

Graduate English Academic Preparation (GEAP)

Program Handbook for Students

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University of Prince Edward Island

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I. Program Admission and UPEI Language Assessment for Placement

A. Admission

The Graduate English Academic Preparation (GEAP) program is designed for students whose first language is not English and who have already been granted conditional admission to a graduate program at UPEI but have not met the [English Requirements](#).

B. UPEI Language Assessment for Placement

When GEAP students first arrive at UPEI, they take the UPEI English assessment in order to have their language level verified and to be placed in the program. This assessment will be taken *in addition to* any existing, valid IELTS/ TOEFL/ other assessment scores that the student may have presented to Admissions.

Please note: any official IELTS or TOEFL scores must be submitted to the Admissions Office as part of the application process before taking the UPEI English assessment. These, or any updated scores, must also be presented to the English Language Centre for review before taking the UPEI English assessment.

Please note: The Admissions office makes the final decision on whether an incoming student will need the UPEI English assessment. When an incoming student's letter of acceptance states that they have been granted *conditional* admission and requiring the Graduate EAP program, they must take the UPEI English assessment to determine their starting English proficiency.

The scores on the UPEI English assessment are the final deciding factor used for placement in GEAP courses. The results are only valid at UPEI.

The assessment is a paper-based exam that is organized in the following way:

Speaking (10 minutes)

Oral interview with Program Manager/ Assistant Coordinator

Listening Comprehension (50 minutes)

Listening to passages and answering multiple-choice questions

Reading Comprehension: (50 minutes and 15 minutes)

(i) Comprehension: reading passages and answering multiple-choice questions (50)

(ii) Skimming and Scanning: reading texts and responding to short-answer questions (15)

Writing (120 minutes)

Writing a five-paragraph persuasive essay on one of four given topics

Students arriving for the English assessment must present valid photo identification (= a passport, a Canadian Permanent Residence card, a valid driver's license). Students who are not

Canadian citizens or do not have Permanent Resident status must also present their study permit for verification.

Students must be able to stay for the full duration of the assessment unless they have made special arrangements with the Program Manager prior to the test.

II. Program Structure

A. Arrival/ Start Date

GEAP is offered in the fall and winter semester and, student numbers permitting, also in the summer (July to August). Students who (i) have been granted conditional admission, who (ii) have a valid study permit and who (iii) are able to be present at the start of the course will begin in GEAP as determined by Admissions (= starting in September OR in January OR in July).

The English Language Centre will advise incoming students of the date by which they should arrive in Prince Edward Island in order to undergo language assessment *before* starting GEAP. This is usually one week or a few days before courses are due to begin.

Important note regarding arrival:

If students face delays obtaining their study permit and/ or making travel arrangements and/ or securing accommodation in PEI, they must understand that they have to arrive *latest* by the university's registration and payment deadline (please search *calendar dates* on the university's home page to confirm this). This is non-negotiable: it is not possible to start in GEAP after the university's registration deadline has passed.

B. Course Structure

GEAP is a one-level program consisting of the following courses:

1. Professional Communications (Speaking and Listening)
2. Academic Reading
3. Academic Writing
4. Research
5. Seminars

All students regardless of the type of conditional graduate admission will be taking GEAP.

A student will need to take all five courses if their language scores are below the expected requirements in Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing.

It is possible for a student to meet the graduate program requirements in some areas but not in others. They will need to take GEAP courses in any area(s) where they have not met these requirements.

While a student is enrolled in GEAP, they are not eligible to start in the graduate program to which they have conditional admission. The requirements must be met in *all* skill areas before the student is ready to leave GEAP.

A GEAP student must be enrolled in *three* of these courses in order to have full-time student status (and thus meet the requirements for a study permit).

The requirements for different graduate programs are not the same. The following tables explain course placement for (i) Education and (ii) other GEAP students (e.g. Business/ Science/Arts):

Skill Area	Current Score	Required Score	Placement
Education			
Speaking	4.5 or lower	UPEI EA* 5.0	Professional Communications
Listening	4.5 or lower	UPEI EA 5.0	Professional Communications
Reading	4.5 or lower	UPEI EA 5.0	Reading
Writing and Research	4.5 or lower	UPEI EA 5.0	Writing and Research
			Seminar**

*UPEI EA – UPEI English Assessment

**The seminars are mandatory irrespective of the English assessment score and will automatically be added to each student’s schedule.

