

National Policy Number NatPol-001-2005	National Policy Register
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NATIONAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY REQUIREMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL GRADUATES

1.0 Introduction

A national English Language Proficiency requirement for all International Medical Graduates (IMGs) who require registration in Australia has been accepted by:

- Medical Board of the Australian Capital Territory
- New South Wales Medical Board
- Medical Board of the Northern Territory
- Medical Board of Queensland
- Medical Board of South Australia
- Medical Council of Tasmania
- Medical Practitioners Board of Victoria
- Medical Board of Western Australia

Each state and territory registration board is charged with the responsibility of ensuring that medicine is practised in accordance with their Act. This includes ensuring that only individuals who are competent, have a sound knowledge of the English Language, and are of good character, are registered as medical practitioners.

Many international medical graduates come from a non-English speaking background and the level of English competency varies greatly. Through national agreement, the state and territory registration boards have implemented an English Language Proficiency Policy that is consistent.

2.0 English Language Model

A high level of English language proficiency is essential to enable practitioners to communicate with patients, other doctors and health professionals, and for maintenance of professional standards.

The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) is an appropriate language testing model for international medical graduates seeking registration.

The IELTS test was developed by the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate, The British Council and IDP Education Australia. The test is administered at least once a month by IELTS Australia and The British Council at over 230 centres worldwide.

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	<p>Applicants should contact IELTS Australia on all matters relating to the administration of the IELTS English test, examination dates and its associated procedures. The IELTS English Test is held throughout Australia as well as overseas. The contact for IELTS Australia is:</p> <p>Tel: + 612 6285 8222 Website: www.ielts.org E-mail: ielts@idp.edu.au</p> <p>3.0 Requirements</p> <p>Applicants need to submit evidence to the relevant registration authority of competency in speaking and communicating in English, as demonstrated by having completed the IELTS examination (Academic module) to the following standard:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 The boards require the applicant to have achieved a minimum score of 7 in each of the four components. 2 Alternative English proficiency tests that will be accepted are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Completed and obtained an overall pass in the Occupational English Test (OET) administered by the Centre for Adult Education with grades A or B only in each of the four components; or b) A pass in the Professional Linguistic Assessment Board (PLAB) in the United Kingdom; or c) A pass in the New Zealand Registration Examination (NZREX) in New Zealand. 3 Results must have been obtained within 2 years prior to applying for registration. 4 An IELTS (or approved equivalent) Test Report Form more than two years old will be accepted as evidence of present level of ability if accompanied by proof that a candidate has actively maintained employment as a medical practitioner in a country where English is the native or first Language. Test results must comply with the current requirements of this policy. 5 Results from any of the abovementioned English language examinations must be obtained in one sitting. <p>NOTE: The applicant is responsible for the cost of English tests.</p>

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	<p>4.0 Exemptions</p> <p>The boards may grant exemption where the applicant provides evidence of secondary education in English in one of the countries, listed below, where English is the native or first Language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canada • Republic of Ireland • New Zealand • United Kingdom and Northern Ireland • United States of America • South Africa <p>At the board's discretion, an exemption may be approved in special circumstances to applicants applying for registration. Examples would be, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • perform a demonstration in medical techniques; or • undertake research which involves limited or no patient contact; or • undertake postgraduate study or training while working in an appropriately supported environment which will ensure patient safety is not compromised. <p>5.0 Implementation Date</p> <p>This policy takes effect from 1 July 2005.</p> <p>This policy was amended on 4 April 2007 and is effective from 1 July 2007.</p>

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