

Policy

Start date: 22 July 2020

Temporary modification to an English language skill registration standards pathway: COVID-19 response

Background

The Chinese Medicine, Chiropractic, Dental, Medical, Medical Radiation Practice, Nursing and Midwifery, Occupational Therapy, Optometry, Osteopathy, Paramedicine, Pharmacy, Physiotherapy, Podiatry and Psychology Boards of Australia (National Boards)¹ require all applicants for initial registration to demonstrate sufficient English language skills to be suitable for registration.

This policy applies a temporary modification to the usual National Boards' English language skills registration standards test pathway and must be read together with the relevant National Board's *English language skills registration standard*.

Who is this policy for?

This policy applies to applicants who wish to use the English language test pathway to demonstrate that they meet the requirements of the National Boards' English language skills registration standards during the COVID-19 pandemic and until 22 January 2021.

COVID-19 context

National Boards are aware English language tests have been temporarily disrupted due to the COVID-19 pandemic and applicants who need to use the English language test pathway to meet the *English language skills registration standard* may have had difficulty accessing tests. This has particularly affected applicants who wish to combine results from two test sittings when both tests must be sat within a six-month period.

Temporary modification to the English language test pathway

The current English language skills registration standards allow applicants to combine test results from two sittings within six months subject to certain requirements as set out within the respective National Boards' English language skills registration standards. The period for applicants to combine test results from two sittings has been temporarily extended to nine months.

This would mean that for all applications received before 22 January 2021, applicants who have:

- sat their first test after 1 October 2019, and
- sat a second test within nine months of the first test and before 22 January 2021

can combine results from two test sittings.

¹ The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice Board of Australia also has an *English language skills registration standard* however, it does not include the test pathway therefore this policy will not apply to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice Board of Australia.

This means applicants will need to have applied for registration before 22 January 2021 and have taken a second test within nine months of their first test date in order to be able to combine test results over this extended period.

It is important to note that all other requirements as set out in the relevant Board's *English language skills registration standard* will still apply. There are **no changes** to any other requirements in the standards such as minimum test scores.

When will this policy cease to operate?

This policy will operate from the start date until 22 January 2021 unless otherwise specified. After this date this policy will cease to operate, and the usual requirements of the National Boards' English language skills registration standards will apply.

For more information

Applicants can find out further information about the *English language skills registration standard* by visiting the National Board website of the profession they are applying for.

The following pages on the Ahpra website contain useful information for applicants:

[English language skills registration standards](#)

[COVID-19 updates](#)

For registration enquiries: 1300 419 495 (within Australia) +61 3 9285 3010 (overseas callers)

Document control

Approved by	National Boards
Date approved	13 July 2020
Date commenced	22 July 2020
Date updated (update - policy end date extended to 22 Jan 2021)	8 October 2020