



The U.S. Department of State requires exchange visitors to have enough sufficient English language proficiency to perform their jobs or complete their programs; to navigate daily life in the United States; to read and comprehend program materials; to understand fully their responsibilities, rights, and protections; and to know how to obtain assistance, if necessary.

Verification of sufficient English language proficiency is mandatory, and sponsors must ensure that J-1 exchange visitors have verifiable English language skills sufficient to function on a day-to-day basis and in their program environment before issuing a DS-2019.

**Sponsors must use one of the following objective measurements of English language proficiency:**

**1. A recognized English language test**

- a. Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score of 80ibt, 550 PBT minimum
- b. International English Language Testing System (IELTS) score of 6.5 minimum
- c. Michigan English Language Assessment Battery (MELAB) score of 77 minimum
- d. International Baccalaureate (IB) grade of 5 in English at a higher level

**2. A signed documentation from an academic institution or English language school**

**3. A documented interview conducted by the sponsor either in person or via videoconferencing (or telephone if videoconferencing is not a viable option)**

Please provide certification of the above to International Student and Scholar Services (ISS). To satisfy option 3 please provide a letter on letterhead summarizing the interview findings, including an attestation by the sponsor verifying sufficient English language proficiency to participate in the program and to navigate daily life in the United States.