

# What is OET?

your questions answered

by Debbie Rogers



## A short guide to the OET

An overview of the OET, including an explanation of each sub-test and how the test is graded.

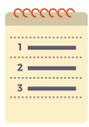


### Who is the OET for?



OET is used to test the English of a number of healthcare professions including:

- ✔ Dentistry
- ✔ Dietetics
- ✔ Medicine
- ✔ Nursing
- ✔ Occupational Therapy
- ✔ Optometry
- ✔ Pharmacy
- ✔ Physiotherapy
- ✔ Podiatry
- ✔ Radiography
- ✔ Speech Pathology
- ✔ Veterinary Science



### What is examined?



Reading, writing, speaking and listening skills in a medical scenario, consisting of:



#### Part A

- Read 4 short texts which are found in the workplace when consulting a patient.
- 20 questions consisting of either sentence / note completion, matching or short answer questions.
- Tests the ability to:
  - Skim, scan and identify specific information.
  - Match vocabulary to find relevant texts.
  - Process information to find an answer through detailed reading.

#### Part B

- Read 6 short texts which are extracts of procedural and policy documents.
- 6 questions consisting of 3 option multiple choice questions.
- Tests the ability to:
  - Understand gist, main points and detailed meaning.
  - Focus on the overall message.
  - Comprehend large portions of text.

#### One Task

- Write a letter based on patient case notes.
- A contextualised communicative task. Consists of either a referral letter, a letter to a patient or carer, or a letter to a colleague or relevant service.
- Tests the ability to:
  - Use appropriate language - a variety of vocabulary and expressions.
  - Incorporate a range of linguistic features including grammar and cohesion.
  - Present information in the expected style and format.
  - Evidence correct spelling and punctuation.
  - Comprehend the task and its function.
  - Demonstrate logical ordering of information and effective organisation.
  - Understand and link information to formulate priorities for action.

#### One Task

- Take part in 2 role plays. The candidate plays the health-care professional.
- The interlocutor takes the role of the patient, relative or carer.
- Tests the ability to:
  - Adapt language to different situations and contexts.
  - Communicate effectively in a professional role.
  - Demonstrate typical workplace communication skills in order to advise, explain, reassure, question and recommend.
  - Use register appropriately in a professional / patient scenario.
  - Organise and lead a conversation.
  - Speak intelligibly, using correct pronunciation, intonation and stress.
  - Avoid hesitation and unnecessary pauses.
  - Converse at a natural speed and rate.

#### Part A

- Listen to 2 dialogues between a health care professional and a patient. Answer questions on their content.
- 24 note completion questions (12 per dialogue).
- Tests the ability to:
  - Understand, interpret and record detailed information.
  - Extract relevant information from a consultation.

#### Part B

- Listen to 6 short dialogues or monologues and answer questions on their content.
- 6 questions consisting of 3 option multiple choice questions.
- Tests the ability to:
  - Understand the gist and overall meaning of the dialogue.
  - Listen for detail.
  - Detect the course of action that should be taken.

## Part C

- Read 2 long texts which are taken from medical journals or websites.
- 8 questions consisting of 4 option multiple choice questions.
- Tests the ability to:
  - Understand gist, main points and attitude / opinion.
  - Grasp a wide vocabulary and understand words and expressions in context.
  - Understand cohesive devices and lexical references.

