



English Language  
Competency Guidelines

# Purpose

In order to ensure that all learners gain maximum benefit from their chosen programme at SQT we want to ensure that applicants level of English language competency is of an acceptable standard. It is important to note that learners are not expected to have an IELTS or equivalent examination complete. Potential delegates are expected to self-assess their English language competency against the IELTS Band scores in the table below. The IELTS band scores are used as a benchmark only of the recommended minimum accepted English for our programmes. It is important to stress that the onus is on the learner to ensure that their proficiency in English meets the specific guidelines set-out below.

# Explanation of IELTS Band Scores

The table below provides an explanation of each IELTS (International English Language Testing System) band. Further information regarding IELTS is available [here](#).

<b>Band Score</b>	<b>Skill Level</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Band 9</b>	Expert user	has fully operational command of the language: appropriate, accurate and fluent with complete understanding.
<b>Band 8</b>	Very good user	has fully operational command of the language with only occasional unsystematic inaccuracies and inappropriacies. Misunderstandings may occur in unfamiliar situations. Handles complex detailed argumentation well.
<b>Band 7</b>	Good user	has operational command of the language, though with occasional inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings in some situations. Generally handles complex language well and understands detailed reasoning.
<b>Band 6</b>	Competent user	has generally effective command of the language despite some inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings. Can use and understand fairly complex language, particularly in familiar situations.
<b>Band 5</b>	Modest user	has partial command of the language, coping with overall meaning in most situations, though is likely to make many mistakes. Should be able to handle basic communication in own field.
<b>Band 4</b>	Limited user	basic competence is limited to familiar situations. Has frequent problems in understanding and expression. Is not able to use complex language.
<b>Band 3</b>	Extremely limited user	conveys and understands only general meaning in very familiar situations. Frequent breakdowns in communication occur.
<b>Band 2</b>	Intermittent user	no real communication is possible except for the most basic information using isolated words or short formulae in familiar situations and to meet immediate needs. Has great difficulty understanding spoken and written English.
<b>Band 1</b>	Non-user	essentially has no ability to use the language beyond possibly a few isolated words.
<b>Band 0</b>	Did not attempt the test	No assessable information provided.

# Accredited SQT Programmes

## QQI PROGRAMMES

### QQI (Formerly HETAC Programmes)

<b>Programme</b>	<b>NFQ Level</b>	<b>IELTS Score</b>
Certificate in Process Engineering Special Purpose Award – Lean Six Sigma Green Belt	6	6.0
Certificate in Process Engineering Special Purpose Award – Lean Six Sigma Green Belt	7	6.0
Certificate in Process Engineering Special Purpose Award – Lean Six Sigma Green Belt for the Health Sector	7	6.0
Certificate in Process Engineering Special Purpose Award – Lean Six Sigma Black Belt (Service and Transaction)	8	6.0
Certificate in Process Engineering Special Purpose Award – Lean Six Sigma Black Belt	8	6.0

### QQI (Formerly FETAC Programmes)

<b>Programme</b>	<b>NFQ Level</b>	<b>IELTS Score</b>
Safety and Health at Work (D20165)	5	5.5
Development, Implementation, Validation & Verification of a Food Safety Management System (6S0212)	6	5.5
Food Standards Auditing (6S2178)	6	5.5
Training Needs Identification and Design (6N3325)	6	5.5
Training Delivery and Evaluation (6N3326)	6	5.5
Leading and Managing People (6N2191)	6	5.5
Customer Service (D20151)	5	5.5

## *NEBOSH Programmes*

**NEBOSH recommends** that candidates reach a minimum standard of English equivalent to an International English Language Testing System (IELTS) as specified below.

<b>Programme</b>	<b>IELTS Score</b>
Environmental Awareness at Work	5.0
NEBOSH Certificate in Environmental Management	6.0
NEBOSH International General Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety	6.0
NEBOSH International Certificate in Fire Safety and Risk Management	6.0
NEBOSH International Diploma in Occupational Health and Safety	7.0

## *Other Accredited Programmes*

SQT recommends an English Language competency equivalent to at least an IELTS of 5.5 for all other accredited programmes i.e. (IRCA, IEMA, AEE, ICEB and CIEH).

# Non Accredited SQT Programmes

SQT recommends that the standard of English required by delegates on all non-accredited programmes is such that they can both understand and articulate the concepts contained in the programme content/syllabus.

Due to the technical nature of the below programmes specific IELTS bands have been used as a benchmark.

Programme	IELTS Score
Technical Writing Skills <i>Note: This course can be run for groups of lower proficiency on request.</i>	6.0
Instructor Skills for the Food Industry	6.0