

Bilkent University

**English Language Preparatory
Program**

Student Handbook

2022 - 2023

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Welcome to Bilkent University English Language Preparatory Program



This handbook has been designed to give you all the basic information you will need for your studies in the English Language Preparatory Program.

The English Language Preparatory Program Staff are here to help you achieve the necessary English language, academic, and life skills so that you can pursue your studies successfully in your chosen department in Bilkent University.

On the following pages you will find details of the program's education system, syllabus, assessment, and its rules and regulations. This information is here to help you understand the program's approach to the learning of English and its expectations of its students.

The English Language Preparatory Program is a challenging program and has high expectations of its students and its staff. You will need to work hard during your time in the program, but if you use all the opportunities made available to you and work both regularly and systematically, we are confident that you will be successful.

The handbook also tells you where you can get additional information and help, should you need it. We want students to be fully aware of the facilities available to them and the process by which they can get further information and support for their learning.

We are here to help you so please feel free to contact us, either through email, or through visiting the administrative services in N building on east campus. The contact details are given in the pages that follow.

We wish you every success in your studies in the English Language Preparatory Program. We look forward to getting to know you, working with you, and celebrating your successful learning experience in the program.

Dr. Elif Kantarcioğlu
English Language Preparatory Program Director

English Language Preparatory Program

The English Language Preparatory Program is one of the largest academic units in Bilkent University with over 2000 students and approximately 120 teaching staff, both Turkish and international. It helps students acquire the required level of English for entry into the academic programs in their chosen departments. The program is divided into 5 levels and students are placed into an appropriate level at the beginning of their studies, reflecting their level of English. Students then have between one and four semesters to complete the program.

Instructors are organized into 9 Teaching Units (TUs) and students will be assigned to a TU during each of their courses. The Head of Teaching Unit (HTU) is an important person in the life of students as s/he is responsible for overseeing the academic work for a certain group of students. Instructors also have an important role to play in students' lives. All English Language Preparatory Program teaching staff are highly trained professionals, and students need to follow their recommendations and advice as the academic staff are charged with ensuring that students meet the learning objectives and that they are prepared for the level assessment tasks.

Who's Who in the English Language Preparatory Program



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THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE PREPARATORY PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT

We provide a learning environment for students which

- ensures they attain the level of proficiency in English necessary to continue their studies in the Faculties at Bilkent University and supports the further development of their English language and study skills throughout their study in the university;
- helps them develop their potential as critical, analytical, and autonomous learners as part of a commitment to whole-person learning;
- enables them to successfully adapt to university life, supports them in coping with the demands of academic study, and provides them with tools to embark on a fulfilling and successful life after university.

We provide staff with a professional place to work which

- offers them opportunities for personal and professional learning and development;
- encourages an open and enquiring culture to support institutional learning.

We contribute to the maintenance and improvement of English within the university and the community at large.

NOW THAT YOU ARE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Now that you have left high school behind you and have become a university student, you need to adapt to a new educational system which has different requirements to the one that you experienced in high school.

Bilkent University is one of Turkey's top universities, as well as being recognized internationally as a center of excellence. It sets challenging educational goals for its students.

You are now a member of the Bilkent University community. You will need to work hard in order to meet the university's goals. Please read the following as it will help you settle in successfully into your new environment.

1. PLAN YOUR TIME

First of all, you will need to develop study habits that allow you to work and learn independently. It is important that you do this as early as possible.

As a student in the English Language Preparatory Program, you will have a number of required class hours every day that you will need to attend. However, in order to be successful in the program, one of the most important things you will need to learn is how to work regularly on your own outside of the classroom hours.

Your instructors will guide you and provide you with the essential materials. They will also ask you to buy textbooks, and they will give you homework to do as part of your course assessment. However, this will not be sufficient to ensure that you meet the English Language Preparatory Program's challenging objectives, it is essential that you study independently. Learning how to plan your time is crucial. A balanced life is important for students. It is essential that you learn how to organize your time effectively so that you have a balance between work and relaxation.

