



9 November 2010

Student Update: English language

Currently graduating dental practitioner students from overseas - English Language Skills requirements

The Dental Board of Australia (the Board) has clarified how its Registration Standard on English Language Skills applies to overseas students currently completing a Board approved program of study for registration as a dental practitioner at an Australian education institution. The Board made these decisions to address concerns raised by the some education institutions and some students.

In relation to students from overseas currently completing or graduating from a Board approved program at an Australian education institution, the Board has decided:

1. To accept an OET or IELTS test result that is more than two years old, provided it is accompanied by proof that the candidate has since been continuously enrolled in a Board approved program of study.
2. In relation to *Exemptions*, the Board accepts that students who completed the last two years of their secondary education in English meet the requirement of having 'undertaken and completed secondary education' taught and assessed in English in one of the following countries where English is the native or first language: Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Republic of Ireland, South Africa, United Kingdom and United States of America.

The Board reminds all dental practitioner students graduating in 2010 from Australian education institutions that they must meet the Board's [Registration Standard on English Language Skills](#), to be eligible for general registration in 2011.

Any student who is not covered by items 1 and 2 above, and who does not have a minimum of IELTS Level 7 (academic module) in all 4 components or the OET with grades of A or B in all 4 components, will need to achieve this level before the Board will grant general registration. The Board encourages all students in this category to seek guidance and support from their education institution in relation to meeting this Registration Standard on English Language Skills.



FAQs

As an overseas dental practitioner about to graduate from an Australian education institution, do I need to meet the Board's English language standard?

Yes. Please refer to the Standard. But there are some exemptions. These are detailed in points 1 and 2 above.

My successful OET/IELTS result is more than two years old, do I meet the standard if I am graduating this year?

Yes, if you also have proof that you have since been continuously enrolled in an approved program of study in Australia.

Not all my secondary education was in English, do I meet the standard?

The Board accepts that students who completed the last two years of their secondary education in English meet the requirement of having 'undertaken and completed secondary education' taught and assessed in English in one of the following countries where English is the native or first language: Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Republic of Ireland, South Africa, United Kingdom and United States of America.

I didn't get an academic level 7 in all four areas of my IELTS or grades A or B in all four areas of my OET, do I need to resit?

Applicants who qualified for registration in Australia but did not complete their secondary education in English, must demonstrate that they have the necessary English language skills for registration purposes. All applicants must be able to demonstrate English language skills at IELTS academic level 7 in each four components of the IELTS or grades A or B of OET in all four components. If you do not qualify for an exemption then yes, you will need to pass the IELTS or OET to this standard before you can be registered by the Board and commence working as a dental practitioner.

Why has the Board set this standard?

The role of the Board is to protect the public. Under the National Law, the Board set registration standards which all registrants must meet before they are registered to practise in Australia. Each of the National Boards have set an English language skills standard to ensure all registered health practitioners in Australia can provide safe care to the Australian community and can communicate effectively – orally and in writing – with other health professionals about the care of their patients.

Will the Board make other exemptions/ exceptions?

Under the National Law, the Board's registration standards must be signed off by Ministerial Council. The Board can make no change to the registration standard without ministerial approval. Therefore the Board can make no further exemptions to the standard without Ministerial approval.

What do I have to do to arrange an IELTS/OET test before I graduate?

The Board encourages all students in this situation to seek guidance and support from their education institution in relation to meeting this registration standard.