

# English Language Proficiency Requirements

for Appointment of TAs and Als

# UCDAVIS



**UCDAVIS**

International & Academic English  
Office of Undergraduate Education

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## Graduate Students Affected

The English language proficiency requirements described in this handbook apply to all UC Davis graduate students – regardless of a student’s citizenship or visa status. While most students affected by these requirements will be international students, it is worth noting that some domestic students are non-native English speakers and may need to take action to meet requirements while some international students are native English speakers who will have already met the requirements.

## English Language Requirements for Graduate Students

There are two different English language proficiency requirements for admitted graduate students who elect to be TAs: (1) the first year English course requirement and (2) the TA/Al oral English proficiency requirement. Both of these sets of requirements are in addition to the minimum admission requirements.

Level 3

### TA/Al Requirement

Demonstrate oral English proficiency unless waived

Level 2

### First Year Course Requirement

Complete UWP 225 or UWP 226 unless waived

Level 1

### Admission Requirement

Score 80+ on TOEFL (iBT), 550+ on TOEFL (paper-based), **OR** 7+ on IELTS unless waived

*Figure 1. Three levels of English language requirements for graduate students at UC Davis.*

Some students can satisfy all three levels of requirements before arriving at UC Davis while others have to continue working on their language proficiency after beginning their studies at UC Davis so that they can meet the first year English course requirement and, if applicable, the TA/Al requirement.

### First Year English Course Requirement

It has been a longstanding practice to require ESL coursework during the first academic year for graduate students who have not yet achieved a certain degree of English proficiency. This practice became [policy](#) in 2018.

All new international graduate students should take an English language course (UWP 225 or UWP 226) during their first academic year, unless:

- The student has an undergraduate or graduate degree from an approved English-medium institution, as confirmed this with the UC Davis Office of Graduate Studies; or
- The student has a TOEFL (iBT) score of 105 or higher or IELTS score of 7.5 or higher; or
- The student scored 24 or higher on the TOEFL (iBT) writing and 23 or higher on the TOEFL (iBT) speaking portion of the test.

### First Year English Course Requirement Options

Students can meet the first year English course requirement by meeting one of the qualifications listed in the previous section or by taking either UWP 225 (formerly LIN 25) or UWP 226 (formerly LIN 26) during their first academic year. You can advise your students on whether UWP 225 and/or UWP 226 would be most helpful to them.

- **UWP 225** is strongly recommended for students with TOEFL iBT scores below 95 or speaking subset scores below 22. It is a multi-skills course that helps graduate students improve their skills and knowledge in writing, speaking, listening, reading, and academic culture.
- **UWP 226** primarily focuses on the skills needed for effective academic writing and prepares students for writing conference proposals, abstracts, journal articles, dissertations, etc. UWP 226 is recommended to students who will be expected to produce written work for an academic audience. (Generally offered in winter and spring.)

### TA/AI Oral English Proficiency Requirement

While the first year English course requirement involves multiple language skills, the TA/AI English proficiency requirement concerns only *oral* English proficiency. The Office of Graduate Studies requires all graduate students, except those with an undergraduate degree from an institution where English is the sole language of instruction, to demonstrate oral English proficiency before they are appointed to Teaching Assistant (TA) or Associate Instructor (AI) positions. You can see the official policy here: [https://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/sites/default/files/upload/files/current-students/gs2011-01\\_appt\\_reqs\\_intl\\_ta-ai.pdf](https://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/sites/default/files/upload/files/current-students/gs2011-01_appt_reqs_intl_ta-ai.pdf). Note that, while a graduate degree from an English-medium institution may be used to satisfy the first year course requirement, the TA/AI requirement can only be satisfied by completing an undergraduate degree in an English-medium institution.

Oral proficiency in English must be demonstrated by one of the following methods:

- Achieving a minimum score of 26 on the speaking subset of the TOEFL iBT, or
- Achieving a minimum score of 8 on the speaking subset of the IELTS, or
- Achieving a minimum score of 50 on the SPEAK, or
- Achieving a “Pass” on the TOEP.

### Overview of Oral Proficiency Testing at UC Davis

Students can demonstrate oral proficiency before they begin their studies at UCD with either the TOEFL or IELTS, but the TOEP is the primary tool used for testing students who are on campus. The SPEAK used to be the primary tool used on campus, but since the campus began offering the TOEP in 2015, the SPEAK has been slowly phased out. Moving forward, please advise all students to take the TOEP since the SPEAK is expected to be fully phased out by the 2018-19 AY. Along

with this, students are no longer required to meet eligibility requirements in order to register for the TOEP as they did in the past.

