

How to Evaluate English Proficiency

If you choose to evaluate English proficiency through an interview, here is guidance on what questions to ask and how to evaluate the individual. The interview does not have to be long; it can be as short as five minutes and should not take longer than 15 minutes.

Questions

*Ask one from each category

- 1) About preparation/plans/expectations
 - a) What type of courses or training have you completed to prepare you to come to the US [for our program]?
 - b) What skills or knowledge do you hope to learn during your time at UD?
 - c) What do you hope to learn about American culture and society?
- 2) Ability to handle day-to-day interactions
 - a) What would you do in your country if you got really sick or ill? Where would you go? Who would you ask for help?
 - b) What would you do in your country if you saw a fire? Who would you call for help?
 - c) What would you do if you were locked out of your home/apartment/car? Who would you ask for help?
- 3) About their background
 - a) What kind of work/research have you done in the past?
 - b) Tell me about your town/city/family.
 - c) Have you ever traveled to the US before? What was your favorite thing that you did?
- 4) Check for understanding
 - a) [Explain something about the program / UD / arrival procedures then ask] Can you explain to me what you understood of what I just told you?

Evaluating Proficiency

Here is a scale you can use to evaluate the individual. OISS views a score of 3 as the recommended minimum for sufficient proficiency.

Level	Characteristics of Communication
1	Impossible to understand <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not understand questions • Attempts at English incomprehensible
2	Nearly impossible to understand <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Few words are intelligible • Speech contains mostly sentence fragments, repetition of vocabulary, and simple phrases
3	Possible to understand, although often repetition is needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major or minor grammatical errors • Communication sometimes affected by errors, but speech can generally be understood
4	Easy to understand <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Errors not unusual, but rarely major • Communication generally not affected by errors
5	Communication is effortless <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Errors not noticeable and accent not distracting • Delivery often has native-like smoothness

*Levels based on the ETS Speak test

Evaluation Results

Scholar Name:

Type of interview: In-person Video-conference Telephone

Interviewer Name and Title:

Interview Date:

Proficiency Level (1-5):

Sufficient Proficiency to successfully participate in program: Yes No