Skill Area	Current Score	Required Score	Placement
Business/ Science/Arts			
Speaking	4.0 or lower	UPEI EA 4.5	Professional Communications
Listening	4.0 or lower	UPEI EA 4.5	Professional Communications
Reading	4.0 or lower	UPEI EA 4.5	Reading
Writing	4.5 or lower	UPEI EA 5.0	Writing and Research

and Research			
			Seminar**

*UPEI EA – UPEI English Assessment

**The seminars are mandatory irrespective of the English assessment score and will automatically be added to each student’s schedule.

The following provides **an example of the GEAP weekly schedule**. Note: As has been explained above, students take the courses where they have not met the requirements for their graduate program.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
09:00-12:00 Academic Writing	08:30-11:30 Critical Reading	09:00-12:00 Academic Writing	08:30-11:30 Critical Reading	09:00-12:00 Seminar
12:00-13:00 Lunch / 1:1	11:30-12:30 Lunch/ 1:1	12:00-13:00 Lunch/ 1:1	11:30-12:30 Lunch/ 1:1	12:00 - 1:1/ FREE
13:00-16:00 Research	12:30-15:30 Professional Communications	13:00-16:00 Research	12:30-15:30 Professional Communications	

1:1 = scheduled one-to-one appointments with Writing and Research instructor; in addition to the lunch hour, these meetings can be timetabled to take place at other times

Please note that this is an *example schedule*. The times may need to be amended according to classroom availability and departmental scheduling (i.e. instructors’ other teaching/ administrative commitments).

III. Course Requirements

A. Course Evaluation

GEAP courses focus on Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing and help students to develop fundamental skills that they will need in order to start in a North American graduate program. Students’ progress and attainment are evaluated through *formative and summative assessment*

which includes **(1) all coursework** (= the satisfactory completion of classwork and homework to a *minimum* score of 75%) and **(2) an end-of-term exam** in the courses in which they are registered. There is, however, no separate exam for Research or the Seminars.

Formative assessment is measured throughout the semester against qualities such as:

- attendance and punctuality (all courses that you are registered in are mandatory)
- autonomy (the frequency and level of support needed in order to understand and complete tasks as opposed to independence)
- contribution to class (passive versus active presence; relevance of interaction)
- effort (the extent to which a student tries his/ her very best and aims to meet his/ her potential)
- growth (showing increasing analytical skill, logical organization of work, intellectual maturity, scholarly interest etc.)
- initiative (showing drive and acting promptly, not relying on the teacher to tell one what to do)
- motivation (interest in one's graduate/ doctorate program; willingness to learn and progress; appreciating why one must complete GEAP)
- participation (being fully involved and engaged inside and outside the classroom)
- response to feedback and one-to-one support (accepting advice and constructive criticism and acting positively upon these)
- scholarly attitude (developing disciplined study habits for independent reading, note-taking, planning, etc.)

Summative assessment is carried out throughout the semester in the form of marked in-class and homework assignments (e.g. focused listening, oral presentations, reading tests, summaries, essays, timed writing, and quizzes on formatting). All coursework (including homework) must average a **minimum of 75%**.

It is imperative to understand that proof of progress must be *consistent* through all coursework, and the final exam must reflect this same level of attainment.

The final outcome will be an amalgamation of coursework and the final exams. Graduation from the GEAP program is not determined by the instructors but the overall performance of the student (formative assessment) and their academic results (summative assessment). The final decision regarding the following semester and any further GEAP requirements lies with the Program Manager and the instructors and, where necessary, will happen in consultation with the relevant faculty.

Class attendance is mandatory: unexcused absences and poor participation will lead to low course grades.

