



Language Proficiency – Pharmacy Technician Policy Statement

The Saskatchewan College of Pharmacy Professionals (SCPP) has adopted the “Language Proficiency Requirements for Licensure as a Pharmacy Technician in Canada” (NAPRA, 2009) for the creation of this policy statement.

Pharmacy technicians will be expected to perform a variety of tasks on a daily basis that require the technician to effectively communicate with patients. In the interests of patient and practice safety it is imperative that pharmacy technicians meet the minimum language proficiency requirements as outlined below.

PRINCIPLES

The following principles for the application of this policy have been adopted from the “Language Proficiency Requirements for Licensure as a Pharmacist in Canada” (NAPRA, 2014).

1. A pharmacy technician applicant who has graduated from a Canadian Council for Accreditation of Pharmacy Programs (CCAPP) accredited Pharmacy Technician program will not be required to undergo further testing of his or her language proficiency skills unless a “trigger” (see below) suggests that further testing is necessary.
2. A pharmacy technician applicant who has not received training through a CCAPP accredited Pharmacy Technician program will be required to provide a transcript or diploma that confirms graduation from a high school, community college, or private career college in Canada or the USA where English is the language of instruction. Applicants will not be required to undergo further testing unless a “trigger” suggests that a test for language proficiency is necessary.
3. Language proficiency standards are applied at entry into practical training and evaluated early as a means of public protection and preparation of the technician candidate for licensure. SCPP will evaluate language proficiency upon entry into the practical skills assessment portion of the bridging process.
4. SCPP will accept prior language proficiency test results as valid if the assessment was completed within two years prior to commencement of practical training.

TRIGGERS

The following triggers for the application of this policy have been adopted from the “Language Proficiency Requirements for Licensure as a Pharmacist in Canada” (NAPRA, 2014). Triggers include, but are not limited to:

1. A pharmacy technician candidate undergoing a practical skills assessment will be evaluated by a Pharmacist and/or a Registered Pharmacy Technician preceptor. A preceptor who identifies a candidate with less than adequate language proficiency must advise SCPP of this inadequacy.

2. A complaint is received by a CCAPP accredited Pharmacy Technician program or SCPP from a customer, patient or health professional about the technician candidate concerning a lack of language proficiency skills. This alleged deficiency in communication must be confirmed through an appropriate process approved by SCPP.

ENGLISH PROFICIENCY REQUIREMENTS

The following chart is the current English proficiency requirements as dictated by NAPRA, 2009. The requirements therein have been adopted by SCPP as the requirements for pharmacy technician candidates to be eligible for licensure in Saskatchewan. **Test results must be sent directly from the assessment centre to the College.**

Test	Details		Minimum Score	SEM* + / -
1. Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)	Internet-based test (iBT)	Speaking	23	2
		Writing	25	3
		Reading	22	2
		Listening	21	2
		Total	91	5
2. Michigan English Language Assessment Battery (MELAB)		Speaking	3+	X**
		Writing	80	X**
		Reading	83	4
		Listening	80	3
		Total	81	3
3. International English Language Testing System (IELTS)	Academic format	Speaking	6	X**
		Writing	6	X**
		Reading	6	X**
		Listening	6	X**
		Overall Band	6.5	0.5
4. The Canadian Test of English for Scholars and Trainees (CanTEST)		Speaking	4.5	X**
		Writing	4.0	X**
		Reading	4.5	X**
		Listening	4.5	X**
		Total	X**	X**

*SEM = Standard Error of Measurement

** For IELTS, no section scores less than 6.0, accounting already for the SEM. Likewise scores for Writing and Speaking on the MELAB, and all final band scores on the CanTEST, account already for the SEM. CanTEST does not report total scores.

REFERENCES

“Language Proficiency”, College of Pharmacists of Manitoba, Pharmacy Technicians:
<http://mpha.in1touch.org/site/pharmacytechnicians?nav=practice>

The Canadian Council for Accreditation of Pharmacy Programs (CCAPP), Pharmacy Technician Programs information: <http://ieccap.wpengine.com/find-an-accredited-program/#pt>

“Language Proficiency Requirements for Licensure as Pharmacist in Canada”, National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities (NAPRA), 2014: http://napra.ca/sites/default/files/2017-08/Language_Proficiency_Requirements_for_Licensure_Pharmacist_June2014_b2.pdf

“Language Proficiency Requirements for Licensure as Pharmacy Technician in Canada”, National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities (NAPRA), 2009:
http://napra.ca/sites/default/files/2017-08/Language_Proficiency_Requirements_for_Licensure_PharmTech_Nov2009_Final.pdf

The Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada (PEBC), Pharmacy Technician Evaluating Exam information: http://www.pebc.ca/index.php/ci_id/3100/la_id/1.htm

Questions?
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