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LICENSING POLICY

English Language Proficiency Requirements

Purpose

An applicant for any class of licence, except for emergency licence, must have the ability to speak, read and write English to the satisfaction of the registrar, pursuant to section 6-4(1)(j) of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC (CPSBC) Bylaws.

Background

Section 6-4(1)(j) of the Bylaws under the *Health Professions and Occupations Act* states:

General eligibility standards

6-4 (1) An applicant for each class of licence, except for an emergency licence, must provide to the registrar:

[…]

(j) information confirming the applicant's English language proficiency, satisfactory to the registrar,

[…]

The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) is a test developed by the world's leading experts in language assessment on four key English language skills: listening, reading, writing and speaking. It is designed to assess the language ability of people who aim to study and work in, immigrate to and integrate into an English-speaking environment.[1]

The Occupational English Test (OET) is a test developed specifically for health-care professionals, with an emphasis on testing English communication in a health-care setting. It assesses four key English language skills: listening, writing, reading and speaking.[2]

The Canadian English Language Proficiency Index Program (CELPIP) Test evaluates each test taker's English speaking, reading, listening and writing skills. It is used for permanent residence applications and professional designations.[3]

[1] https://ielts.ca/about-ielts/#general-training-and-academic
[2] https://www.occupationalenglishtest.org/test-information/healthcare-professions/medicine/
[3] https://www.celpip.ca/celpip-general/

Policy

The registrar may determine that an applicant has demonstrated English language proficiency if either:

1. The primary language of medical education was English, **and** the primary language of patient care was English, **or**
2. The applicant currently holds a valid medical licence in a majority native English-speaking country, **and** the applicant demonstrates that they practise independently primarily in English.

The registrar may exempt an applicant from the English language proficiency requirements set out herein in exceptional circumstances.

The government of the United Kingdom classifies the following countries as majority native English-speaking:

- Antigua and Barbuda
- Australia
- The Bahamas
- Barbados
- Belize
- Canada
- Dominica
- Grenada
- Guyana
- Jamaica
- Ireland
- Malta
- New Zealand
- St Kitts and Nevis
- St Lucia
- St Vincent and the Grenadines
- Trinidad and Tobago
- United Kingdom
- United States of America

For the purposes of this policy, CPSBC considers the above a complete list of majority English-speaking countries, and only the above will be considered under this policy.

Candidates who have not met the above requirements will require one of the following examinations:

- **IELTS academic examination**
    - Minimum score of 7 in each component, achieved in one sitting.
    - Forward your test report form (TRF) by including the CPSBC as one of the five institutions on your application form or order additional copies. Alternatively, you may forward your TRF number to CPSBC, and your score can be viewed through the IELTS academic verification service.
    - A TRF is valid for a period of two years from the date taken.
- **OET medicine examination**
    - Minimum grade of B in each component, achieved in one sitting.
    - Forward your OET results by including CPSBC as a verified organization on your myOET account.
    - OET results are valid for a period of two years from the date taken.
- **CELPIP general examination**
    - Minimum score of 9 in each component, achieved in one sitting.
    - CPSBC will access candidate scores through Paragon's Score and Identity Verification System (SIVS). In order to be granted access, candidates must either inform Paragon that CPSBC is an authorized institution or provide CPSBC with their registration number.
    - CELPIP results are valid for a period of two years from the date taken.

Results/scores of the examination must be sent directly to or shared with CPSBC. Combined scores from multiple attempts of the examination will not be accepted. The minimum scores or grades in each component must be achieved in the same examination sitting. CPSBC will not consider a combination of component scores from multiple sittings of the examinations.

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