

# Two-Year Progress Report

## English Language Institute (EFAS, BASE)

### October 2020

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#### Background

A self-study was submitted to the Associate Vice-President, Academic on December 18, 2017. Two arm's-length reviewers appraised the self-study documentation and conducted a site visit to Renison University College on March 1, 2018.

The reviewers concluded that "... that this program is in very good standing, not least because it appears committed to continuous improvement. It has improved significantly in response to a previous external review and delivers high-quality, student-centered instruction that brings a significant number of international students to our region and to UW."

#### Progress on Implementation Plan

#### Recommendations

1. Develop a comprehensive plan to raise the profile of the ELI as a key agent of internationalization for UW.

#### Status: In progress

Details: Renison's Vice-President, Student Affairs and Community Engagement (VP, SACE) is sitting on the International Operations Group and has been working more with Waterloo International (WI). The ELI contributed to International Education Week. The ELI also provided WI with a tool kit which they intend to compile with other units across campus to showcase ways we can work together for Internationalization purposes. The VP, SACE has been asked to be a part of a conversation re: Blended Mobility to Internationalization at uWaterloo. We are excited to be a part of this dialogue.

The Student Success Office (SSO) wanted to do its own communication plan to establish their position as a leader and elevate their presence in supporting international student experience. They did suggest our working together on the following:

- Create **internal document** that defines role clarity between WI/Renison/SSO to provide to managers to help guide their work
- Use this document as a basis for a Daily Bulletin article to provide clarity to campus partners and elevate all of our work
- Allow Renison to participate in International Student Experience group (Renison's Manager, Student Experience)

2. Improve recognition of the important role of ELI instructors at Renison and for UW.

**Status: Ongoing**

**Details:** The Final Assessment Report discussed plans to revise contracts to allow time to work on special projects (i.e., curriculum and program development) or conduct research. In 2019, Renison completed a salary review and implemented a new compensation model for all instructors, which put the plan of adjusting contracts to provide time to expand research or special projects on hold. Hopefully, we will be able to revisit this in 2022.

Across campus, Associate Deans and student advisors from several faculties have acknowledged the important role of ELI instructors and programs. Meetings with these campus partners are currently taking place, and so far all faculty partners have expressed a desire for more of their students to come into their programs with the same level of preparedness and support as the ELI students.

Two instructors were asked to present at PebbleBash 2020 in Scotland based on their work with the Centre for Teaching Excellence (CTE). Instructors have also been asked to review proposals for CTE's annual conference; additionally, two instructors presented at CTE in 2019. Two ELI instructors have been recognized at Renison for the creation of a "Family Getaway" program, which pairs international students with host families for short-term weekend visits aimed at alleviating some of the stress caused by homesickness. These instructors presented their early research findings on program impact at the 2020 [CACUSS](#) conference (July).

3. Work towards resolving space limitations at the ELI.

**Status: In progress**

**Details:** Renison completed a new third floor addition to our Academic Centre in January 2020, which freed up classroom and office space in older parts of the building for the ELI to use. Renison's Board of Governors approved moving ahead with a new build proposal. This build will create more residence and classroom space, freeing up residence and classroom space in the current building for ELI students.

During the pandemic, the move to online course delivery and further integration of PebblePad workbooks into course design has also highlighted possibilities for more blended learning opportunities once in-person classes return, particularly within courses that support writing skill development. This will allow for some class hours to be reduced by one or two hours each week, while still providing students with the opportunity to engage with core course concepts within the interactive online environment of PebblePad. Even a slight reduction in weekly in-person class hours opens many possibilities for the use of classroom space at Renison.

4. Refresh course names so that they better indicate their purpose.

**Status: Completed**

Details: BASE and EFAS course changes were approved at Community and Professional Education (CAPE) Council on Jan. 22, 2019. BASE course changes were approved at SUC in March 2019. These course changes became effective in Fall 2019.