Therefore, it is strongly recommended that you *learn to keep a weekly planner* – this will allow you to plan ahead so that you meet deadlines for your academic work, and at the same time, you can put time aside for personal enjoyment such as sports, cinema, and other activities. Throughout the academic year, your instructors will help you draw up planners based on the requirements of the courses you will be taking. These planners can then be used to make sure that you devote enough time to learning while also signaling important dates and deadlines for your courses. With all the 'Apps' now available for mobile computing, there are many useful tools which will help you plan and keep track of your learning and other related commitments.

2. USE TECHNOLOGY

During your time in the English Language Preparatory Program, much of the information you need for your studies will be available to you on-line. It is therefore important to become familiar with the university's computing systems.

You will be able to access your course material through the Learning Management System (LMS) *Moodle*. Many instructors in the university use *Moodle* to send you homework, or to connect you to material necessary for your courses; they may also post your grades on *Moodle*. If you learn to interact with your course and your instructor through this system, it will help you be more prepared and therefore more successful in your studies.

Besides *Moodle*, course information will be made available to you electronically through the *STARS* System (Student Academic Records System). You will be able to access information about your registration to classes, as well as get immediate feedback on grades in important exams, or find access points to materials and other information of importance to you as a student, such as attendance. When you registered at the university you were given your access code for the *STARS* system.

In addition to systems providing students with course materials and helping them track their academic records, online learning platforms, which are personalized learning environments, are made available to students to help students continue their language learning outside class. These online platforms support students' further practice of listening, speaking, reading, writing skills, and enhance their grammar and vocabulary knowledge in accordance with their specific needs.

3. USE THE LIBRARY

It is important for you to learn to use the library. Bilkent has one of the best equipped libraries in Turkey and meets international standards in the services it offers to Bilkent students.

During your induction to the university, you were given tasks to familiarise yourself with the library system. You need to know how to look for books in the catalogue system, how to run searches electronically, which will bring up needed materials for your assignments, and how to borrow books so that you can take them out of the library for your personal needs.

Information about the library is available on www.library.bilkent.edu.tr

4. WHO TO VISIT WHEN IN NEED

Starting university is a transition period which involves new and sometimes difficult experiences for all students, many of whom come from very many different backgrounds. The English Language Preparatory Program academic and administrative staff are available to help students integrate into the Bilkent community.

Academic Guidance

Sometimes we need help in adjusting to a new environment; this is a normal part of life. This help could be related to your study needs. As mentioned earlier, universities are very different from high schools and they require a different type of learning which you may not have experienced in high school. If you have problems with learning on your courses, you can talk directly to your instructor who will provide you with help. However, if you feel you need help from someone outside of your class context, you can see your Head of Teaching Unit, who will be happy to help you, or point you in a direction where you can get the help you need.

Personal Guidance

All of us, at some point in our lives, need help with personal problems that we may encounter. Sometimes these can be related to our social environment, or could concern family or other related issues. For example, some students have left home and now live in a dormitory for the first time in their lives. This can sometimes be a challenging experience for many different reasons. Bilkent University Dean of Students' Office Psychological Counseling and Development Center is ready to help students cope with any obstacles to their learning. The center can be reached by telephoning (312) 290 1785 – 86 or sending an e-mail topdgm@bilkent.edu.tr

Administrative Guidance

The rules and regulations governing the courses in the English Language Preparatory Program are provided both in this handbook and during the student orientation program. You can also reach the relevant information through our website: prep.bilkent.edu.tr. For all administrative matters not mentioned on the English Language Preparatory Program website, students may contact their Head of Teaching Unit.

Support for Students with Special Needs

If you feel you are a student who needs special arrangements in order to achieve better academic success, please contact the Dean of Students' Office Center for Students with Special Needs as soon as possible so that procedures may be put in place to help you. The center can be reached by telephoning (312) 290 2483.

Student Support System

If you have a problem that you have experienced or are experiencing related to your studies and/or life in the English Language Preparatory Program which you wish to express in either written or spoken form, you can e-mail prep@bilkent.edu.tr or visit your Head of Teaching Unit who will look into the issue, direct the problem to the relevant parties either in the English Language Preparatory Program or in the university and provide feedback on the problem or direct you to the relevant parties.

