

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 21 November 2013 9:48 AM
To: Standard Consultation
Subject: Feedback: Review of criminal history registration standard and English language skills registration standards

Dear AHPRA,

I would like to provide my two cents worth regarding the current English language skills for "overseas practitioner".

I feel extremely discriminated by the system being (1) an Australian Permanent Resident (2) trained as an Occupational Therapist in Australia and (3) receiving the whole of my education from birth entirely in English and yet (4) having to sit for an IELTS test in a country where I have resided in for half my life - all because I received my secondary education in Singapore.

For your information, Singapore education system follows the British Cambridge GCE O and A level format where the papers were both set and mark in UK. This has been the way for the last 50-60 years and has never changed. Singaporean students do not need to sit for IELTS in order to study in Australian universities and I have never ever heard of any Singaporean struggling with English. English is considered my first language and it is the only language I am capable of writing and reading in.

According to statistics taken off the IELTS website for "test-takers performance" (http://www.ielts.org/researchers/analysis_of_test_data.aspx), Singapore has consistently ranked amongst one of the top nations for IELTS performance with an average of above 7.4 (Year 2010, 2011, 2012).

I also have serious doubts over the validity of IELTS in gauging a person's English ability from my two test scores.

A. For a test that I sat for on the 5th of January 2013, I received a test score of 6.5(L) 7.0 (R) 7.0 (W) 7.0 (S) 7.0 (Overall).

B. On 12th January 2013, I sat for the same test again and received a score of 8.5 (L) 8.5 (R) 6.5 (W) 7.5 (S) 8.0 (Overall).

Language skill is a skill that's gained slowly and gradually over the course of a person's lifetime. It is impossible for one to be a beginner English user this week and become an expert user next week. As you can see from the above example, it is not possible for any person's language ability to fluctuate so much in a matter of 7 days.

In the above instances, I did not even do any "study" for the second test (modified my variable) to cause the "difference in scores". So in effect, from my own personal experiences, the only factor that seems to have affected the IELTS scores is luck.

Therefore, in light of the fact that (i) Singaporean students sit for the same secondary school examination as British students (Cambridge GCE O and A levels), and bearing in mind (ii) the consistent "above average" standard of English amongst Singaporeans in comparison to other "native Speakers" (same score), I would like to ask of AHPRA to please give applicants who have completed their secondary school education in Singapore the

same exemption given to applicants from the six nations who are already exempted from IELTS.

We have proven with scientific results and statistics that we are performing at the same level. To deprive us of the same concession in light of similar performance would amount to systematic discrimination akin to saying "because you do not look English, I do not think you speak English" for example.

Thank you.

Regards,

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