IELTS™

Pamela Humphreys

Academic Manager
Language Testing & University Programs, Griffith University, Australia

www.ielts.org

IELTS™

National context:

English Language Standards for Higher Education

1) The provider ensures that its students are sufficiently proficient in English to participate effectively in their higher education studies on **entry**.

2) The provider ensures that prospective and current students are informed about their responsibilities for further developing their English language proficiency **during** their higher education studies.

3) The provider ensures that resourcing for English language development meets students' needs **throughout** their studies.

4) The provider actively develops students' English language proficiency **during** their studies.

5) The provider ensures that students are appropriately proficient in English when they **graduate**.

6) The provider uses evidence from a variety of sources to monitor and improve its support for the development of students' English language proficiency.

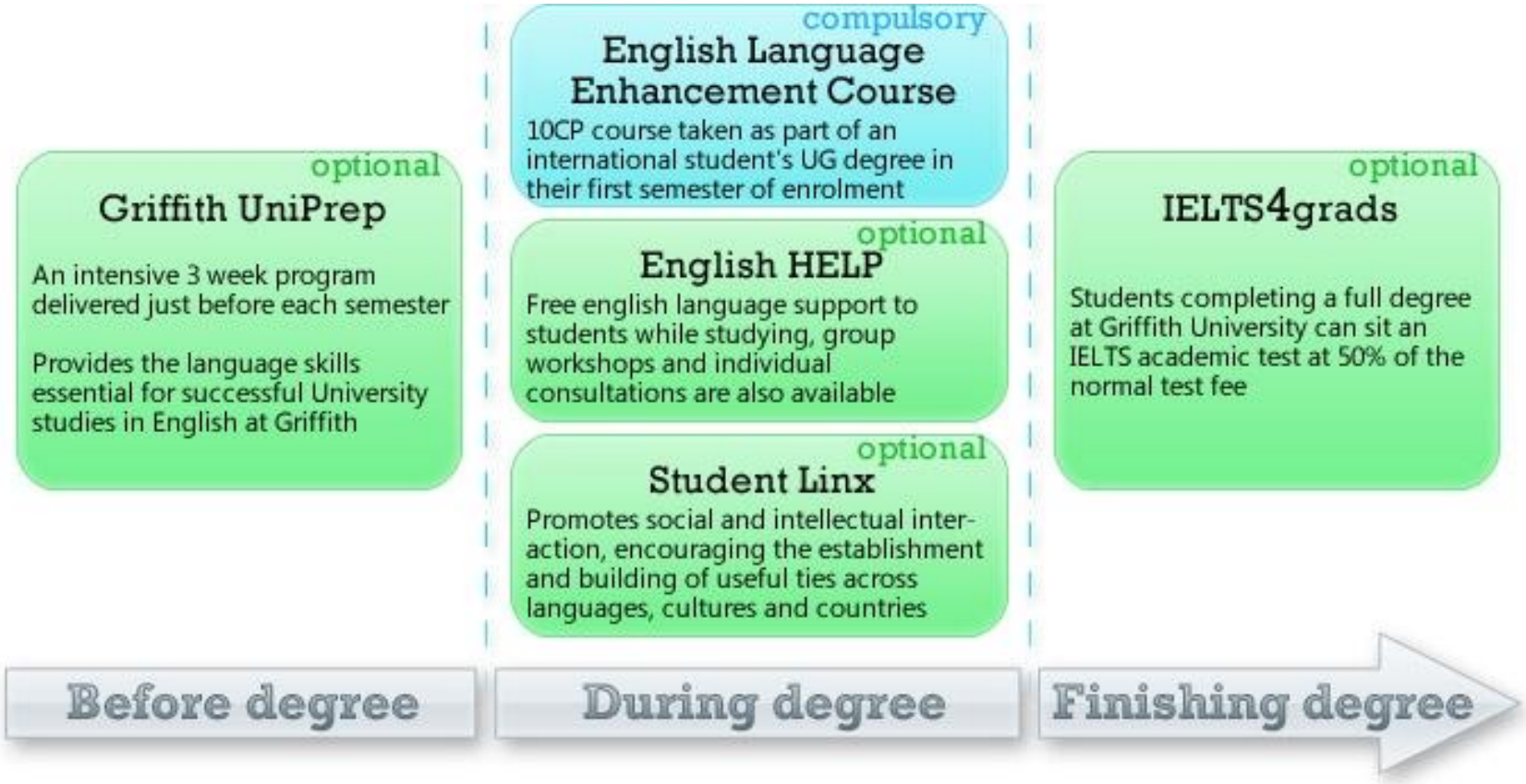
http://www.aall.org.au/sites/default/files/FinalEnglishLanguageStandardsMay2012.pdf

entry

during

exit

Institutional context:
Griffith English Language Enhancement Strategy



http://www.griffith.edu.au/international/english-enhancement-course/overarching-strategy-policies

IELTS™

Tracking international students' English proficiency over the first semester of undergraduate study

Ms Pamela Humphreys, Dr Michael Haugh, Dr Rowan Michael, Dr Ian Walkinshaw, Dr Ben Fenton-Smith & Dr Ana Lobo, Griffith University.

