



General Foundation Program Prospectus

وثيقة البرنامج التأسيسي

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Abbreviations

AM	Applied Mathematics
BM	Basic Mathematics
CA	Continuous Assessment
CAS	Colleges of Applied Sciences
CoTs	Colleges of Technology
CS	Computing Skills
CT	Challenge Test
EL	English Language
ECT	English Challenge Test
EPT	English Placement Test
ELPT	English Language Proficiency Test
FE	Final Exam
GFP	General Foundation Program
GSS	General Study Skills
ICDL	International Computer Driving License (www.icdlgcc.com)
IELTS	International English Language Testing System (www.ielts.org)
MPT	Mathematics Placement Test
MWT	Mathematics Waiver Test
MCT	Mathematics Challenge Test
PM	Pure Mathematics
PT	Placement Test
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language (www.ets.org/toefl/)
UTAS	University of Technology and Applied Sciences
EWT	English Waiver Test



Glossary

General Glossary		
No.	Term	Definition
1.	W	Withdrawal 'W' refers to valid excuses. 'W' is awarded in the following cases: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A student who surpasses the tolerated absence percentage of the relevant GFP component with a valid health or other compelling excuse is debarred from the final exam and receives a 'W' 2. A student who is absent for 10 consecutive study days in all the registered courses with a valid health or other compelling excuse is debarred from the final exam and receives a 'W'
2.	FW	'FW' refers to failing for unexcused absence. 'FW' is awarded in the following cases: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A student who surpasses the tolerated absence percentage of the relevant GFP component due to unexcused absences is debarred from the final exam and receives an 'FW' in the relevant GFP component. 2. A student who is absent for 10 consecutive study days in all registered courses without a valid excuse. This student is considered to have unofficially withdrawn from the university. 3. Additionally, if a student has more than two W grades is awarded an FW
3.	Dismissed	A suspended student who exhausts the two permitted chances to pass the level/component Exit Exam in any of the GFP components and did not submit any valid proficiency certificate within the allotted suspension period is dismissed from the University.
4.	Final Exam	A comprehensive exam given at the end of the semester.
5.	Make-Up Exam	An exam given to students who have missed a scheduled exam for a valid reason.
6.	Cumulative Mark	The sum/total of the Continuous Assessment mark and Final Exam mark.
7.	'I' Grade	A student who misses the final exam shall be awarded incomplete, 'I' grade.
English		
8.	English Placement Test	A test given to all new students who join UTAS. It aims to determine their English language proficiency level and place them in the program accordingly.
9.	High-flyers	Students who score greater than or equal to 78 in the English Placement Test are identified as high-flyers.
10.	English Wavier Test	A Level 4 Final Exam given to high-flyers who score greater than or equal to 78 in the English Placement Test. These high-flyers need to score greater than or equal to 70 in the English Waiver Test to be exempted from taking English courses; otherwise, they will have to study Level 4 English Course.



11.	English Placement Validation Test	A level Final Exam given to levels 1, 2 and 3 students whose language proficiency is higher than the level they have been placed in as identified by their instructors during the first two weeks of the semester. Students who achieve a score of greater than or equal to 80 in this test are upgraded to the next level.
12.	English Challenge Tests	These are two tests: 1. The Level 2 Final Exam is given to students who achieve a cumulative grade of A or A- (greater than or equal to 90) in Level 1. If they score greater than or equal to 80% in this test, they will be exempted from studying Level 2 English and be eligible to study Level 3 English course. 2. The Level 3 Final Exam is given to students who achieve a cumulative grade of A or A- (greater than or equal to 90) in Level 2. If they score greater than or equal to 80% in this test, they will be exempted from studying English for Level 3 and be eligible to study Level 4 English course.
13.	English Language Proficiency Certificate	A formal document showing students' English language proficiency level issued by a reputable organization. UTAS accepts the academic International English Language Testing Certificate (IELTS) and the Test of English as a Foreign Language (Internet-based Test) (TOEFL (iBT)).
14.	English Language Proficiency Test	A Level 4 Final Exam given to the following category of students: 1. Suspended students who exhausted their two chances of passing the English Exit Exam within one academic year of suspension date. 2. Diploma students who did not initially qualify to register for Advanced Diploma or Bachelor due to their language proficiency level. 3. Advanced Diploma students who did not initially qualify to register for Bachelor program due to their language proficiency level.
15.	English Exit Exam	A Level 4 Final Exam given to suspended students who have exhausted the repeat chance to study in any of the English Language Levels.
16.	Suspension in English Language	A student who fails twice is suspended for one academic year and s/he shall forfeit the right to enrolment for GFP English levels. Suspension in the GFP English component shall not affect student's progression in the other GFP components. Suspended student is permitted <u>two chances</u> to sit for the English Exit Exam and/or submit an approved proficiency certificate before the suspension period is elapsed.
Mathematics		
17.	Mathematics Placement Test	A test given to all new students who join UTAS. It aims to determine students' proficiency in Mathematics and places them in the program accordingly.



18.	Mathematics Waiver Test	A Pure Mathematics/Applied Mathematics Comprehensive Exam given to students who score greater than or equal to 80% in the Mathematics Placement Test. The passing score is greater than or equal to 50.
19.	Mathematics Challenge Test	A Pure Mathematics/Applied Mathematics Comprehensive Exam given to students who achieve a cumulative mark of greater than or equal to 80% on their first-time regular study of Basic Mathematics course to determine their eligibility to be exempted from studying PM/AM. The passing score is greater than or equal to 50%.
20.	Mathematics Re-sit exam	A comprehensive exam given to students who have failed a course two times in any semester or to students who failed any Mathematics course for the first time in their fourth semester. The passing score is greater than or equal to 50%.
21.	Mathematics Exit exam	A comprehensive Exam given to suspended students for maximum of two times in their suspension period to be exempted from any of the mathematics courses. The passing score is greater than or equal to 50%.
22.	Suspension in Mathematics	A student who fails a course twice is suspended for the remaining semesters available from the four-semester permitted time period. Suspension in the GFP Mathematics component shall not affect student's progression in the other GFP components.

