A Richmond Pro **Insight Report**

The English Language in **Higher Education** in **Latin America**

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Why English proficiency matters more than ever?

In today's global economy, English proficiency isn't just a nice-to-have—it's essential. Around the world, professionals with advanced English skills are **significantly more likely to secure employment** than those with basic or no English.

Nearly **80%** of **international business** is conducted in English.

Up to **98%** of **scientific publications**—especially in the natural and basic sciences—are written in English.

English is the primary language of **diplomacy** and international relations.

According to the English Proficiency Index, **Latin America** ranked **lowest** among global regions for English skills in 2020.

It's time for Latin America to take **bold, strategic steps** toward improving English proficiency among both students and professionals. The future of higher education—and employability—depends on it.

The English Language in Higher Education

Growing Demand for Language Skills

English proficiency is now a baseline requirement in industries such as:

- Manufacturing
- Tourism
- Finance
- Technology

Employers are actively seeking graduates who can communicate across borders and access international information, networks, and tools.

A Global Language of Business

Fluency in English enhances access to:

- Updated academic content
- Research and innovation hubs
- International collaboration

It also increases **graduates' competitiveness** in global job markets.

Nearshoring and Workforce Development

With nearshoring on the rise in Latin America, there is growing demand for professionals who can meet international standards, especially in English.

Countries like Mexico and Brazil are attracting global investment—but **language gaps** may become a barrier unless addressed strategically.

Higher Education's Responsibility

Higher Education Institutions must:

- **Align academic programs** with current workforce needs.
- Equip students with **job-ready skills**, including English communication.
- Focus on **graduate outcomes**, such as employment quality within 2–3 years of graduation.

Universities play a key role in bridging the gap between education and employability.

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