

Language Proficiency

Policy Section: Administration of the Act	Policy Number: AA-2	Approved By: CEO/Registrar
Regular Policy Review Frequency: Every five years	Date Approved: August 24, 2001	Date Reviewed/Revised: March 25, 2025

Rationale:

To provide safe registered nursing (RN) care in Manitoba, a person must be able to read, write, listen, and speak English proficiently. An important part of entry-level RN practice is related to an RN's role as a communicator. Communicative competence, which includes proficiency in the English language, is necessary for RNs to work effectively as a communicator.

Purpose:

This policy outlines options for meeting the English language proficiency requirement for registration eligibility.

Authority:

- Section 2.7(1)(b) of the [College of Registered Nurses of Manitoba General Regulation](#) identifies English Language proficiency as a requirement for registration.
- The Language Proficiency Testing Regulation under [The Fair Registration Practices in Regulated Professions Act](#) identifies requirements for language tests.

Policy:

1. All applicants for registration and approval of a certificate of practice as an RN must meet the language proficiency requirement. There are five ways the requirement can be met:
 - Registration as a nurse in Canada
 - Nursing education
 - International nursing practice
 - Work experience in health care or health care support (Manitoba only)
 - Language tests
2. An applicant is deemed to have satisfied the language proficiency requirement if one of the following criteria (A-H) are met

Registration as a Nurse in Canada	<p>A) The applicant is currently or was previously registered as a practicing nurse (Registered Nurse, Licensed Practical Nurse, Registered Psychiatric Nurse, Nurse Practitioner) anywhere in Canada where:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evidence of English or French language proficiency was required for registration eligibility if the applicant was registered prior to June 1, 2018; or 2. Evidence of English language proficiency was required for registration eligibility
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	if the applicant was registered on or after June 1, 2018.
Nursing Education	B) The applicant successfully completed an approved registered nursing education program in Canada where the language of instruction (both theory and clinical components) was English.
	C) Within the last two (2) years, the applicant successfully completed remedial education courses in the Nurse Re-Entry Program at Red River College Polytechnic, as required by the College; or D) Completed a Clinical Competence Assessment and did not require any remedial education because they demonstrated sufficient possession of Entry Level Competencies.
	E) The applicant successfully completed a recognized registered nursing education program outside of Canada where: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All components of the program (theory and clinical) were instructed and evaluated in English, including direct interactions with patients, clients, and health care professionals as well as in any virtual simulation; and 2. The educational institution completes and submits the required attestation form directly to the College confirming the above.
International Nursing Practice	F) Within the last two (2) years, the applicant engaged in nursing practice in an international jurisdiction where health services were provided primarily in English. The following conditions apply: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The employer/agency must provide health services in English; and 2. The employer/agency must be accredited and can be verified as an employer in a manner acceptable to the College; and 3. The employer/agency must complete an international work experience attestation form and submit it directly to the College. The form must be completed by a person who: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Supervised the applicant while the applicant worked as a nurse; and ii. Directly and frequently observed the applicant's verbal and written interactions with patients, families and members of the health care team.
Work Experience in Health Care or Health Care Support (Manitoba Only)	G) The applicant is currently employed by a designated Manitoba employer (see the Designated Employers policy for the list), and the applicant's supervisor will attest to the applicant's English language proficiency. The following conditions apply: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The applicant must work in a position that involves direct communication with patients, families and members of the health care team; and 2. The applicant's supervisor must be a regulated health professional who: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. shares the same employer as the applicant, and ii. has worked with the applicant in the past two (2) years, and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> iii. is in a supervisory position, and iv. directly observed frequent examples of the applicant's interactions both verbal and in writing, with patients, families, and members of the health care team, and v. attests to the applicant's possessing English language proficiency at a level required for safe RN practice using the College's language attestation form. <p>3. The language attestation form must be received directly from the supervising regulated health professional.</p>
<p>Language Tests</p>	<p>H) The applicant achieved the required minimum scores in reading, writing, listening, and speaking on an approved English language proficiency test (see Appendix A).</p> <p>The following conditions apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The College must receive the results direct-from-source. 2. Individual scores from components of one English language test cannot be combined with the individual scores from components of a different English language test to achieve an overall passing score. 3. An applicant has up to two (2) years to submit language test results to the College. Test results will then remain valid until the applicant receives a final registration decision from the College.. 4. The applicant can achieve the required minimum scores across two (2) sittings of the same English language proficiency test if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the organization or institution that developed the accepted language test has a policy that permits combined test results; and ii. the combined test result was achieved in accordance with the requirements of the policy.

3. In cases where staff of the College have reasonable grounds to believe that the applicant does not meet the English language requirement, staff shall provide to the applicant:
- a) Written reasons for that belief; **and**
 - b) Notice that the applicant has the right to have the CEO/Registrar review their reasons; **and**
 - c) Notice that the request for review must be submitted to the CEO/Registrar within 30 days of the reasons being sent to the applicant.

Please note that this does not apply to applicants who have demonstrated language proficiency through a language test under 2(H).

4. At the conclusion of the above-noted review, if the CEO/Registrar has reasonable grounds to believe that the applicant does not meet the English language proficiency requirement, the College reserves the right to request that the applicant complete a language test acceptable to the College.



College of
Registered Nurses
of Manitoba

References:

[College of Registered Nurses of Manitoba Requisite Skill and Abilities](#)

[College of Registered Nurses of Manitoba Entry-Level Competencies for the Practice of Registered Nurses](#)

APPENDIX A – ACCEPTED ENGLISH LANGUAGE TESTS AND MINIMUM SCORES

The English language proficiency tests currently accepted by the College, and the corresponding required minimum scores for each area of reading, writing, listening and speaking, are as follows:

<p>International English Language Testing System (IELTS) (Academic version)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing: no less than 6.5* • Speaking: no less than 7.0* • Listening: no less than 7.0* • Reading: no less than 6.5* <p>TOTAL: no less than 7.0*</p>
<p>International English Language Testing System (IELTS) (General version)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing: no less than 7.0 • Speaking: no less than 7.0 • Listening: no less than 7.0 • Reading: no less than 7.0
<p>Official Canadian English Language Benchmark Assessment for Nurses (CELBAN)*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing: 7 • Speaking: 8 • Listening: 9 • Reading: 8 <p>*Please note that CELBAN has specific eligibility criteria for individuals who completed their nursing education in Canada. Please review CELBAN's eligibility criteria for more information.</p>
<p>Occupational English Test (OET)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing: C+ • Speaking: B • Listening: B • Reading: C+
<p>Pearson Test of English (PTE) (Academic version)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading: 66 • Listening: 73 • Writing: 68 • Speaking: 75

*Note: This takes into account the established standard error of measurement of 0.5.