General Dental Council: Information released under the Freedom of Information Act

Date released: 26 May 2021

Request:

In regards type 4 evidence (work in a country where the first language is English) as proof of English proficiency for the ORE exam. The structured reference form and the GDC website do not provide guidance on how detailed the form should be nor what are the criteria for the form to be accepted as proof of English.

Under the FOI Act, I am requesting to please disclose what are the details required and what are the criteria for this form to be accepted

Response:

The Dentists Act 1984 (as amended) requires the GDC to be satisfied that all applicants have the necessary knowledge of English prior to entry to our registers. The GDC has produced guidance – the GDC’s Guidance on English Language Controls – to further support applicants to meet the English language requirements. This guidance applies to all applications for entry to our registers and the Overseas Registration Examination application process, forming an integral part to the route to registration. As the Guidance highlights, “[t]o practise safely in the UK, all dental professionals must have the necessary knowledge of English” which is in accordance with our standards – “[you] must be sufficiently fluent in written and spoken English to communicate effectively with patients, their relatives, the dental team and other healthcare professionals in the United Kingdom”.

In line with the information available on our website, in some instances a completed structured reference form may be required. This must confirm that at least 75% of the applicant’s day-to-day interaction with patients, carers, their families and other healthcare professionals in the referee’s employment or under their supervision has been in English. Examples must be provided to illustrate how each of the four skills of speaking, listening, writing and reading have been demonstrated or this form will not be accepted. This is again reconfirmed at the start of the GDC structured reference form, and there is no separate criteria beyond the information available via our website.