

English Language Standards

Purpose

The purpose of the Aviation English Language Standards Policy and Procedures for Flight Students is to ensure ERAU flight students demonstrate and continuously maintain operational and plain English language proficiency of at least the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Operational Level 4, as required by the FAA Aviation English Language Standards (FAA-AC 28-60).

Scope

The Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University Aviation English Language Standards Policy and Procedures for Flight Students applies to all international flight students at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University residential campuses, for whom English is not a first or “native” language, as well as citizens or permanent residents of the United States for whom English is a foreign or second language. In addition, the policy applies to any ERAU flight student who is referred to the Flight Department English Language Coordinator by a flight instructor, training manager, or other FAA flight certified evaluators.

All international flight students in the ERAU Flight Department for whom English is not a first or “native” language are required to take and pass the Aviation English for Flight Training, FACR 135 (Daytona) or Aviation English, ASCI 137 (Prescott) course. All citizens or permanent residents of the United States who speak English as a foreign or second language are required to take and pass the Aviation English for Flight Training, FACR 135 (Daytona) or Aviation English, ASCI 137 (Prescott) course.

Non-native English speaking flight students may test out of this course by passing the English for Flight Training Assessment (EFTA). No other English assessments or qualifications will substitute for an EFTA test.

FAA Aviation English Language Standards

The FAA Aviation English Language Standards (FAA AELS) “apply to any applicant or airman applying for or holding an FAA certificate.” The FAA AELS supersedes all ERAU English language requirements for those candidates who wish to enroll in the ERAU flight program.

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University complies with FAA Aviation English Language Standards that are outlined in FAA Advisory Circular AC 60-28b. Embry-Riddle and Embry-Riddle instructors and evaluators are:

“...responsible for ensuring that those attending or receiving training continuously demonstrate the eligibility requirements for an FAA certificate specific to the AELS.”

(FAA AC 60-28B, para 5.1.)

“An applicant for an FAA certificate or rating should be able to communicate in English in a discernible and understandable manner with ATC, pilots, and others involved in preparing an aircraft for flight and operating an aircraft in flight. This communication may or may not involve the use of the radio...For additional guidance, reference AC 60-28, English Language Skill Standards required by 14 CFR parts 61, 63, 65, and 107, as amended.”

(FAA ACS 2018, Appendix 5, A-8)

“ICAO ENGLISH LANGUAGE CRITERIA DEFINITIONS. The FAA has accepted the ICAO Language Proficiency Ratings Scale Operational Level 4 as its minimum proficiency requirement. The Proficiency Scale is found in ICAO Document 9835. These definitions apply to any applicant or airman applying for or holding an FAA certificate.

Pronunciation (P). This assumes that English is not the applicant’s native language and that the applicant has a dialect or accent that is intelligible to the aeronautical community.

Structure (S). Relevant grammatical structures and sentence patterns are determined by language functions appropriate to the task. Basic grammatical structures and sentence patterns are used creatively and are usually well controlled by the applicant. Errors may occur, particularly in unusual or unexpected circumstances, but rarely interfere with meaning.

Vocabulary (V). The applicant’s vocabulary range and accuracy are usually sufficient to communicate effectively on common, concrete, and work-related topics. The applicant can often paraphrase successfully when lacking vocabulary in unusual or unexpected circumstances.

Fluency (F). The applicant produces stretches of language at an appropriate tempo. There may be occasional loss of fluency on transition from rehearsed or formulaic speech to spontaneous interaction, but this does not prevent effective communication. The applicant can make limited use of discourse markers or connectors. Fillers are not distracting.

Comprehension (C). Comprehension by the applicant is mostly accurate on common, concrete, and work-related topics when the dialect, accent, or variety used is sufficiently intelligible. When the applicant is confronted with a linguistic or situational complication or an unexpected turn of events, comprehension may be slower or require clarification strategies.

Interactions (I). Responses by the applicant are usually immediate, appropriate, and informative. The applicant initiates and maintains exchanges even when dealing with an unexpected turn of events. The applicant deals adequately with apparent misunderstandings by checking, confirming, or clarifying.”