## Test of Oral English Proficiency (TOEP)

The TOEP is used to test the oral English ability of non-native English speaking graduate students in order to determine their eligibility for working as TAs. In the exam, test takers complete TA tasks in a 20-minute simulated classroom exercise with an audience of undergraduate students and test raters. The test taker gives an introduction to the audience, goes over a sample class document, and delivers a mini-lesson. You can see more details about the TOEP, including an overview document and a series of YouTube videos, on the TOEP website at <https://iae.ucdavis.edu/graduate/toep>.

### TOEP Schedule

The TOEP is offered on multiple dates at the end of each quarter and in the weeks prior to fall quarter. It is recommended that students take the TOEP as early as possible and not wait until the quarter before they want to work as a TA. TOEP scores are made available to all test takers and posted in Banner about a week after the test date. The scores also appear in GradHub. The exact dates of the TOEP are posted on the IAE website a few weeks in advance. Interested individuals can join the IAE grad mailing list (from the IAE website) to receive an email when test registration opens.

### TOEP Results

Students receive their results by email and have the option to meet with staff from IAE for feedback and to discuss next steps. There are three possible results:

#### TOEP: Pass

Students who earn a PASS have fully met the English language requirements for a TA position.

#### TOEP: Conditional Pass

Students who earn a CONDITIONAL PASS have partially met the English language requirements for a TA position; their oral English skills are reasonably proficient but could still cause some confusion or require additional effort on the part of the undergraduate students they will be teaching. Students who earn a Conditional Pass may hold a TA position for up to two quarters while concurrently enrolled in approved English language instruction (approved by IAE). The two quarters they are permitted to serve as a TA are only allowed once, after the first Conditional Pass. For example, if a student received a Conditional Pass, worked as a TA for two quarters, and then received another Conditional Pass, the student would not be eligible to continue as a TA until they received a Pass on the TOEP.

#### *Approved Courses/Workshops*

In order for Conditional Pass students to work as TAs, they must be enrolled in approved English language instruction. This includes any of the graduate-level English language courses (UWP 225, UWP 226, or UWP 391), IAE's workshops/seminars, and other workshops/seminars approved by IAE (approval must be received from IAE prior to the start of the quarter).

Of the three UWP courses, **UWP 391** is most recommended for students with a Conditional Pass since the focus of that course is oral English proficiency for TAs.

## TOEP: Fail

Students who earn a FAIL have not met the English language requirements for a TA position. They may not hold a TA position and are encouraged to take additional English language coursework.

## Retaking the TOEP

Students may not take the TOEP twice in the same quarter. Students who wish to retake the TOEP must complete approved English language instruction before each retake. This may be completed with any of the grad-level English courses or IAE's workshops/seminars.

## Speaking Proficiency English Assessment Kit (SPEAK)

Prior to 2015, the SPEAK was the primary tool used for determining TA eligibility. When the TOEP started being offered on campus in 2015, the SPEAK started being used mostly as a way to determine whether a student is eligible to take the TOEP. Moving forward, the SPEAK will not be offered on campus, and all students should take the TOEP instead. The SPEAK assesses general oral English proficiency and is not specific to academic or classroom language skills. As a result, the TOEP – not the SPEAK – is the preferred instrument for determining whether or not a student is eligible to be a TA or not.

## Checking Students' Eligibility in GradHub & Banner

In order to see whether or not a student has met the requirements described in this document, you will need to check the student's test scores, educational background, and/or courses completed in Banner or GradHub. The following instructions outline how to find that information in each database.

Open an individual student's record. Then, in the bottom section, click the 'exams' tab.

The screenshot shows the UC Davis GradHub interface. At the top, there is a header with the UC Davis logo and the text 'GradHub'. Below the header, there is a navigation bar with tabs for 'Students', 'GARD', and 'Search'. The main content area displays a student's record. On the left, there is a large black redacted area. To the right of this area, the following information is visible:

- Last Student Status**  
Ph.D. in Electrical and Computer Engineering (GEEC)
- Active Student in 2017 Winter  
Enrolled in 12.0 units
- Academic Standing**  
Good Standing (GS)
- Level & Class**  
Graduate - Doctorate Level 2 (D2)
- Admitted**  
Fall Quarter 2014 ( GR )

At the bottom of the interface, there is a navigation bar with tabs for 'Degree', 'Student Details', 'Standing History', 'GPA / Units', and 'Exams'. The 'Exams' tab is highlighted with a red circle.

