



MEDIA RELEASE

28 November 2019

NMC amends OET Writing requirement to C+.

The UK's Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) announced yesterday that it would amend the OET Writing requirement for overseas nurses and midwives taking the Occupational English Test (OET). From late January next year, the Council will accept a grade C+ in Writing alongside a minimum B grade in the OET Listening, Reading and Speaking sub-tests.

The decision is in line with an NMC announcement late last year that they would begin to accept an IELTS Writing 6.5 (changed from 7). Since then the Council has undertaken significant engagement with OET to ascertain that an OET C+ in Writing is equivalent to an IELTS Writing score of 6.5. In addition, OET provided empirical evidence via a standard-setting workshop with NHS trusts that a C+ grade would meet the writing standard required by nurses in the workplace.

OET CEO Sujata Stead said: "We are delighted by the NMC's decision to amend the required OET Writing score. Many nurses and midwives taking OET have been narrowly missing out on achieving a grade B so the NMC decision, together with UKVI no longer requiring candidates to sit a separate English language test to apply for a Tier 2 (General) visa, will allow many more highly capable professionals to register and work in the UK."

"We applaud the NMC for their diligence in fulfilling their core public regulator role of ensuring nurses and midwives in the UK have the necessary skills to provide patients with safe and high-quality care," Stead concluded.

Emma Broadbent, Director of Registration and Revalidation for the NMC said: "These common sense changes are in line with the NMC's commitment to better, safer care and will continue to ensure that only those nurses, midwives and nursing associates with the right skills, knowledge and command of English are able to join and re-join our register".

The change will come into effect from 28 January 2020. OET results achieved during the previous two years that meet the new requirements will also be considered by the regulator.

About OET

OET is an international English language test that assesses the language communication skills of healthcare professionals who seek to register and practise in an English-speaking environment.

OET results are accepted by healthcare boards and councils in the UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Dubai, Malta, Namibia and Ukraine as proof of English language proficiency. In Australia and New Zealand OET is also accepted for visa and immigration purposes, while

doctors and nurses in the UK are no longer required to take a separate English language test when applying for a Tier 2 (General) visa.

Available at more than 140 venues in 44 countries, OET is owned by Cambridge Boxhill Language Assessment, a venture between Cambridge Assessment English and Box Hill Institute, Australia. For more information visit <https://www.occupationalenglishtest.org>

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