



## REGULATIONS FOR PROVING FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY IN UNDERGRADUATE DEGREES AT THE UNIVERSITAT POLITÈCNICA DE VALÈNCIA

### JUSTIFICATION

The purpose of these regulations is to unify and update the general framework that, at the Universitat Politècnica de València (hereinafter, UPV), governs the ways to prove foreign language proficiency as a requirement in order to be able to obtain a degree there. To date, this framework has been regulated by Point 8 of the Framework Document for the Design of Degrees, approved by the UPV Governing Council on 14 February 2008; by the Regulations for Proving Foreign Language Proficiency in the New Study Plans, approved by the UPV Governing Council on 18 December 2008 (consolidated text, *BOUPV 22*, December 2008); and by the Authorisation of Exemptions from the Requirement, Prior to Obtaining a Degree, of Proof of Proficiency in a Foreign Language at a Level Corresponding to B2 of the Levels Established by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (hereinafter, CEFR), which was approved by the UPV Governing Council on 13 December 2012.

Both the internationalisation of the university system and the demands of the labour market require universities to undertake a series of language policy actions aimed at guaranteeing that students acquire a minimum level, at least, of foreign language proficiency. In its Framework Document on Language Policy for the Internationalisation of the Spanish University System, the Conference of Rectors of Spanish Universities (hereinafter, CRUE) stresses the need for Spanish universities to work on the acquisition of foreign languages through proof of proficiency, training and incentives.

As regards proof of proficiency, the aforementioned document recommends as follows: "the minimum level of foreign language required to obtain a bachelor's degree should be B1 in the different skills, notwithstanding the fact that universities may require a higher level in those degrees in which it is deemed necessary". At the Universitat Politècnica de València, the Framework Document for the Design of Degrees approved by the UPV Governing Council on 14 February 2008 indicates that, in order to obtain the bachelor's degree, students must prove that they have a proficiency level corresponding to B2, and establishes two ways to achieve this. Subsequently, the UPV Governing Council, in its session of 18 December 2008, added three new ways to pass level B2 in the Regulations for Proving Foreign Language Proficiency in the New Study Plans.

The application of this requirement showed the need to address special circumstances alleged by students. This is why so the UPV Governing Council, on 13 December 2012, approved a document called *Authorisation of Exemptions from the Requirement, Prior to Obtaining a Degree, of Proof of Proficiency in a Foreign Language at a Level Corresponding to B2 of the Levels Established by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, which included three exemptions from the language proficiency requirement.

With the passing of time, it has become necessary to add new regulations governing the ways to prove foreign language proficiency in order to obtain a degree at the UPV, and to modify the existing regulations as well. It was therefore considered appropriate to unify the existing regulations, at the same time adapting them



to the current reality, in a single regulatory document that establishes the ways for proving B2-level proficiency, as well as the possible exemptions from this requirement. The routes envisaged for proving B2-level proficiency are the same as those that were envisaged in the previous document, although specifications and clarifications have been added where it has been deemed appropriate. In accordance with social realities, a new pathway has also been introduced, for students entering our University from foreign educational systems – a pathway that had previously been treated as an exemption. The first four routes established in Article 2 of this regulation are the priority routes for proving B2-level proficiency, while passing a proficiency level test is reserved for dealing with exceptional situations.

On the basis of the above, it is proposed that the previous regulations be recast as follows:

### **Article 1. Language requirements for obtaining a degree at the UPV**

In order to obtain a bachelor's degree, students must prove that they have B2-level proficiency, according to the CEFR, in English, French, German or Italian, with English being the preferred language.

### **Article 2. Ways to prove B2-level proficiency**

B2-level proficiency may be proved through any of the following possible routes:

1. Successfully completing a course offered by the UPV Department of Applied Linguistics in the undergraduate syllabuses, including those of a transversal nature, that serves to prove that the student has acquired the linguistic competences and skills corresponding to level B2 of the CEFR in one of the languages mentioned in Article 1.
2. Presenting a certificate of language proficiency at level B2, or at a higher level, that is recognised by the Association of Language Centres in Higher Education (ACLES)<sup>1</sup>.
3. Having stayed abroad for a four-month term at least, within the framework of student mobility programmes, and preparing and orally presenting the bachelor's thesis in one of the foreign languages in which proficiency is to be proved. Should the presentation take place in the same country in which the exchange studies were carried out, the bachelor's thesis must be prepared and presented in one of the languages mentioned in Article 1. Should the presentation take place at the UPV, the bachelor's thesis must be prepared and presented in English.
4. Completing a minimum of 30 ECTS corresponding to subjects taught and assessed in English, and preparing and orally presenting the bachelor's thesis at the UPV in that language.

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<sup>1</sup> The list of certificates accepted by the Universitat Politècnica de València for the accreditation of foreign language proficiency is the one that appears in the last updated table of "Certificates recognised by ACLES". This table can be found on the website of the Language Centre of the Universitat Politècnica de València, which is the competent unit for revising and updating it.



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5. Accessing the UPV from a foreign education system that allows students to prove B2-level proficiency in the languages mentioned in Article 1 of these regulations.
6. Passing a B2-level foreign language proficiency test. The UPV Department of Applied Linguistics will carry out this test in exceptional cases only, when the vice-rector's office responsible for student performance and progress considers it appropriate.

**Article 3. Exemptions**

Students will be exempt from having to show proof of B2-level proficiency in a foreign language in order to obtain the bachelor's degree in the following cases:

1. Students who can prove that they have a functional diversity issue that severely prevents or hinders them from learning a foreign language. This exemption will be applied on the basis of a binding report prepared by the Fundació CEDAT de la Comunitat Valenciana.
2. Students who have gained access to the bachelor's degree studies by proving work or professional experience (people over 40 years of age) or by passing the admission test for people over 45 years of age.
3. Students who access bachelor's degree studies by adapting their unfinished studies from the old pre-Bologna curriculum, as well as students who have accessed the corresponding bachelor's degree through specific adaptation courses for graduates.

**First transitory provision**

In order to facilitate the adaptation of students who are nearing the completion of their studies, a transitional period for the enforcement of this new regulation is established. Any student who completes their studies before September 30, 2025, may alternatively demonstrate a B2 level of a foreign language according to the requirements that had been in effect until the enactment of the current regulation.

**Sole repeal provision**

Point 8 of the Framework Document for the Design of Degrees, approved by the UPV Governing Council on 14 February 2008, is expressly repealed. So are the Regulations for Proving Foreign Language Proficiency in the New Study Plans, approved by the Governing Council on 18 December 2008 (consolidated text, *BOUPV* 22, December 2008), and the Authorisation of Exemptions from the Requirement, Prior to Obtaining a Degree, of Proof of Proficiency in a Foreign Language at a Level Corresponding to B2 of the Levels Established by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, approved by the UPV Governing Council on 13 December 2012, as well as any subsequent amendments thereto.



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Likewise, any provisions or instructions of equal or lower rank that oppose the provisions contained in these regulations are hereby repealed.

**First final provision**

These regulations will come into force in the academic year 2023-2024, once they have been published in the *Butlletí Oficial de la Universitat Politècnica de València*.

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