Computing Skills

23.	Computing Skills Entry Test	A test given to all new students who join UTAS. It aims to assess the proficiency level of students' knowledge of computing skills. The test includes 2 parts. Students need to pass part 1 to be eligible to sit for part 2. Passing both parts exempts students from studying the course.
24.	Computing Skills Exit Exam	A final exam given to suspended students who exhausted all the permitted chances to study the Computing Skills course. Suspended students are granted two chances to sit for the CS Exit Exam. The passing score is greater than or equal to 50%.
25.	IT Proficiency Certificate	A formal document showing students' IT proficiency level issued by a reputable organization. UTAS accepts the following proficiency certificates. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ICDL certificate (International Computer Driving License) 2. *IC3 Certificate (Internet Core Competency Certification) <p>*The IC3 Exam must be taken at UTAS branch centres according to the international dates.</p>
26.	Suspension in Computing Skills	A student who fails the Computing Skills Course twice is suspended for one academic year. Suspended student is permitted <u>two chances</u> to sit for the Computing Skills Exit Exam and/or submit an approved proficiency certificate before the suspension period is elapsed. Suspension in the GFP CS component shall not affect student's progression in the other GFP components.



1. Introduction

This document provides information and guidelines about the General Foundation Program (GFP) offered at the University of Technology and Applied Sciences (UTAS). The document does not apply to the education programs taught in Arabic at UTAS-Rustaq. This document provides details about the GFP structure, entry and exit standards, progression, assessment, language admission criteria, general guidelines, examination regulations, and discipline and order.

2. GFP Structure

The Program consists of four areas: English Language, Mathematics, Computing Skills, and General Study Skills (GSS). The General Study Skills learning outcomes are embedded in all the GFP courses. Each semester, foundation students shall register for all the components of the GFP that they have to successfully complete at a certain level in order to progress to the next level or complete the program. Figure 1 illustrates the structure of the GFP and its levels.

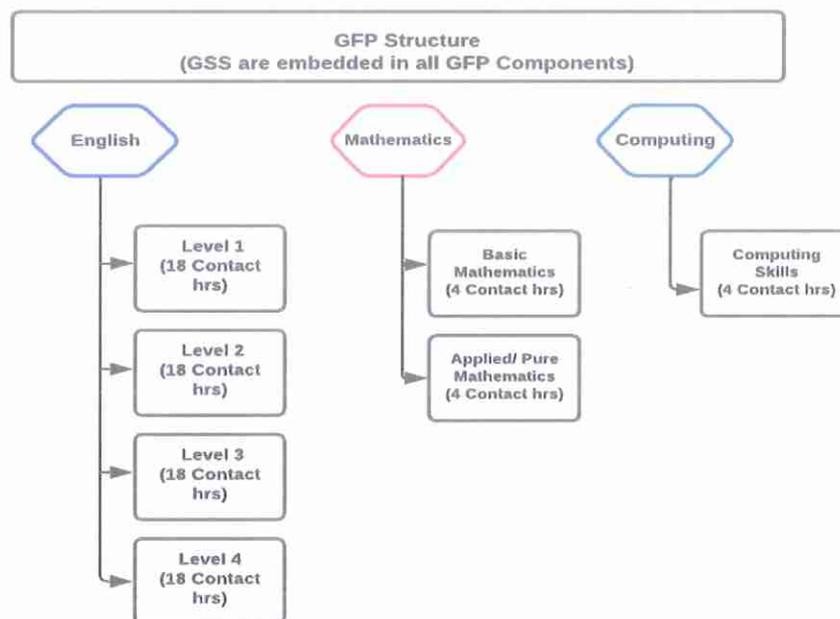


Figure 1. GFP Structure

As Figure 1 shows, the English Language courses have been structured into four ability levels. Students may enroll in any of the three Mathematics courses whenever they meet the pertinent entry requirements. Students who pass Level 2 English course may enroll in the Computing Skills course in Level 3. If a student is suspended from the English component before reaching level 3, s/he must enroll in the Computing Skills course in the subsequent semester. The GSS are embedded

in the teaching of the other three GFP study areas and assessed through CA components. The GFP structure is flexible as it is designed to offer all GFP courses every semester to meet the needs of all the students. The table below gives a breakdown of the number of hours per course of study shown in Figure 1 above and their prerequisites.

Table 1. The courses offered in the GFP

Course Code/Name	Contact hours per week	Prerequisites
FPEL0001 English for Level 1	18	Equivalent English Placement Test score
FPEL0002 English for Level 2	18	Pass in Level 1 or equivalent English Placement Test score
FPEL0003 English for Level 3	18	Pass in Level 2 or equivalent English Placement Test score
FPEL0004 English for Level 4	18	Pass in Level 3 or equivalent English Placement Test score
FPMB0001 Basic Mathematics	4	Equivalent Mathematics Placement Test score
FPMA0002 Applied Mathematics	4	Pass in Basic Mathematics or score greater than or equal to 50% in MPT
FPMP0003 Pure Mathematics	4	Pass in Basic Mathematics or score greater than or equal to 50% in MPT
FPCS0001 Computing Skills	4	Pass Level 2 English course and did not meet the required passing score of CS Entry test.

3. English Language

3.1. Entry and Exit Standards

Newly admitted students to UTAS are required to sit for the English Placement Test (EPT). Students are placed into different levels according to their score in the EPT. As illustrated in table 2 below:

