



Policy on English Language Proficiency Requirements for Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians

Introduction

Language proficiency is an essential skill required of all pharmacy professionals on the day-to-day practice of pharmacy in Canada. Although language proficiency does not guarantee that effective communication will take place, it is the foundation for all communication skills components - reading, speaking, listening, and writing.

Individuals applying to the PEI College of Pharmacists (PEICP) to register as a pharmacist or pharmacy technician must meet English language proficiency requirements as set out in the current NAPRA documents, Language Proficiency Requirements for Licensure as a Pharmacist in Canada and Language Proficiency Requirements for Licensure as a Pharmacy Technician in Canada, or as described in this policy.

Principles

1. Graduates of CCAPP-accredited Pharmacy Degree Programs

All applicants who have graduated from an English pharmacy degree program accredited by the Canadian Council for the Accreditation of Pharmacy Programs (CCAPP) or a pharmacy degree program accredited by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) will not be required to undergo further testing unless a “trigger” suggests that a test for language proficiency is necessary.

2. Graduates of a CCAPP-accredited Pharmacy Technician Program

All applicants who have graduated from an English pharmacy technician program accredited by CCAPP where the admission criteria meets the NAPRA requirements for pharmacy technicians will meet language proficiency requirements. An applicant will not be required to undergo further testing unless a “trigger” suggests that a test for language proficiency is necessary.

3. Pharmacy Technician Applicants in the Transition Pathway (Currently in Practice)

(a) All applicants pursuing licensure as a pharmacy technician through the transition pathway (currently in practice) whose first language is English will not be required to undergo further testing unless a “trigger” suggests that a test for language proficiency is necessary.

(b) All applicants pursuing licensure as a pharmacy technician through the transition pathway (currently in practice) whose first language is NOT English will be required to:



- i. Provide evidence of successful completion of one of the approved NAPRA English Language Proficiency (ELP) assessments, OR
- ii. Provide a transcript or diploma that confirms graduation from a high school, university, community college, or private career college in Canada or the US where English is the language of instruction. Applicant will not be required to undergo further testing unless a “trigger” suggests that a test for language proficiency is necessary.

4. All other Applicants

International pharmacy graduates, international pharmacy technician graduates, may also meet language proficiency requirements by submitting either of the following:

- a) Provide evidence of successful completion of one of the approved NAPRA English Language Proficiency (ELP) assessments,
- b) Provide evidence of two of the following non-objective evidence (see Appendix A for criteria):
 - Successful completion of professional pharmacy education in a majority English country;
 - Pharmacy work employment in a majority English country in a similar role or scope of practice as application;
 - Successful completion of the four final years of school in Canada in English to become eligible to apply for university or college; or
 - Successful completion of an undergraduate university degree in Canada in English.

Applicants will not be required to undergo further testing unless a “trigger” suggests that a test for language proficiency is necessary.

5. Applicants registering through the terms of the AIT

Only those applicants applying for registration through the terms of the Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT) who are a registered pharmacist or pharmacy technician from Quebec or have graduated from a CCAPP-accredited French program are required to successfully complete one of the approved English Language Proficiency assessments or provide evidence of two of the non-objective evidence outlined above.



6. Timing of application of Language Proficiency Standards

Language proficiency standards are to be applied prior to commencing practice experience program or pharmacy technician assessment. Application at this time (rather than at the point of licensure) supports public protection and enables the candidate to derive the expected educational benefit from the program, while at the same time allows for language proficiency to improve through the program's emphasis on communication, prior to licensure.

7. Acceptance of Test Scores

- i. Language proficiency test results are considered valid for two years from the date of the test.
- ii. The PEICP accepts the most current ELP assessment results which overrides previous results.
- iii. Test scores must be sent directly to the PEICP from the testing agency or be verifiable through the testing agency's online verification system, if available.

TRIGGERS

1. A pharmacist or pharmacy technician, who has been recognized as a preceptor by the PEICP, identifies a candidate who has demonstrated less than adequate language proficiency. This perceived inadequacy would be confirmed through an appropriate process.
2. A complaint is received by the educational institution or the PEICP by a customer, patient, or health professional about the candidate concerning a lack of language proficiency skills. The alleged deficiency in communication would be confirmed through an appropriate process.

References:

Ontario College of Pharmacists; Language Proficiency Requirements at Registration for All Applicants.
Ontario College of Pharmacists; Non-Objective Evidence of Language Proficiency
NAPRA Language Proficiency Requirements for Licensure as a Pharmacist in Canada.
NAPRA Language Proficiency Requirements for Licensure as a Pharmacy Technician in Canada.
Nova Scotia College of Pharmacists; Policy on English Language Proficiency Requirements for Pharmacy Technicians.



Appendix A

Decision Criteria

Each type of non-objective evidence will be accepted if it satisfies the following specific decision criteria.

1. Successful completion of professional pharmacy education if
 - Degree/diploma was completed in a majority English and
 - Documentation submitted for the individual applicant directly from the pharmacy program confirms:
 - Theoretical and clinical instruction, and patient care experience were provided in English while the applicant attended program; and
 - Program was delivered in class (not online or by distance education), and was a minimum two years of full time study.
2. Pharmacy work employment in a similar role or scope of practice as the final application as a pharmacist or pharmacy technician if:
 - Practice was completed in a majority English language country; and
 - Documentation submitted for the individual applicant directly from the employer confirms:
 - Direct patient care and collaboration with other health professionals were provided in English;
 - The applicant is able to communicate and comprehend effectively, both orally and in writing, in English.
3. Successful completion of the four final years of school in Canada to become eligible to apply for university or college if documentation submitted for the individual applicant directly from the school(s) or school board confirms the applicant successfully completed four consecutive, first language English credits/courses.
4. Successful completion of an undergraduate university degree in Canada if documentation submitted for the individual applicant directly from the school(s) confirms the program was delivered in class (not online or by distance education), and was a minimum three years of full time study.