Academic Issues: Attendance and Health Reports

It is important for students to attend class. The English Language Preparatory Program requirements for attendance and rules for absence due to illness are stated below in this booklet.

Bilkent University Emergency Line - 0312 290 6666

Students can report any emergency incidents to the University's emergency line that provides service 7 days a week and 24 hours a day.

5. TAKE ADVANTAGE OF SPORTS OPPORTUNITIES

The university offers a wide range of opportunities for you to take part in sports and other leisure activities. A healthy life-style is an important part of being a successful student and you are encouraged to enroll in one of the many activities available to you. You may get more information about sports and activities available to you through contacting the Sports Center on-line at www.spor.bilkent.edu.tr, or by going to the main campus sports centre.

6. BE ACTIVE AND MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

The English Language Preparatory Program is interested in hearing student voices about all aspects of their education. There are many opportunities for you to give feedback to the program about your opinions and needs related to your academic and social environment.

Class Spokesperson Meetings

Since 1995, the English Language Preparatory Program has had a “Class Spokesperson” system. Each class selects a representative to attend regular meetings which have the following aims: to provide a forum where the ideas of students in the English Language Preparatory Program can be heard, to increase communication between all members of the program, and to improve student understanding of their priorities. In order to help each class spokesperson fulfill his/her role to the best of their ability, they are given training as well as written guidelines about their responsibilities.

Student Evaluation of Learning

The English Language Preparatory Program is committed to maintaining a high quality learning environment for all our students. Students are given the opportunity to evaluate their courses and their instructors through the university’s ‘student evaluation of learning’ system. Towards the end of every course you will be asked to fill in an anonymous questionnaire that requires you to answer a number of questions about your course and instructor. The data is collated and put on-line. This is a major responsibility given by the university and students should use the opportunity in a responsible manner so that the teachers and the program can provide the best service possible to their learners.

The English Language Preparatory Program Evaluation of Learning

The anonymous student evaluation of learning system is supplemented by a more informal course evaluation system that will take place during each of your courses. You will be asked to answer a range of questions about your learning experience and needs, and instructors will act on your response in order to have a dialogue with the class so as to improve the quality and effectiveness of your learning. Again, it is very important that you answer these questions responsibly so that the program can help you learn more effectively.

7. GET TO KNOW THE LEARNING SYSTEM

It is important for you to become familiar with the learning system used in the English Language Preparatory Program. What you do in the English Language Preparatory Program is an important part of your education and your English language results will appear on the transcript you receive at the end of your university education.

GE 100 Orientation

All students are given information about the university system and resources available for their learning at the beginning of their first academic year through the GE100, a one credit course. The GE100 is required for all new undergraduate students.

Courses Offered by the English Language Preparatory Program

There are five distinct level courses in the English Language Preparatory Program. You will be placed into one of the courses at the beginning of the year depending on your results in the PAE (Proficiency in Academic English) exam. The courses offered by the English Language Preparatory Program are:

- **PREP 111 Elementary Course (CEFR Level A1-A2):** Students with low level of English skills are placed at this level. This level gives importance to the learning of vocabulary and grammar, as well as, basic skills in reading, writing, listening and speaking. The course covers approximately 8 weeks (39 days).
- **PREP 121 Pre-intermediate Course (CEFR Level A2+):** Students placed at this level further develop their reading, writing, listening and speaking skills, and expand their range of grammar and vocabulary. The course covers approximately 8 weeks (39 days).
- **PREP 131 Intermediate Course (CEFR Level B1):** Students placed at Intermediate already have a good grounding in English language skills and continue to develop fluency and accuracy in the language. At this level students start to focus in more depth on the academic skills they are required to have at entry into their freshman year. The course covers approximately 8 weeks (39 days).
- **PREP 141 Upper - Intermediate Course (CEFR Level B1+):** This course focuses on more advanced language and skills. Students are required to demonstrate an ability to express themselves clearly and

concisely in writing and speaking, to read a broad range of material effectively, and to follow lectures and discussions in English. The course covers approximately 8 weeks (39 days).

