



## **ENGLISH LANGUAGE POLICY FOR REGISTRATION**

Refer Part 2 of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE POLICY – REQUIREMENTS FOR REGISTRATION

### Background

Under section 15 of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (HPCA Act) the OCNZ may register an applicant within the Scope of Practice - Osteopath if the applicant:

- is fit for registration in accordance with section 16; and
- has the qualifications that are prescribed, under section 12, for that scope of practice; and
- is competent to practise within that scope of practice.

There are eight criteria relating to fitness to practise, set out under section 16 of the HPCA Act – English language competence is one of those criteria.

### Purpose

This policy explains the OCNZ's requirements for registration in terms of English language competence.

If English is not an applicant's first language<sup>1</sup>, the Osteopathic Council of New Zealand (OCNZ) will require an applicant to demonstrate proficiency in English.

### Policy

An applicant may demonstrate their competence in English language through one of the following methods:

#### 1. Osteopathic Education in English

Providing that the applicant's registerable osteopathic qualification was fully taught in the English language, the OCNZ will consider that holding this qualification provides sufficient evidence of English proficiency, unless issues were raised relating to the applicant's English competency during their course of study.

To satisfy this requirement:

- a. all written and verbal teaching and assessment (including clinical assessment) must have been carried out solely in English.
- b. A majority of any clinical practicum completed as part of the qualification must have involved communicating solely in English

#### 2. Registration with an approved Competent Authority

Current registration with an approved Competent Authority will be considered as providing sufficient evidence of English proficiency, unless there are existing concerns relating to the applicant's English competency. Approved Competent Authorities under this section will typically have English language requirements similar to those of the OCNZ.

---

<sup>1</sup> The OCNZ considers 'first language' to mean the language a person learns from birth or in early childhood. A person may have more than one first language when they develop in a bilingual or multilingual home environment.

The Council has currently approved registration with the following Competent Authorities as providing sufficient evidence of English Proficiency under this section:

- Osteopathy Board of Australia (Australia)
- General Osteopathic Council (United Kingdom)

### 3. Approved English Language Proficiency Assessment

If English is not an applicant's first language and their osteopathy degree was taught in a language other than English, the applicant must provide evidence of achieving a satisfactory result in an approved English Language Proficiency assessment. The Council currently accepts either the **International English Language Testing System (IELTS) Academic** assessment, or **Occupational English Test (OET) Physiotherapy** assessment.

#### **a. International English Language Testing System (IELTS)**

- An applicant must provide evidence demonstrating English Language Testing System (IELTS) Academic test results with a score of 7 in each band.
- The IELTS scores of 7 in each band do not need to be achieved in a single sitting of the test. Applicants may choose to sit the test more than once and gain the necessary scores over a series of tests.
- The total of 7 in each band must be achieved within 12 months of first sitting the test. The OCNZ will accept test results for up to 24 months after the first test date.
- Applicants may choose the *In person – Computer* or *In person – On paper* test format. The Council does not accept *Online* (remote) test results.

#### **b. Occupational English Test (OET)**

- An applicant must provide evidence demonstrating Occupational English Test (OET) Physiotherapy test results with a grade of 'B' in each band.
- The OET grade of 'B' in each band do not need to be achieved in a single sitting of the test. Applicants may choose to sit the test more than once and gain the necessary scores over a series of tests.
- The grade of 'B' in each band must be achieved within 12 months of first sitting the test. The OCNZ will accept test results for up to 24 months after the first test date.
- Applicants may choose the *OET Test on Paper* or *OET Test on Computer* test format. The Council does not accept *OET@Home®* (remote) test results.

**Date approved: June 2025**

**Due for review: June 2028**