

# International Applicants & Students

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## Academic Transcripts/ International Credential Evaluation

- In lieu of foreign transcripts, a **course-by-course international credential evaluation is required** for applicants educated a foreign country from outside of the United States, regardless of the language of instruction. The credential evaluation will translate the student's academic credentials into English and convert their grades and GPA into the traditional United States grading scale. If your institution is accredited through a U.S. regional accrediting body, an international credential evaluation is not required.
- International credential evaluation reports must be submitted to Graduate Admissions directly from the agency by the appropriate deadline in order to complete their application. This process may take several months to process, and it is recommended to **begin this process no later than 6-8 weeks before** the deadline for which they plan to apply. Failure to do so may result in a late review of the application or denial of admission due to insufficient academic records.
- The School of Graduate Studies strongly recommends international credentials to be evaluated by World Education Services. World Education Services (WES) is a trusted credential evaluation service whose evaluations are widely recognized by more than 2,500 educational, business, and governmental institutions throughout the U.S. and Canada. Fees for this service start at \$160 for a course-by-course credential evaluation.
- If an applicant chooses to have their credentials evaluated by a different organization, they must be a member of the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES).

*A detailed list of the required documents for each country can be found on the evaluation service's website. Please check the website to see which documents are needed for the country in which you completed your education. Please review the terms and conditions of each vendor carefully, as directions and regulations vary. FIT is not responsible for the services offered by these vendors and cannot be held liable for any dispute regarding services rendered.*

- It is the applicant's responsibility to follow their home university's policies for transcript requests and provide postsecondary academic records to the evaluation agency for a course-by-course credential evaluation. These include course transcripts or mark sheets for each semester or year completed during the degree program, and the degree certificate or diploma if a graduation date, with the name of the degree, if not shown on the transcript. If an applicant has not yet graduated, transcripts or semester marks statements for all semesters/years completed to-date must be submitted. Foreign transcripts sent directly to FIT will not be accepted by the Office of Graduate Admissions.
- **International Credential Evaluations must be sent directly to the Office of Graduate Admissions.** Under no circumstances will materials sent to the Office of Undergraduate Admissions be retrieved. Students who submitted an international credential evaluation before completion of their degree are not required to submit a second evaluation. If admitted to the School of Graduate Studies, you will be required to submit an updated final transcript with translation showing degree conferral.

## English Language Proficiency Exam Scores

- Applicants who speak English as a second language must submit evidence of English Language Proficiency to do graduate work, as measured by the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language), or the IELTS academic (International English Language Testing Service) exams.

- English language proficiency is WAIVED for applicants who hold a bachelor's or higher degree from a university located in the United States or in another country in which English is both the primary spoken language and the primary language of instruction. (e.g., Australia, Barbados, Canada, Ireland, Jamaica, New Zealand, United Kingdom)

If your degree is still in progress, you are required to submit scores. Exceptions to the above may occur at the discretion of the department.

- Official score reports must be sent to the graduate admissions office directly from the testing agency. TOEFL scores can be sent by paper or electronically using **FIT's institution code of 2257, department code 99**; IELTS scores can be submitted by paper or electronically using the e-Delivery service to **Fashion Institute of Technology - School of Graduate Studies**. Only IELTS Academic test scores will be accepted. We will not accept the IELTS General Training Module.
- For all graduate programs, our minimum score requirements are:
  - TOEFL (iBT) minimum is **85**
  - IELTS (academic) minimum is **6.5**

Candidates with scores below these minimums are encouraged to retake the exam.

- English Language Proficiency exemption is based upon the applicant's undergraduate degree and/or the candidate's native language. Applicants having earned a master's degree from an institution where English is the primary language of instruction must still provide TOEFL or IELTS scores. Exceptions to the above may occur at the discretion of the department.
- TOEFL and IELTS scores must be less than two years old in order for it to be considered valid.
- More information about the TOEFL exam is available at <https://www.ets.org/toefl>
- More information about the IELTS exam is available at [ielts.org](http://ielts.org)

## STUDENT VISAS

In accordance with federal regulations, FIT issues I-20 forms (Certificates of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant [F-1] Student Status) to students who have been admitted to a full-time program of study. Students who wish to apply for an F-1 student visa or who hold F-1 student status must obtain an I-20 from FIT. To obtain an I-20, students must submit an International Student Financial Statement (ISFS) to FIT after being admitted to the college. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) requires verification of the student's ability to finance studies in the United States. An estimate of expenses based on current tuition, fees, and living and personal expenses appears on the ISFS.

After notification of acceptance, a tuition deposit is required. Once the tuition deposit and the International Student Financial Statement are received, an I-20 will be issued by FIT International Student Services (ISS). The I-20 is necessary to apply for a visa at a U.S. Consulate in order to enter the United States to study and maintain F-1 status.

Those students holding F-1 status from another U.S. college must transfer their F-1 status to FIT; instructions for transfer of their SEVIS record to FIT will be sent upon receipt of the tuition deposit and the ISFS. An FIT-issued I-20 is necessary to maintain F-1 status while at FIT. To download the ISFS and for more information about applying for a visa and the terms and conditions of F-1 status, please visit the International Student Services website at [fitnyc.edu/iss](http://fitnyc.edu/iss).

All international students must attend a mandatory orientation during their first semester of attendance. Orientation information will be sent with the I-20 and is available online.