



College of Veterinarians of British Columbia

Registration Committee Policy: Alternative Assessment of English Language Proficiencyⁱ

Published May 2023

Policy Purpose

To establish protocols for the Registration Committee for assessing alternative evidence submitted in support of an applicant's English Language Proficiency, where the application does not satisfy the requirements and criteria established in the registration bylaws (section 2.12(1)(b) and (2)).¹

All sections of the Veterinarians Act and CVBC bylaws that are referenced in this policy are provided on pages 3 & 4, "Legislative and Bylaw References".

Preamble

The CVBC's Bylaws (Part 2 – Registration) establish that an applicant for registration must [demonstrate proficiency in the English language](#) ('ELP') if they are not a graduate of a veterinary school that provided instruction in English. In such instances, the applicant will satisfy this registration requirement by submitting [a test result](#) from one of three designated assessment providers (TOEFL, IELTS - 'Academic' test, or CAEL) that is verifiable; is currently validated and/or endorsed by the test provider (ie. No more than 2 years old); and that meets the minimum score requirements for that test.

If an applicant:

- is unable to provide a test result that satisfies the criteria established in the bylaws, or
- prefers to submit alternative evidence in support of their proficiency in the English language,

the Registrar will refer the application to the Registration Committee, pursuant to [s. 32\(4\)](#) of the *Veterinarians Act*, and the Registration Committee may consider the alternative evidence within the discretion granted to them by [bylaw section 2.4](#).

¹ Under the *Labour Mobility Act*, if an applicant for registration is currently actively registered in another Canadian jurisdiction, is seeking [equivalent](#) licensure in BC, [and](#) their current jurisdiction has [already assessed them to be proficient in the English language](#) as a part of their own registration process, the CVBC must not require additional proof of ELP and the application will be processed in accordance with sections 32(3) and 36 of the *Act*, and s. 2.11 of the CVBC bylaws.

Assessment Protocol

When an application for registration requires the Registration Committee to conduct an alternative assessment of the applicant's English Language Proficiency, the Committee will require the applicant to provide evidence in support of their proficiency. This may include any combination of the following, without limitation:

1. Proof of meeting the ELP exemption criteria of the [National Examining Board of the CVMA](#) which are one of the following:
 - a. the applicant's native language (i.e. the common language of an individual's country of birth) is English;
or
 - b. the applicant has at least three years full-time attendance at a secondary school (high school) at which the complete language of instruction was English
 - Acceptable documentation includes a letter directly from school officials confirming dates of attendance and that the complete language of instruction was English.or
 - c. the applicant has been granted a certificate by the Educational Commission for Foreign Veterinary Graduates (ECFVG) of the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA)
 - requires written confirmation from the ECFVG.
2. English proficiency assessment test scores that could not be accepted by the Registrar, as they are no longer valid/endorsed by the testing company (ie. Because they are more than 2 years old);
3. Recent history that supports recent and ongoing communication (speaking, listening, reading and writing) in the English language. This may include:
 - a. Clinical practice in a setting where English is a main language of communication
 - b. Academic instruction (as student or instructor) in English
 - c. Presentations to veterinarians (ie. Conferences, seminars, research presentations) in English
 - d. Publication in English-language journals/textbooks
4. Letters of reference from colleagues whose primary working language is English who can comment on the applicant's proficiency in all aspects of English language communication (reading, writing, speaking, listening)
5. Any additional relevant information that the applicant chooses to provide.

If the applicant's submissions do not satisfy the Registration Committee of the applicant's ELP, the Registration Committee may (pursuant to [s. 33\(2\)](#) of the *Act*):

- a. require the applicant to take an examination, and/or

- b. seek additional information or records from the applicant that it considers necessary.

Assessment Outcome

Pursuant to s. [33\(3\)](#) of the *Veterinarians Act*:

- If the registration committee is satisfied that the applicant has demonstrated a reasonable proficiency in the English language, then the Committee will direct that the Registrar grant registration to the applicant so long as the other requirements for registration as set out in the Bylaws are met.
- If the Registration Committee is not satisfied that the applicant has demonstrated proficiency in the English language, the Committee will direct a registration hearing (pursuant to s. 33(3)(b) of the *Act*) for the purpose of further assessment prior to a registration decision.

