



BC Health Care Assistant (HCA) Programs English Language Competency Requirements

To be accepted into a recognized BC HCA program, applicants are required to demonstrate proficiency in English. Students must be able to communicate effectively in English in order to be successful in their studies and to be capable of providing safe and competent care to patients/clients/residents in the work environment. Teamwork and communication failures are a primary cause of patient safety incidents in healthcare; the ability to communicate effectively is one of the fundamental safety competencies identified by the Canadian Patient Safety Institute (CPSI).

All BC HCA program applicants are required to demonstrate English language proficiency. Domestic and/or international applicants whose first language is not English will need to take a standardized proficiency assessment to confirm communicative competency in all four language skills areas (speaking, listening, reading and writing).

Domestic and/or international applicants

Applicants whose first language is English

Requirement:
English 10 or equivalent

Evidence of one of the following:

1. Proof of completion of Grade 10 English; or
2. College courses determined to be equivalent to completion of Grade 10 English (or higher) by post-secondary institutions. Applicants must produce transcripts as evidence of completion. A minimum of a C grade is acceptable.
3. Canadian Adult Achievement Test (CAAT):
Reading Comprehension 35/50
Spelling 23/32
4. Language Placement Index (LPI):
The three individual scores (Sentence Structure, English Usage, and Reading Comprehension) must total a minimum of 20, out of a maximum possible score of 40. Essay level of 4, with a minimum essay score of 24/40
5. Accuplacer:
Grade 10 level or higher
Recommended Cut Scores*:
Reading Comprehension 60
Sentences Skill 55
Writeplacer 4

**Educational institutions may conduct their own predictive validity studies to confirm appropriate cut scores*

Applicants whose first language is not English

Requirement:
Standardized English language proficiency test score from an authorized assessment centre

Evidence of one of the following test scores:

1. Canadian Language Benchmark Placement Test (CLB PT): test within the last year: Listening 7, Speaking 7, Reading 6 and Writing 6 Note: a CLB Report Card from a LINC Program may also be accepted.
2. Canadian English Language Proficiency Index Program (CELPIP – General): test within the last two years, Listening 7, Speaking 7, Reading 6 and Writing 6
3. International English Language Testing System (IELTS): Academic or General -- test within the last two years: Overall score of 6 with a minimum of 6 in Speaking and Listening and no score lower than 5.5 in Reading and Writing
4. Canadian Academic English Language Assessment (CAEL)-- -- test within the last two years: Overall Score of 60, with no section less than 50
5. The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL): test within the last two years, IBT only -- Overall score of 76 with no score lower than 20 in Speaking and Listening and no score lower than 18 in Reading and Writing

In cases where applicants already hold Canadian English Language Benchmark Assessment for Nurses (CELBAN) results (testing within the last 2 years), the following minimum scores will be accepted: Speaking 7, Listening 7, Reading 6, Writing 6.

Additional Criteria - English Language Competency Requirements

To confirm the appropriate level of English proficiency, Language Instruction for Newcomers (LINC) Report Cards (also may be known as ESL Student Progress Reports) would need to specify that an applicant's current language level ("CLB levels now"), as "Completing" CLB Speaking 7, Listening 7, Reading 7 and Writing 7 AND that the "Recommended Class Placement for Next Term / Course" as Speaking 8, Listening 8, Reading 8 and Writing 8.

It is important for educational institutions to have a process in place to confirm that the CLB PT has been conducted by a qualified assessor at a licensed site. Please find information about HCA English Language Proficiency Tests and Authorized Assessment Centre Locations at the following link:

https://www.cachwr.bc.ca/Documents/HCA-Program-Entry-English-Proficiency-Tests_Info.aspx

To support educational institutions in ensuring applicants meet Registry English language competency requirements, the following criteria have been put into place:

1. To achieve functional language proficiency and be termed as a speaker of English as a first language, one would require seven (7) years of education in a listed country with English language systems/institutions (see list provided below). These years could be acquired in either a consecutive or non-consecutive manner. If, however, these years were all consecutive and inclusive of only secondary or post-secondary education in an English-speaking environment, the number of years to be considered as a speaker of English as a first language could be achieved in a period of three (3) years.

