What higher education leaders need to know?

In today's global labor market, English proficiency plays a critical role in graduate employability and career readiness. Insights from the **TOEIC Global English Skills Report** show that employers increasingly view English as a valuable workforce skill — one that higher education institutions are uniquely positioned to develop, measure and validate.



English proficiency is now a core employability outcome of higher education

91% of employers seek to hire university graduates with English language skills

89% say English assessment scores taken during university are valuable when screening job candidates

What this means for higher education?

Employers are not only seeking English-skilled graduates, they also value evidence of those skills during the hiring process. Higher education institutions can respond by making English proficiency assessments part of graduation requirements.

English proficiency connects education to workplace success



90% of employers say English proficiency is critical to organizational success

92% say English proficiency is more important today than it was five years ago

What this means for higher education?

The increasing importance of English in the workplace signals that traditional curriculum approaches may no longer be sufficient and should be amended to support career readiness.

English proficiency underpins AI readiness for graduates

- **81%** of employers say AI is increasing the need for English skills
- About **6 in 10** say AI cannot compensate for low English proficiency across reading, writing, speaking and listening
- **90%** say English skills are required to use AI effectively, including interfaces, prompt writing and evaluation of AI-generated information

What this means for higher education?

English proficiency is now seen as a prerequisite for effective AI use. For universities focused on innovation, STEM and digital transformation, English proficiency is foundational to preparing graduates for AI-enabled careers.

English proficiency supports trusted professional communication

In contexts with stronger English proficiency expectations, employers report:

- **83% satisfaction** with employees' ability to build new business partnerships (vs. 76% in countries with no mandate)
- **13 percentage** points lower likelihood of frequent trust erosion caused by communication issues



What this means for higher education?

Creating regular opportunities for students to communicate in English — for example in class discussions, presentations, group work and assessed coursework — will help graduates build the confidence and clarity needed to foster trust and collaboration in the workplace.

Key higher education takeaways:

For higher education institutions, these findings support:

- English proficiency as a core graduate employability outcome
- Assessment of English skills during university study
- Alignment between learning outcomes with workforce and AI-driven skill requirements

Discover English as a driver of graduate employability

Explore how English proficiency supports career readiness, AI preparedness and workplace success. Scan the QR code to download the full report.

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