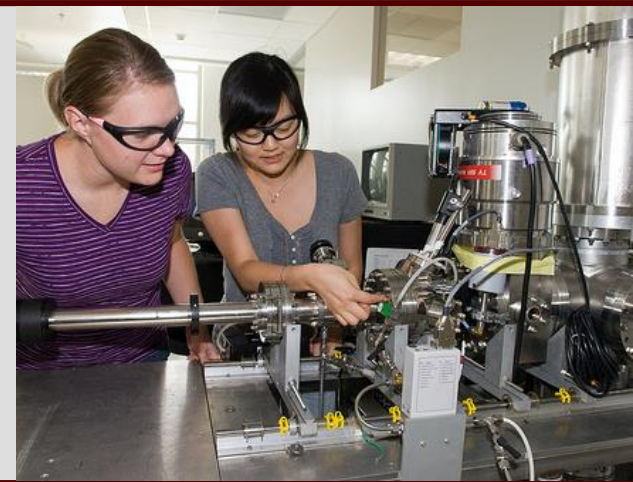


English Language Proficiency Requirements



Rachel Krolczyk and Russell Ramirez
 Office of Graduate and Professional Studies

Verification vs. Certification

- **English Language Proficiency Verification**

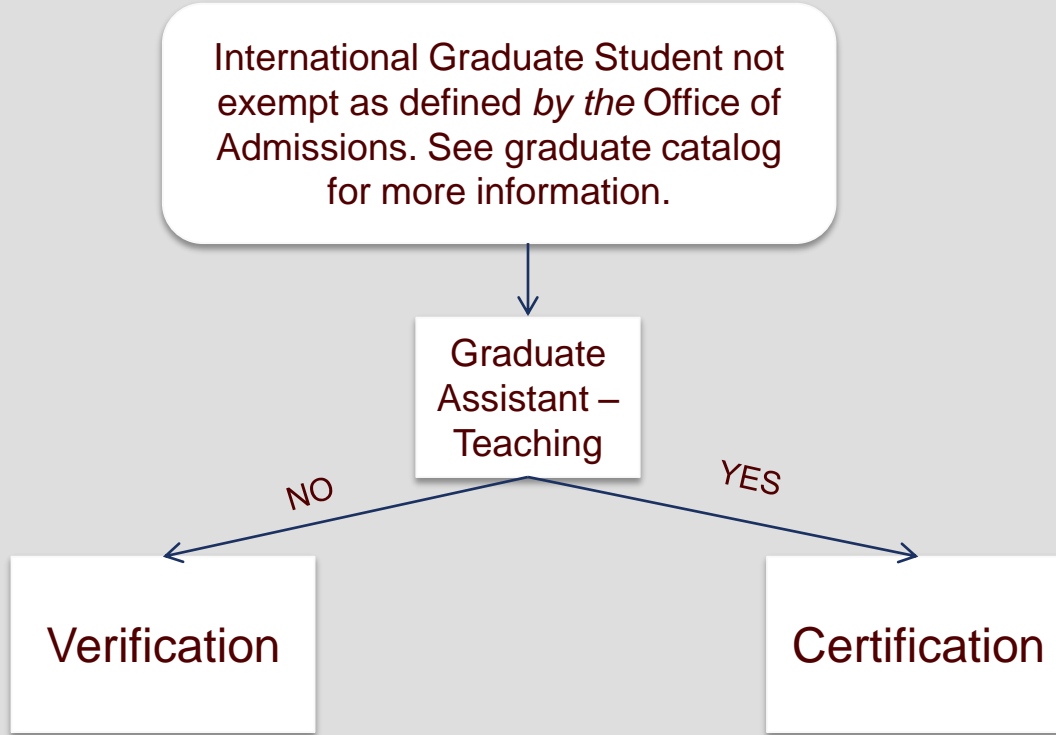
Required of *all* TAMU international students for whom English is not the native language (as defined by the Office of Admissions)