2. To ensure consistency and quality assurance in student program entry, institution-created tests are not acceptable for the assessment of applicants whose first language is not English at this time.¹¹

3. The Registry has established the following list of countries as those with English language systems / institutions.¹²

Countries with English language systems / institutions (where English is a primary, official language and the language used for education)

American Samoa	Dominica	Mauritius	Uganda
Anguilla	Falkland Islands	Montserrat	United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland)
Antigua	Fiji	New Zealand	United States of America (USA)
Australia	Ghana	Seychelles	US Virgin Islands
Bahamas	Grenada	Singapore	
Barbados	Guam	South Africa	
Belize	Guyana	St. Kitts and Nevis	
Bermuda	Irish Republic	St. Lucia	
British Virgin Islands	Jamaica	St. Vincent	
Cayman Island	Kenya	Trinidad and Tobago	
Canada*	Malta	Turks and Caico Islands	

*Applicants educated in Quebec at an institution where the language of instruction was not English, must meet the current English language proficiency requirements.

¹¹ In cases of proven hardship, (e.g. College is located in a remote location and there is no local access to any of the listed tests), the educational institution may contact the Registry.

¹² Weighted criteria to determine inclusion of a country on this list were: use of English as by more than 50% of the population, country literacy rate as compared to world literacy rate, School Life Expectancy (SLE) rate as compared to the world SLE rate, schooling in languages other than English in primary grades and consistency of listing by Canadian post-secondary institutions.

BC Health Care Assistant (HCA) Programs English Language Competency Requirements

Remote Language Proficiency Assessments Interim Emergency Measures for HCA Program Entry Effective to June 30, 2021

1. Applicants whose first language is not English

The Registry is aware that, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been interruptions to services that normally support HCA program applicants to meet English Language Competency Requirements, including the closure of English language assessment centres.

To ensure that Health Care Assistant programs are able to move forward, the following interim emergency measures are being allowed.

Applicants whose first language is not English may provide one of the following as evidence of program entry:

- **For the HCA Program¹**

CLBPT Remote Assessment: test within the last year. Listening 7, Speaking 7, Reading 6, Writing 6. Assessment results dated on or before June 30, 2021 may be accepted.

TOEFL iBT, Special Home Edition: test within the last year. Overall score of 76 with no score lower than 20 in Speaking and Listening and no score lower than 18 in Reading and Writing. Assessment results dated between May 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021 may be accepted.

- **For the HCA ESL Program Variation**

CLBPT Remote Assessment: test within the last year. Listening 6, Speaking 6, Reading 5, Writing 5. Assessment results date on or before June 30, 2021 may be accepted.

TOEFL iBT, Special Home Edition: test within the last year. Overall score of 56 with no score lower than 15 in Speaking and Listening and no score lower than 13 in Reading and Writing. Assessment results dated between May 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021 may be accepted.

For further information, see Appendix A.

¹ Includes recognized variations such as the Health Care Assistant Access Program and the Health Care Assistant Upgrade Program

Appendix A - Information about Remote Assessments

1. **CLBPT Remote Assessment:** <https://www.language.ca/resources/expertise/for-language-learners/#1473771803983-0f2b7a24-0d0f>

The CLBPT Remote Assessment can be taken at home, with security provided remotely by the CLBPT assessor. For more information regarding rules for remote testing, see client consent form:

Client Consent Form



CLBPT_Remote_No
Proctor_Client consen

The test is identical in content and format to the CLBPT Assessment, which is already an accepted test within English Language Competency Requirements. Test Interpretation for the CLBPT Remote is the same as for the CLBPT.

Test details and fees vary by assessment centre. The following approved CLBPT assessment centres have confirmed they offer the CLBPT remote and provided cost and contact information:

[ISS Language and Career College of BC](#)

Contact: info@LCC.issbc.org

Cost: \$150.00

[MOSAIC engage](#)

Contact: clbpt@mosaicbc.org

Cost: \$120.00

[Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Society](#)

Contact: jennifer@vircs.bc.ca

Cost: \$100.00

Note: There may be additional testing centres offering the CLBPT remote. For more information, contact [assessment centres](#) directly.

2. **TOEFL iBT Special Home Edition Test:** https://www.ets.org/s/cv/toefl/at-home/?gclid=EAlalQobChMlgaKxw9zb6AIVisBkCh1I4gWQEAAAYASAAEgKP8fD_BwE

The TOEFL iBT, Special Home Edition Test can be taken at home, with security provided remotely by a human proctor through ProctorU. For more information regarding test security, visit the link above

This test is identical in content, format and on-screen experience to the TOEFL iBT test taken at a test center. The TOEFL iBT is already an accepted test within the English Language Competency Requirements. Test Interpretation for the special home edition is the same as for the TOEFL iBT

Test results are available within 6-10 days of the test. Scores can also be shared with selected educational institutions. Candidates may retest again after 3 days.

Test Fees are listed [here and total \\$245.00](#)