Table 2. English Language Levels Entry Standards

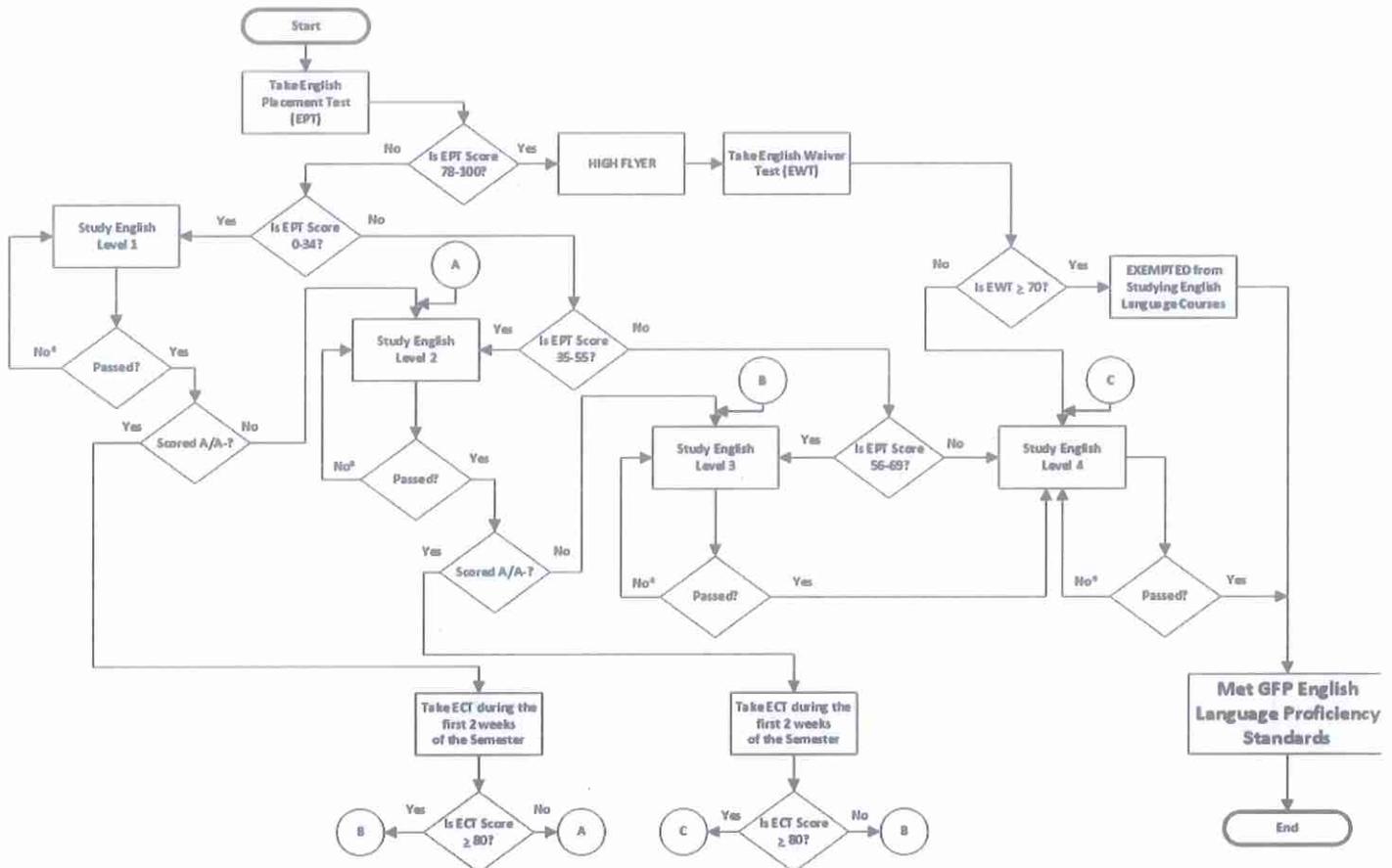
Placement Test Entry Score	0-34	35-55	56-69	70-77	78-100
Levels	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	High-flyers



1. The students who score greater than or equal to 78 in the English Placement Test (high-flyers) shall sit for the English Waiver Test (EWT). If they score greater than or equal to 70 in the EWT, they shall be exempted from the GFP English component. If their score in the WT is less than 70, they shall study the Level 4 English course.
2. Students who submit, during the first two weeks of a semester, a valid academic IELTS/TOFEL(iBT) certificate, issued by an official local or international testing center and not older than two years, equivalent to Level 4 exit standards (refer to the Language Admission Criterion Article) shall be exempted from the GFP English component and shall be allowed to enroll in courses from their academic program provided that all other pertinent requirements have also been met.
3. If students who are currently enrolled in any of the levels of the English component submit, at or after the start of the third week of the semester, a valid academic IELTS certificate issued by an official local or international testing center and not older than two years, they shall be exempted from the GFP English component altogether. These students may enroll in an academic program the following semester if the other GFP requirements have also been met.
4. In case a student fails in any of the GFP English levels, s/he shall be allowed to repeat that level once. If s/he fails any English level twice, s/he is suspended for one academic year and shall forfeit his/her right to enrolment for GFP English levels. However, this suspended student shall be granted two chances to sit for English Exit Exam, register for the English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT) offered by UTAS and/or submit an approved proficiency certificate before the suspension period is elapsed.
5. Suspended student in English Language is dismissed from the university if s/he exhausts the two permitted chances to pass the English Exit Exam and/or fails the English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT) offered by UTAS and/or fails to submit an approved proficiency certificate within one academic year from date of suspension.
6. The English Exit Exam is administered three times a year: at the beginning of the academic year, at the end of Fall semester, and at the end of the Spring semester.
7. The English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT) is administered twice a semester: at the beginning and the end of Fall and Spring semesters.
8. Suspended students are allowed to register for the ELPT twice during the suspension period.
9. Diploma and Advanced Diploma students are allowed to register for the ELPT three times maximum during their study period.



The following diagram illustrates the progression in English, and it encapsulates all possible routes a GFP student may take.



*Students are allowed to repeat an English course only once in the entire GFP period.

Figure 2. Student Progression in English

3.2. English Entry, Progression and Exit Tests

3.2.1. English Placement Test (ELPT0001)

The English Placement Test is given to all new students who join the university without being exempted by holding an alternative entry qualification as detailed in 3.1 above. The EPT aims to place students in different English language levels (1-4) according to their English language proficiency.



3.2.2. English Validation Test (ELVT0001)

A level Final Exam given to levels 1, 2 and 3 students whose language proficiency is higher than the level they have been placed in as identified by their instructors during the first two weeks of the semester. Students who achieve a score of greater than or equal to 80 in this test are upgraded to the next level.

3.2.3. English Waiver Test (WTEL0004)

Students who achieve a mark of greater than or equal to 78 in the English Placement Test may sit for the English Waiver Test in order to be exempted from studying Level 4. If the student scores greater than or equal to 70 in this English Waiver Test, s/he will be exempted from studying English, but if s/he scores <70, s/he will study level 4. The English Waiver Test ensures that high-flyers students meet the proficiency requirements to advance to Year One of the academic program.

3.2.4. English Challenge Test (CTFP0002 & CTFP0003)

The purpose of the English Challenge Test is to allow high achieving students in levels 1 and 2 to move up to a higher level to recognize their performance and minimize their time in the GFP. Students who achieve an A or A- in the previous Level 1 or 2 are given the chance to sit for an English Challenge Test. If they achieve a total mark of 80% or higher in this Test, they shall be able to move up to level 3 or 4, respectively. The test is administered during the induction week.

3.2.5. Make-up Exam

This exam is for the students who have missed a scheduled exam in any of the GFP components for a reason officially recognized as a valid excuse.

3.2.6. English Exit Exam (EXEL0004)

The English Exit Exam is a Level 4 Final Exam given to suspended students who have exhausted the repeat chance to study on any of the English Language levels. Suspended students are granted two chances to sit for the English Exit Exam. The exam is administered three times a year: at the beginning of the academic year, at the end of Fall semester, and at the end of the Spring semester. Suspended students have the option to select two Exit Exam timings from the three available each academic year.