Previous Course Name EFAS	Current Course Name
Academic Skills (120)	Introduction to Academic Skills through Reading and Listening
Writing Skills (140)	Introduction to Academic Writing
Oral Skills (160)	Introduction to Academic Oral Communication
Academic Skills (220)	Building Academic Skills through Reading and Listening
Writing Skills (240)	Fundamentals of Academic Writing
Oral Skills (260)	Developing Skills for Effective Academic Oral Communication
Academic Skills (320)	Enhancing Academic Skills through Reading and Listening
Writing Skills (340)	Effective Writing and Research in Academic Contexts
Oral Skills (360)	Effective Academic Communication through Conversation and Presentation
Academic Skills (420)	Advancing Academic Skills through Reading and Listening
Writing Skills (440)	Refining Writing and Research in Academic Contexts
Oral Skills (460)	Advanced Academic Communication through Conversation and Presentation

Previous Course Name BASE	Current Course Name
BASE 32 – Academic Skills	Introduction to Skills & Strategies for University
BASE 34 – Writing Skills	Introduction to Academic Writing & Research Skills
BASE 36 – Oral Skills	Introduction to Academic Speaking & Communication Strategies
BASE 42 – Academic Skills	Enhanced Skills & Strategies for University
BASE 44 – Writing Skills	Extended Academic Writing & Research Skills
BASE 46 – Oral Skills	Effective Academic Speaking & Communication Strategies

5. Further diversify the representation of students from different countries in BASE.

**Status: In progress**

Details: ELI is creating its own recruitment plan in conversations with Engineering, Renison Marketing and Recruitment, and Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs. Creating a fully integrated plan with UW's Marketing and Undergraduate Recruitment at this time is complicated due to budgetary issues, but we have been successful working on sharing event participation as well as trying to work with the same agent pool. The relationship is working well. Issues impacting diversity, such as high tuition fees, are not within our purview. Such challenges limit the ability to recruit students from certain markets. For example, both SENEYCYT and SENACYT can no longer afford to send their fully funded students to Engineering at Waterloo as the cost exceeds their budget of \$250,000 USD per student over the course of study.

6. Explore further co-curricular opportunities for BASE students, especially in some faculties.

**Status: In progress**

Details: BASE has collaborated once again with Social Development Studies (SDS) to revive the Cross-Cultural Exchange Project, pairing students from ARTS BASE with PSYCH 349 – Cross-Cultural Psychology students. This project was successfully implemented in both the Winter 2019 and Fall 2019 terms. To date, other than collaborating with the Ecology Lab for ENV iBASE, no new co-curricular opportunities have been established with the Faculty of Environment. This is still something we plan on investigating but have not yet had the opportunity.

At this time, we have not had the opportunity establish ongoing meetings with the Associate Deans. We have, however, had meetings with the Associate Deans in Engineering, Science, and Arts to see if they have any feedback regarding BASE. We did not have the opportunity to meet with the Associate Deans in Applied Health Science or Environment prior to the pandemic. We will be meeting with them in the upcoming months.

7. Develop concrete ways for EFAS to integrate experiences at UW into its programming.

**Status: In progress**

Details: EFAS council initiatives have been implemented, including participation in Random Act of Kindness Day and [International Fair](#). EFAS also participates in [Cultural Caravan](#), an event put on by WUSA. EFAS 2+2 students have been integrated into the ENV 101 Day. Additionally, we have begun linking campus excursions to various academic departments to co-curricular activities and academic programming (e.g., Engineering 5 tour). We are exploring changing our academic excursions to be more campus oriented. For upcoming terms, we will be taking students to RoboHub, Games Institute, Earth Sciences Museum, and touring Engineering Labs. These excursions will be integrated into course content. We are also looking at building relationships so that we can invite guest lecturers.

8. Improve program metrics leading up to the next review.

**Status: In progress**

**Details:** We are investigating new software programs to help keep track of student records, which should improve metrics once implemented. The purchase of a new student information system is on hold due to the financial difficulties we are facing as a result of the lack of students in our short-term programs (pandemic driven). These programs would help fund this purchase. A request was submitted through uWaterloo's Registrar's Office to Institutional Analysis and Planning for more specific international student data and we are waiting on a response. This data will help us have a better understanding of how BASE students are doing in comparison to other international students.

**Explain any circumstances that have altered the original implementation plan:** The COVID-19 pandemic has had an enormous impact on our plan. We needed to pivot to remote delivery, for both BASE and EFAS for the remainder of the Winter term, and then EFAS moved online for the Spring term. Both iBASE and iEFAS moved online over the summer; and of course, both are online for the Fall. One of the complications for us is that our students are in multiple time zones; additionally, due to the interactive nature of language learning, our students need synchronous learning opportunities. Thus, classes are being taught at 8:30 am and 8:30 pm. Additionally, student supports are a key component of our programming and moving check-in meetings and social programming online has been challenging, but doable, because of the ingenuity and flexibility of our staff. The amount of time and energy to do these tasks has slowed down, but not impeded, our implementation plan.

