



Newfoundland and Labrador Pharmacy Board

Interpretation Guide

English Language Proficiency Requirements for Registration

Last Revised May 2024

The *Pharmacy Act, 2012* states that applicants for registration must have “a working knowledge of the English language sufficient to enable the person to practice pharmacy in the province”.¹ For the purposes of this section, applicants for registration as a pharmacist or a pharmacy technician are required to meet the English language proficiency requirements defined below.²

1) Principles

- a) The language proficiency requirement applies to all applicants. To become registered, applicants must demonstrate proficiency in the English language.
- b) Appropriate evidence of English language proficiency must be provided to NLPB prior to the commencement of practical training.
- c) Appropriate evidence may come from one of two sources – education or language proficiency testing.

2) Education as Evidence of English Language Proficiency

Applicants may demonstrate language proficiency by meeting one of the education requirements outlined below.

- a) Graduation from an English-language CCAPP-accredited pharmacist education program located in Canada; or
- b) Graduation from an English-language ACPE-accredited pharmacist education program located in the United States; or
- c) Graduation from an English-language CCAPP-accredited pharmacy technician education program located in Canada and, if the program was less than three years’ duration, whose English language proficiency admission criteria match those outlined in this document; or
- d) Graduation from an English-language high school, community college, private career college or university program located in Canada, if the program was of at least three years’ duration, with successful completion of three consecutive English language courses.

3) Language Proficiency Testing as Evidence of English Language Proficiency

- a) If the applicant is unable to demonstrate English language proficiency by providing evidence of completing one of the education requirements outlined in section 2), they may do so by providing language proficiency testing results as outlined in Table 1.
- b) Applicants must complete all four subtests in a single testing session and achieve passing scores for each.
- c) Remotely proctored tests will be accepted if they maintain the same levels of security, validity, and reliability as their on-site counterparts. Testing agencies are responsible for reporting the validity and reliability of such remotely proctored tests, as well as any incidents involving security violations or compromises.

¹ Enabling Legislation: Pharmacy Act, 2012 section 14.(g) and 17.(1)(g)

² These requirements are based on the *NAPRA Language Proficiency Requirement Policy*, available at <https://www.napra.ca/publication/napra-language-proficiency-requirement-policy/>

- d) While test results are typically valid for two years, this may vary depending on the specific test or other guidelines set by the respective testing agency. Results must be valid at the time of application for practical training.
- e) Results must be sent to NLPB directly from the testing agency or be verifiable through the testing agency's online verification system, if available.

Table 1 – Acceptable English Language Proficiency Test Results

Test	Subtest	Cut Score
International English Language Testing System (IELTS) Academic Test	Reading	7.0
	Listening	7.0
	Speaking	7.0
	Writing	6.5
Occupational English Test (OET)	Reading	B
	Listening	B
	Speaking	B
	Writing	C+

4) Language Proficiency Trigger Policy

There may be instances when an applicant or an already-registered pharmacy professional exhibits concerning characteristics (i.e., triggers) that lead NLPB to require that person to complete further language proficiency assessment, regardless of the initial evidence the individual provided to confirm proficiency.

Examples of such language proficiency triggers include, but are not limited to:

- A member of the teaching staff at a pharmacy technician or pharmacist education program reports a concern to NLPB.
- A registered pharmacy professional assessing the individual during practical training reports a concern to NLPB.
- A member of the public or another health professional expresses a concern as part of a complaint made to NLPB.
- NLPB becomes aware of a concern through its staff's interactions with the individual.