



Internationally Educated / Foreign-Trained - Physical Therapist Applicants Licensure Information

North Carolina Board of Physical Therapy Examiners / Updated – September 21, 2009

21 NCAC 48E .0110 FOREIGN-TRAINED PHYSICAL THERAPISTS

(a) This rule applies to a physical therapist who has graduated from a program located outside the United States which has not been accredited in accordance with G.S. §90-270.29 [currently, the Commission on Accreditation of Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE)].

(b) English Translations. All application forms and supporting documents must be in English or accompanied by an English translation.

(c) If the applicant does not meet the requirements of G.S. §90-270.29(2), the Board shall examine the applicant's educational background to determine if the general and professional education is substantially equivalent to that obtained by an applicant for licensure under G.S. 90-270.29 as follows:

- (1) For candidates graduating prior to December 31, 2002, a minimum of 120 semester hours of college education at the freshman through senior level is required, which includes a minimum of 60 semester hours of professional curriculum, including basic health sciences, clinical sciences and clinical education, and a minimum of 42 semester hours of general education. Up to 21 hours may be substituted for actual course work by obtaining a passing score on College Level Examination Program (CLEP) examinations.
- (2) For candidates graduating after December 31, 2002, the applicant's educational background must be substantially equivalent to a Post-Baccalaureate degree from a CAPTE approved physical therapy educational program. In order for a foreign-trained applicant's educational background to be determined substantially equivalent to a post-baccalaureate degree from a CAPTE approved program, the general and professional education must satisfy the requirements for the first professional degree as determined by the course work evaluation tool developed by the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (FSBPT), or its successor organization. Up to one-half (1/2) of the general education credit hours may be substituted for actual course work by obtaining a passing score on CLEP examinations.

(d) The applicant must make arrangements to have the credentials evaluated by FCCPT (Foreign Credentialing Commission on Physical Therapy, Inc.), or a service determined by the Board to be equivalent, and which must have a physical therapist consultant on its staff. The Board shall make its own review of applicant's educational program and is not bound by the findings of the credentialing service.

(e) The applicant must provide the following information:

- (1) For examinations administered prior to August 1, 1998, proof that a score of 210 on the TSE (Test of Spoken English) or the SPEAK (Speaking Proficiency English Assessment Kit) examination was obtained;
- (2) For examinations administered on or after August 1, 1998, and prior to January 1, 2007, proof that a minimum score of 50 on the TSE examination or the SPEAK examination was obtained, a minimum score on the Test of Written English (TWE) of 4.5 was obtained, and a minimum score of 560 on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) was obtained;
- (3) For examinations administered on or after September 25, 2005, proof that the applicant obtained the following minimum standard scale scores in each of the four scoring domains (Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking), and the total score of the iBT/Next Generation TOEFL: Writing: 24, Speaking: 26, Reading Comprehension: 21, Listening Comprehension: 18, Total Score: 89; or
- (4) Proof that English is the applicant's primary language.

*History Note: Filed as a Temporary Amendment Eff. July 21, 1995, for a period of 180 days or until the permanent Rule becomes effective, whichever is sooner;
 Authority G.S. 90-270.26; 90-270.29; 90-270.30; 90-270.31;
 Eff. December 30, 1985;
 Amended Eff. November 1, 2006; November 1, 2004; August 1, 2002; August 1, 1998; February 1, 1996; October 1, 1995; November 1, 1991; August 1, 1991.*

An internationally educated / foreign-trained physical therapist who plans to practice in North Carolina **must** have a current North Carolina license prior to beginning employment in the State. North Carolina does not have temporary licensure.

