



# Language Fluency

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## Language Fluency Requirement

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**8-81**

**Established:** March 2015  
**Effective:** May 1, 2015  
**Most Recent Revision:** February 2016

### Applicable Categories of Registration:

1. General Practising Certificate
2. Provisional Practising Certificate
3. Temporary Practising Certificate

**Type of requirement:** Exemptible

### Applicable Regulation:

35 (1) The following are registration requirements for a certificate of registration of any class:

5. The applicant must be able to speak and write either English or French with reasonable fluency.

### Principle(s):

Effective communication is one of the key essential competencies of practice in occupational therapy and is critical for the delivery of safe and effective, quality care. For these reasons the Registration Committee believes that applicants must provide persuasive, objective evidence of language fluency in English or French.

### Decision Criteria:

An applicant may meet the requirement as follows:

1. Providing a signed declaration that his or her first language is English or French and confirming that he or she can speak and write English or French with reasonable fluency; or
2. Providing verification from the accredited credential assessment agency that the language of instruction of occupational therapy education was English or French. This must be sent directly from the agency to the College as a hard-copy original document or be included with



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the Substantial Equivalency Assessment System (SEAS) Disposition Report issued by the Association of Canadian Occupational Therapy Regulatory Organization (ACOTRO),

3. Providing a current (i.e. not expired) report, where the applicant has achieved the minimum score on one of the College approved language fluency tests as indicated in the following table. Assessment results must be sent directly from the testing agency to the College as an original document or be included with the SEAS Disposition Report issued by ACOTRO.

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Acceptable tests and scores are as follows:

Test	Details	Minimum Score
<b>1. Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)</b>	Speaking	26
	Listening	22
	Reading	22
	Writing	22
	Overall score	92
<b>2. International English Language Testing System Academic (IELTS AC)</b>	Speaking	7.5
	Listening	7.0
	Reading	7.0
	Writing	6.5
	Overall score	7.0
<b>3. TESTCan</b>	Speaking	4.5
	Listening	4.5
	Reading	4.5
	Writing	4.0
	Overall score	-
	Speaking	4.5
	Listening	4.5



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4. CanTEST	Reading	4.5
	Writing	4.0
	Overall score	-

Note: Each skill area minimum score must be met in order for the language requirement to be considered to have been met.

#### Possible Outcomes:

1. An applicant who can provide sufficient evidence of fluency will be deemed to have met the language fluency requirement.
2. An applicant who cannot provide sufficient evidence of fluency will:
  - a. Be notified that he/she cannot be registered until he/she has met this requirement;
  - b. If the applicant has met all other requirements, under exceptional circumstances, he/she may be granted a temporary exemption from the requirement and will have Terms, Conditions, and/or Limitations (TCLs) placed on the certificate. This decision is at the discretion of the Registration Committee and may be granted to an applicant who has demonstrated a degree of fluency that would, with supervision, provide adequate safeguarding of public safety and effective care. The TCLs may include but are not limited to:
    - i. Requiring the registrant to disclose to all potential employers that he/she has not yet met the College's fluency requirement; and/or
    - ii. Imposing conditions for supervision (e.g. written documentation, verbal communication); and/or
    - iii. Imposing limitations regarding practice settings or controlled acts.

Once the registrant has met the language fluency requirement, the TCLs will be lifted.

If the registrant does not pass the required language test by the date stipulated, his or her certificate of registration will expire.



College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario  
Ordre des ergothérapeutes de l'Ontario

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The individual has the option to apply again for a certificate of registration.

*See Policy 8-90 – Request for Exemption from Language Fluency Requirement*