

From: Wumay [mailto:_____]
Sent: Thursday, 2 December 2010 5:49 PM
To: Kathleen Almond
Subject: comments

Dear Sir/ Madam,

I am writing in regard to the [Consultation draft on English Language Skills Registration Standard](#) .

Thank you for giving us an opportunity to show our personal thinking.

It is understandable that internationally qualified nurses should meet the standard of English competency so as to serve patients properly and keep them in safe. However, I am frowned with the proposal saying ***“completion in a single sitting and an overall pass in the OET with grades A or B only in each of the four components.”*** In other words, the requirement of ***completion in a single sitting*** for OET, I think, should not be as same as IELTS.

Compared with both tests, it is easy to find that there are differences between them. Firstly, the frequency of OET test is much less than IELTS. For example, there were about 10 times of OET tests in 2010, compared with approximate 25 times of IELTS test this year. Furthermore, the policy for applying to sit on OET is more restricted than IELTS. For instance, IELTS candidates can continuously sit on every exam without break; but OET applicants just can sit on every other test because OET policy is that ***“candidates cannot apply to re-sit sub-tests until their results from the previous Test have been published”***. Once we get the results, the dead line for applying to resit on next test has already past. So, the maximum sitting of OET test that a candidate can apply in one year period is only about 5. Once failed, candidates have to wait for 2~ 3 months. Also, the test fee of OET(\$528) is more expensive than IELTS(\$310). All of these are meant that if we fail on OET, we can hardly try again due to limited opportunities and expensive cost.

It has been realised that there are many factors impacting the test results. This sort of exam not only tests people’s English level, but also tests their speed of response and skills of reacting questions, probably as well as their luck. One of my Australian nurse friends has commented that even as a native speaker, he can not guarantee that he will pass all units in one time.

In addition, in order to be registered, most overseas nurses have spent about \$20,000 to \$25,000 a year on tuition fee to finish the nursing courses in Australia because they believe they are able to pass the English test according to the former policy (OET could be accepted in different sitting). However, this requirement was soon changed. Although it is hard to pass all units in one sitting, these foreign nurses have no choice but only trying again and again to sit on the tests otherwise their dream will be broken by this heightened threshold. Sometimes, I could not hold myself to think that it seems Australia needs more overseas nursing students rather than overseas nurses.

Therefore, a strong feeling rises from the bottom of my heart: could the policy be made more justly and humanely?

I think it could be reasonable to remove the single sitting condition from OET requirement because it does have disadvantages to candidates comparing with IELTS.

It would be grateful to have a balanced registration policy considering not only the protection of the public health, but also the fairness for these international nurses.

Thank you very much.

Yours sincerely,

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