A doctor's note is required if a student misses more than three consecutive days per course/ per instructor. Missed assignments may result in a zero (as decided by the teacher). Students must always email their teacher(s) if they are going to miss class; however this does not automatically justify the absence or make it excusable - the decision will be based on the specific circumstances and the instructor's professional judgement.

The instructor is within his/ her rights to award a student a zero for any in-class work or homework assignment if the absence is not considered excusable.

B. Progressing in GEAP

As a condition of admission, successful completion of GEAP is mandatory. This is not the same as successful completion of an individual course or the semester as a whole.

If a student has not met the required level of proficiency in *any* GEAP course, they must repeat the course when it is next offered.

It takes, on average, two full, consecutive semesters for a student to reach the required level of proficiency *if* their starting level is only two half band levels (= 0.5) lower than the expected level. However, this is only a general guideline. Some students require longer than two full, consecutive semesters to reach the required scores and this is often the case where the student has arrived in GEAP with scores that are more than two half bands away from the expected level.

Students have 12-months to reach the English proficiency requirements of their designated program. See the [Graduate EAP Requirements](#) page for more information.

The table below shows the *average* progression; it is *not* a guarantee. Improvement is dependent on many factors including:

- the student's starting level in GEAP
- the characteristics of the student's first language
- aptitude and attitude
- how much time the student spends actively engaging in English (speaking/listening/reading/ writing practice)
- passing course(s) with a minimum grade of 75%
- passing final exam(s) with a score that meets the requirements for the graduate program

Entrance English Assessment Score	Number of GEAP semesters* (one semester = approximately 13 weeks of study)
3.5	2-3 semesters
4.0	2 semesters
4.5	1-2 semesters

*Please note that these are estimated times only. Students could require longer than this.

*Please note that the July-August session would only equal approximately half a semester.

C. Graduating from GEAP

Once a student has successfully reached the language requirements outlined by the graduate program to which he/ she has been conditionally accepted *in all skill areas*, they will be eligible to move into that graduate program. Please review section II: A and B above.

Upon graduation from GEAP, the English Language Centre will inform Admissions of changes to the student's status.

Students going into the M.Ed. program must contact [EdGrad Admin](#) (Jo Smith) and the [International Student Academic Coach](#) (Ashley Clark) to notify them of their status.

Students going into a Master's or Ph.D. in Science must contact their supervisor and/ or the faculty administrator.

Students going into the MBA program must contact the [MBA Program Manager](#) (Grace McCourt).

IV. Lack of Progress

If a student has still not reached the required level of proficiency after three consecutive semesters, his/ her case will be referred to Admissions and/ or the relevant faculty for a review of the student's conditional acceptance. The final decision regarding admission does not lie with the English Language Centre/ the GEAP Program but with Admissions.

It is important to be aware that students who do not progress in a timely manner are at risk of not having their study permit renewed. Study permit renewals are out of the control of the English

Language Centre/ the GEAP program, and a student's progress in or graduation from GEAP cannot be 'sped up' because of study permit or financial issues.

V. GEAP Examinations

GEAP examinations take place for Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing at the end of the semester. Exam grades are reviewed when making decisions on whether a student has passed a specific level.

Students are asked to arrive at least 10 minutes before the Listening, Reading, or Writing exam is scheduled to start and are required to have their UPEI student ID card.

Students who need to be assessed for Speaking will be given designated test times. Please arrive at least five minutes prior to your Speaking assessment.

Note: [Examination Regulations](#) (Regulation 13, Section i).

a. No students are permitted to enter the examination room to write an examination after the first 30 minutes and no students are permitted to leave an examination room within the first 30 minutes. Students still in the examination room during the last 10 minutes of the examination, must remain seated until all examination materials have been collected and accounted for.

NOTE: If a student has a low grade on a GEAP course/ in the GEAP exam, he or she is *not* allowed to take a general UPEI English Assessment assessment to challenge this result/ these results.

A general UPEI English Assessment can only be taken in substitution of course grades and/ or the end-of-term exam in the case of documented long-term medical-related circumstances or exceptional compassionate grounds as verified by the Program Manager.