Furthermore, there is a significant strain on our finances because of the current situation. Our EFAS student numbers were about 70% lower than expected in both our Spring term and Fall terms. We anticipate that this will also be the case for the Winter term. EFAS has been affected more than BASE because unlike BASE, EFAS consists of students who are not conditionally admitted as well as students who are; many students participate in the program as a study abroad experience, and since students are not traveling, they are not taking the program.

Finally, the issue of diversity in BASE will need some more time to address as the pandemic has stalled international travel, impacting recruitment efforts.

**Address any significant developments or initiatives that have arisen since the program review process, or that were not contemplated during the review:** Recently, the President of Renison and the VP SACE had a conversation with the Faculty of Mathematics to discuss the possibility of Math working with Renison for their pathway program. Their current contract with their English Language provider is up for renewal in the Spring.



Because of the pandemic, BASE was invited to be a part of the 'Bringing Waterloo to You' online initiative. The BASE video production was a collaboration between MUR, Renison's Marketing and Recruitment department and uWaterloo's Registrar's Office.

### Updated Implementation Plan

	<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Proposed Actions</b>	<b>Responsibility for Leading and Resourcing (if applicable) the Actions</b>	<b>Timeline for addressing Recommendations</b>
1.	Develop a comprehensive plan to raise the profile of ELI as a key agent of internationalization for UW.	Renison started meeting with International Operations Group in Fall 2019. Work with SSO in other initiatives.	Director	Implementation of the plan began Fall 2019.
2.	Improve recognition of the important role of ELI instructors at Renison and for UW.	Staff compensation review done in 2019 and implemented in 2020. Presentations at CTE (2019) and PebbleBash (2020). Meetings with faculty partners to continue to take place.	Director, Finance, President, and HR.	Meetings with faculty partners began 2019 and will continue throughout 2020.
3.	Work towards resolving space limitations at the ELI.	Space issues were addressed in Renison's Strategic Plan 2019-2024.	Director, President, New Build Planning Committee	New third floor build completed January 2020.
4.	Refresh course names so that they better indicate their purpose.	Course name changes went through proper approval process as per Renison and UW policies.	Assistant Directors, Director, and VP: Academic & Dean	Course changes approved, effective Fall 2019.
5.	Further diversify the representation of students from different countries in BASE.	ELI is creating its own recruitment plan with conversations with Engineering, Renison's Marketing and Recruitment, and Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs.	Manager and Senior International Recruitment Specialist at Renison	Implementation of the plan would begin in Fall 2022.
6.	Explore further co-curricular opportunities for BASE students, especially in some faculties.	Continue to collaborate with other departments.	Assistant Director	Collaboration began in 2019 and will continue onwards.
7.	Develop concrete ways for EFAS to integrate experiences at UW into its programming.	Changing academic excursions to be more campus oriented and integrated into course content. Continue to build relationships with other departments and faculties.	Assistant Director	Changes began in 2019 and will continue onwards.

8.	Improve program metrics leading up to the next review.	Investigating new software programs to keep track of student records.	Administrative Officer and Student Experience Manager	New software will be ready by 2023/2024.
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The Department Chair/Director, in consultation with the Dean of the Faculty shall be responsible for monitoring the Implementation Plan.



Date of next program review:

2024-2025

Date

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Signatures of Approval:



May 12, 2021

Chair/Director

Date



May 13, 2021

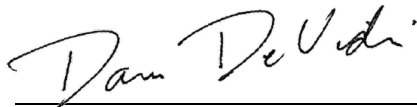
AFIW Administrative Dean/Head (For AFIW programs only)

Date

Faculty Dean

Date

**Note:** AFIW programs fall under the Faculty of ARTS; however, the Dean does not have fiscal control nor authority over staffing and administration of the program.



September 22, 2020

Associate Vice-President, Academic  
(For undergraduate and augmented programs)

Date

Associate Vice-President, Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs  
(For graduate and augmented programs)

Date