

Carnegie Mellon University

Office of International Education

J-1 Exchange Visitor English Proficiency Requirement

The US Department of State (DoS) has mandated that J-1 Exchange Visitors -- including short-term scholars, research scholars, professors, and student interns -- have sufficient English proficiency [22 CFR §62.10(a)(2)] to successfully participate in their programs and successfully function in the US on a day-to-day basis. Here “English proficiency” has a very specific meaning. It refers to the ability to: 1) Perform activities in the field; 2) Navigate daily life in the US; 3) Read and comprehend materials of the discipline/field of research; 4) Fully understand his/her rights and responsibilities, rights and protections; and 5) Know how to get help if necessary.

Host institutions must objectively measure and document language proficiency in one of the ways described below. This documentation must be maintained and presented to DoS upon request up to three years beyond the end of the Exchange Visitor’s program.

OIE requires that it be the J sponsors (generally the faculty member/supervisor who will be working with the J-1 Exchange Visitor) who must screen and select prospective Exchange Visitors to ensure that they are eligible for program participation, including possessing sufficient English proficiency, as assessed in one of the ways described below. The program or activity J-1 Exchange Visitors will engage in, as described by the J sponsors on the DS-2019 request documentation submitted to OIE, must be suitable to the visitor’s background, needs, experience and English proficiency.

According to DoS requirements, a J-1 Exchange Visitor’s English language proficiency may be (1) objectively measured through a recognized English language test, or (2) through a documented interview conducted by the host, either in-person or by videoconferencing, or, if videoconferencing is not possible, by telephone, or (3) the DoS now allows documentation attesting to the proficiency of native English speakers instead of requiring they be assessed. In most cases, OIE recommends using the conversation/interview prior to extending the offer in order to assess/document English proficiency. **Until the department has documentation of sufficient English proficiency, it is not appropriate to request a DS-2019 for the J-1 Exchange Visitor, as s/he is not eligible for J-1 status without documentation of English language proficiency.**

Documentation of the prospective J-1 Exchange Visitor’s English proficiency must be submitted as part of the DS-2019 request process. The Office of International Education (OIE) will not issue a DS-2019 without valid documentation.

In summary, the English Proficiency Requirement at CMU can be satisfied by one of these methods:

Measurement Type:	Options and Instructions:	Selected Type	
English Language Test	Test must have been taken within the last 2 years. Visitors must submit a copy of their score(s) with the Department Request for J-1 Exchange Visitor form. *Scores from only one test required for this type.	TOEFL* Minimum 84 22 Listening 18 Speaking IELTS Minimum* Listening = 6.0 Speaking = 6.5	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Documented Interview	Submit J-1 <i>English Proficiency Interview Assessment Report</i> . Oral interviews/conversations must be conducted in English, in person or via videoconference, or by telephone if videoconference/Skype is not possible. As you interview the applicant and discuss the specific activities that the J-1 Exchange Visitor will be carrying out at CMU, refer to the TOEFL iBT Independent Speaking Rubric as a guide to scoring English proficiency: https://www.ets.org/s/toefl/pdf/toefl_speaking_rubrics.pdf . J-1 Exchange Visitors must have an overall proficiency score of at least 2.	Minimum acceptable score: 2	<input type="checkbox"/>
Documented Native English Speaker	Determine if English is the visitor’s native language/mother tongue. If so, complete top of <i>English Proficiency Assessment Report</i> (name, DOB, etc.), then add a note indicating the person is a native English speaker and how that was determined in the Host Faculty’s Overall Assessment box; print, sign and date. NOTE: citizenship, work or study in a country that has English as an official language does NOT equate to native English proficiency.	Native English speaker	<input type="checkbox"/>

Carnegie Mellon University

Office of International Education

5000 Forbes Ave, Warner Hall 3rd Floor, Pittsburgh, PA 15213

Phone: (412) 268-5231 • Email: oiie@andrew.cmu.edu • Web: www.cmu.edu/oiie

J-1 English Proficiency Interview Assessment Report

Exchange Visitor Family Name: _____ Exchange Visitor First Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Country of Citizenship: _____

Host Faculty Name: _____ Academic Department: _____

Date of Interview: _____ Interview Rubric to use for assessment: https://www.ets.org/s/toefl/pdf/toefl_speaking_rubrics.pdf

Interview Method: In Person By Videoconference By Phone (*only if videoconference not available*)

The English Proficiency Interview should be part of the general interview of a candidate for a position at CMU. For the purposes of English proficiency assessment to meet J-1 documentation requirements, list 4 of the questions you asked in your interview/conversation below on the left. In the center column indicate the score (1-4) you gave the response to your question(s) based on the ETS TOEFL speaking rubric linked above. In the right column enter notes indicating how you arrived at that score. Questions should gauge whether the prospective Exchange Visitor will be able to: 1) Perform activities in the field; 2) Navigate daily life in the US; 3) Read and comprehend materials of the discipline/field of research; 4) Fully understand his/her rights and responsibilities, rights and protections; and 5) Know how to get help if necessary. **If visitor is a native English speaker, skip to Overall Assessment box.**

Question	Score	Assessment Comments (basis for score determination)
<i>EXAMPLE #1: How do you think that the time you spend at CMU will benefit you personally and professionally?</i>	<i>(see rubric link above)</i>	<i>Was able to articulate complex ideas without struggle or hesitation.</i>
<i>EXAMPLE #2: What laboratory safety training did you receive during your PhD training? Have you supervised other technicians?</i>		<i>Good comprehension of how to seek help, understood need to receive proper training and report concerns in the work place. Did not struggle to find words or express thoughts.</i>

Host Faculty's Overall Assessment (note if visitor is a native English speaker here and how that was determined):

Signature of person conducting interview: _____

Printed name of interviewer: _____ Phone or email: _____