Istinye University Department of Foreign Languages Student Handbook

Welcome!

Welcome to the Istinye University Foreign Languages Department's English Preparatory Program! We are happy to have you here. Learning a new language and improving your language skills can be challenging, but with hard work and focus it is an achievable goal. The English Preparatory Program has been created with those goals in mind. We have created a program that includes several internationally recognized book series to help you develop your language skills as well as your academic skills, with a focus on how to read, write, and listen more effectively. In addition, we have designed courses and created materials that are specific to your individual departments so you can get a jump start on the vocabulary and ideas you'll need when you join your department. We also include a series of homework assignments that will help you practice and fine tune everything you have learned. Once you have finished our program you will have all the abilities you need to be a successful student in your department. Welcome to the beginning of that journey!

Our Mission (why we are here!)

The Istinye University English Preparatory Program aspires to offer quality English language education in Türkiye by providing a well-rounded curriculum to help EFL speakers reach competent levels in academic English as well as develop the skills needed to succeed in their English medium instructed departments. In addition, the program strives to offer a positive work environment where all its faculty feel they can contribute knowledge while also utilizing the latest global research and up-to-date theories in the area of English language teaching.

About the English Preparatory Program

Istinye University's English Preparatory Program was established in the 2018 – 2019 academic year. It began with a vision to ensure that students entering into English medium programs in our university have a level of English fluency and academic skills that will enable them to be successful in their studies. It is with this goal in mind that we do everything that we do. Over the past 4 years, our department has grown to include 54 full-time faculty from over 14 different countries around the world all trained in the art of teaching English as a foreign language. Our program continues to grow and change every year in order to improve our teaching methodology so that you receive the maximum benefit in learning English. Every aspect of our program is designed towards that end.

About International Accreditation (CEA)

Our English Preparatory Program has been accredited by CEA, an international accreditation institution, as of April 2023. In this way, our English education has obtained a quality certificate at international standards, and the validity of our students' language education abroad has been ensured.

Opportunity to Study English in the U.S.A.

Our English Preparatory Program also offers its students the opportunity to study English in the United States. In cooperation with Rowan University, a state university in the U.S.A., a student mobility program was launched between our English Preparatory Program and Rowan University English Program. This way, our students are given the opportunity to improve their English abroad for 12 weeks during the summer term.

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Education (what you'll learn)

Our educational program comes in 3 parts: General English, Academic English, and Content-Integrated English. Courses are taught in these 3 areas over 3 semesters (Fall, Spring, and Summer). Here is a description of each of these areas:

General English:

The *General English* part of our course covers the language content (vocabulary & grammar) and skills you will need in your daily life and international communication. We have chosen the most successful books from internationally well-known publishers to help you increase your vocabulary, tighten up your grammar skills and help you become confident in your communication and understanding of English.

Academic English Skills:

The Academic English Skills part of our course covers all the skills you will need to become a successful student. They include such skills as reading more efficiently to understand the important information more quickly, strategies for effectively understanding lecturers, organized note taking, and writing in a clear and concise manner so that people can understand what you are trying to express. The books used are also chosen from some of the most successful academic English books produced from internationally well-known publishers.

Content-Integrated English:

The Content-Integrated English aspect of our course focuses on the language and skills you will need that are specific to your department and future occupation. All of the materials for our Content-Integrated English course (known as the "Unique" course) are created in-house in the Foreign Languages Department. Members of our faculty have discussions with the various departments in our university and search out the most relevant content needed for students entering into their fields. With this information, they create course books that are both informative and entertaining.

Levels

Our education program divides students into 4 different levels, ranging from beginner to more advanced students. At the beginning of the fall semester, an English Placement Test is given to assess students' English language abilities. From the results of this test, students are assigned to one of 4 levels (students who do not take the English Placement Test are automatically assigned to the *Basic* level). Here are the basic details of each level:

Basic (A1 - A2):

- 20 hours per week
- 3 semesters

Mid (B1):

- 20 hours per week
- 2 semesters

High (B2):

- 20 hours per week
- 2 semesters

Proficiency (C1):

- 20 hours per week
- 2 semesters

*The Summer term is compulsory for students who start in the Basic level in the Fall semester. Students who start from Mid, High and Proficiency levels in the fall term may sign-up for summer classes if they want additional education and practice.