IELTS Research Reports Online Series 2012/1

www.ielts.org/researchers

Acknowledgements

Grant funding kindly provided by the

IELTS Joint-funded Research Program

http://www.ielts.org/researchers/grants_and_awards/call_for_research_proposals.aspx

Research Design

Quantitative: Score gain (IELTS) & correlation to GPA

Qualitative: Focus groups in semi-structured interviews

IELTS™

Quantitative findings

- Mean IELTS test scores were higher in Test 2 than Test 1
- Speaking improved most; Writing least
- Limited improvement with considerable variation (Arkoudis & O'Loughlin, 2009; Craven, 2011)
- No clear predictor - except initial low scorers improved most
- IELTS Reading & Listening scores correlated with GPA in first two semesters (Avdi, 2011; Cotton & Conrow, 1998; Dooey & Oliver, 2002; Kerstjen & Nery, 2000; Ushioda & Harsch, 2012)

IELTS™

Qualitative findings

1. I think it's very embarrass to raise the hand to ask the question so I prefer to stay at home and listen to Lecture capture.

2. Because in the lecture we have the text book and we can prepare for it before the lecture. But for the tutorial, all the questions that we can't imagine before the tutorial.

IELTS™

3. Some tutorials, I, we have one local student, like first time even I didn’t understand. He asked me like what is your name but I didn’t understand. [...] the first time I was really embarrassed I don’t understand what you’re saying, really embarrassed.

IELTS™

4. It’s very hard to read or to understand some of the words, the terminology they’re using [in academic texts]. ‘Cause we are not used to those words, we never, maybe we never heard of them.

IELTS™

5. You are learning how to write English academically. It's something that is different from personal writing. …Because for second language for me, we always write in Chinese which means thinking in Chinese, but here we should write in English, think in English. Different logic.

6. My speaking is getting worse because I don’t have a lot of time with friends to speak English, so every time I just attend the lecture and go home. I think I don’t have time to practise my English.

IELTS™

7. My girlfriend, she's Korean, and her Korean friends come to Australia without any English. And they just hang around like that, and they don't speak English at all. So they're not going to learn, never.

8. You need to have friends of different nationalities, even English not their first language. You gonna be forced to speak English. […] I don't think there is a secret formula for that, just speak English.

IELTS™

9. Makes it kind of hard to get to the native students because they also stick to themselves quite a lot so […] kind of hard to […] learn how to talk to them.

10. I believe my speaking is really improved when I work because I'm working in a café and then I'm taking orders so then I have to you know speak English every time in my workplace. So this is really helpful for me.

IELTS™

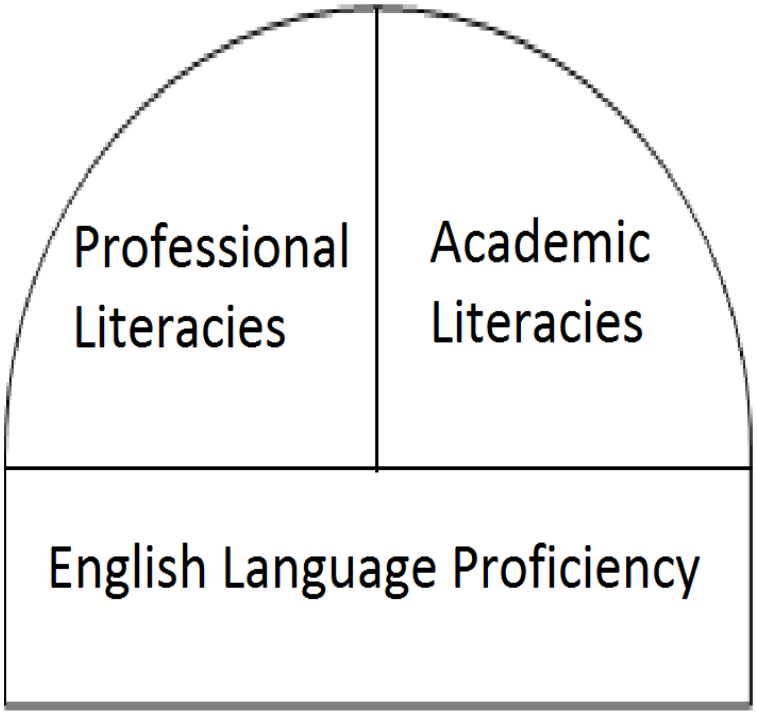
Summary of students' perceptions

- Aware of own deficiencies and obstacles that hinder development
- Able to identify some strategies to overcome obstacles
- Aware that English differs in academic and social contexts

(Cotton & Conrow, 1998; Elder & O'Loughlin, 2003; Haugh, 2008; Ingram & Bayliss, 2007; Kerstjen & Nery, 2000; Lobo, 2012; O'Loughlin & Arkoudis, 2009).