3.2.7. English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT0002)

English Language Proficiency Test is a Level 4 Final Exam given to the following category of students:



1. Suspended students who exhausted their two chances of passing the English Exit Exam within one academic year of suspension date.
2. Diploma students who did not initially qualify to register for Advanced Diploma or Bachelor due to their language proficiency level.
3. Advanced Diploma students who did not initially qualify to register for Bachelor program due to their language proficiency level.

The English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT) is administered twice a semester; at the beginning and the end of Fall and Spring semesters. Suspended students are allowed to register for the ELPT twice during the suspension period. Diploma and Advanced Diploma students are allowed to register for the ELPT three times maximum during their study period.

3.3. English Language Contact Hours

Each level comprises a number of contact hours. Contact hours are additional to student independent learning hours. Although the key items and skills of each course are presented and practiced in class, students are expected to revise and do homework wherever required. The contact hours are detailed below for each of the GFP English levels.

Table 3. English Contact Hours per Level

Level	Courses*	No. of Hours / Week	Total No. of Hours/Week
Level 1	Reading & Writing + (Integrated Grammar & Lexis)	10	18
	Listening & Speaking (Integrated Grammar & Lexis)	8	
Level 2	Reading & Writing + (Integrated Grammar & Lexis)	10	18
	Listening & Speaking (Integrated Grammar & Lexis)	8	
Level 3	Reading & Writing + (Integrated Grammar & Lexis)	10	18
	Listening & Speaking (Integrated Grammar & Lexis)	8	
Level 4	Reading & Writing + (Integrated Grammar & Lexis)	8	18
	Listening & Speaking (Integrated Grammar & Lexis)	7	
	Project & Presentation	3	

*General Study Skills (GSS) is embedded in the teaching of the GFP courses.



3.4. English Language Assessment

The English Language course assessment scheme includes Continuous Assessment (CA) and a Final Exam (FE), with both components carrying equal weightage of 50%. In continuous assessment (CA), 30% of the marks are assigned to the Midterm Exam, while the remaining 20% is distributed among other formative assessment components. The CA includes components like quizzes, book reviews, news reports, presentations, self-study, portfolios, active participation, and project report and presentation. (Refer to the Assessment Booklets for further details). The table below shows the mark distribution for all English levels.

Table 4. Assessment Scheme for English Language Levels

Levels	Continuous Assessment (CA)		Total CA	Final Exam (FE) (out of 100)	Cumulative Mark (CA + FE)
	Midterm Exam	Other CA Components			
1-4	30%	20%	50%	50%	100%

To pass a level, a student must attain a cumulative mark (CA + FE) and a Final Exam mark of 50% or higher. In other words, a student must pass both the cumulative mark and the Final Exam to move to the next level. The table below provides different pass/ fail scenarios.

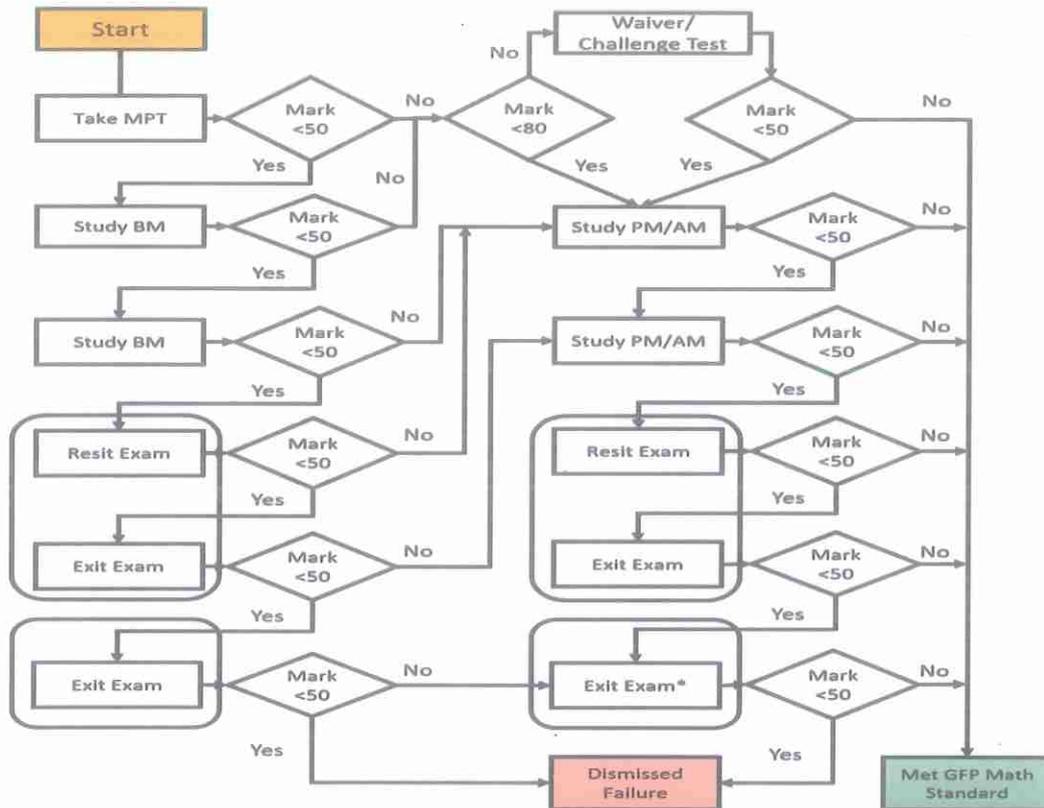
Table 5. different pass/ fail scenarios for English.

	CA (50)	FE (50)	Cumulative Mark (100) (CA+FE)	Grade	Result
Student 1	25	25	50	D	Pass
Student 2	40	20	60	F	Fail
Student 3	21	40	61	C-	Pass



4. Mathematics

4.1. Entry and Exit Standards



* An Exit Exam will be administrated third time for the suspended student who passes the second Exit Exam of Basic Mathematics and left with Pure or Applied Mathematics to fulfill the mathematics requirement as described in article 3 (e) of the progression routes for mathematics courses.