Books

At the beginning of each semester, coursebooks for your level will be on sale from a table in our department for the first 2 weeks of class. If you miss the opportunity to purchase the books directly you may order them online using this link: https://bookshop.gordionakademi.com/. Once you enter the site you can click on *Order* or *Sipariş* and then choose *Istinye University* and *Foreign Languages Department* and choose your level.

Evaluation Criteria (Grading)

Students are evaluated on the following criteria:

	2 Quarter Exams	2 Content-Based Exams (CBE)	Alternative Assessment
Basic	25% each	-	50%
Mid	15% each	10% each	50%
High	15% each	10% each	50%
Proficiency	15% each	10% each	50%

Written Exams

- Quarter Exams assess what students have learned in the General English and Academic English components of the course
- Content-Based Exams (CBE) assess what students have learned in the Content-Integrated English component of the course (also referred to as Unique courses)

Alternative Assessment

Attendance – students must not miss more than 25% of their classes in order to pass a level. All students are responsible for keeping track of their own attendance. You can check on your attendance through our OIS system, but don't rely solely on this information because it may not be up to date at the time you check. If a student misses more than 25% of their classes, they will need to repeat the level and, in the case of *High* & *Proficiency* Levels it will result in ineligibility to take the ISTEP exam

- Class admission: It is important to remember that if you are more than 10 minutes late to the first class or you do not stay till the end, you will be marked absent for that class.
- Excuses for missing class: Medical excuses, health reports, family issues or part-time jobs are
 accepted within 25% absenteeism limit. For serious chronic diseases and death of a parent or
 sibling, please see the department head.

Skills Extension Tasks – students of each level are given weekly homework to practice their language skills. Here are descriptions of each task, who they are for, and how they affect your overall grade:

- Skills Extension Tasks—Basic/Mid (20%): Each week students are assigned an article to read or an
 audio track to listen to, then they answer questions based on this input. In addition to listening
 and reading tasks, students are given a writing prompt to write a paragraph about (around 150
 words). Students turn in a first draft of their paragraph to receive feedback from their teachers
 and then, after making the suggested changes, submit a second draft to be evaluated and
 graded.
- Skills Extension Tasks High/Proficiency (20%): Each week students are assigned an article to
 read or an audio track to listen to, then they answer questions based on this input. In addition to
 listening and reading tasks, students are expected to write a well-organized essay to discuss a
 given topic (around 300 words). Students turn in a first draft of their essay to receive feedback
 from their teachers and then, after making the suggested changes, submit a second draft to be
 evaluated and graded.

Vocabulary Tasks – All levels (10%): Each week students are assigned vocabulary tasks as a chance to practice the vocabulary learned in that week's lessons.

Online Homework – Each week students are assigned online homework in the following platforms as a way to practice and improve the skills they have learned that week.

- Cambridge One all levels (5%): CambridgeOne is an online assignment platform where students complete exercises related to their Grammar and Beyond, Unlock, Evolve, and Empower books. The site can be accessed at www.cambridgeone.org with a username and password provided to students at the beginning of the semester. Students are expected to complete the exercises of the units that are covered during the week until Sunday midnight of each week.
- Rootangle all levels (5%): Rootangle is an online platform which provides students weekly
 academic articles based on their levels and weekly topics they cover in class. Students are
 expected to read the assigned articles and complete the pre- and post-reading activities. Basic,
 Mid ,and High levels are assigned 3 articles each week while the Proficiency level needs to
 complete 4 articles.

Class Participation (10%) – Showing up to class is only half the battle when trying to learn a new language. If you do not use the language you are learning and interact with the teacher and other students, learning a language can be more difficult. Students are expected to actively participate in their classes to get the most benefit and this comprises 10% of their final grade. Active participation increases the chances that you will remember and be able to use your newly acquired language skills.