Figure 2. How to see exam scores listed in GradHub

At that point, you will be able to see any TOEFL, IELTS, SPEAK, or TOEP scores on record for the student. In the example below, the student's overall TOEFL score is 98 (bottom of first column). You can also see that the student scored a 28 on TOEFL writing and 17 on TOEFL speaking (top of second column).

Degree	Student Details	Standing History	GPA / Units	Exams	Academic		
Exam Name			Score	Date	Exam Name		
Graduate Record Exam Tape					TOEFL- ETS Electronic Transfer		
GRE Analytical Writing Section			3.0	2/9/13	TOEFL Writing-Internet Based		
GRE Verbal Score			135	2/9/13	TOEFL Speaking-Internet Based		
GRE Quantitative Score			160	2/9/13	TOEFL Reading-Internet Based		
GRE Quantitative Percentile			78	2/9/13	TOEFL Listening-Internet Based		
GRE Verbal Percentile			02	2/9/13			
GRE Writing Percentile			14	2/9/13			
TOEFL- ETS Electronic Transfer					Graduate SPEAK exam for ITAs		
TOEFL Total-Internet Based			098	10/19/13	ITA Test of Oral English Prof.		
					Graduate SPEAK exam for ITAs		
					ITA Test of Oral English Prof.		

Figure 3. Exam scores listed in GradHub

This information would be used to determine whether or not the first year English course requirement is waived for this student. Remember, all international graduate students are required to take an English language course (UWP 225 or UWP 226) during their first academic year, unless:

- The student has a college degree from an approved English-medium institution; or
- The student has a TOEFL (iBT) score of 105 or higher or IELTS score of 7.5 or higher; or
- The student scored 24 or higher on the TOEFL (iBT) writing and 23 or higher on the TOEFL (iBT) speaking.

In this case, we can see that the student does not have a TOEFL score of 105 or higher. And, even though the student does have a TOEFL writing score greater than 24, the student does not have a TOEFL speaking score greater than 23. So, this student is unable to have the requirement waived due to their test scores. You will also need to check if the student has a degree from an English-medium institution. In the bottommost section of GradHub, there is a section that lists the student's prior education and admission documents. This section can be used to verify what degrees, if any, the student earned from an English-medium institution.

Transcript
Sichuan Univ. (BS)
Peking Univ. (MS)
International Technological Univ. (MS)

Figure 4. Prior education listing in GradHub.

In this example, the student's undergraduate education was at Sichuan University in China. At that point, you need to look up the language(s) of instruction for that university in the World Higher Education Database at <http://whed.net/home.php>. Search for the institution using the search tool and click on the plus sign beside the name of the university to view its details. Look for the

language listing to see whether or not the sole language of instruction was English.

Language(s)	Chinese
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You would look in the same places for information to determine whether or not a student met the requirements to be a TA. To check for TA eligibility, you would look at TOEFL or IELTS speaking scores, TOEP scores, and/or SPEAK scores. You'll see TOEP scores listed as *Pass = P*, *Conditional Pass = C*, and *Fail = F*.

Graduate SPEAK exam for ITAs	40	2/25/11
ITA Test of Oral English Prof.	C	5/5/16

Figure 5. SPEAK and TOEP scores listed in GradHub

You can check to make sure your student is enrolled in one of the graduate-level English courses (UWP 225, UWP 226, or UWP 391) by opening the student's internal transcript or by opening the student's record in OASIS. There are links for both of these options in the rightmost pane of GradHub.

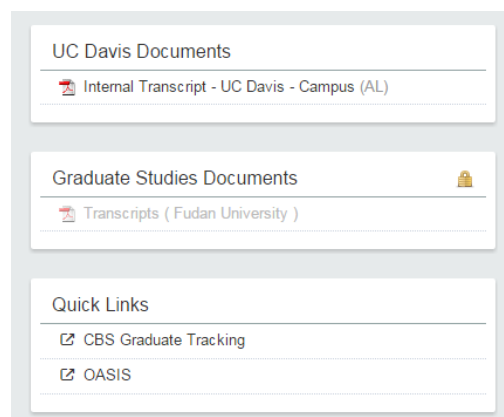


Figure 6. Access a student's internal transcript or record in OASIS from the rightmost pane.