## Part C

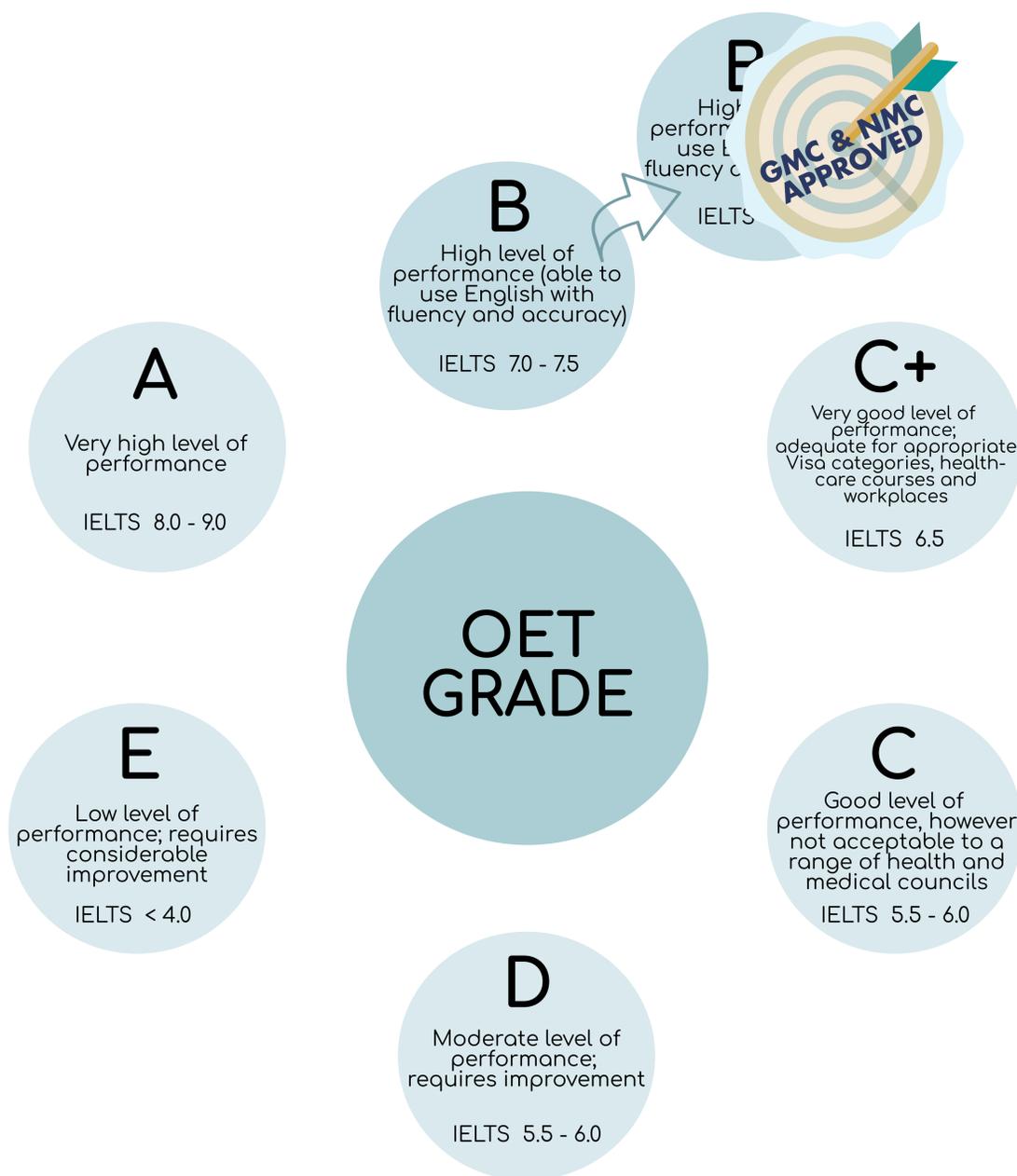
- Listen to 2 long presentations or interviews with healthcare professionals and answer questions on their content.
- 12 questions (6 questions for each dialogue) consisting of 3 option multiple choice questions.
- Tests the ability to:
  - Understand gist, main points and attitude / opinion.
  - Comprehend large sections of audio.
  - Listen for deeper meaning.



### How is the OET graded?



Each health board or council decides on the passing grade. For doctors and nurses in the UK, this is governed by the General Medical Council (GMC) and Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) respectively.



### What if a Grade B is not achieved?



It may be possible to pass the OET if a B is not achieved the first time the test is taken.

### For nurses in the UK

If you did not receive a B in all sub-tests, it is still possible to pass the OET.

The NMC has announced that if a minimum Grade B is achieved in all for sub-tests across the two tests (with no sub-test marked below a C+), in a 6 month period, an overall passing grade of B will be awarded.

Below is an example of an overall Grade B. (B has been scored in all sections, with no score lower than C+).

|        | Listening | Reading | Writing | Speaking |
|--------|-----------|---------|---------|----------|
| TEST 1 | B         | C+      | B       | B        |
| TEST 2 | B         | B       | C+      | B        |



How long is OET valid for?



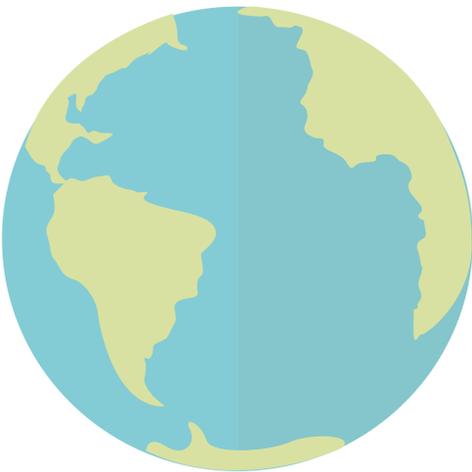
Like the IELTS, the OET is valid for two years.