*A note about plagiarism: at Istinye University, we take plagiarism (submission of other's materials or writing as your own) very seriously. Copying any idea, homework, anything related to the course requirements or creating content using an AI such as ChatGPT either intentionally or unintentionally will result in a grade of 0 and disciplinary punishment. All written homework assignments are cross-checked by SafeSign software for matches with internet content and other students' written work.

At the end of the semester

At the end of each semester, there are 2 tests that students take. One, the Level Achievement Test (LAT), will determine whether you have gained the skills needed to move on to the next level in our program. The other, the Istinye English Proficiency Exam (ISTEP), determines whether you have the language skills needed to enter your English medium departments. This exam is available to students in the Mid, High and Proficiency levels if they are eligible. Here are some details on those 2 exams:

Level Achievement Test (LAT)

Students who receive a total score of 70 or higher using the evaluation criteria during the term are eligible to take the Level Achievement Test (LAT) to determine if they can move on to the next level. Students who receive 70 or above on the LAT move on to the next level. Students who receive a total evaluation criteria score or LAT score of below 70 must repeat the level.

Istinye English Proficiency Exam (ISTEP)

The ISTEP exam is the department created English proficiency exam that all students in the English Preparatory program must pass in order to begin their departments. Students who score a 60 or above on the exam are considered to have successfully completed the English Preparatory program. Students who receive below 60 points on the ISTEP exam must continue in our program. Students have up to 7 tries (over 2 years) to try and pass the ISTEP exam. If they are still unable to pass the exam in that time, they must choose a Turkish medium department.

Eligibility

Students who have successfully completed the Mid level or above are eligible to take the ISTEP exam provided that they have not missed more than 25% of their class hours. Before the exam, the list of students who are eligible to take the exam is announced on our website.

When

The ISTEP exam is administered 4 times per academic year. The exam is held in the following months:

- **September** for past students (and incoming students whose level is determined to be B2 or above in the Placement Test)
- January at the end of the Fall semester for all eligible students
- June at the end of the Spring semester for all eligible students
- August at the end of the summer semester for all eligible students

^{*}Note: there is no make-up exam for the ISTEP

^{**}Exam dates might change depending on the changes in the academic calendar.

What is in the ISTEP exam?

The ISTEP exam is composed of 3 separate parts (Listening, Reading & Writing) each with their own individual sections.

Listening Section

The Listening section is composed of a single part:

• Selective Listening (30% of grade) – in this section, students are given a question sheet prior to the listening track and are given 3 minutes to review the questions. Students answer the questions while listening and are given 3 more minutes at the end to check their answers.

Reading Section

The Reading section is composed of a single part:

• Reading Section 1 (30%) – in this section students are given an academic reading text of around 1000 words along with questions. Students have approximately 40 minutes to read the text and answer all the questions.

Writing Section

The Writing section is composed of a single part:

• Essay Writing (40%) – students are given a topic and are expected to write a well-written essay. They have 40 minutes to complete the task.

Assessment

The entire exam is worth 100 points. A score of 60 or more is needed to pass.



For examples of the various parts of the exam scan this QR Code

Exam Rules and Regulations

Exam-specific rules, regulations and instructions are announced on Blackboard by class advisors a few days before the relevant exam. Below are general regulations that must be followed by students in all exams given within the program:

- All students must be in their assigned classrooms at the exam time. Latecomers will not be accepted to the exam.
- Students must present their student ID cards to the invigilators before the exam starts.
- The use of mobile devices is strictly forbidden. You must put your mobile devices into your backpacks or on the teacher's desk.

- Students cannot use a dictionary or any other resources during the exam.
- Absent students will not be given a makeup exam. Only health reports are a valid excuse for the make-up. But there is no make-up exam for ISTEP.
- Students must bring their stationery supplies with them (i.e. pencil, eraser, etc.). The exchange of these materials during the exam is strictly forbidden.
- Any kind of cheating or disruptive behavior will result in a disciplinary investigation. Students must refrain from such actions.

Application for Revaluation of Exam Papers

Students who want to object to their exam results are required to download the relevant petition from the department's website, fill in the required information, and submit it to the department secretariat either by hand or via email. The petition should be signed and submitted by the student objecting to their result. If the objection is to be made via email, the email must be sent from the objecting student's ISU email address.

