

2017 CAASPR Language Proficiency Standard

Established: November 6, 2017

Revised: Not applicable

Principle(s):

The practice competencies for both audiology and speech-language pathology include the Role as Communicator and describe related communicative competencies in order to ensure that members of the two professions have the knowledge, skills and attributes to practice in a variety of practice settings.

While language proficiency is not the only indicator of communicative competence, it is an important foundation without which this competence cannot be achieved in the context of speech-language pathology and audiology practice. In recognition of this, the vast majority of jurisdictions where these professions are regulated in Canada require applicants to meet a language proficiency requirement in order to attain full, unrestricted registration.

The adoption of this language proficiency standard is initially intended to constitute pan-Canadian agreement and harmonization of a policy regarding the registration requirement of language fluency/proficiency as described in legislation in each regulated jurisdiction.

It is anticipated that CAASPR will develop a centralized assessment process for the two professions. At that point this standard will be used to implement consistent policies and processes for assessing the language proficiency of all internationally-educated candidates applying for registration across Canada¹ and applicants will need to meet it in order to be eligible to attempt any required national examination(s).

Decision Criteria:

1. In this standard “required language” refers to the language(s), English or French, in which the applicant is required to provide evidence of proficiency in the jurisdiction where he/she is applying for registration. The provincial requirements in the jurisdictions where audiology and speech-language pathology are currently regulated are as follows:

Jurisdiction	Language requirements
British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Newfoundland & Labrador	English
Manitoba, Ontario	English or French
Quebec	French
New Brunswick	N/A - no requirements

¹ With the possible exception of Quebec.

2. Applicants meet the language proficiency requirement in one of the following ways:

- a) Graduation from a program accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Canadian University Programs in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CACUP).

Evidence required: Official academic documentation (diploma, transcripts) required to meet the education requirement of registration, sent directly from the university to the regulatory body.

- b) Evidence of completion of an entire audiology or speech-language pathology university degree in the required language (this must include all didactic learning and clinical practice). In jurisdictions where both official languages are accepted, the applicants may have completed their degree in English and/or French;

Evidence required: Academic credential assessment report which includes indication of language of didactic and clinical instruction or official attestation sent directly from the university to the regulatory body.

- c) Achievement of the required minimum score on a standardized language fluency test in the required language. All components of the test must be completed using the same test.

Evidence required: Official test results on one of the tests indicated below, completed within the two years prior to application, sent directly from the testing agency to the regulator.

3. The acceptable standardized language tests and scores² are as follows.

Language	English		French	
Test	TOEFL inter-net based test (iBT)	IELTS (AC or GT)	<i>Test d'évaluation du français (TEF) or TEF Canada</i>	<i>Office québécois de la langue française (OQLF)</i>
Required minimum score(s)	Speaking: 26 Listening: 26 Reading: 22 Writing: 24	Speaking: 7.5 Listening: 8 Reading: 7.5 Writing: 7.5	Level 5 Expression orale (speaking): 371 Compréhension orale (listening): 298 Compréhension écrite (reading): 248 Expression écrite (writing): 371	Passing mark set by the OQLF & reviewed by the OOAQ

Note: While other jurisdictions may adopt all tests as part of their language proficiency policy, in Quebec the French language proficiency requirement and associated acceptable test(s) are determined by the OQLF, in consultation with the provincial regulator.

² These are informed by language benchmarking work for the professions completed by the Canadian Centre for Language Benchmarks (CCLB) and mapped to Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) of 9 in all domains of language use (speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing).

4. Regulators commit to making their language proficiency policies public, and they will include:
 - a) Reference to provincial legislative requirements (legislation, regulation or by-law) and how the policy supports professional competency standards.
 - b) Criteria outlined in 2. a), b) and c) regarding how applicants may meet the requirement, whether proficiency in English or French is required, acceptable tests and minimum scores (3.) and how test results must be received by the regulator.
 - c) Contact information (e.g. links to websites) for the language tests and basic information about costs, locations etc.
 - d) A clear description regarding at what stage/step along the registration pathway an applicant must provide evidence of language proficiency.

5. In some cases, an applicant may apply to be registered and work in one of Canada's official languages that is not the language required by provincial legislation (e.g. French in B.C. or Alberta). In order to promote public protection, and if legally permitted, regulatory authorities may require applicants to meet the language proficiency requirement in the other of Canada's official languages and be registered with a term, condition or limitation (TCL) limiting their practice to a specific practice site and/or to providing services primarily in that language. Such TCLs could be removed if/when the member provides evidence of language proficiency in the required language.

6. The CAASPR Board shall regularly review this Language Proficiency Standard to ensure continued relevance and reliability.