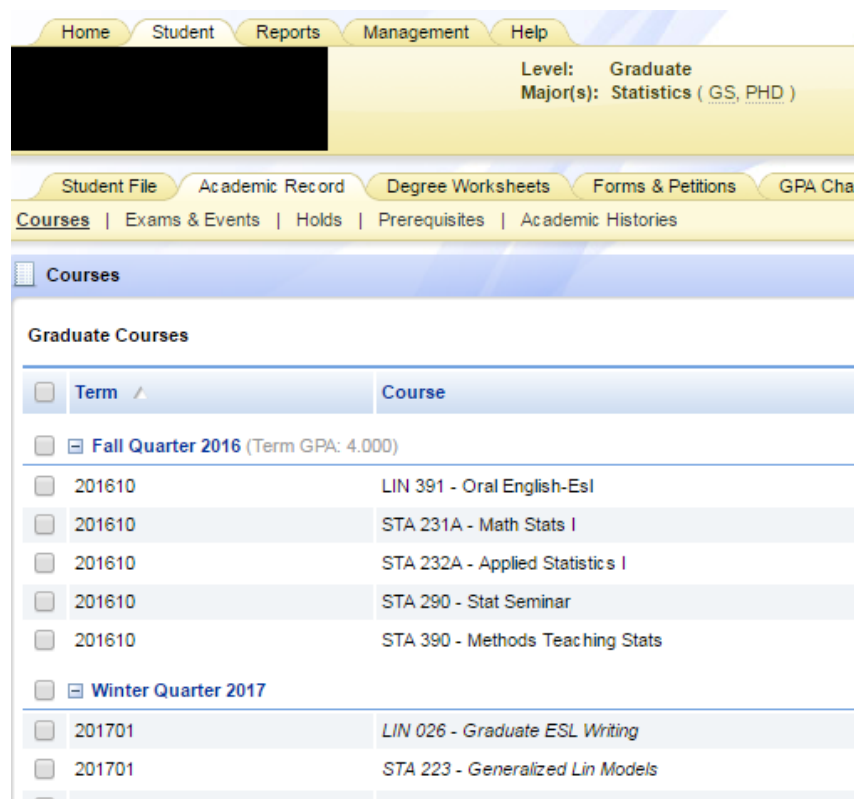


Figure 7. To check the student's current and past course schedule in OASIS, click on the 'Academic Record' tab in OASIS.



## Banner

You can check a student's test scores, schedule, and prior education in Banner too. Test scores and prior education are both listed in form ZGASTDN. After opening ZGASTDN, click the 'Activities' tab to see a student's test scores. Click the 'Prior College/Degrees' tab to see what degrees, if any, a student has earned from an English-medium institution.

The screenshot shows the Oracle Fusion Middleware Forms Services window for the ZGASTDN form. The 'Activities' and 'Prior College/Degrees' tabs are highlighted with red circles. The form is titled 'General Student Query Form ZGASTDN 7.0 (prod)'. It contains several sections: 'General Student Information' with fields for New Eff. Term, From, Matric Term, Citizen Type, EOPS, Status, Admit Term, Res.Code, Student Type, Expected Graduation Date, Level, To, and Admit Type; 'Primary Curriculum' with fields for Degree, College, Major1, Major2, College Charge, Leave Of Absence, Acad.Standing, (Override), Class Standing, and Assess Rate Code; and 'Secondary Curriculum' with fields for Degree, College, Major1, Major2, Home Code, From, To, Term, and Term. The 'Activities' tab is currently selected, showing a list of activities with columns for Record, ID, and Description.

Record	ID	Description
1	1	1
2	2	2
3	3	3
4	4	4
5	5	5
6	6	6
7	7	7
8	8	8
9	9	9
10	10	10
11	11	11
12	12	12
13	13	13
14	14	14
15	15	15
16	16	16
17	17	17
18	18	18
19	19	19
20	20	20
21	21	21
22	22	22
23	23	23
24	24	24
25	25	25
26	26	26
27	27	27
28	28	28
29	29	29
30	30	30
31	31	31
32	32	32
33	33	33
34	34	34
35	35	35
36	36	36
37	37	37
38	38	38
39	39	39
40	40	40
41	41	41
42	42	42
43	43	43
44	44	44
45	45	45
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68	68	68
69	69	69
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75	75	75
76	76	76
77	77	77
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79	79	79
80	80	80
81	81	81
82	82	82
83	83	83
84	84	84
85	85	85
86	86	86
87	87	87
88	88	88
89	89	89
90	90	90
91	91	91
92	92	92
93	93	93
94	94	94
95	95	95
96	96	96
97	97	97
98	98	98
99	99	99
100	100	100

Figure 8. Main screen of form ZGASTDN in Banner.

