

# Language Fluency Policy

(Approved January 8, 2020)

## 1 Introduction

Communication is critical for safe, competent, and professional practice as an early childhood educator (ECE). A number of risks arise, such as risks to children's safety, quality practice, and governability as a member of the *College*,<sup>1</sup> when ECEs cannot communicate in English or French with reasonable fluency.

Because of these risks and the importance of communication, the College has a *language fluency requirement* for registration as a way to hold applicants accountable for demonstrating proficiency in English or French before they are granted a certificate of registration that authorizes them to practise in Ontario.

### 1.1 Purpose

*This policy* establishes the standard for the *language fluency requirement* and options by which applicants can meet it.

### 1.2 Application

*This policy* applies to all applicants for registration with the *College*.

### 1.3 Relevant legislation

Language fluency is established as a registration requirement by s. 5(2)4 of the *Registration Regulation*.

### 1.4 Definitions

The following terms and definitions are applicable to *this policy*.

Term	Definition
Act	<i>Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007.</i> <sup>2</sup>
College	College of Early Childhood Educators.

<sup>1</sup> Italicized words or phrases are defined in Subsection 1.4 of *this policy*.

<sup>2</sup> The *Act* can be accessed online at <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/07e07>.

Term	Definition
<i>language fluency requirement</i>	The language fluency requirement for registration is set out in s. 5(2)4 of the Registration Regulation. s. 5(2)4 states that “The applicant must be able to speak and write either English or French with reasonable fluency.”
<i>Registrar</i>	The Registrar of the <i>College</i> , including their designate.
<i>Registration Regulation</i>	O. Reg. 221/08 regarding Registration passed under the <i>Act</i> . <sup>3</sup>
<i>this policy</i>	The College’s <i>Language Fluency Policy</i> (i.e., this document).

## 1.5 Roles and responsibilities

The *College*’s:

- Council is responsible for approving *this policy*, including any revisions to it.
- Registration Committee is responsible for reviewing *this policy* and making recommendations to Council on proposed revisions.
- *Registrar* is responsible for overseeing the implementation of *this policy* by management and staff as designated within the *College*’s organizational structure.

## 2 Guiding principles

The following principles guide *this policy* and its implementation.

- **Public interest and protection** – All actions and decisions under *this policy* are made in a manner that upholds the *College*’s mandate to serve and protect the public interest.
- **Transparency** – *This policy* is available and communicated clearly to internal and external stakeholders.
- **Objectivity** – All actions and decisions are guided by *this policy* to ensure consistency in outcomes. Processes are developed and implemented in a manner that supports consistency in procedural matters.
- **Impartiality** – All groups and individuals, who are involved in any aspect of developing, reviewing, revising, or implementing *this policy*, remain alert for any actual or potential conflicts of interest (whether real or perceived, direct or indirect). They also take immediate and appropriate action to mitigate risk of bias and to ensure that the integrity of *this policy* is upheld.
- **Fairness** – Due process is followed. All applicants are held to the same requirements and expectations.

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<sup>3</sup> The *Registration Regulation* can be accessed online at <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/080221>.

- **Flexibility** – There are multiple options for applicants to meet the *language fluency requirement*.

### **3 Options for meeting the requirement**

There are four ways that applicants can meet the *language fluency requirement* for registration. In summary the options are:

- Completion of post-secondary education in English or French.
- Completion of post-secondary education involving a specialization in Indigenous studies in Canada
- Possession of a letter of equivalency certificate from the Association of Early Childhood Educators of Ontario (AECEO) or the Association francophone à l'éducation des services à l'enfance de l'Ontario (Aféseo).
- Achievement of at least the minimum scores, determined by the College, on a language test recognized by the College for the purposes of the *language fluency requirement*.

Each of these options are further described in the following subsections.

#### **3.1 Post-secondary education in English or French**

An applicant can meet the *language fluency requirement* if they successfully completed a diploma or degree program from a post-secondary institution where the language of instruction of the program was entirely in English or French.

Where an applicant completed a diploma or degree program from a post-secondary institution in Canada, the official transcript is reviewed.

Where an applicant completed a diploma or degree program from a post-secondary institution in another country, the applicant must submit an International Credential Advantage Package (ICAP) document-by-document or course-by-course report from World Education Services (WES). The report must indicate that the program was completed entirely in English or French.

#### **3.2 Post-secondary education involving a specialization in Indigenous studies in Canada**

Where an applicant completed a diploma or degree program from a post-secondary institution in Canada that involved a specialization or specific stream of Indigenous studies taught in a language indigenous to Canada, the applicant can meet the *language fluency requirement* if all other aspects of the program were completed in English or French.

Where an applicant completed a program described in this subsection, the official transcript is reviewed.

### 3.3 Letter of equivalency certificate from the AECEO or Aféseo

An applicant can meet the *language fluency requirement* if they hold a letter of equivalency certificate from the AECEO or Aféseo. The letter of equivalency certificate must have been applied for by the applicant by December 31, 2010 and issued to the applicant prior to February 23, 2014.<sup>4</sup>

### 3.4 Language tests

An applicant can meet the *language fluency requirement* if they achieve at least the minimum scores required in each of speaking, listening, reading, and writing on a language test set out below.

English Tests	Minimum scores required				
	Speaking	Listening	Reading	Writing	Overall score
International English Language Testing System (IELTS) Academic	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	---
Internet-based Test of English as a Foreign Language (IBT TOEFL)	20	20	20	20	88 <sup>5</sup>
Canadian Test of English for Scholars and Trainees (CanTEST)	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	---

French Tests	Minimum scores required				
	Speaking	Listening	Reading	Writing	Overall score
Test pour étudiants et stagiaires au Canada (TESTCan)	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	---

For this option the applicant must:

- Achieve the minimum scores in each area in a single sitting. Combined scores from multiple sittings of the same test, or from different tests, are not accepted.

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<sup>4</sup> These dates are the same as those for the option to meet the education requirement for registration by holding a letter of equivalency certificate from the AECEO or Aféseo.

<sup>5</sup> To achieve the overall score of 88, applicants must score higher than 20 in one or more of speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

- Arrange to have the results sent directly by the testing centre to the *College*.
- Ensure that test scores are valid under the terms of the test. Scores more than two years old are not accepted.

Applicants are responsible for finding an appropriate test centre and paying any fees for taking the test.

### **3.5 Discretion by the *Registrar***

The *Registrar* has the discretion to vary from the options and associated criteria in *this policy* when determining whether an applicant satisfies the *language fluency requirement*.