

# Language Fluency Requirement

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<b>Section:</b>	Registration
<b>Applies to:</b>	All applicants for all classes of registration
<b>Approved by:</b>	Registration Committee
<b>Date Revised:</b>	February 2016, February 2022, December 2022, January 2026

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## 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:

#### English

Language Skill	Canadian English Language Proficiency Index Program (CELPIP General)	International English Language Testing System Academic and General Module (IELTS)	Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) iBT		Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) Essentials	Pearson Test of English Core (PTE Core)
			Tests completed before January 21, 2026	Tests completed after January 21, 2026		
Reading	9	7.0	21	4	10	78
Writing	8	6.5	21	4.5	8	79
Listening	8	7.0	21	4.5	9	71
Speaking	8	6.5	21	4	8	76

#### French

Language Skill	Test d'Evaluation du Français (TEF) TEF Canada, TEF Quebec and TEF 5 épreuves	Test de connaissance du français (TCF) TCF Canada, TCF Quebec, TFC Tout Public results
Reading	248	524
Writing	349	12
Listening	280	503
Speaking	349	12

#### Testing Conditions:

- Combined scores from different testing agency tests will not be accepted.
- All 4 language components (reading, writing, listening, speaking) must be tested
- The minimum required test score must be met for component
- All component scores must be obtained from a single test sitting, except in the case of official partial test re-takes where the language testing agency issues a combined report, and has verified the validity and reliability of the combined result
- The test must have been successfully completed no more than two years prior to applying. Test results older than two years will not be accepted.
- Once accepted, the test results remain valid for the duration of the application.