

English Language Competence – Criteria used to Approve Tests

The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) was inherited by HPC from CPSM as an appropriate test to demonstrate an applicant's English Language competence.

The Registration Committee recommended the continued use of this test and initially set the appropriate levels as follows: Level 8 for Speech and Language Therapists and Level 5 for the other 11 professions regulated by HPC.

These levels were referred to the Registration Committee for further review. The Committee had the opportunity to consider information on the test format of the IELTS (listening, reading, writing and speaking). The Committee also considered the interpretation of the tests results from bands 0-9. The relevant bands for the Committee's consideration were 5,7 and 8. Band 5 was a "modest user"; band 7 a "good user" and band 8 a "very good user".

In the light of the above the Committee recommended that Level 8 remain the appropriate level for Speech and Language Therapists but that the level for the other 11 professions be increased from 5 to 7.

In addition to IELTS the Registration Committee was asked to consider additional tests that could be used by HPC to demonstrate English Language competence.

The Committee was provided with details of research carried out by Newcastle University which identified tests that were acceptable as demonstrating English language competence. The following tests were recommended:

TOEFL--Teaching of English as a Foreign Language. An applicant would have to obtain a paper score of 600 or an electronic score of 250
CIE—Cambridge International Examination Certificate of Advanced English
University of Cambridge ESOL Examination
Hong Kong Examination and Assessment Authority –HKEAA

The Registration Committee considered the above tests and was satisfied on the evidence available to it that they were of a comparable standard to the IELTS and recommended that they be used as additional tests to demonstrate an applicant's English Language competence.