

Results of the 2002-2003 FEPT and 2001-2002 I-TOEFL Tests

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This article reviews and explains the results of the Freshman English Placement Test (FEPT), administered at Asia University in April 2002 and January 2003, and of the Institutional Test of English as a Foreign Language (I-TOEFL) administered during May 2001, December 2001, and July 2002.

2002-2003 FEPT

The FEPT was administered to 1,573 entering freshman students in April 2002 and to 1,307 freshman students in January 2003. The April test was used to stream students into oral proficiency interviews (OPIs) conducted by teachers at various levels of Freshman English (FE). Interviewing teachers assessed the oral proficiency of each student, which (combined with the FEPT score) was used for final placement of students into various levels of FE classes. This was the second year that OPIs were officially used for placement of students, although interviews were unofficially used in previous years to check for obvious anomalies in the placements made by FEPT scores alone.

This is the fifth academic year at Asia University that freshman students were given the FEPT on two separate occasions. Although not an achievement test, it was thought that a retaking of the FEPT at the end of the freshman year might give some indication as to whether or not students had made progress in their English proficiency skills.

This was the fourth year students took the revised FEPT. It differs from the original FEPT in length (45 minutes as opposed to 60 minutes) and in the number of test items (75 as opposed to 100, each test item having a mark value of 1). The format of the FEPT remained the same (listening, grammar, and reading).

Results of FEPT

Mean test scores were tabulated for the April 2002 FEPT (incoming freshmen) and January 2003 (after FE classes were completed) for each of the four AU faculties. Listening scores were included because of the emphasis on oral communication in the level placement of incoming freshmen.

There were improvements in test scores for all four faculties, as seen by the mean scores of students who took the April 2002 and January 2003 tests (Appendix A). In the

January test, Business Administration students show a mean total score increase of 6 points, Law students 5 points, Economics students 6 points and International Relations 7 points.

For all four faculties a different number of students took the test in April and January (Appendix A) but no adjustment was made to account for students who did not participate in both test sessions. Therefore an analysis of the two sets of data does not reflect an accurate comparison.

International Relations FEPT Scores – Compared With Other Faculties’ Scores

The scores for incoming International Relations (IR) students were significantly higher (5-7 points) than students in the other three faculties, as was true in the three previous years. Also, a comparison was made between the listening scores of various faculties and levels that are taught together, by one teacher. For example, Business level 4 is taught with IR level 5, Law 6, and Economics 5, so the mean scores for these classes were compared. Again, the IR mean scores (36 for listening) were higher than the scores in the other faculties taught by the same teacher. The mean listening score for students placed in Business level 4 was 32, which is comparable to the listening scores (32.0) of students placed in IR level 10.

The 2001 I-TOEFL Administration/Methodology

The I-TOEFL was given to all freshman students who planned to participate in the Asia University America Program (AUAP) in the 2002-2003 academic year. International Relations and Economics students who participate in AUAP go to the United States in the first semester of their sophomore year (Cycle 1) while Business Administration and Law students go abroad in the second semester (Cycle 2). The I-TOEFL was administered twice during students’ freshman year (May and December, 2001). Results of these two tests were used primarily for placement purposes in AUAP. For International Relations and Economics students the examination was given again for evaluation purposes in July 2002, during their sophomore year, after returning from their AUAP semester. Business Administration and Law students will retake the I-TOEFL in February 2003.

Results of I-TOEFL

Appendix B illustrates the mean scores of all International Relations, Economics, Business Administration and Law students who took the I-TOEFL examinations in May and December 2001. Mean scores of the December 2001 test results for Business students show a slight decrease (a reduction of 9 points in the mean score), while those for IR and Law students show an improvement, (a mean score increase of 11 for IR and 12 for Law). The

scores for Economics students decreased 3 points. However, since the TOEFL is designed primarily to assess the English proficiency of students who are planning to enter an English academic environment in the United States or Canada (at relatively high levels of proficiency), the scores may not be as valid as desired for measuring the English proficiency of most Asia University students.

The results of the I-TOEFL given to students in July 2002 (Post-AUAP) were also tabulated in Appendix B. This included the International Relations students and Economics students who attended AUAP during Cycle 1 of their sophomore year. The mean scores show a marked improvement from the scores received prior to AUAP. The International Relations mean score rose 26 points (from 421 before AUAP to 447 after AUAP). The Economics mean score rose 32 points (from 382 points before AUAP to 414 after AUAP). Also, the number of IR students who scored over 500 increased from 6 before AUAP to 19 students after AUAP. The results of the post-AUAP I-TOEFL are not available for Business Administration and Law students as of publication.

Appendix A

FEPT Results – Listening/Total Scores 2002/2003

	Business Administration		Law		Economics		International Relations	
	April 2002	Jan. 2003	April 2002	Jan. 2003	April 2002	Jan. 2003	April 2002	Jan. 2003
Number of Examinees (change)	470	367 (-103)	485	389 (-96)	341	280 (-61)	228	191 (-37)
Mean Listening Score (change)	32	36 (+4)	32	36 (+4)	29	34 (+5)	36	41 (+5)
Mean Total Score (change)	41	47 (+6)	41	46 (+5)	38	44 (+6)	47	54 (+7)

Appendix B

I-TOEFL Results 2001/2002

May 2001 (at beginning of FE classes)

	International Relations	Economics	Business Administration	Law
Number of Examinees	219	54	69	35
Mean Score	410	385	404	383
Scores over 500	3	0	0	0

December 2001 (at completion of FE classes – prior to AUAP)

	International Relations	Economics	Business Administration	Law
Number of Examinees	208	56	48	54
Mean Score	421	382	395	395
Scores over 500	6	0	0	0

July 2002 (post-AUAP)

	International Relations	Economics	Business Administration	Law
Number of Examinees	214	59	*	*
Mean Score (change)	447 (+26)	414 (+32)		
Scores over 500	19	0		

* Because of the AUAP schedule, Business and Law students have not taken the post-AUAP I-TOEFL as of the date of this article.