

GMC English Language Requirements for European Doctors

The GMC uses the following evidence to demonstrate that a European doctor qualifying from one of the member states of the European Economic Area (with the exception of the UK) has sufficient English language skills to practice safely and effectively in the UK.

Evidence type 1: Academic IELTS 7.5

Doctors should have an overall score of 7.5 in the academic version of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) from the last 2 years. As part of this, a doctor must score a minimum of 7.0 in each of the four papers: reading, writing, listening and speaking. These scores must be achieved in one sitting of the test.

This, in practice, is how most overseas doctors demonstrate their knowledge of English. The GMC may accept IELTS test scores that are more than 2 years old if a doctor can show that their English language skills have not deteriorated in that time. They may have worked in a country where English is the first language for example, or they may have taken a postgraduate course of study which has been taught and examined in English.

While IELTS is currently the only test recognised by the GMC, the organisation is open to alternatives in the future which can be shown to be reliable and appropriate tests of a doctor's English language skills.

Evidence type 2: A primary medical qualification (PMQ) that has been taught and examined in English.

The GMC requires the PMQ to have been taught and examined in English and to be from the last 2 years. As part of this, at least 75% of the doctor's clinical interaction, including personal contact with patients, relatives and other healthcare professionals, must have been conducted in English

Where the PMQ is not so recent, then the GMC requires clear evidence that the doctor has extensive experience practising in English over the previous 2 years in a country where English is the first language, to include employer references.

Practice may be clinical, teaching, management or research-based. The GMC will take into account whether this is continuous or periodic, and ensure that the practice uses the knowledge, skills, attitudes and competences gained in a medicine degree and any further study.

Evidence type 3: an alternative language test for registration with a medical regulatory authority in a country where the first and native language is English

The GMC will explore which test was used and what requirements were met. If the test pass is over 2 years old, then the GMC may ask for evidence that demonstrates the doctor's experience of practising for the preceding two years, as outlined above in evidence type 2.



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