□ One Semester Suspension Period

Figure 3. Student Progression in Mathematics

Figure 3 illustrates the following:

1. Students are placed into two Mathematics courses (Basic Mathematics or Pure/Applied Mathematics) according to their score in MPT being less than, greater than or equal to 50%, respectively.
2. If a student scores greater than or equal to 80% in the MPT s/he is eligible to sit for a Pure or Applied Mathematics Waiver Test (MWT). If the student successfully scores the passing minimum 50% in MWT, s/he is exempted from GFP Mathematics courses; otherwise, the student is placed in Pure or Applied Mathematics depending on the area of specialization.

3. There are 5 possible progression routes for the mathematics courses:
 - a) If a student studies BM once and passes, s/he progresses to PM/AM. However, if the student fails, PM/AM, s/he must repeat the course. In the event of failing, the student faces suspension for one semester. If the student fails the exit exam, an additional semester of suspension occurs. Ultimately, failing the exit exam results in dismissal.
 - b) The student who studies BM twice and passes, s/he progresses to PM/AM. If the student fails, s/he repeats the course in the event of failing, the student will face suspension for one academic year considering that the student has completed 4 semesters of study. Additionally, failing the exit exam twice during the suspension period will result in dismissal.
 - c) The student who studies BM twice and fails, s/he is suspended for one semester. If the student passes the exit exam, s/he can progress to study PM/AM. If this student fails, PM/AM, s/he will be suspended for one semester. In the event of failing the exit exam, the student will be dismissed.
 - d) The student who studies BM twice and fails, s/he is suspended for one semester, if the student fails the exit exam, s/he will be suspended for another semester. In case the student fails the exit exam, s/he will be dismissed.
 - e) The student who studies BM twice and fails, s/he is suspended for one semester, if the student fails the exit exam s/he will be suspended for another semester. In the event the student passes the BM exit exam, s/he will be given a chance to pass the exit exam of PM/AM within a semester. If s/he fails, the student will be dismissed.
4. Students who have failed a course two times in any semester are entitled for a Re-sit Exam. Also, students who failed for the first time in their fourth semester are eligible to sit for the Re-sit Exam.
5. The students who study BM for the first time and score 80% and above may also take the relevant Mathematics Challenge Test. They will need to score 50% and above to be exempted from studying Pure/Applied Mathematics.

4.2. Entry, Progression and Exit Tests

4.2.1. Mathematics Placement Test (MAPT0001)

The students should sit for the Mathematics Placement Test (MPT) during the induction week. The mechanism of placing students is detailed in **Figure 3**, above. Students are placed into two courses (Basic Mathematics or Pure/Applied Mathematics) according to their score in MPT. If a student scores greater than or equal to 80% in the MPT s/he is eligible to sit for the Pure or Applied Mathematics Waiver Test.



4.2.2. Waiver Tests (WTMA0001 & WTMP0002)

The Mathematics Waiver Tests ensure that students have achieved the proficiency requirements of the GFP Mathematics courses to advance to Year One of the academic program. The table provided below outlines the Waiver Tests for the GFP Mathematics component and specifies the conditions under which students are eligible to take them.

Table 6. Mathematics Waiver Tests

Code	Test name	Conditions
WTMA0001	Applied Mathematics Waiver Test	Students who achieve a mark of greater than or equal to 80% in the Mathematics Placement Test s/he may take the relevant Applied Mathematics or Pure Mathematics Waiver tests.
WTMP0002	Pure Mathematics Waiver Test	

4.2.3. Challenge Tests (CTMA0001 & CTMP0002)

A Pure Mathematics/Applied Mathematics Comprehensive Exam given to students who achieve a cumulative mark of greater than or equal to 80% on their first-time regular study of Basic Mathematics course to determine their eligibility to be exempted from studying PM/AM. The passing score is greater than or equal to 50%.

4.2.4. Re-sit Exam (REMB0001 & REMA0002 & REMP0003)

This Exam is only applicable to Mathematics Courses. It is given to students who have failed a course twice (taken in class) or to students who have failed Applied or Pure Mathematics for the first time in their fourth semester of GFP. It should be scheduled 7 days after the announcement of the results or at the nearest available date when the exam is offered.

4.2.5. Make-up Exams

These exams are for the students who have missed a scheduled exam in any of the GFP components for a reason officially recognized as a valid excuse.

4.2.6. Exit Exams (EXMB0001 & EXMA0002 & EXMP0003)

When a student exhausts all the permitted chances to study a Mathematics course, s/he shall not be allowed to register for that course again. However, the student may still take the relevant Mathematics Exit Exam up to two times during the suspension period. The Exit Exam can be attempted once per semester.



4.3. Contact Hours

Each Mathematics course comprises a number of contact hours. Contact hours are additional to student independent learning hours. Although the key items and skills of each course are presented and practiced in class, students are expected to revise and do homework wherever required. The contact hours' regime is set out below for Mathematics courses.

The two Mathematics courses are offered to students in all the Levels. Table 7 presents the details related to Mathematics courses and contact hours.

Table 7. Contact Hours per Mathematics Course

Course	No. of Contact Hours
Basic Mathematics	4hrs./wk./course
Applied Mathematics OR	
Pure Mathematics	

**General Study Skills (GSS) is embedded in the teaching of the course.*

4.4. Assessment

The Mathematics assessment scheme comprises Continuous Assessment (CA) and a Final Exam (FE), each carrying equal weightage of 50%. Within CA, 20% of the marks are allocated to the Midterm Exam, while the remaining 30% are distributed among other formative assessment components such as quizzes, class activities, homework (assignments), and self-study. (Please see the Course Outline for further details.) The Final Exam is comprehensive, covering the entire course content. To pass a specific Math course and progress to the next course, students must achieve a cumulative mark (CA + Final Exam) greater than or equal to 50%. Table 8 illustrates the structure of the Mathematics Assessment Scheme.

Table 8. Assessment Schemes for Mathematics Courses

Continuous Assessment	Midterm Exam	20%
	Other Assessment	30%
Final Exam		50%
Total		100%



5. Computing Skills

5.1. Entry and Exit Standards

Students gain entry into the Computing Skills component of the GFP through either of two methods: the Computing Skills Entry Test or an IT Proficiency Certificate from international qualifying exams like ICDL (English Medium). A student who holds a valid Computing Skills proficiency certificate (refer to Table 9) or passes both parts of the Computing Skills Entry Test is considered to have fulfilled the requirement for this component and is exempt from studying it. However, students who do not achieve a passing score on the Computing Skills Entry Test will need to study the Computing Skills Course for GFP, as depicted in Figure 4.