REQUIREMENTS FOR LICENSURE [IMPORTANT: See Board Rule 21 NCAC 48E .0110 – Foreign-Trained Physical Therapists on the Board web page (www.ncptboard.org) regarding foreign educated]. Each applicant must:

1. Be of good moral character;
2. Be a graduate of an educational program for physical therapists approved by the Board;
3. Furnish documentary evidence of completion of a course of instruction substantially equivalent to that of the United States trained physical therapist;
4. Be proficient in English;
5. Furnish examination scores that meet the North Carolina passing level;
6. **For Endorsement Only:** active license in another state.
7. Furnish the Board with his/her social security number.
(required by G.S.§ 93B-14)
8. Complete Jurisprudence Exercise (www.ncptboard.org)

EVALUATION OF EDUCATION

The credentials of an internationally educated / foreign-trained physical therapist who is **not** a graduate of a CAPTE (Commission of Accreditation of Physical Therapy Education) accredited program, whether applying for licensure by examination or by endorsement, must be evaluated by a credentialing service acceptable to the Board to determine if the course of instruction is substantially equivalent to that of the United States trained physical therapist. Credentialing services accepted by the Board are as follows:

1. The Foreign Credentialing Commission on Physical Therapy (FCCPT) (**Preferred Agency**)
 511 Wythe Street, Alexandria, VA 22314
 Telephone 703/684-8406, Fax 703/684-8715
 E-mail address: fccpt@fsbpt.org
2. International Consultants of Delaware, Inc. (ICD)
 P.O. Box 8629
 Philadelphia, PA 19101-8629
 Telephone 215-222-8454
 E-mail address: www.icdel.com
3. International Credentialing Associates, Inc. (ICA)
 10801 Starkey Road, Suite 104
 Seminole, FL 33777
 Telephone 727-549-8555, Fax 727-549-8554
 E-mail address: www.customerservice@icaworld.com ; Website: www.icaworld.com
4. International Education Research Foundation, Inc. (IERF)
 PO Box 3665 Culver City, CA 90231-3655
 Telephone 310-258-9451, Fax: 310-342-7086
 E-mail: info@ierf.org ; Web site: www.ierf.org (applications available off web page)

The results of the evaluation must be sent directly to the Board by the credentialing service. Prior to December 31, 2002, general education requirements will include a minimum of 42 semester hours. The minimum number of professional hours remains at 60. Total required semester hours remains at 120.

For candidates graduating after January 1, 2003, the applicant's educational background must be substantially equivalent to a Post-Baccalaureate degree from a CAPTE approved physical therapy educational program.

Internationally Educated (Foreign-Trained) Physical Therapists must meet the following requirements:

Rules for applicants who apply for licensure. (See Attachment)

1. An applicant who graduated from his/her entry level physical therapy program after January 1, 2003 will be required to submit a credentials review from one of the four NC Board approved credentialing agencies that states explicitly that the education **is** substantially equivalent to a **post-baccalaureate degree** from a CAPTE approved physical therapy educational program. Applicants that graduated prior to January 1, 2003 must meet the standards in effect at the time of their graduation.
2. English language requirements (Proof of proficiency in the English language is required. If English is the applicant's primary language or if English was the medium of education for the physical therapy degree, the TSE, TWE, and TOEFL examination may be waived upon receipt of satisfactory evidence to that effect.)
3. For examinations administered prior to August 1, 1998, proof that a score of 210 on the TSE (Test of Spoken English) or the SPEAK (Speaking Proficiency English Assessment Kit) examination was obtained;
4. For examinations administered on or after August 1, 1998, and prior to January 1, 2007, proof that a minimum score of 50 on the TSE examination or the SPEAK examination was obtained, a minimum score on the Test of Written English (TWE) of 4.5 was obtained, and a minimum score of 560 on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) was obtained;
5. For examinations administered on or after September 25, 2005, proof that the applicant obtained the following minimum standard scale scores in each of the four scoring domains (Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking), and the total score of the iBT/Next Generation TOEFL: Writing: 24, Speaking: 26, Reading Comprehension: 21, Listening Comprehension: 18, Total Score: 89;

ENGLISH REQUIREMENT To make arrangements to take the TSE (P) examination, write to: TSE, Box 6154, Princeton, NJ 08541-6154, USA; or telephone: 609/771-7100 as far in advance of the registration deadline as possible. Score reports must be sent to the Board from TSE, TWE, and TOEFL. Our code Number is 9688. The telephone number for the TSE, TWE, and TOEFL is 609-771-7100. The telephone number to schedule tests through Sylvan Learning Centers in the USA and Canada is 1-800-727-8430. Web site for TOEFL is www.toefl.org. The address for TOEFL /TWE Services- Princeton, PO Box 6151, Princeton, NJ, USA 08541-6151.