- **PREP151-155 Pre-Faculty Course (CEFR Level B2):** This course brings students' language abilities up to the level required for entry into faculties. The Pre-Faculty course may be spread over 8 or 13 weeks, depending on when you enter the level during the year. Therefore, the weekly course load will vary depending on which of the two time periods you are in.

Students taking the PREP 155 course can attend classes for preparation towards the PAE at the end of their course. These classes will be offered to students until the PAE exam.

In addition to the courses above, the English Language Preparatory Program offers the course below to prepare students for the PAE exam.

PREP 160 PAE Practice Course: This course is designed for first and second year students who are unsuccessful in the Spring PAE exam and wish to retake the PAE in September.

Assessment in the English Language Preparatory Program

Assessment of learning plays an important role in the English Language Preparatory Program as it gives you feedback on your progress and helps you identify areas that you need to study more. In every course, there is continuous assessment of your learning. As part of the continuous assessment, there are different assessment tasks. These are Cumulative Achievement Tests (CATs), and Learning Portfolio (LP) tasks.

During a course you will need to take a number of CATs, and LP tasks. You need to attend classes regularly and be successful in these assessment tasks to take the End of Course Assessment (ECA) or the PAE. If you are successful in the ECA, you can pass into the next level. If you are successful in the PAE, you can start your studies in your department.

Attendance

You are asked to keep a check of your own attendance through the STARS system. Instructors will update the STARS system regularly and it is your responsibility to make sure that your attendance is correctly recorded on the computer system, and that any issues are brought up with the instructor immediately.

Tutorials

In addition to regular teaching hours, students may be given individual tutorials, or in small groups and/or a class when deemed necessary by the HTU.

Activities that Support Learning

With the aims of providing language support to students and guiding their studies outside class, a variety of activities such as workshops, seminars, clubs, etc. have been incorporated into their timetables.

8. FAMILIARISE YOURSELF WITH THE RULES AND REGULATIONS

The following pages describe in detail the rules and regulations governing the levels in the English Language Preparatory Program. You should read these in conjunction with the English Language Preparatory Program's Regulations related to Teaching, Exams and Assessment. The English Language Preparatory Program Regulations are available at: **prep.bilkent.edu.tr**

1. LEVELS AND PASSING REGULATIONS IN THE PREPARATORY PROGRAM

There are 5 levels in the English Language Preparatory Program: Elementary, Pre-intermediate, Intermediate, Upper-intermediate and Pre-faculty. When students enroll in the university, they are placed in a level based on the results of PAE Stage 1, or, if eligible, Stage 2 of the PAE exam.

Undergraduate students may study in the English Language Preparatory Program up to a maximum of two years; graduate students for one year only.

The academic year consists of 2 semesters, Fall and Spring, and a summer school. For the purposes of calculating tuition periods in the academic calendar, each semester is divided into 2 distinct periods, and the summer school is 1 period. All in all, there are 5 distinct time periods in the academic year.

Summer courses are free if, and only if, a student has no failing grades in the Fall and Spring semesters.

Below is general information about the course passing regulations in the English Language Preparatory Program. More detailed information will be provided by the instructors on the first day of courses. This information can also be accessed through **prep.bilkent.edu.tr**.

PREP 111 Elementary, PREP 121 Pre-intermediate, PREP 131 Intermediate, PREP 141 Upper-intermediate Courses

These courses are normally 8 weeks in duration. The eligibility requirements are: 90% attendance of classes, 60% achievement in the CATs and 60% achievement in the LP.

Students who fail to achieve either 60% in the CATs or 60% in the Learning Portfolio are required to repeat the level and will not be eligible to sit the ECA. Students who fulfill the eligibility requirements may sit the ECA. Students who do not meet the eligibility requirements will have to repeat the 8 week course.

The final course grade (out of 100) is made up of the ECA (80%) and CATs (20%). Students are required to get an overall course grade of 60 out of 100 or above to pass the level. This means that students who get below 60 points out of 100 will be required to repeat the 8 week course.

PREP 151, PREP 155 Pre-Faculty Courses

The Pre-faculty course is normally either 8 or 13 weeks depending on the point in a semester when students progress from the Upper-Intermediate level. In the summer period, the Pre-faculty level is also offered.