Table 9. Certificates as Equivalent to the Computing Skills Course

Certificate (English Medium)	Covered Content
International Computer Driving License (ICDL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Computer and online Essentials• Office Essentials
*Internet Core Competency Certification (IC3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Computing Fundamentals• Living Online• Key Applications

*IC3 Exam is taken at UTAS Premises only according to the international dates.



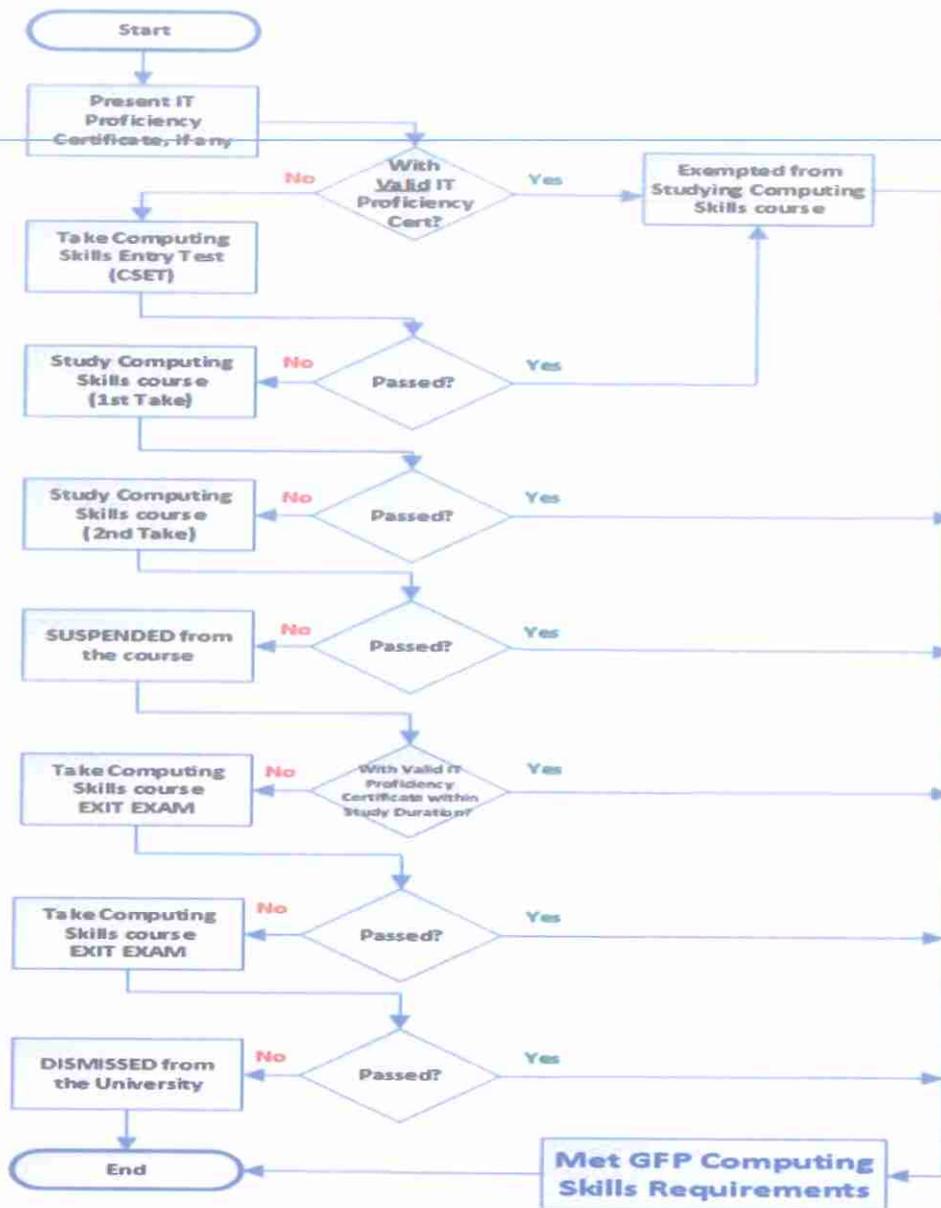


Figure 4. Student Progression in Computing Skills

Figure 4 illustrates the following:

- A student who fails the Computing Skills course for the first time will repeat the course by attending regular classes.
- A student who fails the Computing Skills course for the second time will not be allowed to retake the course, but s/he will be given two chances to sit for the Computing Skills Exit Exam or to present a valid IT Proficiency Certificate within one academic year.

- A student who passes the Computing Skills Exit Exam (greater than or equal to 50%) or presents a valid IT proficiency certificate within the GFP completion period will be considered as met GFP Computing Skills requirement.
- A suspended student who exhausts the two chances to sit for Computing Skills Exit Exam and does not present a valid IT proficiency certificate within the one year period, will be dismissed from the university.

5.2. Entry, Progression and Exit Tests

5.2.1. Computing Skills Entry Test (CSET0001)

With regards to the Computing Skills study area, it is called Computing Skills Entry Test because there is only one Computing Skills course; hence no placing as such. This test is given to all new students who join the university. It aims to assess the proficiency level of students' knowledge of computing skills. The test includes 2 parts. Students need to pass part 1 to be eligible to sit for part 2. Passing both parts exempts students from studying the course. Students who do not pass Part 1, and those who pass Part 1 but don't pass Part 2, will study the Computing Skills course. Students can be exempted from having to take the Computing Skills Entry Test and from studying the Computing Skills course if they provide a valid IT proficiency certificate.

5.2.2. Make-up Exams

These exams are for the students who have missed a scheduled exam in any of the GFP components for a reason officially recognized as a valid excuse.

5.2.3. Computing Skills Exit Exam (EXCS0001)

When a student exhausts all the permitted chances to study Computing Skills, s/he shall not be allowed to register for the course again. The student will be suspended from this GFP component for one academic year. Suspended students will be granted two chances to sit for the Exit Exam or present a valid IT Proficiency Certificate before the one-year suspension period is elapsed. Suspended students who exhausted the two permitted chances or fail to submit a valid IT Proficiency Certificate before the suspension year is elapsed are dismissed from the GFP Computing Skills component and hence from the University. The Exit Exam is administered three times a year: at the beginning of the academic year, at the end of Fall semester, and at the end of the Spring semester.

5.3. Contact Hours

Computing Skills course comprises four contact hours. Contact hours are additional to student independent learning hours. Although, the key items and skills of each course are presented and



practiced in class, students are expected to revise and do homework wherever required. Computing Skills course is offered to GFP students from level 3 onwards. If a student is suspended from the English component before reaching level 3, s/he must enroll in the Computing Skills course in the subsequent semester. The teaching hours per week are 4 hours as presented in the following table:

Table 10 . Contact Hours for the Computing Skills Course

Course	No. of Contact Hours
Computing Skills	4 hrs./wk.

