

English Proficiency Testing

To be considered for admission to Columbia, you must be comfortable with rapid and idiomatic spoken English. If your home language is not English and if your primary language of instruction has not been English for at least five years, you are required to take an English proficiency examination. Both of the examinations listed here are given all over the world, several times a year; you must take the examination no later than March of the school year in which you are applying:

I. TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language). You are urged to visit www.toefl.org as quickly as possible for more information on this examination. A minimum score of 600 (paper-based test), 250 (old computer-based test), or 100 (new Internet-based test) is necessary for admission to Columbia. Your score must be reported directly to Columbia by the testing service, using report code 2116 (Columbia College) or 2111 (The Fu Foundation School of Engineering and Applied Science).

II. IELTS (International English Language Testing System). You are urged to visit www.ielts.org as quickly as possible for more information on this examination. A minimum score of 7.0 is necessary for admission to Columbia. Your score must be reported directly to Columbia Undergraduate Admissions.

III. If you have a 650 on the Critical Reading section of the SAT, you are exempt from taking an English proficiency examination.

Candidates from Colleges and Universities Outside North America

Because of the great differences between the higher education system in North America and those in the rest of the world, we must set specific policies for those students considering transfer from an overseas college/university.*

1. You must be enrolled at a U.S.-style college or university to apply as a transfer. **“U.S.-style” means your university**
 - offers courses by the term or semester;
 - gives you a number or letter grade for each course;
 - can provide an official transcript *in English* that shows both of the above.

2. If your college or university is not U.S.-style as defined above, you may apply to Columbia as a first-year candidate instead of as a transfer but **only** if you will have completed no more than one year of university study. You must use the first-year application (available online) instead of the transfer application, and your completed application must be **submitted or postmarked** by the appropriate Early Decision (November 1) or Regular Decision (January 2) deadline.

a) When applying as a first-year candidate, please note the following: where the first-year application asks for two teacher recommendations, you should give at least one to a college/university faculty member. Where the first-year application asks for a short paragraph delineating your reasons for wishing to attend Columbia, you should instead append a statement of up to a full page explaining why your current college/university is not meeting your needs and why you consider Columbia to be a better place for your studies.

b) Should you be admitted to Columbia as a first-year student and accept our offer, then your post-secondary work can be considered for credit only after you enroll here; in making the decision to attend Columbia, you acknowledge that you may not receive credit for all the coursework you have done at your previous college/university and that you may receive no credit at all.

c) You must take both the SAT or ACT and the two Subject tests as part of your application to Columbia if these exams are available in the country where you are attending college/university. For applicants to Columbia College, your SAT subject tests can be in any two subjects; for applications to SEAS, you should take a math exam and either Physics or Chemistry.

*We consider such institutions as the American University of Paris, the American University in Cairo and Franklin College in Switzerland to be U.S.-style colleges and thus exempt from this policy. If you do not know whether your college/university should be counted in this category, please contact our office.

Filling Out the Application

Social Security Number - Please make an entry in these boxes only if you have a U.S. Social Security number; please do not use an identification number issued by any other government. (Canadians, please do NOT use your SINS.) Columbia will issue you an identification number if needed.

Telephone - Enter your complete telephone number, including the country and city codes required to reach the number from the United States.

School records - Your secondary school(s) and university(ies) must provide a record of what courses you have taken in each year of study and what marks or grades you have received in those courses; in the U.S. such a document is called a “transcript.” If your school cannot provide a year-by-year record of courses taken and grades received, then a school official must at least provide us with a listing of the disciplines you have studied (i.e., English, biology, history, etc.) and a summary of your achievement in each. Your secondary school records should also include a copy of any examination results particular to your national educational system (e.g., British GCSEs). If you have studied A-level courses in a British-model school, your A-level results are required; copies of UCAS documents are welcome.

Housing

Campus housing is guaranteed to all entering students. As an international student, you should be aware that campus housing will be available without interruption throughout the summer and academic year.

International Programs Services

Visa services, social gatherings and many other offerings are provided by Columbia's International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO). Columbia also has a variety of international student clubs, including the Columbia International Student Coalition. For more information please visit the ISSO website at www.columbia.edu/cu/isso.