After clicking on the 'Activities' tab, you will see test scores in the second section. Please note that you may need to scroll through the scores to find what you need (only four will display at a time).

Term	Activity Code	Description	Activity Date

Test Code	Description	Score	Date Taken
TOEP	ITA Test of Oral English Prof.	P	02-DEC-2016
TW1L	TOEFL Listening-Internet Based	25	18-OCT-2014
TW1R	TOEFL Reading-Internet Based	30	18-OCT-2014
TW1S	TOEFL Speaking-Internet Based	23	18-OCT-2014

Figure 9. Activities tab in Banner form ZGASTDN.

Click the 'Prior Colleges/Degrees' tab to see the student's prior college(s) and degree(s).

**Prior College**

College: 990010 CHINA PEOPLES REPUB

**Prior Degrees**

Degree: MEN Master of Engineering

Date: 01-JUN-2016

Level Code:

College:

Figure 10. Prior Colleges/Degrees tab in Banner form ZGASTDN.

## Tools for Graduate Students & Departments

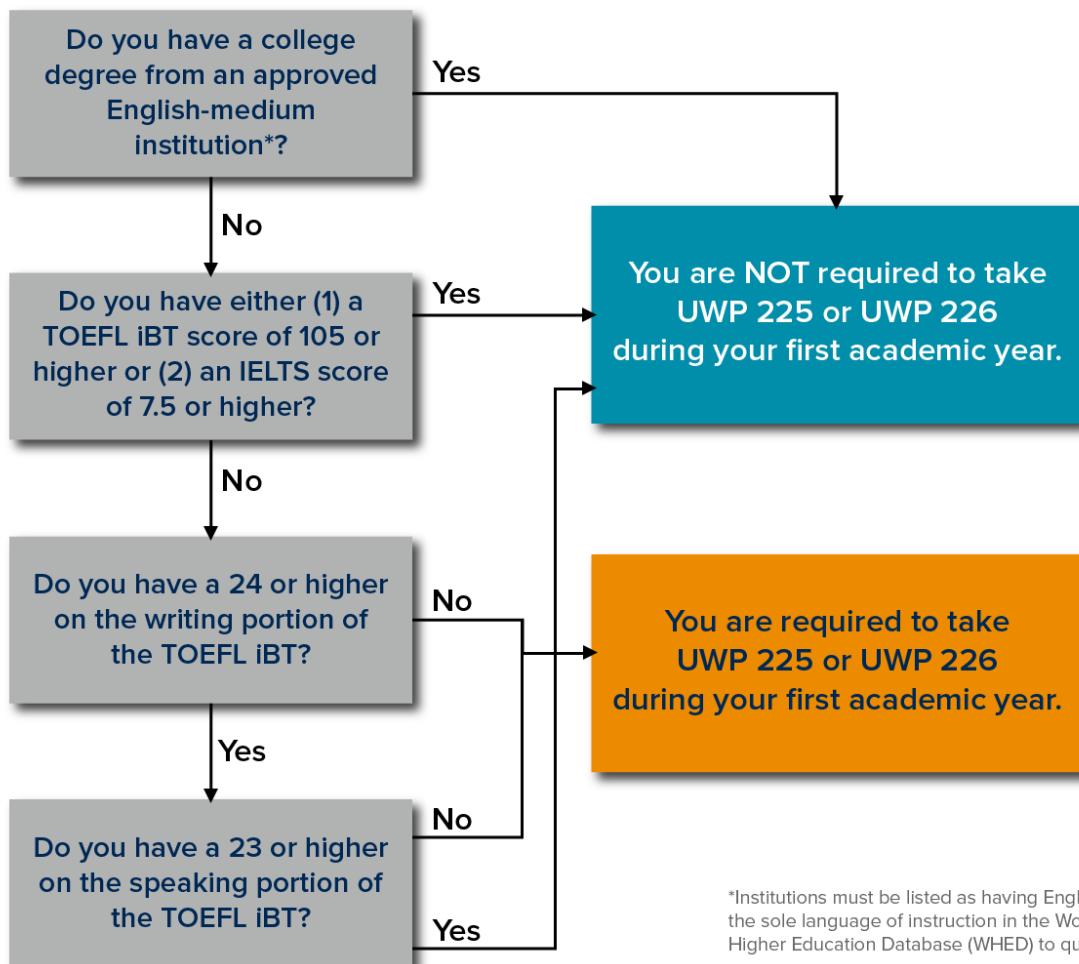
Since the English language proficiency requirements can be a little confusing, IAE has created tools to help students and departments. Students can use the flowcharts below (also on our website) to determine whether or not they have met the requirements. Students may also answer a series of questions in online questionnaires for instructions on what steps they need to take, if any.