- (A) For examinations administered prior to August 1, 1998, proof that a score of 210 on the TSE (Test of Spoken English) or the SPEAK (Speaking Proficiency English Assessment Kit) examination was obtained;
- (B) For examinations administered on or after August 1, 1998, and prior to January 1, 2007, proof that a minimum score of 50 on the TSE examination or the SPEAK examination was

- obtained, a minimum score on the Test of Written English (TWE) of 4.5 was obtained, and a minimum score of 560 on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) was obtained;
- (C) For examinations administered on or after September 25, 2005, proof that the applicant obtained the following minimum standard scale scores in each of the four scoring domains (Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking), and the total score of the iBT/Next Generation TOEFL: Writing: 24, Speaking: 26, Reading Comprehension: 21, Listening Comprehension: 18, Total Score: 89; or
- (D) English is the applicant's primary language.

Disclaimer: This information regarding these arrangements is provided for convenience only and is not guaranteed to be accurate or correct.

LICENSURE BY EXAMINATION

An applicant seeking initial licensure or who fails to meet the requirements for endorsement is required to pass the National Physical Therapy Examination (NPTE).

North Carolina uses computer testing, so the examination is held at testing centers throughout the country.

Approved candidates will select the place and the date for the exam, which can be scheduled no sooner than 60 days from the day the applicant's file is opened.

The examination must be passed with a score of 600. There is a fee to retake the examination.

LICENSURE BY ENDORSEMENT

An active license in another state or territory may be endorsed if the applicable requirements for licensure were at the time of the applicant's licensure substantially equal to the requirements of the North Carolina Physical Therapy Practice Act. A person must be licensed in another state by virtue of examination or by endorsement of a license granted on the basis of examination. The applicant's examination score must meet the North Carolina passing level. For examinations taken prior to July 1, 1993, the North Carolina passing level was 1.5 standard deviations below the national average. Thereafter, a score of 600 is required to pass the National Physical Therapy Examination (NPTE) exam.

The endorsement applicant must meet the educational requirements for the internationally-educated / foreign-trained physical therapist and present evidence of English proficiency acceptable to the Board.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

It is the applicant's responsibility to ascertain that all forms are sent to the Board. Examination applications must be filed AT LEAST 30 days before the examination date.

ALL APPLICANTS must submit:

1. Application form and affidavit with photograph. All sections must be completed.
2. Two character references from individuals other than relatives who have known the applicant for at least one year. *(While not required, the Board prefers to have at least one reference from a physical therapist or a health care professional with whom the applicant has been associated for at least one year.)*
3. Evaluation of educational credentials from an acceptable credentialing service unless the educational program is CAPTE accredited.
4. Evidence of proficiency in English.

EXAMINATION APPLICANTS must also submit the following:

1. A CERTIFIED CHECK OR MONEY ORDER ONLY for the application fee in the amount of \$150.00 to be paid to NCBPTE; No portion of the application fee may be refunded. (Examination cost: \$ 350.00 is paid directly to the FSBPT)

Disabled applicants who need special arrangements for the exam must indicate this on the application form. The appropriate documentation must be filed in the Board's office no later than 60 days before the examination date.

ENDORSEMENT APPLICANTS must also submit the following:

1. A CERTIFIED CHECK OR MONEY ORDER ONLY for the application fee of \$150.00. No portion of the application fee may be refunded.
2. Official verification of a current license in another state, indicating date, license number and manner in which license was obtained.
3. Examination scores:
If the raw score for examinations taken prior to July, 1993 is not available from the board in another state, the score must be issued through the reporting service. Beginning with the July, 1993 examination, unless the other state has scores based on the 200 - 800 scale, the scores must be issued by the FSBPT Score Transfer Service. If the score does not meet the North Carolina passing level, the applicant must retake the examination and pay the cost of re-examination.