

Transition arrangements policy – changes to minimum scores and requirements for accepted English tests

March 2026

Summary

National Boards have approved changes to the minimum scores required for registration purposes to reflect the most recent score concordance research published by test providers. Importantly, these changes do not change the level of proficiency required for registration.

Background

In August 2025, the Department of Home Affairs published changes to English language test requirements and minimum scores for migration purposes. The changes implemented by the Department of Home Affairs reflect recent score concordance research published by test providers.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide information for applicants applying through the test pathway of the English language skills (ELS) registration standard. It sets out which scores and requirements you need to meet, depending on when you took an English test.

This policy is to be read with the ELS standard for your profession:

- [English Language Skills registration standard](#) common to 13 National Boards
- Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia's [English Language Skills registration standard](#)

Transition arrangements

English tests taken	Test dates	Score requirements
If you took one test	Test taken on or before 22 April 2026	You must meet the old minimum scores in Table 1
	Test taken on or after 23 April 2026	You must meet the new minimum scores in Table 2
If you took two tests	Both tests taken on or before 22 April 2026	You must meet the old minimum scores in Table 1
	Both tests taken on or after 23 April 2026	You must meet the new minimum scores in Table 2
	First test taken on or before 22 April 2026, and second test taken on or after 23 April 2026	Your first test must meet the old minimum scores in Table 1 Your second test must meet the new minimum scores in Table 2

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency
National Boards

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Ahpra and the National Boards regulate these registered health professions: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practice, Chinese medicine, chiropractic, dental, medical, medical radiation practice, midwifery, nursing, occupational therapy, optometry, osteopathy, paramedicine, pharmacy, physiotherapy, podiatry and psychology.

Table 1

Minimum test scores for tests taken on or before 22 April 2026.

Test	Scores	Overall score	Test results accepted from one test sitting, or a maximum of two test sittings in a 12-month period only if:
Cambridge C1 Advanced (Paper and computer at test centre only)	Listening: 185 Reading: 185 Writing: 176 Speaking: 185	Overall: 185	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • you are tested in all four components in each sitting • you achieve a minimum score of 185 in each component for listening, reading and speaking and a minimum score of 176 for writing across the two sittings, and • when using two test sittings no score in any component of the test(s) for either test sitting is below 176.
Cambridge C2 Proficiency (Paper and computer at test centre only)	Listening: 185 Reading: 185 Writing: 176 Speaking: 185	Overall: 185	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • you are tested in all four components in each sitting • you achieve a minimum score of 185 in each component for listening, reading and speaking and a minimum score of 176 for writing across the two sittings, and • when using two test sittings no score in any component of the test(s) for either test sitting is below 176.
IELTS Academic (Academic paper and computer at test centre only)	Listening: 7 Reading: 7 Writing: 6.5 Speaking: 7	Overall: 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • you achieve a minimum overall score of 7 in each sitting, and • you achieve a minimum score of 7 in each component for listening, reading and speaking and a minimum score of 6.5 for writing across the two sittings, and • when using two test sittings no score in any component of the test(s) for either test sitting is below 6.5.
OET (On paper or computer based in testing centre) (Any profession-specific OET test can be accepted)	Listening: B Reading: B Writing: C+ Speaking: B	N/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • you are tested in all four components in each sitting, and • you achieve a minimum score of B in each component for listening, reading and speaking and a minimum score of C+ for writing across the two sittings, and • when using two test sittings no score in any component of the test(s) for either test sitting is below C+.
PTE Academic	Listening: 66 Reading: 66 Writing: 56 Speaking: 66	Overall: 66	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a minimum overall score of 66 is achieved in each sitting, and • you achieve a minimum score of 66 in each of the communicative skills of listening, reading and speaking and a minimum score of 56 in writing across the two sittings, and • when using two test sittings no score in any of the communicative skills for either test sitting is below 56.

