

Language Fluency Requirement

8-81

Section:	Registration
Applies to:	All applicants for all classes of registration
Approved by:	Registration Committee
Date Established:	March 2015
Date Effective:	May 1, 2015
Date Revised:	February 2016, February 2022, December 2022

Purpose

This policy explains how the College determines if an applicant meets the registration requirement to be able to speak and write English or French with reasonable fluency.

Principle

Effective communication is essential for providing safe and effective care in the practice of occupational therapy.

Policy

Applicants must provide evidence of reasonable skills in reading, listening, speaking and writing in one of Canada's official languages, English or French.

The College applies the [language proficiency standards](#) of the Association of Canadian Occupational Therapy Regulatory Organizations (ACOTRO).

Process for demonstrating language fluency

Applicants can demonstrate that they meet the language fluency requirement in the following ways:

- Applicants who obtained their occupational therapy education in Canada can provide proof of the completion of their occupational therapy degree.
- Applicants who obtained their occupational therapy education outside Canada can have an accredited credential assessment agency confirm that their language of instruction for occupational therapy was English or French. The agency must send this directly to the

College as an original document. This can also be included with the Substantial Equivalency Assessment System (SEAS) report issued by the Association of Canadian Occupational Therapy Regulatory Organizations.

- Applicants can show that they have achieved the minimum score on one of the College-approved language fluency tests listed in this policy's Appendix. They must also ensure that:
 - i. The test was completed within the two years prior to the application. However, the results will remain valid within the application validity period.
 - ii. The four domains of reading, writing, listening and speaking were tested,
 - iii. All sections of the test (four domains) were completed in a single sitting,

The results must be sent directly from the testing agency to the College as an original document. They can also be included with the SEAS report.

Demonstrating language fluency through alternate methods

Applicants who are unable to demonstrate language fluency by way of one of the methods set out above must make a request to the Registration Committee for permission to demonstrate fluency through an alternative method.

Applicants must have alternative evidence acceptable to the Registration Committee that they meet the language fluency requirement. The evidence must be sent directly to the College by the individual or organization who is providing the evidence. For example, the test provider or applicant's employer.

Here are some examples of evidence that the Committee may consider:

- Language tests and scores that they have achieved to date
- Experience with verbal communication, validated by signed letters of support from, for example, occupational therapists or other health professionals, previous practice supervisors, or employers
- Related healthcare employment where written documentation was required, validated by signed letters from, for example, occupational therapists or other health professionals, previous practice supervisors, or employers

Criteria for granting permission to demonstrate language fluency through alternate means

The Committee considers each request on an individual basis. The Committee will only grant permission to demonstrate language fluency through alternate means if:

- The circumstances are exceptional and
- The Committee considers the applicant's evidence to be substantially equivalent to the requirements set out in this policy and
- Allowing the applicant to prove reasonable fluency through alternate means will not pose a risk to safe, effective care.

Legal Requirement

[Ontario Regulation 226/96: General, under the Occupational Therapy Act, 1991, s 35\(1\)5](#)

[Ontario Regulation 508/22 Registration Requirements, under Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991, s 3\(1\)\(2\)](#)

Appendix

College Language Fluency Requirement

Acceptable tests and scores are as follows:

Test	Details	Minimum Score
1. Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)	Speaking	26
	Listening	22
	Reading	22
	Writing	22
	Overall score	92
2. International English Language Testing System Academic (IELTS GT)	Speaking	6.5
	Listening	7.0
	Reading	7.0
	Writing	6.5
	Overall score	
3. Canadian English Language Proficiency Index Program (CELPIP General)	Speaking	8
	Listening	8
	Reading	9
	Writing	8
	Overall score	-
4. Test d'Evaluation du Français (TEF) TEF Canada, TEF Quebec and TEF 5 épreuves	Speaking	349
	Listening	280
	Reading	248
	Writing	349
	Overall score	-
5. Test de connaissance du français (TCF) TCF Canada, TCF Quebec, TFC Tout Public results	Speaking	12
	Listening	503
	Reading	524
	Writing	12
	Overall score	-

Note:

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