**General Study Skills (GSS) is embedded in the teaching of the course.*

5.4. Assessment

The assessment of Computing Skills comprises of Continuous Assessment and the Final Exam. To pass the course, students must achieve a cumulative mark (CA + Final Exam) of greater than or equal to 50%. Table 11 below shows the structure of the Computing Skills Assessment Scheme.

Table 11. Assessment Scheme for Computing Skills Course

Continuous Assessment	50 %
Final Exam	50%
Total	100%

6. GFP Grading Scale

The grades to be awarded shall be classified as the following:

Grade Point	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	F
Score x/100	95-100	90-94	85-89	80-84	75-79	70-74	65-69	60-64	55-59	50-54	00-49

Note: UTAS GFP marks are not rounded to the whole number before the end of the semester. That is to say that students' Continuous Assessment tasks and Examinations will not be rounded to the first decimal number. However, at the end of the semester the cumulative mark/total mark will be rounded up to the nearest whole number.



7. Language Admission Criterion

GFP Level 4 students at UTAS who have successfully met the GFP Exit standards may conditionally be admitted to one of the chosen degree program's three academic levels (Diploma, Advanced Diploma, or Bachelor). The pertinent academic level shall initially be determined based on the student's performance in Level 4/ELPT (Cumulative Mark/Final Mark) or the Academic IELTS bands or TOEFL iBT as shown in the table below.

Academic Level	Level 4 Final / ELPT Cumulative Final Mark	IELTS Band	TOEFL iBT Score
Diploma	50-61	4.5	56
Advanced Diploma	62-69	(with no component lower than 4)	(with no component lower than 13)
Bachelor	70-100	greater than or equal to 5 (with no component lower than 4.5)	greater than or equal to 64 (with no component lower than 15)

Table 12: English Language Admission Criterion

Note:

- a) If an IELTS skill does not satisfy the required band, the student can repeat that one skill (as per the international practice) and submit the updated IELTS Certificate.
- b) The above conditions apply to programs that offer three academic levels (Diploma, Advanced Diploma and Bachelor). Programs that offer Bachelor level only are temporarily exempted.



8. General Guidelines

- a) Each semester, foundation students shall register for all the components of the GFP to successfully complete the required courses at a certain level in order to progress to the next level or complete the program.
- b) The maximum study period in GFP is two years including the repeat chance except for repeat students of level one entry.
- c) Students who entered the program in level one and repeated any of the levels once and passed will be allowed to complete the program within two and a half years.
- d) Students are not permitted to postpone a semester of their GFP study except for valid reasons or in insurmountable circumstances upon the approval of the concerned authorities. Postponement is awarded for one semester and applicable to all GFP components. The period of the first postponement shall not be calculated from the maximum GFP study period. An extension of postponement for one more semester due to insurmountable circumstances might be granted by the branch council and it shall be calculated from the maximum GFP study period.
- e) Suspended students in Mathematics (Basic, Pure or Applied) are allowed to enroll in a Higher Education Institution with an accredited General Foundation Program (GFP) by the Oman Authority for Academic Accreditation and Quality Assurance (OAAAQA). These students will receive a pass grade.
- f) Subsistence allowances shall not be paid to the students during their postponement period.
- g) Students are not permitted to withdraw from any of the registered GFP courses.
- h) Students who successfully complete both the English Language component and the Basic Mathematics course shall be allowed to register for some Diploma – Year One courses of their academic program, in addition to the remaining GFP courses; Applied/ Pure Mathematics and/or Computing Skills provided that:
 - 1) The remaining GFP course is not a prerequisite for the registered course(s).
 - 2) A student with two GFP courses is not allowed to register for more than 6 credit hours or 2 courses maximum.
 - 3) A student with one GFP course is not allowed to register for more than 9 credit hours or 3 courses maximum.



4) If a student fails in Applied/ Pure Mathematics or Computing skills while studying the courses of year one of the academic program, s/he will not be permitted to register any other year one courses.

- i) High-Flyers who have passed both the English and either the Basic Math or Computing Skills course are eligible to register for certain Diploma – Year One courses in their academic program in addition to the remaining GFP course(s) provided that the conditions 1 – 4 of article (8h) are satisfied.
- j) Suspended student who exhausts the two permitted chances to pass the level/component Exit Exam in any of the GFP components and did not submit any valid proficiency certificate or did not pass the ELPT within the allotted suspension period for each subject area is dismissed from the university.
- k) Allowances shall not be paid to students who are suspended from all GFP components during their suspension period.

9. Examinations Regulations

- a) Students shall present their university student card, civil ID card or driving license. Failure to comply with this requirement will result in preventing students from taking the exam.
- b) Students may enter the exam room up to 30 minutes from the start of the examination.
- c) Students may hand in their exam papers only after the first half of the time assigned to the exam has passed.
- d) Students shall submit their exam papers only once. After doing so, they have no right to look at their answers or change them.
- e) Students who miss any continuous assessment tasks shall submit a document justifying their absence to the concerned authorities within the following three days from the date in which the assessment was due. If their request is granted, a make-up assessment shall be arranged.
- f) Students who miss the final exam shall be awarded an "I" grade (Incomplete). If the students wish to apply for a make-up exam, they shall submit a document justifying their absence to the concerned authorities within three days after the exam. If their request is granted, a make-up exam shall be arranged.

10. Appeal

- a) The student is entitled to submit a request to review his/her final grade in any course to the Admission and Registration Center according to the approved form and policies within a



maximum period of three official working days from the date of announcing the final result. The student has the right to appeal in one course without fees while certain fees are applied to the other courses. These fees are refundable in case of an error is found in the final grade according to the regulating policies.

- b) The final results are reviewed by the Preparatory Studies Center to ensure that all questions are marked, and all results are reviewed in the approved electronic systems. The final results of the appeals are approved by the Assistant Vice Chancellor of the branch. The appeals should be processed and decided upon within a period not exceeding the end of the first week of the following semester. If a student doesn't get a response after the end of this period, his/her appeal is considered rejected.
- c) The results should be modified in the university's electronic academic system within a maximum period of three working days from the date of approval of the Assistant Vice Chancellor of the branch.