English Preparatory Program Exemption Conditions

Students can submit official TOEFL (TOEFL iBT or TOEFL iBT Special Home Edition), IELTS Academic, PTE Academic, LanguageCert, CPE, CAE, Oxford Test of English, Linguaskill General or e-Tep scores to be exempt from the İstinye English Proficiency Exam (ISTEP) and English Preparatory Program. Students who successfully submit their scores and qualify for exemption will be announced on our website on a weekly basis. You can find the approval details and required grades for each exam below.

TOEFL	TOEFL	IELTS	PTE	LanguageCert	CPE	CAE	Oxford	Linguaskill	e-Tep	ISTEP
IBT	IBT	Academic	Academic				Test of	General		
	Home						English			
	Edition									
75	75	6.0	55	70	С	В	110	150	75	60

The approved exam results submitted to Foreign Languages Department are valid throughout the maximum length of education which are all listed in the table below.

Program Duration	Maximum Length of Education	Validity of Language Exam Results
2 years (4 semesters)	4 years (8 semesters)	4 years (8 semesters)
4 years (8 semesters)	7 years (14 semesters)	7 years (14 semesters)
5 years (10 semesters)	8 years (16 semesters)	8 years (16 semesters)
6 years (12 semesters)	9 years (18 semesters)	9 years (18 semesters)

Students who certify (with a transcript etc.) that they have graduated from a high school (local or international) whose medium of instruction is 100% English are also exempt from the English Preparatory Program and do not need to submit an exam result. These students are required to present

their certificates to the Registrar's Office at the time of registration (taking English courses or adopting English partially as the language of instruction do not provide exemption).

Other things you need to know

Academic Advisors

Each class is assigned an academic advisor specifically for the English Preparatory program (separate from the academic advisor for your department). The academic advisor is responsible for relaying important information to the class through our Blackboard system. The advisor is also the first person you go to if you have any questions or concerns about the class, the course content, or your personal progress through the program. Advisors can be reached either through email (firstname.lastname@istinye.edu.tr) or in person during their office hours. Their office hours are generally 2 hours per week and are listed outside their office.

Academic Advisors are also responsible for monitoring your progress through the course. Halfway through each semester you will have a mandatory meeting with your advisor to review your online and in-class assessment progress, exam scores, and attendance and discuss what steps you need to take for the rest of the semester to be successful in the course.

Online Learning Management Systems

Istinye University uses 2 main online systems to communicate information to students as well as provide a place to post content and homework. The first is the OIS (öğrenci iletişim sistemi) and the second is Blackboard.

OIS

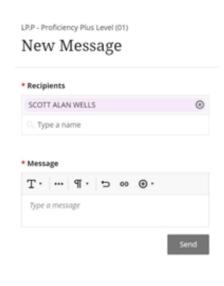


The Istinye OIS system can be found at ois.istinye.edu.tr and you can log in using the username and password sent to you once you have completed registration. The OIS is used for 2 main purposes while you are enrolled in the English Preparatory Program. The first is checking your attendance. It's a good idea to regularly check how many hours you have missed (if you have missed any classes) to make sure you are not getting close to passing 25%. However, it is students' responsibility to keep track of their own absenteeism outside of the OIS (the OIS is a guide but may not always be up to date). If you miss more than 25% of your classes, you automatically fail and must repeat the level. The total number of missed hours in a

semester can be found under **devamsızlık** in the OIS system. The other purpose of the OIS while you are in our program is to check your grades during and at the end of the semester. Exam scores (Quarter & CBE) can be viewed approximately a week after the exam and a detailed report of the individual parts of your overall grade can be found on the OIS system a week after the semester ends.

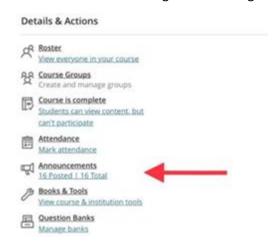
*Note: once you have successfully completed our program, the OIS is also used to register for your departmental classes.