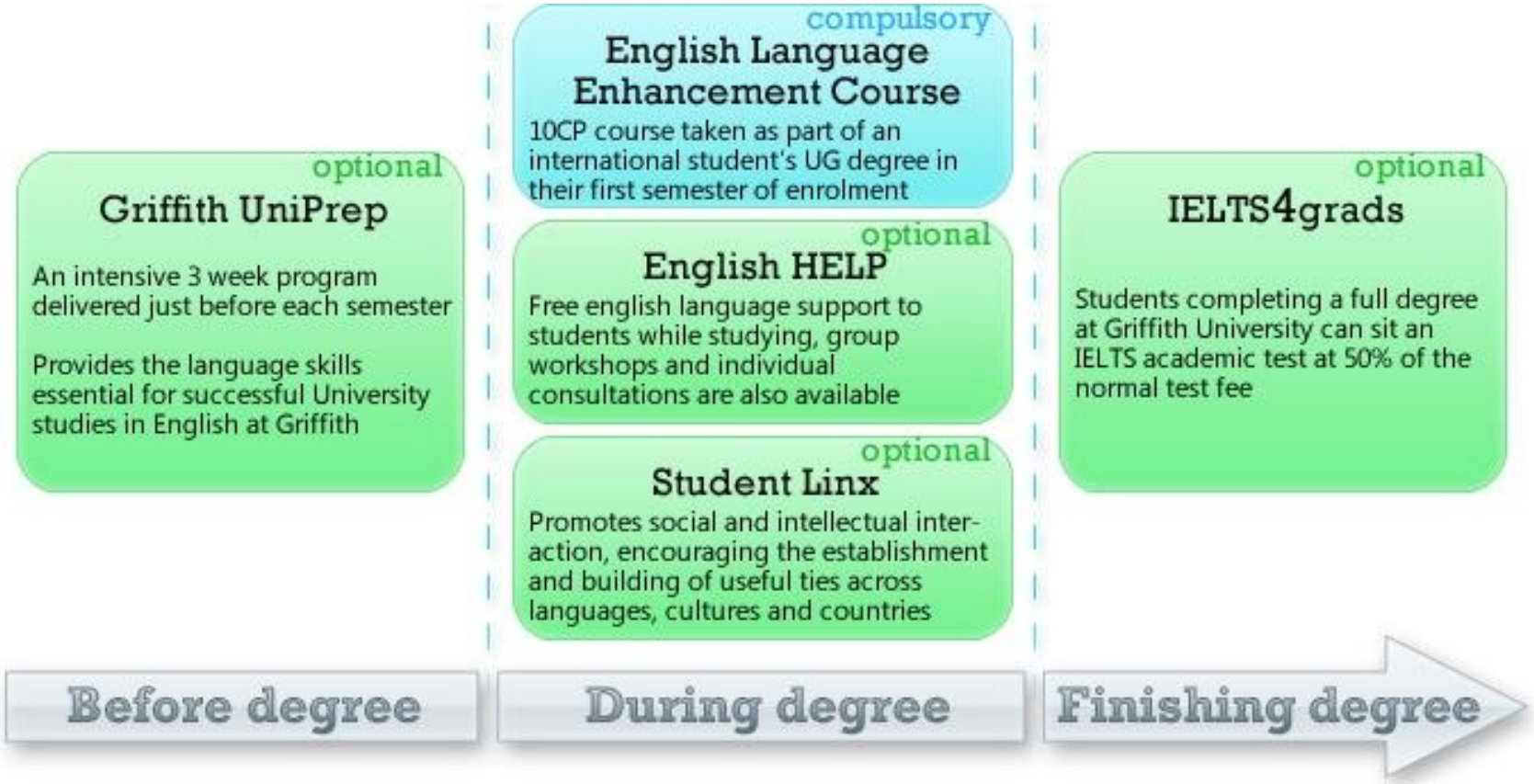
IELTS™

Language proficiency in higher education is complex & multidimensional



Tripartite division of competencies. Murray, 2010.

IELTS™

Institutional context:

Griffith English Language Enhancement Strategy