

BRIEFING NOTE

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Registration Committee

DATE: June 3, 2024

SUBJECT: 10.4 Language Proficiency Policy
APPENDIX A: Draft Language Proficiency Policy

☒ For Decision

☐ For Information

☐ Monitoring Report

Purpose:

To approve the proposed changes to the Language Proficiency Policy.

Background:

In June 2023, the Registration Committee undertook a review of the Language Proficiency Policy to ensure it reflects the requirements set out in the Registration Requirements regulation made under the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991* (RHPA) regulation.

Under the Registration Requirements regulation, health regulatory Colleges are required to accept proof of completion of a language test accepted by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) for immigration purposes with results satisfactory to the regulated profession as proof of English or French language proficiency. The regulation does not limit the Colleges to accept other tests or demonstrations of language proficiency of their choosing.

For Consideration:

Recently, IRCC added the Pearson Test of English (PTE) to the list of approved language proficiency tests. Subsequently, the Ontario regulators were requested by the Office of Fairness Commissioner to update their language proficiency requirements to include the PTE.

To determine the acceptable score benchmarks for the PTE, the Registration Committee referred to the Language Test Equivalency Chart developed by the IRCC to ensure that the scores are in alignment with the minimum threshold set out in the policy.

Additionally, the Registration Committee recommends removing the Michigan English Language Assessment Battery (MELAB) test from the list of accepted English proficiency tests as MELAB has been discontinued.

The proposed draft of the Language Proficiency Policy is attached as **Appendix A**.

Public Interest Considerations

The proposed revisions to the policy ensure that the policy complies with the regulatory requirements and that the language proficiency tests listed in the policy are up to date.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Considerations

The proposed revisions to the policy ensure that language proficiency tests remain aligned with the requirements set by the federal government thus providing further flexibility to the applicants for testing options.

Risk Management Considerations

Inability to communicate in English or French with reasonable fluency may lead to several risks, such as patient safety, quality practice, and governability as a registrant of the College. The Language Proficiency Policy mitigates risks leading to potential liability by ensuring that opticians can render professional services competently.

Action Required:

That the Board approve the proposed revisions to the Language Proficiency Policy.

REGISTRATION POLICY

Language Proficiency

Language Proficiency Requirement

Effective communication with patients, their stakeholders, and interprofessional team members is an essential competency for the practice of opticianry.

As provided for in Section 4 (1)(3) of Ontario Regulation 896/93, it is a requirement for any class of certificate of registration that the applicant must be able to speak and write either English or French with reasonable fluency.

Language Proficiency Criteria

1. Applicants who have completed an educational program in opticianry in English or French are considered to have met the requirement for language proficiency.
2. If an applicant cannot meet the language proficiency requirement by virtue of their opticianry education, they must demonstrate language proficiency by obtaining the minimum scores in one of the language proficiency tests approved by the College, as follows:

Language Proficiency Test	Minimum Scores
Canadian English Language Proficiency Index Program (CELPIP) - General	Speaking: 7.0 Listening: 7.0 Reading: 7.0 Writing: 7.0
Canadian Language Benchmark Assessment (CLBA) Canadian Language Benchmark Placement Test (CLBPT)	Speaking: 7 Listening: 8 Reading: 6 Writing: 7
Canadian Academic English Language Test (CAEL)	Speaking: 60 Listening: 60 Reading: 60 Writing: 60
Michigan English Language Assessment Battery (MELAB) and Test of Spoken English (TSE)	Overall minimum score of 85 and at least 50 on the TSE
International English Language Testing System (IELTS) – General or Academic	Speaking: 7.0 Listening: 7.0 Reading: 6.0 Writing: 6.0

Pearson Test of English (PET)	Speaking: 68 Listening: 60 Reading: 60 Writing: 69
Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) Internet based Test (iBT)	Overall minimum score of 81 Individual minimum scores: Speaking: 24 Listening: 19 Reading: 19 Writing: 19
Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) paper based (PBT) and Test of Spoken English (TSE)	Overall minimum score of 550 and at least 50 on the TSE
Test de connaissance du français pour le Canada (TCF Canada)	Speaking: 10-11 Listening: 458-502 Reading: 453-498 Writing: 10-11
Test d'évaluation de français pour le Canada (TEF Canada)	Speaking: 310-348 Listening: 249-279 Reading: 207-232 Writing: 310-348

Test results will be considered valid for two (2) years from the date the test was administered.