English Language Foundations

Overview

We designed the English Language Foundations (ELF) program for learners whose first language isn't English. Our aim? To help you improve your English skills. Many students choose ELF as a way into SAIT career programs.

Admission

We'll place you in the program based on your current English skills. We use tests like the Canadian Language Benchmarks Assessment (CLBA), Canadian Language Benchmark Placement Assessment (CLBPA) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) to assess your abilities.

Language foundations curriculum

We're here to give you a strong language foundation. We work on speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. There are seven levels, each with two courses - one for reading and writing, the other for listening and speaking.

Flexible class times

Five start dates a year, eight-week terms, full-time or part-time options.

Skill development

Your learning experience will be customized to your abilities, so you'll progress based on your skills. We'll assess you through classroom assignments, participation, and exams. If you get at least a 50% (D) in all subjects, you can move up to the next level.

Completing ELF Level 5 courses meets the English proficiency pre-requisite for admission into most SAIT academic programs, saving you time and effort.

Remember, SAIT career programs require strong English skills in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. ELF is a fast-paced program, so be ready to study and use English outside of class.

Traits, skills and aptitudes

To succeed in the English Language Foundations program, you need some key qualities and abilities, including:

- motivation and a strong desire to improve your academic skills and achieve your educational goals
- time management skills to balance coursework and other responsibilities
- self-discipline so you can stay focused while studying and completing assignments
- computer literacy
- study skills, how to take notes and prepare for exams.

Professional designations and certifications

The ELF program is accredited through Languages Canada.

Specialized Intakes

This program is available to international applicants as a stand-alone program or as part of a program bundle - two programs delivered consecutively.

You may then qualify for a post-graduate work permit of up to three years.

Applicants must meet the admission requirements for both programs.

Bundle program details

Admission requirements

To register for the this program, you must complete **one** of the following:

- Canadian Language Benchmark Placement Assessment (CLBPA) or an ELF Proficiency Placement Test (PPT) and obtain a minimum score as indicated below, for the level to which you are applying.

- An International English Language Testing System (IELTS) assessment and obtain a minimum band score, as indicated below, for the level to which you are applying.

CLBPA or IELTS tests must be completed at least four weeks before the course starts.

International English Language Testing System (IELTS)

The IELTS Test Centre at SAIT provides proficiency testing. We accept IELTS band scores from any approved centres. However, you must submit an official copy of your IELTS test report form (TRF).

A band score of 6.0 in all categories or completion of ELF level 5 meets the English language requirements to enter SAIT programs.

Canadian Language Benchmark Assessments

An entrance ELF Proficiency Placement Test (ELF PPT) for international students is available. If eligible, domestic students can get a CLBPA at CLARC (Calgary Language Assessment and Referral Centre).

English Language Foundations proficiency placement tests

Your ELF placement will be based on your CLBPA, ELF PPT or academic IELTS score.

To register for the English Language Foundations program, you must complete **one** of the following:

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- An International English Language Testing System (IELTS) assessment and obtain a minimum band score, as indicated below, for the level to which you are applying.

CLBPA or IELTS tests must be completed at least four weeks before the course starts.

ELF Communication Foundations

- Canadian Language Benchmark Placement Assessment (CLBPA) score of 2
- English Language Foundations proficiency placement (ELF PPT) test score of 2
- International English Language Testing System (IELTS) score of 2

ELF Communication Fundamentals

- Canadian Language Benchmark Placement Assessment (CLBPA) score of 3
- English Language Foundations proficiency placement (ELF PPT) test score of 3
- International English Language Testing System (IELTS) score of 3

ELF Speech Foundations

- Canadian Language Benchmark Placement Assessment (CLBPA) score of 2
- English Language Foundations proficiency placement (ELF PPT) test score of 2
- International English Language Testing System (IELTS) score of 2

ELF Speech Fundamentals

- Canadian Language Benchmark Placement Assessment (CLBPA) score of 3
- English Language Foundations proficiency placement (ELF PPT) test score of 3
- International English Language Testing System (IELTS) score of 3

ELF level 1:

- Canadian Language Benchmark Placement Assessment (CLBPA) score of 4
- English Language Foundations proficiency placement (ELF PPT) test score of 4

- International English Language Testing System (IELTS) score of

Costs

2025/26 tuition and fees

The following costs are effective as of July 1, 2025.

The estimated cost of tuition and fees is based on the number of courses taken in a semester.

Domestic Students

Number of courses	Tuition fees	Additional fees	Total per semester
1	$699	$211.81	$910.81
2	$1,398	$262.48	$1,660.48

The estimated cost of tuition and fees for domestic students is based on the number of courses taken in a semester.

International Students

Number of courses	Tuition fees	Additional fees	Total per semester
1	$1,473	$401.81	$1,874.81
2	$2,946	$452.48	$3,398.48

The estimated cost of tuition and fees for international students is based on the number of courses taken in a semester.

Books and Supplies

This is a bring-your-own-device program with a standard computer hardware and software requirement. See the specific requirements on our computers and laptops page.

No textbooks are required for this program.