At the end of the Pre-faculty level, students who meet the eligibility requirements are able to take the PAE. Those students who pass the PAE go to their departments.

The eligibility requirements are: 90% attendance of classes, 60% achievement in the CATs and 60% achievement in the LP.

Students who meet the eligibility requirements in the Fall semester, but who fail the PAE in January repeat the Pre-faculty course in 13 weeks. Students who meet the eligibility requirements, but fail the Spring PAE, may take the PREP160 PAE Practice Course in the summer. Students who meet the eligibility requirements in this course, but who fail the PAE in September repeat the Pre-faculty course in 13 weeks if they are in their first year.

PREP 160 PAE Practice Course

This course is for first and second year students who are unsuccessful in the Spring PAE exam and wish to retake the PAE in September. The eligibility requirement is: 90% attendance of classes.

2. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS: ATTENDANCE

An important part of learning a new language, just as learning our first language, is developing the language skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing.

The English Language Preparatory Program insists that students attend all classes so that students are able to regularly practice these necessary skills with their instructors and classmates.

To this end, the English Language Preparatory Program requires students to attend 100% of their classes. Students may be absent up to a limit of 10% of their classes. No absence, for whatever reason, is accepted beyond the 10% limit, with or without documentation.

Students are advised not to take time away from their classes as they may find themselves unable to take the End of Course Assessment (ECA) and/or PAE as a result of poor attendance due to circumstances which they were not able to foresee.

In cases where lessons are cancelled, students may be asked to make-up these classes at other times. They may also be asked to attend make-up classes at the weekends. Make-up class attendance is a requirement.

9. OBSERVE ASSESSMENT RELATED REQUIREMENTS

The program expects students to do their own work and abide by the rules of academic honesty.

Plagiarism

If students use ideas or expressions from various published sources, they are required to acknowledge them properly. If there is any suspicion of plagiarism in any homework or continuous assessment tasks, these tasks will not be accepted until a full inquiry has been undertaken. If plagiarism is confirmed, disciplinary action will be taken against the student(s) committing and/or assisting with the act of plagiarism. The Higher Education Council Student Disciplinary Rules and Regulations can be accessed at:

https://www.yok.gov.tr/Sayfalar/Kurumsal/mevzuat/yok_ogrenci_disiplin_yonet.aspx

Cheating

Disciplinary action will be taken against any student who submits required course work, or any part of required coursework, written by another person, or copied partly or entirely from another student's work, or who gives his/her

own work, or any component thereof, to another student, or who hands in previously submitted work (even if it is the student's own) in the form of new work. The Higher Education Council Student Disciplinary Rules and Regulations can be accessed at:

https://www.yok.gov.tr/Sayfalar/Kurumsal/mevzuat/yok_ogrenci_disiplin_yonet.aspx

Make-up Exams

No make-ups are given for LP tasks, CATs and the PAE. Medical reports are not accepted for the LP tasks, CATs and the PAE. Students who miss any of these will automatically get “zero”. Only those students who submit a health approved by the Bilkent University Health Center for the day of an ECA may be considered to be given a make-up provided that the health report is submitted on the day the ECA is administered.

Lateness for Exams

Students who are late for the CATs, ECAs and PAE are not accepted into the classroom. It is the responsibility of the students to check exam schedules and to arrive on time for the exams. Students must bring their student ID cards to all the CAT exams. For the ECA and PAE, students need to bring their national ID cards/ passports and their student ID cards to the exam.

Optic Forms

All sections of PAE Stage 1 and some sections of CAT, ECA and PAE Stage 2 examinations are coded on optic forms. Where optic forms are used, for marking these sections, any answers marked in the question booklet will not be taken into account. It is the student’s responsibility to correctly code optic forms. The program will not be held responsible for loss of marks due to wrong coding or failure to code in answers.

Examination Rules

Students attend The English Language Preparatory Program examinations in accordance with the rules that are set by the English Language Preparatory Program’s ‘Regulations related to Teaching, Exams and Assessment’. These are announced on the program’s website before exams. The English Language Preparatory Program has the right to make changes to exams without prior notification.

PAE Examination

PAE results are valid for two years from the date of the exam. There is no make-up exam for PAE. Medical reports are not accepted as an excuse for this exam.

