Studying in a Second Language

No doubt one of the most popular reasons for going abroad is to be immersed in another culture and practice or pick up a new language. This may be for personal reasons, such as a love of languages, or for professional reasons, such as developing the skills to work and thrive in an international context.

If you intend to follow courses in a language other than English, you will be required to submit a language assessment as part of your exchange application. Students will be assessed by a McMaster language assessor who will determine a student’s readiness to study in that language while abroad.

How to arrange a language assessment

To arrange a language assessment, email the appropriate department contact to set-up a language assessment. Please bring the language assessment form with you to the meeting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>Nicholas Serruys</td>
<td>Department of French</td>
<td>Students wishing to study abroad in French should have the equivalent of an A- in 1A06/2M06. A grade of B- in 2BB3 and 2B03 is also preferred. French immersion/native language speakers may be required to take a French language course to support academic writing skills as a condition of approval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>Nicolai Penner</td>
<td>Department of Linguistics and Languages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian, Japanese, Korean, Chinese, Spanish</td>
<td>Wendy D’Angelo</td>
<td>Department of Linguistics and Languages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MCMASTER UNIVERSITY STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM

ASSESSMENT OF LANGUAGE COMPETENCE

Student’s Name: ______________________________                 Student Number:_______________________________

(FOLLOWING PORTION TO BE COMPLETED BY A LANGUAGE INSTRUCTOR)

Assessment of ____________________________ language

Name of Evaluator:________________________________ Position/Title:__________________________________

Telephone:__(_____)______________________________ Email:________________________________________

Signature:_______________________________________ Date:_________________________________________

Please return a copy of this assessment to the student. Please also return a copy to:

Jenna Levi
Education Abroad Coordinator
International Student Services, GH 110
McMaster University

How was the evaluation determined?

☐ Based on knowledge of student’s course work in a language class
☐ Written examination; test name and date administered________________________________________
☐ Oral examination; date administered: ______________________________________________________

Please indicate your opinion of the student’s present language ability in each of the following categories.

1. ORAL COMPREHENSION

☐ None
☐ Limited to slow, uncomplicated sentences
☐ Understands simple conversation
☐ Understands conversation on simple academic topics
☐ Understands sophisticated discussion on academic topics

2. SPEAKING ABILITY

☐ None
☐ Able to complete structurally simple, short phrases
☐ Uses basic grammatical structure, speaking with limited vocabulary
☐ Uses structural patterns, but not with consistent accuracy; adequate to participate in conversational topics
☐ Has control over structure patterns; can handle a wide range of conversational situations.
3. READING ABILITY

☐ None
☐ Limited to simple vocabulary and sentences structure
☐ Understands conventional topics and non-technical subjects
☐ Understands materials which contain idioms and specialized terminology
☐ Understands sophisticated materials, including those in proposed field of study

4. WRITING ABILITY

☐ None
☐ Writes simple sentences on conventional topics with some errors in spelling and structure
☐ Writes on academic topics with a few errors in structure and spelling
☐ Writes on academic topics with idiomatic ease of expression and feeling for the style of the language

What is your opinion of the student’s ability to pursue university-level course work in this language?

☐ Will require considerable training before necessary competence can be attained
☐ Will require additional training before beginning the exchange
☐ Should be able to manage adequately after a short period of adjustment abroad
☐ Should have no difficulty

Please mark as appropriate:

☐ I do not approve the student for study in this language
☐ I conditionally approve the student for study abroad in this language
☐ I unconditionally approve the student for study abroad in this language

Please add any comments relating to the student’s linguistic ability.

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

In case of conditional approval, what are the conditions the student must satisfy to receive clearance for study abroad? List any suggestions (e.g. one more term of language preparation/intensive summer language program).

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

☐ I ________________________________ (student name) understand that it is my responsibility to follow up on the conditions noted above and supply proof of completion to MacAbroad. I understand that MacAbroad reserves the right to withdraw my exchange nomination should I not meet the conditions noted in this language assessment.