There are separate surveys for the two different requirements:

- First Year English Course Requirement Questionnaire:  
[http://ucdavis.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV\\_8nOqjidA1nVV6WV](http://ucdavis.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_8nOqjidA1nVV6WV)
- TA English Language Proficiency Requirement:  
[http://ucdavis.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV\\_2IB0EdWGCC5SnZ3](http://ucdavis.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_2IB0EdWGCC5SnZ3)

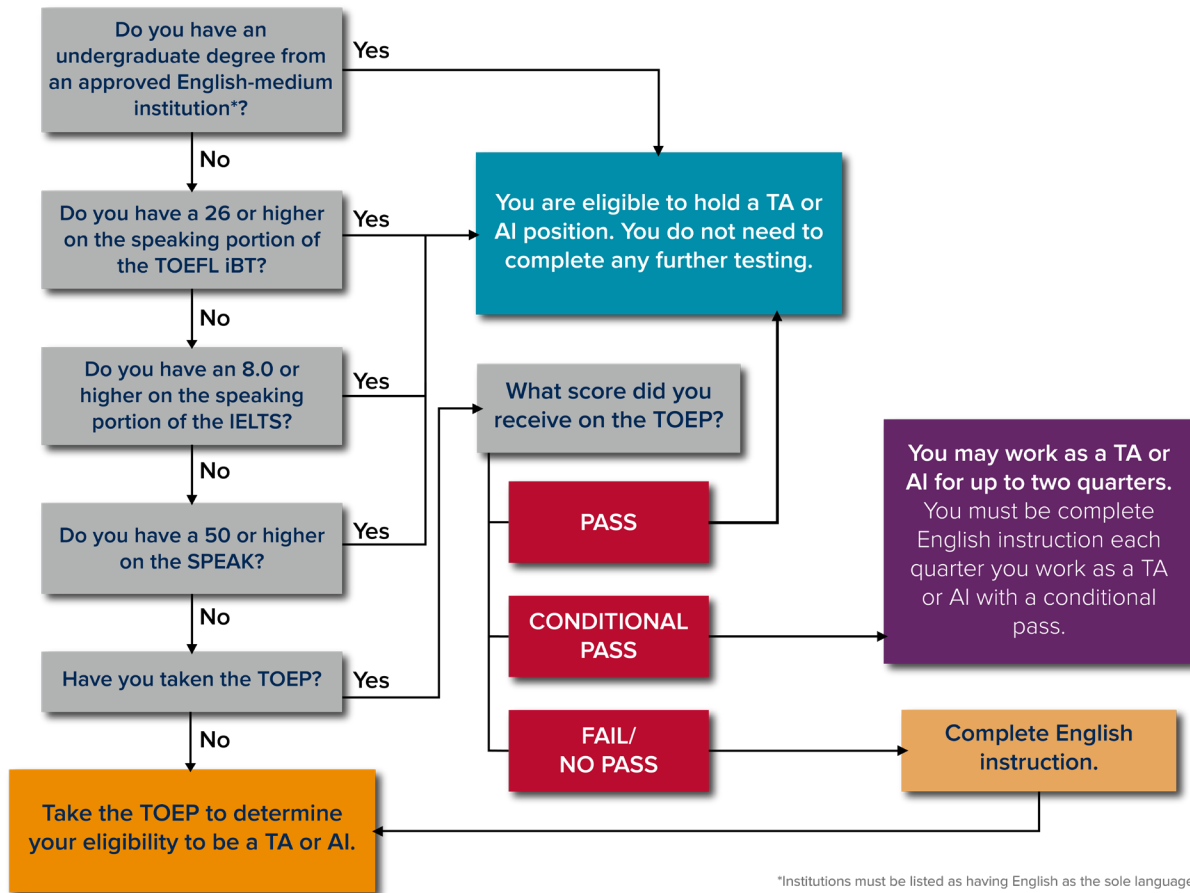
### Graduate Student Course Requirement

#### English as a Second Language



# Language Proficiency Requirement

for Teaching Assistant (TA) and Associate Instructor (AI) Positions



## Contact

You can contact Emily Montgomery in IAE at [edmontgomery@ucdavis.edu](mailto:edmontgomery@ucdavis.edu) if you have specific questions about any of the topics contained in this document.

You can contact UWP about UWP 225, 226, and 391:

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