VI. Plagiarism - based on Academic Regulation 20 Academic Dishonesty

Any copying or other use of another person's work in part or full, or allowing others to hand in work intended to be done by you is cheating, and is a very serious offence. Students who are caught cheating or committing plagiarism (presenting work that has not been produced by the student) in any assignment, quiz or exam may be dismissed from the university. For full details go to: <http://www.upei.ca/programsandcourses/regulation-20-academic-dishonesty>

Recognizing the special challenge of working in a second language, many academic support services are available through GEAP and Student Services. It is every individual's responsibility to learn proper academic referencing, and therefore students are strongly encouraged to seek

assistance before handing in an assignment if they have any doubt or questions about whether the meets the program's and university's standards.

NOTE: In the case of GEAP students, the Writing Centre is *not* available for support. This service can only be accessed by students after they have completed GEAP i.e. after meeting the required language proficiency in full.

VII. How to be successful in GEAP

The GEAP Instructors and the EAP/ GEAP Program Manager are committed to helping students in their journey through the GEAP program.

To make the most of their experience in GEAP, students need to:

- Attend all classes. Remember that GEAP is a mandatory component of your conditional admission to the university.
- Ask for help. Your instructors are there to help you develop your English.
- Actively participate in class. Answer questions, contribute to class discussion, take notes, and talk with your classmate(s) during paired/ group work.
- Attend all scheduled appointments with your instructor(s). Your writing instructor will timetable regular 1:1 appointments to review your work with you. These appointments give you time with your instructor to ask questions and receive feedback.
- Participate in extracurricular activities outside of class to practise using English with friends/ peers, campus staff and/ or faculty. Regular use of English in a variety of settings on and off campus enhances your confidence and develops your English more quickly.
- Read extensively. Reading is at the core of any learning and any graduate-level program, so you should seek opportunities to read articles connected to your own field. However, you should also read outside your immediate area of interest in order to enhance your vocabulary and grammatical fluency, and to expose yourself to different kinds of ideas, theories and principles. Read anything from newspapers and current affairs periodicals to journal articles and books - fiction or non-fiction. Ask your instructor(s) and/ or the library staff for advice.
- Listen extensively. Seek opportunities to expose yourself to both formal and informal listening practice through the Internet, radio, television and music. Listen to the news daily, find a podcast series that interests you, watch documentaries online or on TV, and listen to interviews. Finding material that combines reading and listening can be particularly effective, allowing your language skills and level of fluency to grow quickly.

VIII. Student Supports at UPEI

UPEI Map <https://www.upei.ca/about-upei/visit-the-campus>

Chi-Wan Young Sports Centre – Building #1

- Athletics and Recreation - <https://www.upei.ca/ar>

W.A Murphy Student Centre - Building #4

- Health and Wellness Centre - <https://www.upei.ca/health-centre>
- Student Union
 - Clubs and Societies
 - Health insurance questions
- Bookstore

Dalton Hall - Building #7

First Floor:

- Accessibility Services - <https://www.upei.ca/accessibility>

Second Floor:

- Registrar's Office & Student Accounts - <https://www.upei.ca/registrar>
- Work Integrated Learning (Career Services, Co-op Office) - <https://www.upei.ca/experientialeducation/work-integrated-learning>

Fourth Floor:

- International Student Office - <https://www.upei.ca/international-students/iso>
 - Study permit renewal and enrolment letters
 - Buddy Program
- First Year Advisement - <https://www.upei.ca/future-students/first-year-advisement>

Fifth Floor:

- Student Affairs - <https://www.upei.ca/student-affairs>
 - Campus Life Lounge
 - Counsellors

Chaplaincy Centre - Building #14 - <https://www.upei.ca/student-affairs/chaplaincy-centre>

- campus food bank
- place for worship

Robertson Library - Building #15 - <https://library.upei.ca/>

- Moodle Support
- Writing Centre
- Circulation Desk (borrowing materials)

- Language Lab

English Language Centre - Building # 15 - <https://www.upei.ca/english-language-centre>

- English Academic Preparation (EAP)
- Homestay
- Explore Program