

Information sheet about the specialised language test for psychotherapists

You have submitted an application for a licence to practise as a psychotherapist or a permit to temporarily practise a psychotherapeutic profession (professional licence) in the state of Berlin. In addition to the documentation of completed psychotherapeutic training and any professional experience and the submission of personal documents, proof of the German language skills required to practise the profession must also be provided for the granting of the state licence in accordance with the statutory requirements (see Section 2 Para. 1 No. 4 of the Psychotherapists Act (PsychThG) or Section 3 Para. 1 No. 4 PsychThG in conjunction with Section 62 Para. 2 of the Licensing Act). § Section 62 (2) of the Licensing Regulations for Psychotherapists (PsychThApprO)).

On 26/27 June 2014, the 87th Conference of Health Ministers adopted key points for a standardised verification procedure for the language skills required to practise the profession. Accordingly, from **1 July 2015**, this professional group must have **specialist language skills in a job-specific context based on a proven B 2 certificate at language level C 2**. Proof must be provided by means of a **specialised language test**. For applicants from the Berlin State Office for Health and Social Affairs, this examination is conducted by the **Berlin Chamber of Psychotherapists** on the basis of an administrative agreement with the responsible Berlin Senate Department for Health and Social Affairs.

Who has to take a specialised language test?

- In principle, this applies to all applicants who submit an application for a state licence to practise a psychotherapeutic profession in the state of Berlin from **1 July 2015**.
- Applicants who wish to return to psychotherapy after an interruption must also take a specialised language test if their language certificate is older than 3 years at the time of application and they have not worked in a German-speaking country.
- In other individual cases, it may also be necessary to take the specialised language examination; the state office will decide on this.

As a rule, you do not have to take the specialised language exam if you

- the completion of at least ten years of general education at a German-speaking school or
- Completion of at least three years of vocational training in German

has acquired.

How do I register and how much does the specialised language exam cost?

After receipt of the application for a licence to practise or a professional permit, the application documents will be reviewed within the required processing time. A confirmation of receipt will be sent, stating any missing documents. With this confirmation of receipt, registration for the examination at the Berlin Chamber of Psychotherapists is possible. The costs of €450 for the specialised language examination must be paid to the Berlin Chamber of Psychotherapists. For further information, please refer to the following link to the [Berlin Chamber of Psychotherapists](#).

In addition to the costs for the specialist language examination, fees must also be paid for the granting of a licence to practise or professional permit; the state office will inform you about this.

How does the exam work? What are the requirements?

The examination takes place as an individual examination. The assessment is carried out by at least two examiners, at least one of whom is a psychological psychotherapist or child and adolescent psychotherapist. The examination is organised as follows:

1. Simulated psychotherapist-patient dialogue

The candidate must show that they can understand a wide range of spoken language, even if it is spoken quickly or in long and convoluted sentences. In particular, they must be able to express themselves so spontaneously, fluently and precisely that a psychotherapeutic conversation is possible for both sides without effort. This also means that the candidate must be able to infer meaning indirectly through logical conclusions and interpretations and express finer nuances of meaning in conversation. The candidate must also be able to inform and explain the circumstances that are important for the treatment. This includes information about the psychotherapeutic procedure and various therapy options with their advantages and disadvantages.

Duration: 20 minutes

2. Written documentation

In this part, the candidate compiles a document typically used in training and practice into a report (e.g. report on findings, expert opinion, referral, discharge letter). In doing so, they must demonstrate that they also have an adequate command of the German language in writing in order to be able to properly manage patient documentation.

Duration: 20 minutes

3. Discussion with members of the profession

In this final part of the examination, an interview takes place. Here, he or she must show that he or she can express him or herself clearly and in detail so that misunderstandings and misdiagnoses, incorrect treatment decisions and treatment errors based on this can be ruled out.

Duration: 20 minutes

Psychological expertise is not tested in the specialised language examination.

The specialised language test has been successfully completed if the assessment panel comes to the conclusion that the applicant fulfils all of the above language requirements. If the language test is repeated, it must be repeated in its entirety. The number of retakes is not limited.

What happens after the exam?

After successfully passing the test, you will receive a certificate from the Berlin Chamber of Psychotherapists confirming the result of the specialised language test. You must submit the original certificate with a single copy to the State Office or send an officially notarised copy. Your application procedure for a licence to practise or a professional licence will be continued.

If you do not pass the specialist language test, you must decide whether you wish to retake the test or withdraw your application for a licence to practise or professional permit. Your responsible clerk will be happy to advise you on this.

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