

A look at language proficiency requirements in the professions

applicants with foreign qualifications

Does my

profession require a language test?



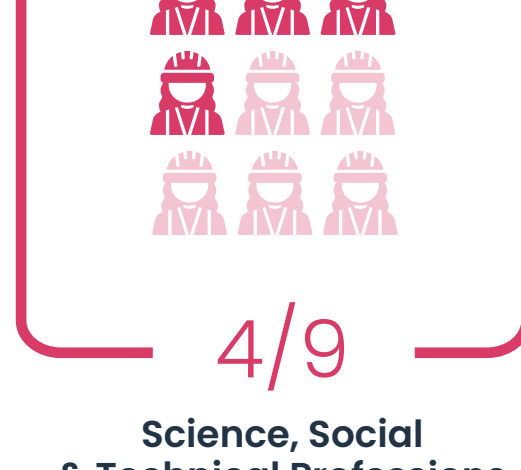
Each regulated profession determines whether they will require proof of language proficiency, who must submit test results, which tests they will accept and what levels are needed. Requirements are different across professions. The best source of information about language policies and requirements is your regulator's website.

More than half of the self-regulated professions under fairness legislation require applicants with foreign qualifications to submit language proficiency test results as part of their assessment and registration process.

Language tests are required by:



Health Professions



Science, Social & Technical Professions

Manitoba regulators do not require a language proficiency test from applicants who completed their entire professional program - classroom and clinical/fieldwork - in English (and French where accepted.)

Each regulator has their own process for verifying the language of instruction of a professional program. Most regulators will require your educational institution to complete and submit an attestation form.

Many professions have additional waivers for language testing. For example, some regulators will not require a language test if your first language is English, or if you worked in an English speaking environment.

Even if you meet the requirements for a waiver, regulators may require a test if they are concerned your language skills are too low.

Professions that do not have language proficiency requirements often provide suggestions about what levels you will need to be successful.

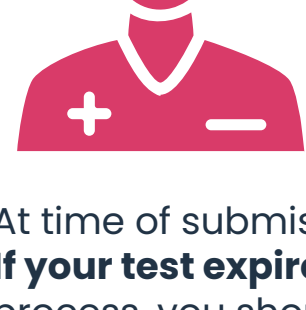
Keep in mind, to pass exams and to complete other requirements, you will need to have strong language skills, even if you are not required to submit language test results.



Before you apply to a regulated profession, make sure your language skills are close to, or at, the required or recommended level for your profession.

When will

I need to supply language results?



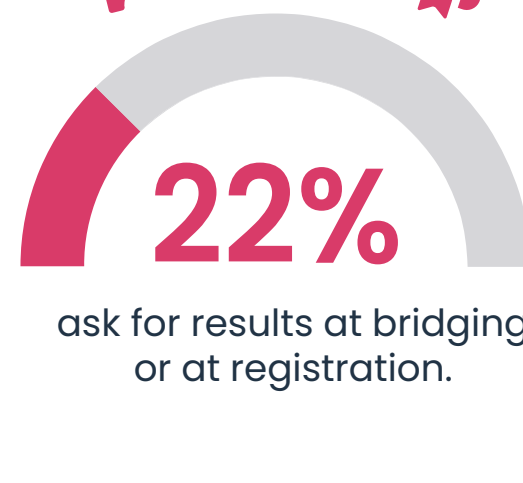
Most regulators require applicants to submit their language proficiency test results when they first apply. Some will allow them to be submitted later in the process. Sometimes you can start the assessment process with language scores that are lower than those required at registration.

At time of submission, most regulators will require test scores to be less than two years old. **If your test expires** (becomes more than two years old) while you are in the assessment process, you should not be asked to supply a new test.

Of regulators that require a language test ...



ask for results at initial application.



ask for results at bridging or at registration.

Which tests

are most commonly required?



The most commonly requested tests are IELTS and CELPIP. Regulators with language proficiency requirements will provide detail on acceptable tests, including scores required and how test results are to be submitted. Check with your regulator for their specific requirements.

Regulators ask for scores in the four skill areas of listening, reading, writing and speaking and sometimes an overall test score. Manitoba regulators with language proficiency requirements must accept IELTS General and CELPIP General tests. They must also accept a combined test score if the testing agency they use offers this option. All Manitoba regulators accept the IELTS One Skill Retake. Regulators that accept TOEFL also accept their MyBest scores combined score option.

Common language tests include:

English tests

- CAEL Canadian Academic English Language Test
- CELBAN* Canadian English Language Benchmark Assessment for Nurses
- CELPIP Canadian English Language Proficiency Index Program (general test)
- IELTS International English Language Testing System (academic and general tests)
- MELA** Michener English Language Assessment
- OET* Occupational English Test - Medicine
- TOEFL- iBT Test of English as a Foreign Language - Internet Based Test

French tests

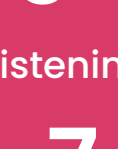
- TEF Test d'évaluation de français
- TCF Test de connaissance du français

*These tests are profession-specific. They are designed to test language skills in the context of the practice of a profession. Currently, these tests are accepted by Manitoba regulators in nursing (CELBAN) and medicine (OET) only.

**This test is specific to the health care sector.

Average requirements across professions

IELTS General



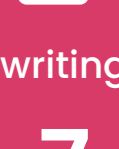
listening

7



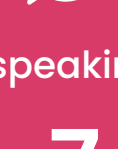
reading

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writing

7



speaking

7

How much

do tests cost & where can they be written?



Language proficiency tests typically cost a few hundred dollars. Tests can be taken in Canada and abroad. All tests (except CELBAN) can be taken at a test-specific, language testing centre. There are hundreds of official testing centres around the world that administer language tests. Most tests can also be done online (from home) if you have the required technology.

Regulators often require test results be submitted to them directly from the testing centre that administered your test.

If you plan to take a language test before coming to Canada, remember that most tests expire after two years.

Language proficiency test costs:

\$290

▲ lowest cost

\$392

▲ average cost

\$629

▲ highest cost

*Costs current as of 2025

Can I meet

language requirements in French?



Currently, 12 professions in Manitoba allow applicants to meet language requirements in French. They are: dietitians, denturists, licensed practical nurses, pharmacists, physiotherapists, land surveyors, lawyers, paramedics, audiologists and speech-language pathologists, respiratory therapists and veterinarians.

Manitoba bridging programs are offered in English only. Most professionals in Manitoba must interact with others in English, even if they are employed in a French speaking environment.

So, even if you are able to meet language requirements in French, you will likely also need strong English language skills to meet other requirements for licensing and to work successfully in Manitoba.

Do I need

another test if I did one for immigration?

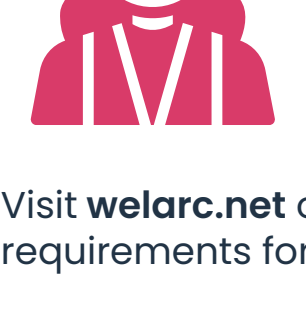


You may not need to do another language test if you did one for immigration. Manitoba regulators all accept IELTS General and CELPIP General. Regulators that accept French language tests take TEF and TCF. These are all tests used for immigration. If you did one of these tests within two years of your application to a regulated profession, and you achieved the required scores, you should not have to do another test.

Check your profession's website for details. A few regulators accept test results that are more than two years old.

Where can

I go to improve my English skills?



Once you are in Manitoba, the Winnipeg English Language Assessment and Referral Centre - WELARC - may be able to help you find a suitable English language program, from beginner to advanced.

Visit welarc.net or call 204-943-5387 to speak with someone at WELARC directly about eligibility requirements for their services.