Test	Scores	Overall score	Test results accepted from one test sitting, or a maximum of two test sittings in a 12-month period only if:
TOEFL iBT	Listening: 24 Reading: 24 Writing: 24 Speaking: 23	Overall: 94	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a minimum total score of 94 is achieved in each sitting, and you achieve a minimum score of 24 for listening, 24 for reading, 24 for writing and 23 for speaking across the two sittings, and when using two test sittings no score in any of the test sitting sections is below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20 for listening 19 for reading 24 for writing, and 20 for speaking.

Table 2

Minimum test scores for tests taken on or after 23 April 2026.

Test	Scores	Overall score	Test results accepted from one test sitting, or a maximum of two test sittings in a 12-month period only if:
Cambridge C1 Advanced (Paper and computer at test centre only)	Listening: 175 Reading: 179 Writing: 180 Speaking: 194	Overall: 178	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> you are tested in all four components in each sitting you achieve the required minimum scores in each component for listening, reading, writing and speaking across the two sittings, and when using two test sittings no score in any component of the test(s) for either test sitting is below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 168 for listening 168 for reading 180 for writing, and 187 for speaking.
Cambridge C2 Proficiency (Paper and computer at test centre only)	Listening: 185 Reading: 185 Writing: 176 Speaking: 185	Overall: 185	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> you are tested in all four components in each sitting you achieve a minimum score of 185 in each component for listening, reading and speaking and a minimum score of 176 for writing across the two sittings, and when using two test sittings no score in any component of the test(s) for either test sitting is below 176.
IELTS Academic (Academic paper and computer at test centre only)	Listening: 7 Reading: 7 Writing: 6.5 Speaking: 7	Overall: 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> you achieve a minimum overall score of 7 in each sitting, and you achieve a minimum score of 7 in each component for listening, reading and speaking and a minimum score of 6.5 for writing across the two sittings, and when using two test sittings no score in any component of the test(s) for either test sitting is below 6.5.
OET (On paper or computer)	Listening: 350 Reading: 360 Writing: 350 Speaking: 360	N/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> you are tested in all four components in each sitting, and

Test	Scores	Overall score	Test results accepted from one test sitting, or a maximum of two test sittings in a 12-month period only if:
based in testing centre) (Any profession-specific OET test can be accepted)			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • you achieve the required minimum scores in each component for listening, reading, writing and speaking, and • when using two test sittings no score in any component of the test(s) for either test sitting is below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 320 for listening - 340 for reading - 350 for writing, and - 350 for speaking.
PTE Academic	Listening: 58 Reading: 59 Writing: 60 Speaking: 76	Overall: 63	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a minimum overall score of 63 is achieved in each sitting, and • you achieve the required minimum scores in each of the communicative skills of listening, reading, writing and speaking across the two sittings, and • when using two test sittings no score in any of the communicative skills for either test sitting is below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 53 for listening - 54 for reading - 60 for writing, and - 66 for speaking.
TOEFL iBT	Listening: 22 Reading: 22 Writing: 23 Speaking: 24	Overall: 91	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a minimum total score of 91 is achieved in each sitting, and • you achieve the required minimum scores for listening, reading, writing and or speaking across the two sittings, and • when using two test sittings no score in any of the test sitting sections is below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 19 for listening - 19 for reading - 23 for writing, and - 22 for speaking.

Transition arrangements for newly graduating nurses and midwives

The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) has established transition arrangements for newly graduating nurses, midwives and enrolled nurses relying on the scores from an English language test taken before the current ELS registration standard took effect (18 March 2025). New graduates who met the published ELS registration standard minimum test requirements when they enrolled in an NMBA-approved program of study are not required to resit an English Language test to meet the current ELS standard.

This arrangement is available for applicants relying on results of a PTE Academic test taken before 18 March 2025 if:

- the applicant completed the test before commencing an NMBA-approved program of study,
- the results met the minimum test scores for the PTA Academic test in the ELS standard (2019), and
- the applicant meets all the acceptance requirements of the current ELS standard when they apply for registration