



English Language Competence Policy

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This policy is reviewed annually or when there are significant changes in legislation or accreditation requirements

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1.0 Introduction

This policy is updated in response to increased linguistic diversity in Ireland, and the increase in international Practitioners seeking employment with Medicall for whom English is an additional Language (EAL).

2.0 Approach

Medicall's accreditation to use PHECC Clinical Practice Guidelines obliges us to recognise that English language competence must be assured where English is not a Practitioners first language. While recognising that language competency assessment is not a role of expertise within Medicall, this policy outlines the steps required to ensure competence in the English language so that Practitioners can interpret the CPGs and provide Safe Patient Care.

2.1 Scope

This policy will apply to all Practitioners who have access to PHECC CPG's, will use them to deliver treatment to patients on behalf of Medicall, and who may be required to conduct patient handovers to Hospital staff. Responsibility for compliance with this policy rests with the Resource Compliance and Human Resource managers.

2.2 Related Procedures and Processes

There are several methods for assessing English language competence. Medicall conduct an initial screening test as part of the employment process. .

Initial Assessment

1. The Candidate is assessed on comprehension and verbal communication skills during the initial interview
2. The Candidate is assessed during a Skills assessment where they are provided with a set of written instructions which they must correctly follow unaided.
3. Language and understanding are assessed during the driving assessment.

If candidates are obviously not fluent in Use of the English language, this warrants further assessment

1. Candidates undergoing assessment in English language competence may undertake one of the following independent tests:

- a. TOEFL (Test of English as a foreign language)
- b. IELTS (International English language testing system)

2. TOEFL & IELTS are independent, internationally recognised tests that may be taken by the candidate at several international and national locations. These tests evaluate the ability to use English in an academic or professional context and has four components.

1. Reading
2. Listening
3. Speaking
4. Writing.

3. Information on these tests are available on the following websites: www.tefl.com (TOEFL) and www.ielts.org (IELTS)

The candidate is responsible for making the appropriate arrangements and for any costs incurred. Results may then be presented to Medical's Resource Compliance Manager.

4. Candidates will need to achieve a minimum score of 6.5 on the IELTS exam to be eligible to continue their employment application. (See Appendix 1 for IELTS Band Scores) Candidates may also chose to undertake the TOEFL test. Candidates who undertake this course will need to achieve a score of 80 or higher to be eligible to continue their employment application. (See Appendix 2 for TOEFL Test Scores)

Appendix 1 - IELTS Banding

Appendix 2 - TOEFL Test Scoring

Appendix 1- IELTS Banding

1. There is no pass or fail in IELTS. Candidates are graded on their performance, using scores from 1 to 9 for each part of the test – Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking.
2. The results from the four parts then produce an Overall Band Score. This unique 9-band system measures scores in a consistent manner – wherever and whenever the test is taken.
3. It is internationally recognised and understood, giving you a reliable international currency. IELTS scores have a recommended validity period of two years.
4. The IELTS 9-band scale Each band corresponds to a level of English competence. All parts of the test and the Overall Band Score can be reported in whole and half bands, e.g. 6.5, 7.0, 7.5, 8.0.

Description of Bands

Band 9: Expert user: has fully operational command of the language: appropriate, accurate and fluent with complete understanding.

Band 8: Very good user: has fully operational command of the language with only occasional unsystematic inaccuracies and inappropriacy. Misunderstandings may occur in unfamiliar situations.

Handles complex detailed argumentation well.

Band 7: Good user: has operational command of the language, though with occasional inaccuracies, inappropriacy and misunderstandings in some situations. Generally, handles complex language well and understands detailed reasoning.

Band 6: Competent user: has generally effective command of the language despite some inaccuracies, inappropriacy and misunderstandings. Can use and understand fairly complex language, particularly in familiar situations.

Band 5: Modest user: has partial command of the language, coping with overall meaning in most situations, though is likely to make many mistakes. Should be able to handle basic communication in own field.

Band 4: Limited user: basic competence is limited to familiar situations. Has frequent problems in understanding and expression. Cannot use complex language.

Band 3: Extremely limited user: conveys and understands only general meaning in very familiar situations. Frequent breakdowns in communication occur.

Band 2: Intermittent user: no real communication is possible except for the most basic information using isolated words or short formulae in familiar situations and to meet immediate needs. Has great difficulty understanding spoken and written English.

Band 1: Non-user: essentially has no ability to use the language beyond possibly a few isolated words.

Band 0: Did not attempt the test: No assessable information provided

Appendix 2 TOEFL Test Scoring

TOEFL Test Scores

1. Scores are based on your performance on the questions in the test. Candidates must answer at least one question each in the Reading and Listening sections, write at least one essay, and complete at least one Speaking task to receive an official score.
2. For the TOEFL test, administered via the Internet, candidates will receive four scaled section scores and a total score:

Reading Section (Score of: 0–30)

Listening Section (Score of: 0–30)

Speaking Section (Score of: 0–30)

Writing Section (Score of: 0–30)

Total Score (0–120)

3. In addition to scores, the official score record also includes performance feedback that reflect performance level and a description of the kinds of tasks that test takers within the reported score range can typically do. There is no passing or failing TOEFL® score; individual higher education institutions and agencies set their own score requirements. TOEFL scores are valid for two years after the test date and there is no limit.