(FAA Order 8900.1 CHG 566, 5-1909)

Embry-Riddle’s English for Flight Training Assessment (EFTA)

Traditional academic English language admissions standards assessments (e.g., TOEFL, IELTS, Duolingo English Test) or other measures, such as attendance at an English-speaking academic institution, are not designed to and do not account for the linguistic challenges associated with flight training. Because of the importance of English proficiency for safe and efficient flight training, as well as compliance with FAA AELS, Embry-Riddle requires non-native English speaking flight students take Aviation English for Flight Training, FACR 135 (Daytona) or Aviation English, ASCI 137 (Prescott). Non-native English speaking students may test out of FACR 135 or ASCI 137 if they pass the Aviation English for Flight Training Assessment (EFTA).

The FAA AELS requires that Pronunciation, Structure (grammar), Vocabulary, Fluency, Comprehension, and Interactions be evaluated based on the ICAO rating scale (see ICAO Doc 9835). Embry-Riddle’s English for Flight Training Assessment (EFTA) screens flight students for these skills using a scale adapted from ICAO to reflect the linguistic demands of flight training. This scale is used to determine their “overall plain language proficiency;” in other words, how their language skills are likely to support or interfere with their ability to learn and communicate effectively in a flight training environment. Embry-Riddle’s English for Flight Training Assessment (EFTA) follows ICAO guidance that the prospective flight student’s overall score reflect lowest sub-score.

With respect to flight knowledge, although questions on the EFTA may relate to aviation or to flight, the assessors do not evaluate a prospective flight student’s aviation operation knowledge. The assessors evaluate prospective flight students’ English language proficiency.

Procedures for students

1. Flight students for whom English is not their native language will be notified of the ERAU requirement to take the Aviation English for Flight Training, FACR 135 (Daytona), or Aviation English, ASCI 137 (Prescott) course. They will also be notified that they may test out of this course by passing the EFTA.
2. Students will receive an email that will provide:
 - a. Information about FACR 135 (Daytona) or ASCI 137 (Prescott), the Embry-Riddle Language Institute (ERLI) Pathway program, the

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- Aviation English Language Standards Policy and Procedures for Flight Students, and the EFTA;
- b. A link to the ERAU CANVAS EFTA website; and
- c. Instructions for registering for and taking the EFTA.
3. Flight students may take the EFTA prior to being assigned a course schedule to test out of the FACR 135 (Daytona) or ASCI 137 (Prescott) course.
4. The EFTA results will be reported to the Flight Training Department and to the student.
5. Based on EFTA results, a non-native English speaking flight student will:
 - a. be recommended to begin flight training with continual monitoring of FAA AELS;
 - b. be required to successfully complete Aviation English for Flight Training, FACR 135 (Daytona) or Aviation English, ASCI 137 (Prescott); or
 - c. be recommended for more extensive English language support through the ERLI pathway program
6. Failure to pass FACR 135 (Daytona) or ASCI 137 (Prescott) will result in the inability for a student to register for flight training which may result in a student having to change their degree program.

EFTA Testing Policy

1. A student must have test files for all 13 questions to be considered for flight school recommendation.
2. EFTA passing scores are valid for up to one year.
 - a. For example, if a candidate takes the EFTA in December 2019 and earn a passing score, that score is valid until December 2020.
3. Except for outstanding circumstances, a student with a completed EFTA test and score may not re-take the test until the next semester's testing window opens.
 - a. EFTA takers who experience technical difficulties while taking the EFTA may be allowed one (1) re-take within the testing window. Candidates who experience technical difficulties during the EFTA should notify the EFTA administrators immediately.
 - b. If candidates are unable to successfully complete the EFTA after the one (1) permissible re-take, the candidate will be required to take FACR 135 (Daytona) or ASCI 137 (Prescott). An FACR 135 (Daytona) or ASCI 137 (Prescott) instructor reserves the right to evaluate candidate's language proficiency in the first week of the course and make further recommendations regarding the candidate's Aviation English support.
4. Test takers are forbidden from receiving any external help during the EFTA. Test takers should carefully review the EFTA instructions. Suspected violators of this policy will be contacted by the EFTA administrators and their test results made invalid.

Forms

EFTA Scoring Rubric

References

- Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). (2017). Order 8900.1 Flight Standards Information Management System 8900.1 CHG 566. Washington, D.C.
- Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). (2017). FAA English language standard for an FAA certificate issued under 14 CFR Parts 61, 63, 65, and 107 (AC 60- 28B). Washington, D.C.
- International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). (2010). Manual of implementation of the language proficiency requirements (Doc 9835) (2nd ed.). Montreal, Canada: International Civil Aviation Organization.