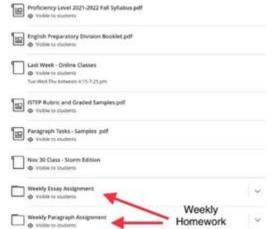
Blackboard



The Blackboard system can be found at <u>istinye.blackboard.com</u> and you can log in using the username and password sent to you once you have completed registration. Blackboard has several uses:

Communication: If you need to send your instructor or advisor a message, you can contact them through Blackboard by clicking the next to their name and then filling in the message.





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Announcements: All important announcements in our department are shared through Blackboard. These include exam times, exam results, and other information specific to your class and our department. It is a good practice to check the announcements regularly to make sure you don't miss anything.

Homework: Weekly homework assignments are posted on Blackboard at various times throughout the week. These include vocabulary tasks and writing tasks. Vocabulary tasks are done directly in Blackboard and the final draft of all writing assignments are to be turned in through Blackboard. In addition, any extra homework that your teacher assigns to you will also be done through Blackboard.

• Online Lessons: On occasion, such as during pandemics, a lesson might need to be held online. Any online lessons will be joined through a link on Blackboard.

Extra-Curricular Activities

The English Preparatory Program isn't only about work. We also have entertaining activities outside of class time for the students in our department. Here are some of them:

ISULingua Clubs

ISULingua Clubs offer students a wide range of fun activities to participate in. To really get good at a language you need opportunities to use it. That's where ISULingua comes in. Whatever your interest may be, there is probably a club for you. At the beginning of each semester, students in the English Preparatory Program can sign-up for any of the clubs they have an interest in. Each of the clubs generally get together once (or sometimes twice) a week outside of class time to explore their creative interests in English.

Here is a list of the current clubs we offer:

- Speakers Unlimited One of our most popular clubs is the Speakers Unlimited club. Speakers Unlimited is an English conversation club where students get to actually use their English in conversations on a wide variety of topics. Each club session is led by one of our department's faculty members who provide all kinds of activities to get you talking.
- Drama Club Got the acting bug? Then the Drama Club is for you! In the Drama Club, you get to do activities and learn skills that teach you to become a better actor, in English! Each semester we work on a small play or series of dialogues to put on at the end of the semester.
- Movie Club If you enjoy watching movies in English, then the Movie Club is the right place for you. At the beginning of the semester, we decide on a list of movies we want to watch and then every week we watch a different film (sometimes together, sometimes on our own) and then get together to discuss it.
- WeTalk Channel The WeTalk Channel is a news and interview channel on YouTube where students get to present the compelling news of the day and talk with interesting people around our school and community. In the club, students can take on the role of news presenter, writer, camera person, and director. To see some of our past programs, you can visit our channel here:



An announcement will be made at the beginning of the semester on how to join. If you have any questions about the clubs, feel free to reach out to scott.wells@istinye.edu.tr.

Sing-Out-Loud Karaoke Night

Each semester the Foreign Languages Department puts on a karaoke night. It's a crazy evening of singing and fun and is open to all languages and music styles. An announcement is made a week before the event so that you can choose the song you want to sing and group performances are encouraged.

Student Complaints

The Foreign Languages Department does everything it can to ensure that our educational programs run smoothly and fairly for all students; but if unexpected problems arise, we want to help you resolve them. A formal complaint can be filed due to academic issues such as implementation of the curriculum and material use, and issues that students may experience with their instructors (poor rapport, issues with correspondence and feedback). A complaint can also be filed for any form of harassment or discrimination. Our department promotes a learning environment where our students can feel safe as equals and any form of harassment or discrimination will not be tolerated.

We would encourage resolution of academic issues to be sought through informal communication with the academic advisor, appropriate instructor, or administrative officer who may be able to help clarify and solve the situation before a written complaint is initiated. However, If the response from the academic advisor, department, or staff member has not resolved the student's complaint, or the student feels like their complaint is so serious that they cannot raise it with members of staff, they should complete the student complaint form and read the Formal Complaint Procedures carefully.

