

## English language requirements

The Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (HPCA ACT) section 16(a)–(b) requires the Board to be satisfied that any person accepted for registration to practise psychotherapy in New Zealand is able 'to communicate effectively and comprehend English sufficiently to protect the health and safety of the public'<sup>1</sup> and for the purposes of practising within a scope of practice in which they are registered.

The Board reserves the right to review an applicant's fitness to practise at any time HPCA ACT section 16.

If English is not the applicant's first or home language and/or the applicant has not completed an acceptable psychotherapy qualification solely in the English language, the Board requires them to demonstrate proficiency in English by completing an academic module International English Language Testing System (IELTS).

### Implementation

Applicants are required to pass an IELTS if English is not the applicant's first language or the applicant has not completed a Board-approved psychotherapy qualification solely in the English language.

Minimum pass marks for the IELTS test are 7 on the IELTS Academic Module (i.e. no less than 7 in each band).

Multiple tests will not be accepted and therefore applicants will need to pass IELTS within one result (the same test). IELTS test scores will only be accepted for up to 24 months after the test has been taken.

### Exemptions to completing the above IELTS requirement

Applicants may apply for an exemption to sitting and passing the IELTS. All exemption requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may require an interview with Board-appointed representatives at the applicant's own expense.

An exemption will be considered when the Board is satisfied that all the following requirements have been met:

- The applicant has provided the Board with two references from registered psychotherapists who have observed and are familiar with the applicant's English language competency.
- All referees must speak English as a first language and must comment on the applicant's competence in reading, writing, speaking and listening in their clinical mahi.

Referees must complete the English language referee form (attached).

<i>Approved by: The Board</i>	<i>Policy in effect from: October 2008</i>
<i>Previous review dates: April 2015, November 2020</i>	<i>Date to be reviewed: November 2022</i>

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<sup>1</sup> Te reo and sign language are also official languages of Aotearoa New Zealand