



MEDIA RELEASE

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Immigration New Zealand accepts OET, the healthcare English language test, for visa purposes

Today Immigration New Zealand announced it will accept the Occupational English Test (OET), a specialist English test for healthcare professionals, as proof of English proficiency for all visa categories where an English language test result may be required, effective 21 November, 2016.

OET is already accepted by all the major healthcare Boards and Councils in New Zealand, and with recognition from Immigration New Zealand, international healthcare professionals can now take OET for both their visa application, and healthcare registration.

OET has been providing healthcare-specific English testing for the past 30 years, and the test is already accepted by major healthcare regulators and educators in New Zealand, including the Medical and Nursing Councils and University of Otago.

The New Zealand Immigration website states that hospitals and practices across New Zealand are looking for doctors, midwives, surgeons and 36 other healthcare occupations. It's estimated that New Zealand will need 380 extra specialists every year to meet the OECD average by 2021, and up to 25,000 more nurses by 2030.

(<https://www.newzealandnow.govt.nz/work-in-nz/nz-jobs-industries/healthcare-jobs>)

OET helps to fill these gaps by providing proof of English language proficiency, and the opportunity for healthcare professionals to become more competent in English related to their workplace, leading to safer and higher quality care. Unlike many English tests, OET's writing, reading, listening and speaking tasks use real healthcare scenarios, such as calming a distressed patient or writing a referral letter.

OET CEO, Sujata Stead, says: "Safety and quality of care for patients lies at the heart of OET. By testing English through real healthcare scenarios, regulators and employers can feel confident that professionals who've passed OET can communicate effectively in their healthcare workplace".

"We applaud Immigration New Zealand for giving OET candidates the chance to use their test results for their visa application. We share the common vision of supporting healthcare professionals to successfully contribute within the New Zealand healthcare system," she concludes.

For more information about the requirements for Skilled Migrant Category visas, go the Immigration New Zealand media centre website: <https://www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/media-centre/news-notifications/new-zealand-residence-programme-changes/nzrp-smc>

For information about migrating to New Zealand, go to: www.immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas

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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 most health regulatory boards and councils in Australia, New Zealand and Singapore as proof of English language proficiency. It is also recognised by the Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection and Immigration New Zealand for most visa categories.

Available in over 70 venues in 30 countries, OET is owned by Cambridge Boxhill Language Assessment, a venture between Cambridge English and Box Hill Institute, Australia. For more information visit <http://www.occupationalenglishtest.org>

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