Formal Complaint Procedures

1. Deadlines for making a complaint

Complaints should be made within 20 days of the issue arising. Complaints made after this deadline will be considered late and will not be processed. If a student wishes the department to consider a late complaint, they must include a valid reason and evidence of lateness in addition to their complaint. The students will be informed if their reason and evidence of lateness has been considered valid or their complaint is out of time.

2. Filing a Formal Student Complaint

To begin formal procedure, a student must complete the Student Complaint Form. It is available in the Office 29 requested from the Secretary or online at https://foreignlanguages.istinye.edu.tr/. The completed form can be submitted to the Secretary (Office 29) or by sending the digital version to foreignlanguages@istinye.edu.tr.

3. Administrative Complaint Admission

Formal student complaints are received by the secretary. The complaints are then reviewed by the English Preparatory Program Coordinator. The English Preparatory Program Coordinator will notify the student by sending an email to their ISU email address within three working days of receiving the complaint indicating that: (1) the formal complaint form has been received and (2) the student will receive a written response after consultation within 10 working days.

4. Administrative Consultation and Response

If the English Preparatory Program Coordinator determines that the nature of the complaint is beyond their area of expertise or supervision, the next level administrator, the Head of the Foreign Languages Department, will be consulted. It is expected from the English Preparatory Program Coordinator to investigate the source of the complaint, previous efforts to resolve the issue through informal complaint, and any other occurrences that may aid in resolving the

problem. The complaint will be authorized and signed by the English Preparatory Program Coordinator. They will keep a copy of each complaint they have resolved and a record of actions they have taken. A copy of the response will be also sent to the Head of the Foreign Languages Department. All formal student complaints will be forwarded upon resolution to the Secretary's office where a log will be kept as a file for hard copy forms in Office 29 and digitally for the digital complaint forms on Foreign Languages Department's online Google Drive.

5. Student Appeal Process

Upon receiving a resolution response to the written complaint, students have the right to appeal to a senior administrator, the Head of the Foreign Languages Department. This appeal must be made in writing using the Appeal Form within five working days of receiving the response to the written complaint. To begin the appeal procedure, a student must complete the Appeal Form which is available in Office 29 requested from the Secretary or online at https://foreignlanguages.istinye.edu.tr/. The completed form can be submitted to the Secretary (Office 29) or by sending the digital version to foreignlanguages@istinye.edu.tr. The form will be forwarded to the Head of the Foreign Languages Department. The student can expect a written response to the appeal within 15 working days.

Student Feedback

Because we value input from our students and want to hear about each student's experience in our program (whether positive or negative), 2 surveys are given at the end of each semester:

- Feedback on Teachers Survey we ask several questions about what you thought of your teachers
- Student Satisfaction Survey we ask questions on how satisfied you were with various aspects
 of our program

Some students will also be chosen, both during the program and after they enter their departments, to take a *Needs Analysis Survey* to help us determine if students feel prepared for their English medium departments and to see if there are any changes we should make to our program.

Useful Contacts

Problems with Blackboard – send an email to <u>uzaktan.egitim@istinye.edu.tr</u> for any issues with your OIS or Blackboard accounts. This includes problems logging in or if you're not seeing your classes listed.

Student Affairs – student affairs can be reached in person or by sending an email to kayitisleri@istenye.edu.tr. You can contact them for issues with the OIS system and registration.

Personal Advising - visit the Psychological Counseling Unit website at https://omer.istinye.edu.tr/en/pcu. All services provided by the Psychological Counseling Unit are free of charge and the services provided are as follows: Individual Psychotherapy, Group Therapy, and Workshops and Trainings. You can apply by filling in the application form and sending it to pdb@istinye.edu.tr.

https://omer.istinye.edu.tr/sites/omer.istinye.edu.tr/files/inline-files/%C3%96MER-FRM-48%20Application%20Form.pdf

International Student Issues – if you are a foreign student, you can contact the International Student Center either in person or by sending an email to international@istinye.edu.tr.

TEDES – for any issues with the building (bathrooms, air-conditioning, etc.) students can send an email to <u>tedesdestek@istinye.edu.tr</u>.