



DIETITIANS BOARD

Te Mana Mātanga Mātai Kai

English Language Requirements Policy

This policy refers to the following key legislation:

[Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003](#)

This policy has been developed in conjunction with [Right Touch Regulation](#)

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following associated Dietitians Board policy documents:

[Professional Standards & Competencies for Dietitians](#)

[Code of Ethics & Conduct for Dietitians](#)

All Board Practitioner Policies (PRA)

Policy Statement

The Dietitians Board (the Board) is required by the [Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003](#) (HPCA Act) to be satisfied that an applicant's ability to communicate in and comprehend English is sufficient to protect the health and safety of the public ([section 16](#) (b)).

Purpose

This document sets out Board policy concerning the English Language proficiency requirements for applicants seeking registration with the Board.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Board's *Recognition of Overseas Qualifications Policy* and the *Registration Examination Policy*.

Under [section 15](#) of the HPCA Act the Board may register an applicant within the **Scope of Practice: Dietitian** if the applicant:

- is fit for registration in accordance with [section 16](#);
- 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 for registration set out under [section 16](#) — satisfying the Board of English language competence is one of those criteria.

Policy

For the Board to be satisfied that an applicant is able to communicate in and comprehend English sufficiently to protect the health and safety of the public, the applicant must fulfil **one of** the following requirements:

- 1) English is the applicant's first/native language as defined by the language learned first from family.
- 2) Have completed a New Zealand dietetic qualification accredited by the Board. The education provider must submit a declaration that states the applicant is able to communicate and comprehend effectively in English in order to work as a Registered Dietitian in New Zealand.
- 3) Complete one of the following English language examinations.
 - *International English Language Testing System* (IELTS) at the Academic level with an overall score of 7.5 and a minimum of 7 in each band (The Board accepts the IELTS One Skill Retake)
 - *Occupational English Test* (OET) with A or B in all four sections.

All components of the test must be passed and dated within the 12 months preceding the Board's receipt of the application.

The Board shall not approve registration where there is doubt about an individual's ability to communicate in and comprehend English. The Board reserves the right to make further enquiries by:

1. seeking additional information from sources such as dietetic workplace training educators/supervisors,
2. requiring the applicant to attend an interview with a Board nominated assessor.

If deficiencies in skills are reported after registration, practitioners may be required to undertake remedial English language training and then pass one of the two tests accepted by the Board as outlined above.