

Psychologists Board of Western Australia

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY Section 26(2)(c) Psychologists Act 2005

The Psychologists Board of Western Australia is charged with the responsibility of ensuring that psychology is practised in accordance with the *Psychologists Act 2005* (“the Act”). Section 26 of the Act requires the Board to consider that an applicant is “fit to practise the profession”. This includes ensuring that only applicants who are competent, have a sound knowledge of the English Language and are of good character, are registered as Psychologists.

Many applicants seeking to become registered as Psychologists come from non-English speaking backgrounds and the level of English language competency varies greatly.

A high level of English language proficiency is essential to enable psychologists to communicate with clients, other psychologists and other professionals, to write reports that often deal with complex matters and to maintain professional standards.

Applicants for registration as a Psychologist in Western Australia, for whom English is not the first or native language, need to submit evidence to the Board of competency in both oral and written communication in English, as demonstrated by the following:

- Achieved a minimum score of seven (7) in each of the four components (Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking) in the International English Language Testing System* (IELTS) examination (Academic Module).

Or alternatively,

- 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
- A pass in the Professional Linguistic Assessment Board (PLAB) in the United Kingdom.

Results must have been obtained within two (2) years prior to applying for registration.

An IELTS or OET 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 Psychologist in a country where English is the native or first language.

An exemption may apply when the applicant can provide evidence of:

- completion of all components of their qualification for registration at a tertiary institution where programs and assessments are conducted in English; and/or
- at least three years practice of the profession as a registered psychologist (or its equivalent in the country of practice) using English as the primary means of communication.

NOTES:

- **The applicant is responsible for the cost of the English tests.**
- **Pass results in each component of either the IELTS or OET must be obtained at the one sitting, ie pass results in a module from a previous attempt at either examination cannot be carried forward to a subsequent sitting which, when combined, would give an overall pass in the examination.**
- **The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) is currently used to assess the English Language ability of applicants from non-English speaking backgrounds.**

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

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:

Tel: + 612 6285 8222
Website: www.ielts.org
Email: ielts@idp.edu.au