



## Can you be exempted from writing TALPS?

If your faculty requires that you write the test you cannot be exempted from writing it, even if you have written other language proficiency tests or completed language courses at other institutions. The test can only be written once. If you have already written the test at another institution, ask your institution to enquire about the result. You may only rewrite the test after six months.

## How should you interpret your score?

Results are usually presented in categories, ranging from High risk (Code 1), Clear risk (Code 2), Risk (Code 3), Less risk (Code 4), and little to no risk (Code 5).

Often these categories are accompanied by a short recommendation in terms of the kind(s) of support you might require.

Arrangements for short courses, writing centre support, etc. should be made via your institution's ICELDA partner - see section with contact details.

## Where can you make enquiries?

**Prof. Witness Mudzi**  
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University of the Free State  
Tel: 051 401 7161  
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mudziw@ufs.ac.za

**Prof. Gustav Butler**  
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Faculty of Humanities  
North-West University  
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**Dr Avasha Rambiritch**  
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 [www.icelda.com](http://www.icelda.com)

## Can arrangements be made for students living with disabilities or who have special needs?

Yes. Questions or queries can be directed to your institution's disability unit.



## Test of Academic Literacy for Postgraduate Students (TALPS)

### What is TALPS

TALPS is a test of academic literacy for postgraduate students that is highly reliable, and used by four South African universities. It was developed by a consortium of four South African universities: North-West, Pretoria, Stellenbosch and Free State.

This partnership, the Inter-institutional Centre for Language Development and Assessment (ICELDA), is responsible for the standard administration of the test, for marking them, and for assisting in the interpretation of their results. ICELDA also administers various other tests, at school and at undergraduate level, that are highly reliable and widely used.

## What is TALPS used for?



It is used in the first instance to determine whether students find themselves at risk as a result of too low a level of academic literacy. Should that be the case, such students may be advised to put plans into place to help develop their ability to handle academic discourse more competently.

## Why do you have to write this test?

A simple answer to this question is that your faculty or department requires you to write this test. Depending on the selection criteria in individual faculties/departments, this test could be used in one of two ways:

- to determine whether you gain access to the desired programme/ field of study or
- it could be used to place you in a specific programme to help improve your academic literacy should the test show that you are at risk.

## Where do you write the test?

Once you have applied for admission to the desired programme your faculty/ department will inform you of the date, time and venue of the test. The test result will be sent to your department who will inform you of the outcome. No results will be released by ICELDA to any individual student.

The contact person at each institution will inform you of arrangements.

Before taking the online test, arrangements must be made with the ICELDA representative for your institution - see section with contact details.



## What do you need for the test?



All you need is your student card, a soft pencil (HB or B) and an eraser. If you are taking the online test you will need access to a computer and the internet for approximately two and a half hours.

## Can you prepare for the test?

As this is a proficiency test, you cannot study for it. It is advisable that you access the TALPS website (<http://www.icelda.com>) where you can view a sample of the test. This sample test cannot be downloaded or printed out. You can, however, complete the sample test online. This will give you an idea as to what to expect in the test. The website includes other useful information and exercises related to TALPS.

## What does the test measure?

It tests a number of components of academic literacy, that allow it to assess whether students are able to:

- understand a range of academic vocabulary in context;
- interpret and use metaphor and idiom, and perceive connotation, word play and ambiguity;
- understand relations between different parts of a text, be aware of the logical development of (an academic) text, via introductions to conclusions, and know how to use language that serves to make the different parts of a text hang together;

- interpret different kinds of text type (genre), and show sensitivity for the meaning that they convey, and the audience that they are aimed at;
- interpret, use and produce information presented in graphic or visual format;
- make distinctions between essential and non-essential information, fact and opinion, propositions and arguments; distinguish between cause and effect, classify, categorise and handle data that make comparisons;
- see sequence and order, do simple numerical estimations and computations that are relevant to academic information, that allow comparisons to be made, and can be applied for the purposes of an argument;
- know what counts as evidence for an argument, extrapolate from information by making inferences, and apply the information or its implications to other cases than the one at hand;
- understand the communicative function of various ways of expression in academic language (such as defining, providing examples, arguing); and
- make meaning (e.g. of an academic text) beyond the level of the sentence.

## In which language should you write the test?

The test is available in English or Afrikaans. Please enquire from your institution.



## Universities



Northwest, Pretoria, Stellenbosch and Free State.



## Contact:

Website: [www.icelda.com](http://www.icelda.com)  
Representative for your institution - see section with contact details.