Who recognises OET?



The health boards and councils of 6 countries across the globe use OET to validate their medical staff.



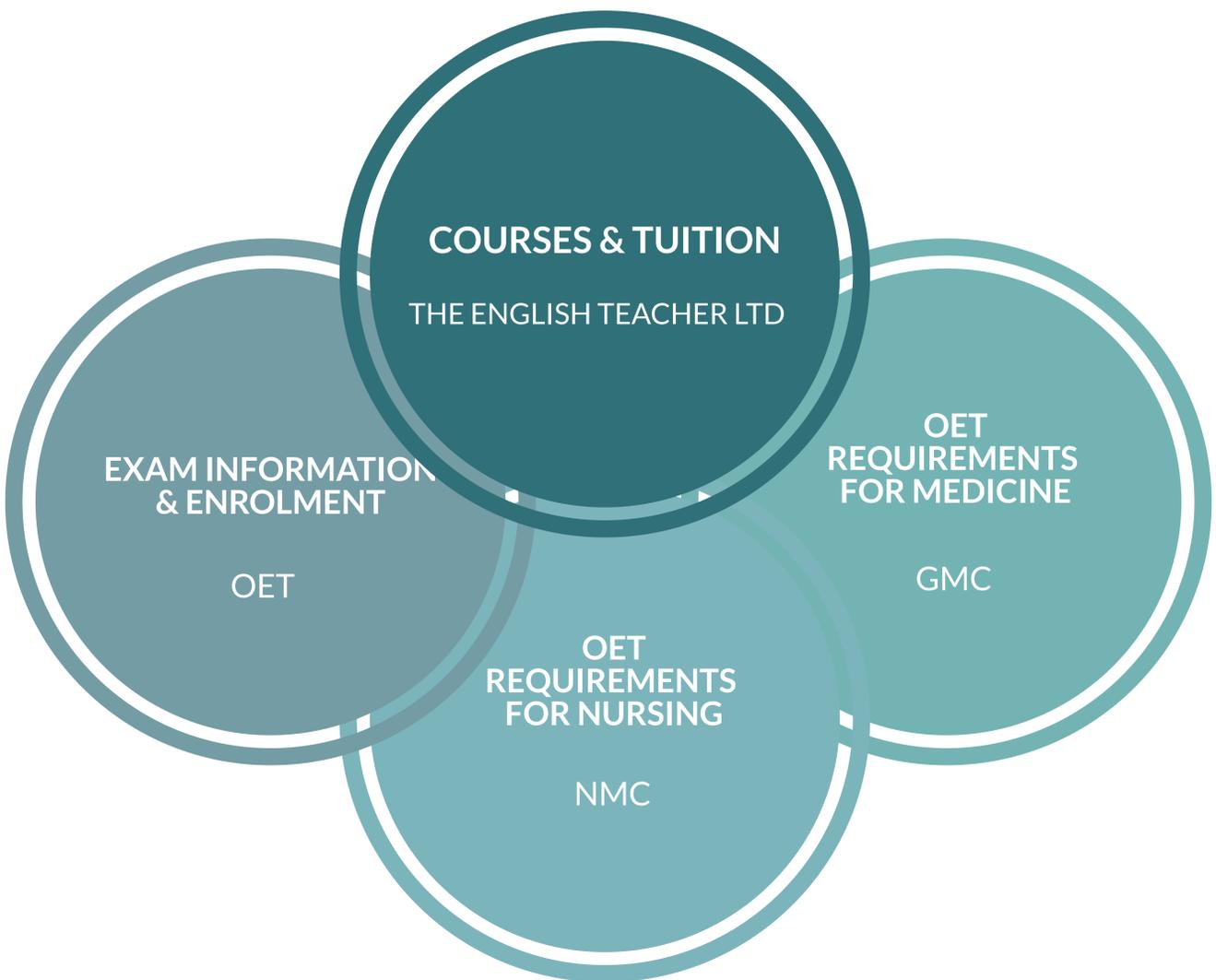
- ✓ UK - General Medical Council (GMC) Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC)
- ✓ New Zealand
- ✓ Australia
- ✓ Singapore
- ✓ Dubai
- ✓ Namibia



For more information...



Below are some useful links to helpful organisations.



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