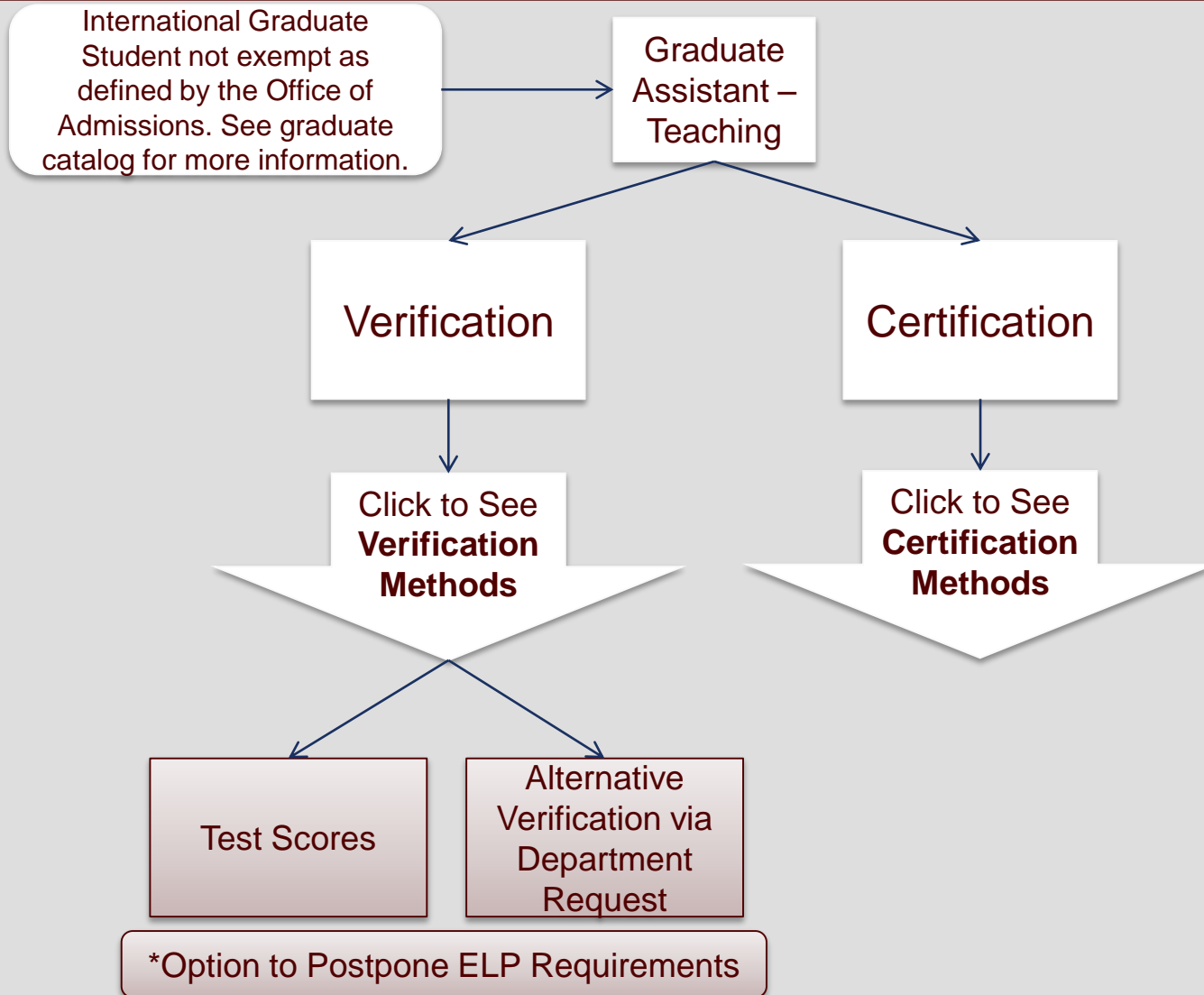
- **English Language Proficiency Certification**

Required of *all* TAMU international students who will serve as Graduate Assistant – Teaching.

- a minimum TOEFL score (from a test date within two years) of: 550 for paper-based testing (p-BT) or 80 internet-based testing (i-BT), OR
- a minimum IELTS score of 6.0 overall band OR
- a minimum PTE Academic score of 53 OR
- a GRE Verbal Reasoning score of at least 146, (400 on the old scale) subject to departmental approval OR
- a GMAT Verbal Score of at least 22, subject to departmental approval

Individual colleges may choose to establish minimum TOEFL standards that exceed the University minimum for English Proficiency Verification. Scores from TOEFL examinations administered more than two years before submission of the application for admission shall not be eligible for English Proficiency Verification.





Request for Alternative Verification Form

An international graduate student holding a master’s degree from an accredited U.S. institution qualifies for verification but **not** certification. (This student must take the ELPE to become certified to teach.)

Departments submit the Alternative Verification Form to the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies to request alternative verification.



