaching credentials (for example, TELFI or be working towards a TEFL qualification), along with a minimum of two years' teaching experience.

No additional facilities are required beyond those already established for the delivery of other NCUK academic pathway programmes, aside from core programme textbooks.

**Students who do not achieve 5.0 IELTS or equivalent upon completing the Pre-sessional English may join an in-sessional English course at the beginning of their chosen NCUK academic pathway programme. They must pass a final assessment in week four to confirm continued study with NCUK.*





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