

Hello,

I would like to make a submission into the Mandatory registration standards for OT, in particular the requirements for English language testing.

Whilst I agree in principle with the need to ensure the minimum standards for English are met by practitioners, I do not believe the current exemption provisions covers people who are genuinely competent in the English language.

For example, consider my case-

- I have written IELTS as part of immigrating to a western society (and lived in the English speaking world ever since) but I do not qualify for exemption because I wrote the 'wrong' version of IELTS (general instead of academic). The fact that my score was 8 out of 9 (when 7 would have sufficed) carries no weight.
- My OT qualification in India was taught and assessed in English language (all university level courses in India are), my syllabus, transcript and degree certificate is in English, but these will not be considered by the board as it was not from one of the 7 countries listed as exempt.
- My secondary school qualification is also in English (in my case, I had 12 years of schooling in English medium) but that again is not considered because it is not from one of the 7 exempt countries.
- I have a graduate certificate in OHS from a university in Australia- but this again will not count for anything as only Bachelor's Degree in Occupational Therapy from one of the 7 countries is accepted.
- An OT classmate of mine living in Australia has done her masters degree in OT from Australia, but this will not be counted by the OT board as only Bachelor Degree (not masters degree) in OT will qualify for exemption.

I hope these serve to highlight why the exemptions are not wide enough.

I feel it is wrong to bundle Commonwealth countries (where English is the official language- ie. the language used in courts, constitution, railways and universities) with other countries such as China, Japan, Vietnam, Korea etc. The reality is, people from Commonwealth countries are able to speak English to some extent if they have had any secondary school education. Sure, in some cases the accent maybe thick, the fluency limited and the grammar poor, but any version of IELTS will test these. In a practical sense, how is South Africa different to India or Pakistan as all three countries have several official languages. Infact, South Africa has eleven official languages ([Afrikaans](#), [English](#), [Ndebele](#), [Northern Sotho](#), [Sotho](#), [Swazi](#), [Tswana](#), [Tsonga](#), [Venda](#), [Xhosa](#) and [Zulu](#)) and English is only one of them.

I hope the board will take into account this.

Kind regards,

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