Office of Graduate and Professional Studies

Alternative Verification Form
English Language Proficiency Requirements

Departments initiate alternative verification requests.

Date: _____

Student Name: _____

Student UIN: _____

Department Head Name (Print): _____

Department Head Signature: _____

I certify that the international student listed above holds a master’s degree from an accredited U.S. institution, and therefore qualifies for alternative verification.

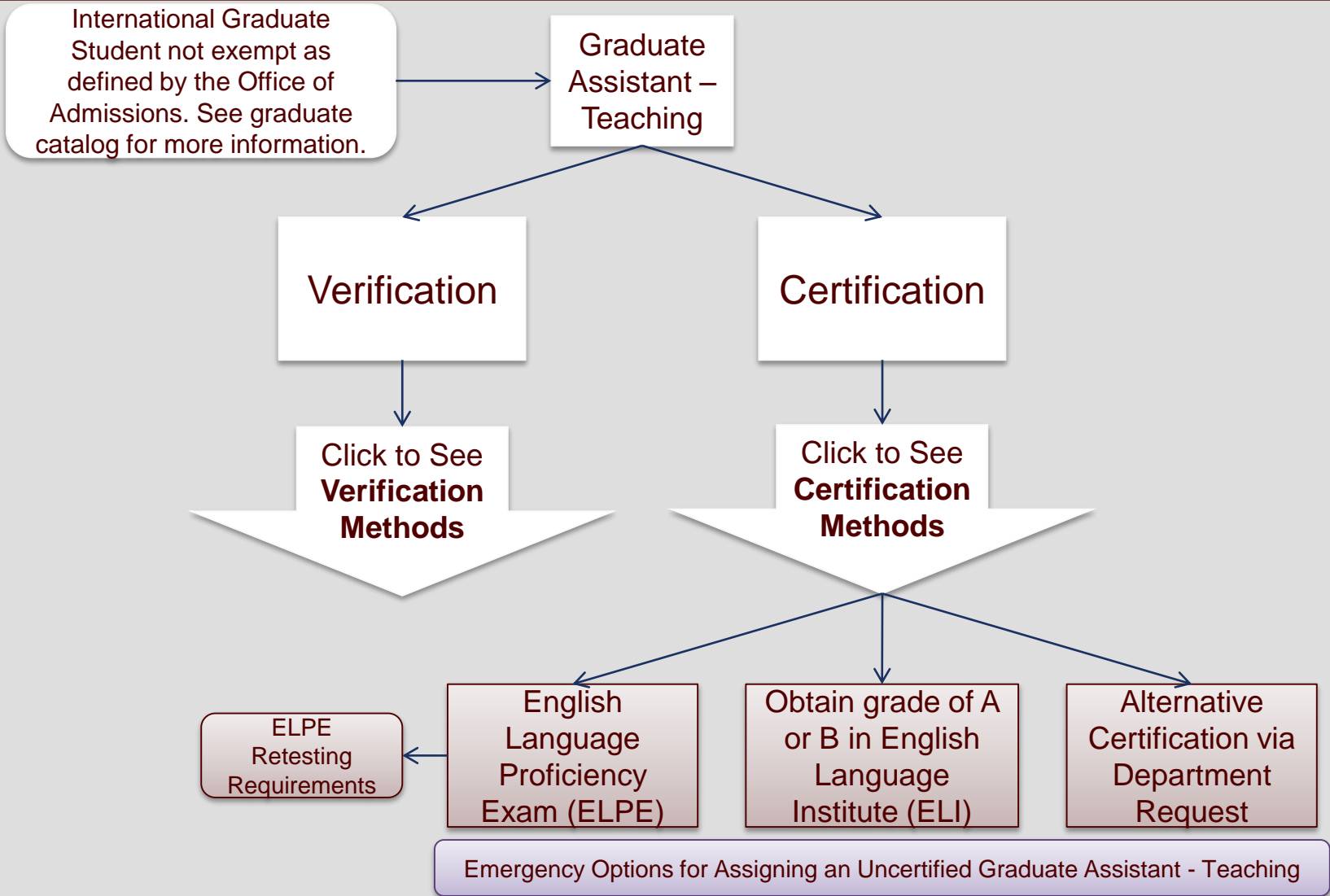


In the event of a student arriving late to campus (i.e. after the semester begins), certain departments allow a one-time only, one-semester option to postpone English Language Proficiency Requirements.