External Examinations

Students may present acceptable scores on external international examinations. Accepted pass marks for proficiency in these examinations and the procedures for exemption through these examinations are determined by the Bilkent University Senate.

The English Language Preparatory Program Rules and Regulations are as follows:

1. Students wishing to take an external exam for demonstrating English language proficiency must inform the English Language Preparatory Program in writing of their intention to sit the exam and submit relevant registration documents, at least 21 days prior to the exam date. Such students can only sit external exams at the centers listed below, and on days previously announced by Bilkent University. Results from external exams taken at other centers or on other dates are not accepted.

- TOEFL exam center: Turkish American Association (Ankara)
- IELTS exam center: IDP (Ankara)

Changes to the list of approved exam centers may be made by the English Language Preparatory Program, with the approval of the Rector.

Bilkent University may request exam centers to take additional security measures. Students who register to take external exams will be notified in advance of any procedures they have to follow in order to have their applications accepted by Bilkent University.

2. The exam result must be sent directly to Bilkent University Registrar's Office by the exam provider. Results submitted in person or mailed by students will not be taken into consideration.

The decision regarding the validity of the results of any such exam lies with the English Language Preparatory Program. The following are the accepted scores for exemption from the English Language Preparatory Program: at least 6.5 points overall on IELTS, with a minimum of 5.5 points in every section and at least 87 points on TOEFL iBT. External exam results are valid for two years starting from the date of the exam.

10. BE A RESPONSIBLE MEMBER OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE PREPARATORY PROGRAM COMMUNITY

You are expected to show responsibility in your learning and display high standards of self-discipline and conduct. There are some basic rules which we all need to observe, which are conducive to effective learning and teaching.

Ground Rules

The following ground rules must be adhered to by all members of the program. We must never endanger the safety and well-being of others; or disrupt activities, teaching and learning; or cause damage to school property. We are all responsible for our actions and their consequences in this regard.

Classroom Environment

The university is a place where we can express ourselves freely in an atmosphere of tolerance and respect for others. The creation and maintenance of such an atmosphere, conducive to academic study inside and outside the classroom, is an important part of membership of an academic community and should be based on courtesy and mutual respect between students and instructors.

Punctuality

Students and instructors are expected to arrive in class before a lesson is scheduled to begin. Instructors will 'refuse entry' to the classroom to late arriving students and the student will be marked 'absent' for the class hour.

Bringing Learning Materials to Class

Students are expected to bring to class the appropriate learning materials (books, paper, pens, etc.). It should be noted that students are required to use "original" copies of the course books at all levels in accordance with the copyright law.

Use of Turkish in Class

The English Language Preparatory Program is part of an English medium university. English is the language of instruction and the means of communication between instructors and students. Therefore, students are expected to speak in English in class.

Changing Classes

Once students have been allocated to their teaching units and classes, no requests for changes from students will be accepted under any circumstances.

Announcements to Students

All necessary information relevant to students is posted on the English Language Preparatory Program website (prep.bilkent.edu.tr). Students are expected to keep themselves updated on levels, exams, evaluation systems, seminars and other important announcements through consulting the website on a regular basis.

University Code of Discipline

It is every student's responsibility to learn and observe the Higher Education Council Student Disciplinary Rules and Regulations. These Rules and Regulations can be accessed at:

<https://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/mevzuat?MevzuatNo=16532&MevzuatTur=7&MevzuatTertip=5>

Building Regulations

- Students are requested to treat buildings and furniture with respect. Appropriate action will be taken against those who damage property.
- Students are kindly asked to behave responsibly inside the buildings and other common areas, and not resort to excessive shouting or abusive language.
- Students are kindly asked to keep the environment clean and use waste bins as appropriate.

Smoke-Free Campus

Bilkent University is a smoke-free campus, the use of cigarettes and other tobacco products including electronic cigarettes are prohibited in all indoor and outdoor spaces of Bilkent University.

Library

Students may borrow books from the library using their student card, with the exception of certain reference journals and books. The library operates rules and regulations for the care and handling of books. Students need to familiarize themselves with these.

Notes

