

HAWTHORN
MELBOURNE



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

**University of Melbourne
English Language Bridging Program**

Assured Entry Proposal

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Proposal Background and Summary

The University of Melbourne is one of the few Australian universities without a broadly recognised English language bridging program for students with a conditional offer. This means that students are required to re-sit an IELTS test prior to entry to the University of Melbourne, regardless of the program and duration of English language studies undertaken at the university's ELC. Hawthorn English Language Centres (HELCC) is seeking to secure recognition of its Intensive Academic Preparation (IAP) program as an English language bridging program with assured entry to the University across all faculties¹. If approved, this program will be renamed the UoM English Language Bridging Program (UoM ELBP). In summary, under this proposal students would enter the ten-week ELBP program at an IELTS band 0.5 lower than the course entry requirement. Students would proceed to their University of Melbourne studies on successful completion of the ELBP without re-sitting an IELTS test.

Currently the IAP program is a ten-week program specifically designed to prepare students with the language, cultural, academic research and study skills they will require to succeed in their tertiary studies. The program is primarily designed for postgraduate students, which is consistent with HELCC's core student market where 90% of HELCC students, who intend to study at the University of Melbourne, are planning to undertake postgraduate studies. However, the program also currently accommodates students planning to undertake undergraduate studies. Amongst the Go8 universities, only two currently do not have an English language bridging program (UQ and UoM). Of the other six, only one distinguishes between undergraduate and postgraduate skills in its bridging program course content (UWA). Over time, once student numbers enable viable delivery, HELCC will develop two independent streams of the program for undergraduate and postgraduate students.

HELCC has been successfully running the IAP program with assured entry arrangements with the Faculty of Education for two years. This pathway has been known as the Faculty of Education English Language Course (FELC Program). Students exiting this program have been tracked by the Faculty of Education and have achieved an average H2B in their first semester results. Faculty of Education will be able to provide details of these students' results. In addition, the program has gained approval for assured entry with the Faculty of Architecture, effective 2006.

Over recent years there have been many conversations with UoM proposing an English Language Bridging Program, including current consideration of the proposal at the Associate Deans International Committee. A faculty by faculty approach has gained approval with the Education Faculty and Architecture Faculty. However, this approach is time-consuming and open to inconsistencies in implementation for different faculties and increases the complexity of entry requirements for students. UoM has taken a high-level strategic position in support of the proposal through the office of the Vice Principal International, with the support of the Vice-Chancellor. A Taskforce on English Language Bridging and Support Programs was established in April 2006 to engage input from experts and stakeholders across the university prior to the proposal's

¹ Some exclusions will apply due to visa regulation requirements (eg health professionals) or where the UofM entry requirement is 6.0 or below.

presentation to the Academic Board. The proposal incorporates feedback and recommendations from the Taskforce.

The proposal firstly details a rationale for the University of Melbourne to employ the IAP Program as an English Language Bridging Program. A comprehensive description of the proposed University of Melbourne English Language Bridging Program (UoM ELBP) is provided in overview, including the moderation and assessment processes to be developed as recommended by the Taskforce. The University entry requirements for the program are proposed, including the application and offer process, based on the process successfully operating with the Faculty of Education. An implementation process and timeline is outlined, providing a description of the intended Faculty consultation and briefing process.