11. Attendance

- a) Attendance is compulsory for GFP students in all the curricular components they have registered for. Students are responsible for monitoring their own absenteeism percentage.
- b) Attendance shall be taken at the beginning of each lecture. Students shall be marked "Absent" if they arrive late to class. A grace period up to ten minutes is tolerated for the 8 A.M. class only.
- c) The allowable percentage of absenteeism from mandatory, scheduled learning activities in the GFP is 15% for the English Component and 20% for Mathematics and Computing Skills. Warning notices will be issued according to the following criteria.

Table 13. Student Absenteeism Notice

Notice	English	Mathematics	Computing Skills
First Warning	5%	10%	10%
Second Warning	10%	15%	15%
Debarred from Final Exam Notice	Surpassing 15%	Surpassing 20%	Surpassing 20%

- d) If a student surpasses the tolerated absenteeism percentage (15% in English or 20% in Mathematics or Computing Skills) with a valid health or other compelling excuse supported by official documents and accepted by the Admissions and Registration Center, the student



- is debarred from the Final Exam and awarded a W in that component.
- e) Students are allowed a maximum of two Ws in any component within the GFP study period.
~~Any further Ws awarded will automatically change to FW.~~
- f) If a student surpasses 15% absenteeism in English or 20% in Mathematics or Computing Skills **without** a valid excuse, he/she shall be debarred from the Final Exam and shall be awarded an (FW) grade in the relevant GFP course only. FW means "Failure due to unexcused absence".
- g) The following shall be considered valid excuses for absenteeism:
1. Illness or any other health condition provided that the student submits a sick leave certificate issued by a government hospital or polyclinic. Sick leave certificates issued by private hospitals or clinics shall not be accepted unless they have been subsequently certified by the government health centers. A certificate stating that the student has merely been seen by a health practitioner shall not be accepted as a valid excuse for absenteeism.
 2. Students who have medical appointments shall inform their teachers about them in advance and submit valid proof of having been to the appointment.
 3. Students are also excused for having been absent from one or more contact hours in the case of the death of a first degree relative provided that an official document from the authorities is submitted to the course teacher within 3 days.
 4. In the case of absence due to extra-curricular activities, the prior approval of the DAVC-ESSS shall be required. Approved absences resulting from extra-curricular activities will be waived.
- h) If a student is absent for 10 consecutive study days in all courses with a valid excuse, s/he shall be withdrawn from the course and awarded (W).
- i) A student is considered 'unofficially withdrawn' in the following cases:
1. If the student is absent for 10 consecutive study days in all components without a valid excuse, s/he will be considered to have withdrawn unofficially from the university and awarded an (FW).
 2. If the student exceeds the acceptable percentage of absenteeism in all GFP components during a semester, the student is unofficially withdrawn and receives an F (Fail) grade.
 3. If the student failed to enroll after being initially admitted to the University or have not registered by the end of the registration period.



- j) The Council of the University's branch can approve students' readmission only once after their withdrawal provided that the interruption from studies shall not exceed two (2) semesters. ~~This interruption period shall be considered as a postponement period.~~
- k) Decisions regarding excessive students' absence due to insurmountable conditions that are supported by official documents are at the discretion of the Assistant Vice Chancellor of the branch. Examples of such condition are extended illness, injuries, pregnancies, or disability-related health issues. An example of the decision might include allowing the student to sit for the final exam.

12. Discipline and Order

- a) All GFP students have to observe the dress code.
- b) Once registered, a student must follow university rules and regulations of academic conduct and integrity, observe ethical conduct, and avoid all forms or degrees of infraction whether during lectures, in examination halls or elsewhere; whether individually involved, or in association with others.
- c) Students who have been issued disciplinary penalty for committing an act that violates honor, honesty, academic integrity, or for assaulting, threatening students, employees, or faculty members of the university, will be granted official withdrawal from the university.
- d) Cheating or attempting to cheat in any assessment component or plagiarizing work is not tolerated in UTAS. Students caught cheating, attempting to cheat or plagiarizing will face punitive measures which can include failing the course.
- e) The health and safety procedures and protocols must be adhered to at all times.
- f) The physical and intellectual properties of the university and rights of other students and staff members must be safeguarded and respected.
- g) Any misconduct or breach of the GFP and UTAS rules and regulations or traditions will be deemed a punishable offence, and certain disciplinary measures will be applied on violators.
- h) Relevant UTAS Academic Regulations articles are applicable to GFP students.



13. References

- I. CAS Foundation Program Prospectus AY2017-2018
- II. Common English Language Curriculum, January 2019, Colleges of Technology
- III. Common GFP Student Handbook, January 2019, Colleges of Technology.
- IV. Common GFP Structure September 2019, Colleges of Technology
- V. General Foundation Program Quality Audit Manual (January, 2017). Oman Authority for Academic Accreditation and Quality Assurance of Education
- VI. GFP Information Technology Curriculum, October 2019, Colleges of Technology
- VII. GFP Mathematics Curriculum, October 2019, Colleges of Technology
- VIII. Preparatory Studies Team. (May 2021) UTAS GFP Placement Test Report. Submitted to the Executive Committee. UTAS, Oman.
- IX. Preparatory Studies Team. (May 2021). UTAS GFP Assessment Report. Submitted to the Executive Committee. UTAS, Oman.
- X. Preparatory Studies Team. (May 2021). UTAS GFP Curriculum Report. Submitted to the Executive Committee. UTAS, Oman.
- XI. Preparatory Studies Team. (November 2021). Entry & Exit Standards Report. Submitted to the Executive Committee. UTAS, Oman.



14. Appendix

14.1 GFP Examination Codes

Exam	Exam Code
English Placement Test	ELPT0001
English Validation Test	ELVT0001
English Language Proficiency Test	ELPT0002
English Waiver Test	WTEL0004
English Challenge Test	CTFP0002
English Challenge Test	CTFP0003
English Exit Exam	EXEL0004
Mathematics Placement Test	MAPT0001
Applied Mathematics Waiver Test	WTMA0001
Pure Mathematics Waiver Test	WTMP0002
Applied Mathematics Challenge Test	CTMA0001
Pure Mathematics Challenge Test	CTMP0002
Basic Mathematics Re-sit Exam	REMB0001
Applied Mathematics Re-sit Exam	REMA0002
Pure Mathematics Re-sit Exam	REMP0003
Basic Mathematics Exit Exam	EXMB0001
Applied Mathematics Exit Exam	EXMA0002
Pure Mathematics Exit Exam	EXMP0003
Computing Skills Entry Test	CSET0001
Computing Skills Exit Exam	EXCS0001