Legislative & Bylaw References

Veterinarians Act

Registration applications determined by registrar

- s. 32 (1) The registrar must register, and issue a certificate of registration to, every individual who,
- (a) in accordance with the bylaws,
 - (i) applies to the college for registration or reinstatement of registration,
 - (ii) satisfies the registrar that the individual meets the requirements for registration,
 - and
 - (iii) pays the required fees or assessments, if any, or
 - (b) is an individual whom the registrar is obliged under the Labour Mobility Act to register.
- (2) The registrar may require an applicant under subsection (1) (a) to provide any information or records the registrar considers necessary for the purposes of taking an action under this section.
- (3) In respect of an applicant under subsection (1) (b), the registrar may, for the purposes of satisfying the registrar that the applicant is entitled under the Labour Mobility Act to be registered, take any action contemplated by that Act, including requiring the applicant to provide any information or records the registrar considers necessary for those purposes.
- (4) If the registrar is not satisfied that an applicant meets the requirements for registration under subsection (1), the registrar must refer the application to the registration committee.

Registration applications determined by registration committee

- s. 33 (1) This section and sections 34 [registration hearings] and 35 [action by registration committee] do not apply to an applicant whom the registration committee is obliged under the Labour Mobility Act to register.
- (2) The registration committee may require an applicant to
 - (a) take an examination, and
 - (b) provide any additional information or records the registration committee considers necessary for the purposes of taking an action under this section.
 - (3) After considering an application for registration and the results of any examination or information or records provided under subsection (2), the registration committee must

- (a) direct the registrar to register the applicant, or
- (b) hold a registration hearing.

CVBC Bylaws, Part 2 – Registration,

s. 2.4 “**Registration committee discretion**”

- (1) If the registrar determines that the application does not include all of the documents or information required under section 2.3, the registrar may refer the application to the committee pursuant to section 32(4) of the Act.
- (2) Upon application, the committee may:
 - (a) grant an extension to the provision of documents by an applicant, and
 - (b) allow supporting documentation which predates the application by more than one month.
- (3) Upon application, the committee may consider the application without all required documentation, provided that:
 - (a) the committee is satisfied that the applicant otherwise meets the criteria for that class, and
 - (b) it is in the public interest to grant the applicant registration.

s. 2.12 “**Private practice registration criteria and requirements**”

- (1) Pursuant to section 32(1) of the Act, an applicant for private practice registration must meet each of the following criteria:
 - (b) if not a graduate of an accredited veterinary school or an acceptable veterinary school that provided instruction in English, demonstrated English language proficiency;
- (2) For the purposes of subsection (1)(b), an applicant who has not graduated from an accredited veterinary school or acceptable veterinary school that provides instruction in English will be considered proficient in the English language, if that applicant has an English proficiency assessment that is currently verifiable and is validated or endorsed by the testing company at the time of their application. Acceptable assessment providers and the minimum required scores are as follows:
 - (a) internet-based TOEFL (iB-TOEFL), with a minimum of 23 in Reading, 25 in Listening, 22 in Speaking, 22 in Writing and no minimum overall score is required. Candidates **MUST** achieve at least the minimum passing scores for each of the four sections of the internet-based TOEFL;
 - (b) International English Language Testing System (IELTS), **Academic version** with an overall score of no less than 6.5, with at least 6.5 in the Listening band, 6.0 in the Writing band and 7.0 in the Speaking band. Candidates **MUST** achieve the minimum passing scores for each of the three sections; or
 - (c) Canadian Academic English Language (CAEL) Assessment with an overall score of no less than 60, with at least 60 in the Listening band, 50 in the Writing band and 60 in the Speaking band.

ⁱ Council approved the *Registration Committee Policy: Alternative Assessment of English Language Proficiency* on April 21, 2023