

<b>1.</b>	<b>POLICY TITLE</b>	<b>ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY POLICY</b>
<b>1.1</b>	<b>Policy number:</b>	<b>AS-E-014.1</b>
<b>1.2</b>	<b>Category:</b>	<b>Organisational</b>
<b>1.3</b>	<b>Approval date:</b>	
<b>1.4</b>	<b>Revision due date:</b>	<b>July 2010</b>
<b>1.5</b>	<b>Unit responsible</b>	<b>Assessment Department</b>

## **2. POLICY DECLARATION**

This policy describes the rules and procedures for determining whether International Medical Graduates applying for enrolment in RACGP assessments have met the required standards for proficiency in the English language.

**This policy is approved by Council and authorised by the CEO.**

## **3. BACKGROUND**

Among the most important objectives of the RACGP is a commitment to patient safety. This policy addresses the standards of English language proficiency required for safe and competent general practice in Australia.

Clear and accurate communication capabilities enhance the quality of patient care, and increase patient safety. Communication skills are assessed in the clinical components of College assessment, such as the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE), and the videotaped consultations in Practice Based Assessment. English language proficiency has been found to correlate with passing all College summative assessments.

An objective assessment of English language proficiency is the best way of ensuring that medical practitioners can comprehend and communicate effectively.

### **3.1 Scope**

This RACGP policy defers to the English language proficiency requirements of the Australian Medical Council (AMC). The AMC policy sets the same standards for English language proficiency for all specialist medical colleges and medical registration boards in Australia. The medical registration boards administer the registration process in accordance with (among other issues) the requirements of the AMC policy on English language proficiency.

The assessment tools recognised by the Australian Medical Council and the medical registration boards in Australia are comprehensive, internationally recognised, professional assessment tools for English language proficiency.

This policy applies to International Medical Graduates seeking assessment for admission to Fellowship who are at the time:

- (i) employed in Australia
- (ii) employed overseas.

#### 3.1.1 Objectives

The objectives of all RACGP policies are to continually improve the capacity of general practice to deliver the highest quality of services to patients.

The objective of this policy is to enable the RACGP to ascertain whether the medical registration boards are satisfied that applicants for RACGP assessment segments and modules have obtained the minimum requirements of English language proficiency as described by the AMC.

### 3.1.2 Specific Aims

The aim of this policy is specify that the requirements of the RACGP for demonstrating proficiency in the English language are as required by the AMC.

## **3.2 Definitions**

### 3.2.1 English language proficiency

The RACGP endorses the requirements for English language proficiency as required by the Australian Medical Council and the Australian medical registration boards, as follows:

From January 2009, medical practitioners seeking registration through the specialist pathway must have demonstrated their English language proficiency before assessment by specialist colleges. The standard required is set by medical boards and is nationally consistent....

....It will also ensure the same standards are expected by the specialist colleges and medical registration boards for English language requirements for the specialist registration pathway.

See:

<http://www.amc.org.au/index.php/component/content/article/97-news/205-upfron>

And:

For all categories of registration, applicants must satisfy the relevant medical board that they:

- have an adequate command of English for the practice of medicine....

See:

<http://www.amc.org.au/index.php/img/res/registration>

## **3.3 Related RACGP Policies**

See:

<http://www.racgp.org.au/assessment/policy>

- Academic Misconduct Policy
- Board of Censors' Decisions Reviews Policy
- Appeals Policy
- Witnessing and certification of documentation policy:  
For information on what the RACGP accepts as a certified document, please read the 'Witnessing and certification of documentation policy'. The RACGP recommends that applicants submit certified copies of authentic documentation, rather than originals.

## **3.4 Related external documents**

### 3.4.1 Australian Medical Council policy on English language proficiency

National English language proficiency requirement for International Medical Graduates, NatPol-001-2005.

See:

<http://www.amc.org.au/images/FormsGeneral/NationalEngLangPol.pdf>

#### **4. BODY OF POLICY**

There are no exceptions to RACGP policies.

English language proficiency will need to be demonstrated according to the requirements of the relevant medical registration board before enrolment for any RACGP assessment segment, module or process.

It will be on the advice of the relevant Australian medical registration board whether the requirements set out in this policy have been met by the candidate.

##### **4.1 Situations in which proof of English language proficiency are required**

All International Medical Graduates are required to provide documentary evidence of proficiency in the English language when applying to one of the following pathways for admission to Fellowship:

- The College Examination
- An RACGP assessment of general practice experience (Australian and/or overseas)
- Practice Based Assessment
- Modular Assessment Pathway
- The RACGP Specialist Pathway.

##### **4.2 How the English language proficiency requirement is satisfied**

English language proficiency requirements must be satisfied by satisfying English language proficiency requirements as contained in the Australian Medical Council policy "National English language proficiency requirement for International Medical Graduates, NatPol-001-2005", see:

<http://www.amc.org.au/images/FormsGeneral/NationalEngLangPol.pdf>

Documentary evidence from the relevant medical registration board that the board's English language proficiency requirements have been satisfied and met by the applicant is sufficient to satisfy RACGP English language proficiency requirements.

##### **4.3 Acceptable documentary evidence**

Documentary evidence must be provided as evidence of satisfying the requirements outlined in this policy.

Only certified copies of required authenticating documentation as defined in the RACGP policy "Witnessing and Certification of Documentation Policy" will be accepted.

#### **5. PROCEDURES**

##### **5.1 Access to published policy**

RACGP candidates for Fellowship, staff, and members will have access to this policy.

##### **5.2 Promulgation of published policy**

Relevant Members and all Staff will be sent communications explaining the function and role of this policy. Staff will be further educated in how to use and apply this policy.

##### **5.3 Review of this policy**

This policy will have a review cycle of three years under usual circumstances, but will be reviewed in July 2010 following implementation of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme.