



## Policy statement

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1 November 2018

### Transitional arrangements for the *Registration standard: English language skills*

#### Introduction

The *Registration standard: English language skills* (the EL standard) for the Paramedicine Board of Australia (the Board) commenced on 15 May 2018. Prior to the paramedicine profession being part of the National Scheme there were no standard national English language skills requirements for the profession.

All initial applicants for registration, including applicants who are currently practising paramedicine in Australia, are required to meet the Board's EL standard. There are four pathways in the EL standard through which an applicant can demonstrate that their competency in speaking and communicating in English is sufficient to practice the paramedicine profession, including three education pathways and an English language test pathway. The standard also provides for other English language tests approved by the Board from time to time and published on the Board's website, with the required minimum scores to be used to satisfy the requirements of the standard.

It has come to the Board's attention that there are a small number of currently practising paramedics in Australia who have been practising for a substantial period of time in Australia who will not meet any of the education pathways in the Board's EL standard and will need to use a testing pathway.

To support a smooth transition of the profession to a regulated environment, the Board has developed another way to test the English Language competence of practitioners for the purpose of satisfying the English Language Skills Registration Standard. In developing these transitional arrangements, the Board's primary objective is to ensure the protection of the public while addressing the unique circumstances of the transition period to national registration. These provisions are only available to practitioners seeking registration during the transition period and will close by 28 February 2019.

#### Purpose and scope

The purpose of this policy statement is to outline the Board's policy position with respect to a specific cohort of currently practising paramedics who do not meet any of the education pathways in the Board's English Language standard, but who have been training and/or practicing as a paramedic in Australia for a substantial period of time under acceptable clinical governance arrangements.

Given the unique circumstances of the transition period to national registration, the Board has determined to approve another English language test under section 4(d) of the EL standard to be published on its website, which will be limited to applicants who meet all the following specific criteria:

- applying for registration as paramedic before 28 February 2019

- are qualified to be registered as a paramedic under the National Law but for the requirement to satisfy the ELS
- currently employed by a Jurisdictional Ambulance Service in Australia or an organisation with a clinical governance framework that meets the requirements of the *National Model Clinical Governance Framework*<sup>1</sup> or similar and is suitably experienced in the delivery of paramedic and/or related clinical services (Employer), and
- have completed five years of practice, within the past 10 years, as a paramedic in Australia while employed by an Employer. If Employer is the Ambulance Service of New South Wales the five years may include a combination of training and practice, provided it includes at least two years of post-qualification practice.

### Transitional arrangements

Under these transitional arrangements, applicants for registration as a paramedic who can demonstrate that they do not meet any of the education pathways set out in the EL standard and that they meet the specific criteria outlined in the *Purpose and scope* section above, can:

1. sit an English language test as specified in the standard, or
2. seek to fulfill the requirements of other English language tests approved by the Board and published on the Board's website with the required minimum scores. The test results must be contained in a form provided by their Employer, that confirms they meet the criteria set out in this policy and attests to their satisfactory ability in speaking, listening, reading and writing in English. The prescribed form for this declaration will be published by the Board.

Each application will be considered on its merits on a case by case basis.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/National-Model-Clinical-Governance-Framework.pdf>