This option **ONLY** allows students to register. It **DOES NOT** fulfill verification requirements **OR** allow a student to teach.

To request this one-time, one-semester deferral to allow a student to register for courses, the Graduate Advisor should send an email to:

ogapsprocessing@tamu.edu



Certification Method – ELPE

- The English Language Proficiency Exam evaluates English skills in the areas of reading, listening, written composition and oral communication.
- A Graduate Student must score **at least 80 on each of the sections** of the English Language Proficiency Examination (ELPE) to be English Language Proficiency Certified.
- Visit the [Data and Research Services website](#) for more information on upcoming exam dates and how to register for the English Language Proficiency Exam Testing Services website.



Certification Method – ELPE Retesting

Students may not take the ELPE within three months of their most recent attempt without permission from the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies.

The departmental graduate advisor may request for a student to retest within three months of their last attempt only if:

- the department needs the student to TA,
- the student has passed at least two sections of the ELPE,
 AND
- the two areas lacking have a minimum score of 75 in each section on the last exam taken.

If the student meets the above three criteria, the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies will approve the request and fax it to Data and Research Services.

Departments will be responsible for notifying students of their approval or denial for a retest. The student will receive the testing information by email.

See next slide for form and information.



Request to Retake the English Language Proficiency Examination Form

Departments will need to submit the Request to Retake the English Language Proficiency Examination form to the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies requesting the student(s) be allowed to retest.

This request should arrive at OGAPS no later than NINE days prior to the date of the earliest requested examination.

Office of Graduate and Professional Studies



Request to Retest the English Language Proficiency Examination Form

Student Name: _____
 Student UIN: _____
 Department Head (Print): _____
 Department Head Signature: _____

Please allow the student listed above to retest the English Language Proficiency Exam. I attest that the student meets the following criteria:

- Our department needs the student to work as a Teaching Assistant
- The student has passed at least two sections of the ELPE
- The two ELPE areas lacking have a minimum score of 75 in each section



- Obtaining grades of A or B in ELIN courses at the 300 (advanced) level is one means of meeting TAMU English Language Proficiency Certification.
- Graduate students may take a combination of Texas A&M University and ELI courses up to a total of 15 hours in fall or spring semesters and up to a total of 12 hours for a 10-week summer semester.
- English Language courses do not count for university credit nor can they be used to satisfy registration requirements if a student holds an assistantship (GANT, GAT, GAR).
- Learn more information about the English Language Institute by visiting their webpage at eli.tamu.edu.

- A department can request that a student have Alternative Certification if the student:
 - has received a bachelor’s degree after 4 years of study at an accredited U.S. institution
OR
 - has previous experience / training that would deem the student proficient in the English language.
- Departments initiate alternative certification requests.
- The student should provide the department with documentation to support alternative certification. If the department deems the documentation sufficient to merit alternative certification, the department will submit the Request form for Alternative Certification recommending and requesting alternative certification (with supporting documentation attached) to OGAPS.
- The Office of Graduate and Professional Studies will determine on a case-by-case basis whether to grant alternative certification.


See next slide for form and information.



Request for Alternative Certification Form

Example of experiences and/or training that may justify alternative certification:

Completing a rigorous and comprehensive (includes the 4 areas of Written Composition, Reading, Listening, Oral Skills) English training program or courses at a university and/or institution other than Texas A&M University and providing associated transcripts.

Office of Graduate and Professional Studies 

Alternative Certification Form
English Language Proficiency Requirements

Departments initiate alternative certification requests.

Date: _____

Student Name: _____

Student UIN: _____

Department Head Name (Print): _____

Department Head Signature: _____

Check one of the following options:

Option One: The student listed above has received a baccalaureate degree following four years of study at an accredited U.S. institution or institutions, and therefore qualifies for alternative certification.

Option Two: Other Alternative Certification Requests

All other requests for alternative certification require strong department justification and review in compliance with Office of Graduate and Professional Studies policies and guidelines. The student should provide the department with documentation to support alternative certification requests based on previous experiences and/or training. Departments should provide a brief justification below for the alternative certification request. Attach all supporting documentation to this form.



Emergency Options for Assigning an Uncertified Graduate Assistant - Teaching

Department needs to hire an international graduate student as a Graduate Assistant – Teaching (GAT) who has not yet met the English Language Proficiency Certification requirements.

Emergency Deferrals require both high justification and OGAPS approval.

Option 1:
Emergency, one-time only, one-semester deferral of *one or more* required ELPE sections

Option 2:
Emergency, one-time only, one-semester deferral of a *RETEST* of *one or more* ELPE sections

For students who have *not* taken any or all sections of the ELPE.

For students who need to retake any or all sections of the ELPE.

Emergency Option

Deferral of ELPE Testing

On rare occasions, a department may need to hire an international graduate student as a Graduate Assistant – Teaching (GAT) who has not met the English Proficiency Certification requirements.

In such a case, a department may request a **one-time, one-semester** emergency deferral of one or more English Language Proficiency Examination (ELPE) sections.

The deferral request should come to the Associate Provost for Graduate and Professional Studies through the Graduate Operations Committee (GOC) Dean via a memo from the Department Head.

Emergency Option

Deferral of ELPE Testing – Memo Template

A memo to request the Deferral of ELPE Testing should include the following items:

- student name and UIN
- number of sections the student is teaching
- name of course and course level the student is teaching
- justification of why the student is needed for teaching
- List of scores received if any sections of the ELPE were already taken
- OPTIONAL: Attachment of student's scores used for verification; TOEFL, IELTS, GRE (verbal reasoning), GMAT(verbal)

The level of justification for approval of an emergency deferral is **very high**.

Examples of justifiable conditions for a case in which the student has not taken one or more of the ELPE sections, and the following conditions exist:

- The department had not anticipated hiring this student as a GAT for this semester; and
- The student meets the requirements for verification; and
- The student has not taken one or more of the ELPE sections; and
- The student will not have an opportunity to take the ELPE section(s) because it is not being offered again before the start of classes; and
- The department has no other options of graduate students with the expertise/knowledge needed to TA the course



Emergency Option

Deferral of ELPE Testing

If the emergency deferral is granted for this case, the student is required to enroll in the ELI oral course during the semester of the deferral.

The department may impose a higher requirement.

Also the department must assign a faculty member to conduct periodic reviews, including observations of student teaching performance during the first month of the semester, with appropriate actions if they deem the student's performance as unacceptable.

Emergency Option

Deferral of ELPE Retesting

For a case in which the student cannot retest again before classes start, and the following conditions exist:

- The student has not made the required score on one or more of the ELPE sections, or did not make an acceptable grade in one or more of the approved ELI courses; and
- The student will not have another opportunity to retest for the ELPE section(s) because it is not being offered again before classes start, or s/he does not meet the 3 retest criteria to retest again before classes start; and
- The department has no other options of graduate students with the expertise/knowledge needed to TA the course

In such a case, a department may request a **one-time, one-semester** emergency deferral of a retest of one or more English Language Proficiency Examination (ELPE) sections.

The deferral request should come to the Associate Provost for Graduate and Professional Studies through the Graduate Operations Committee (GOC) Dean via a memo from the Department Head.

A memo to request the Deferral of ELPE Retesting should include the following items:

- student name and UIN
- number of sections the student is teaching
- name of course and course level the student is teaching
- justification of why the student is needed for teaching (example below)
- list of scores received in the ELPE sections lacking 80 points
- OPTIONAL: attachment of student's scores used for verification; TOEFL, IELTS, GRE (verbal reasoning), GMAT (verbal)

The level of justification for approval of an emergency deferral is **very high**.

Examples of justifiable conditions for a case in which the student cannot retest again before classes start, and the following conditions exist:

- The student has not made the required score on one or more of the ELPE sections, or did not make an acceptable grade in one or more of the approved ELI courses; and
- The student will not have another opportunity to retest for the ELPE section(s) because it is not being offered again before classes start, or s/he does not meet the 3 retest criteria to retest again before classes start; and
- The department has no other options of graduate students with the expertise/knowledge needed to TA the course

Emergency Option

Deferral of ELPE Retesting

If the emergency deferral is granted for this case, and at least one of the student's ELPE scores is below 75, the student is required to take a corresponding ELI course during the semester of the deferral.

The department may impose a higher requirement.

Also the department must assign a faculty member to conduct periodic reviews, including observations of student teaching performance during the first month of the semester, with appropriate actions if they deem the student's performance as unacceptable.



Questions?

For questions about English Language Proficiency Requirements please contact:

The Office of Graduate and Professional Studies
ogaps@tamu.edu or 979.845.3631

or check the ELP Portal online
<http://ogaps.tamu.edu/elp-portal>