

## Health Care Assistant (HCA) Education Program

### Minimum HCA Program Entry Requirements

These are the *minimum* program entry requirements that must be met by students in recognized BC HCA Programs. Post-secondary institutions (PSIs) may set standards that exceed these requirements (e.g. setting additional practice education requirements). Evidence of meeting these minimum requirements must be available in student files.

### Program Entry Requirements

*Evidence of both of the following must be provided prior to acceptance:*

1. Proof of Grade 10 completion (or equivalent)<sup>1</sup> **OR** mature student status<sup>2</sup>
2. Proof of meeting [HCA Program Entry - English Language Competency Requirements](#)
  - For applicants with three years of full-time instruction in English\*: English 10 completion or equivalent
  - For applicants with less than three years of full-time instruction in English\*: Standardized English language proficiency test score

\*Defined as three (3) years of full-time secondary and/or post-secondary education at a recognized institution<sup>3</sup> on the list of [Approved English Speaking Countries](#). Secondary education will be considered starting from grade 8. English as a Second Language (ESL) courses will not be considered.

**Note:** If the program is accepting international students, a clear police certificate from country of origin must also be included as a program entry requirement<sup>4</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> To determine equivalency, BC PSIs may wish to consult [ICES Country Specific Information](#) or [ICAS International Education Guides](#)

<sup>2</sup> Where a post-secondary institution allows entry based on mature student status, the institution must have a definition/policy in place.

<sup>3</sup> Recognized institution: an institution that is in good standing with the Ministry of Education or equivalent in the country of origin.

<sup>4</sup> A clear police certificate from the country of origin must be provided prior to acceptance given that HCA students provide care to vulnerable clients within the practice education portion of the program. To avoid potential hardship for students arriving from another country, the police certificate is an admission requirement. For further information, see information provided at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/application/medical-police/police-certificates/how.html>

## HCA Program Entry - 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 to be successful in their studies and capable of providing safe and competent care to patients/clients/residents in the work environment during practice education components.

To ensure consistency and quality assurance, institution-created tests are not acceptable for the assessment of HCA program applicants. For clarification, three years of full-time instruction in English is defined as three (3) years of full-time secondary and/or post-secondary education in the English language at a recognized institution<sup>5</sup> on the list of [Approved English Speaking Countries](#). English as a Second Language (ESL) courses will not be considered.

### English Language Competency Requirements

1. Applicants who provide evidence of three years of full-time instruction in English<sup>6</sup> must also provide proof of one of the following:
  - a) Completion of Grade 10 English<sup>7</sup> (or higher). A minimum of a C grade is acceptable.
  - b) Completion of college courses determined to be equivalent to Grade 10 English (or higher) by post-secondary institutions. A minimum of a C grade is acceptable.
  - c) ACCUPLACER Next Generation Test Results: Reading 230, Writing 230 and Writeplacer 4
2. Applicants who cannot provide evidence of three years of full-time instruction in English are required to provide proof of one of the following standardized proficiency tests from an authorized assessment agency.
  - a) [Canadian Language Benchmarks Placement Test \(CLBPT\) or CLBPT Remote](#).<sup>8</sup> Test in the last year. Listening 7, Speaking 7, Reading 6 and Writing 6.
  - b) [Canadian English Language Proficiency Index Program](#) (CELPPI General or CELPIP Online). Test in the last two years. Listening 7, Speaking 7, Reading 6 and Writing 6.
  - c) [International English Language Testing System](#) (IELTS Academic, IELTS General or IELTS Academic Online). Test in 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.
  - d) [Canadian Academic English Language Assessment](#) (CAEL or CAEL Online). Test in the last two years. Overall Score of 60, with no section less than 50.
  - e) [The Test of English as a Foreign Language](#) (TOEFL iBT or TOEFL iBT Home Edition). Test in the last two years. Overall score of 76 with no score lower than 20 in Speaking and Listening and no score lower than 18 in Reading and Writing.

---

<sup>5</sup> Recognized institution: institution that is in good standing with the Ministry of Education or equivalent in the originating jurisdiction.

<sup>6</sup> Applicants must provide a transcript(s) or a BC personal education record as evidence to confirm completion of a minimum of three years of full-time instruction in English. To meet this threshold, the Registry looks to confirm that applicants have studied over a period of three years and completed a minimum of two semesters of studies within each year. In addition, it is expected that the student will be taking full time studies (30 credits per academic year to a minimum of 18 credits per academic year [60% courseload]). In this way, it is typically a minimum of six semesters with total credits between 54 – 90 credits, completed over the three-year timeframe.

<sup>7</sup> Includes any English Language Arts 10 course or GED indicating completion of the English requirement.

<sup>8</sup> HCA Educators must ensure that the CLBPT is conducted with a licensed CLBPT Assessment Centre by a certified CLBPT language assessor.

**Notes:**

In cases where applicants already hold Canadian English Language Benchmark Assessment for nurses (CELBAN) results. Test in the last 2 years. Speaking 7, Listening 7, Reading 6, Writing 6.

In addition to the tests and test scores listed above (#2), recognized BC HCA Programs also have the discretion to accept HCA program applicants with a CLB Report Card from a LINC Program indicating “Completing” CLB Speaking 7, Listening 7, Reading 7 and Writing 7 AND “Recommended Class Placement” as Speaking 8, Listening 8, Reading 8 and Writing.

## BC HCA English as a Second Language (ESL) Programs (or equivalent)

For PSIs offering a combined HCA ESL program (a minimum of 12 weeks/300 hours of additional program time for English language skills instruction), applicants will require evidence of one of the following test scores when applying for program entry:

- a) [Canadian Language Benchmarks Placement Test \(CLBPT\) or CLBPT Remote](#).<sup>9</sup> Test in the last year. Listening 6, Speaking 6, Reading 5 and Writing 5.
- b) [Canadian English Language Proficiency Index Program](#) (CELPPIP – General or CELPIP - Online). Test in the last two years. Listening 6, Speaking 6, Reading 5 and Writing 5.
- c) [International English Language Testing System](#) (IELTS Academic, IELTS General or IELTS Academic Online). Test in the last two years. Overall score of 5.5 with a minimum of 5.5 in Speaking and Listening and no score lower than 5.0 in Reading and Writing.
- d) [Canadian Academic English Language Assessment](#) (CAEL or CAEL Online). Test in the last two years. Overall Score of 50, with no section less than 40.
- e) [The Test of English as a Foreign Language](#) (TOEFL iBT or TOEFL iBT Home Edition). Test in the last two years. Overall score of 56 with no score lower than 15 in Speaking and Listening and no score lower than 13 in Reading and Writing.

**Notes:**

In cases where applicants already hold Canadian English Language Benchmark Assessment for nurses (CELBAN) results. Test in the last 2 years. Speaking 6, Listening 6, Reading 5, Writing 5.

In addition to the tests and test scores listed above for BC HCA ESL (or equivalent) Programs, recognized BC HCA Programs also have the discretion to accept applicants with a CLB Report Card from a LINC Program indicating “Completing” CLB Speaking 6, Listening 6, Reading 6 and Writing 6 AND “Recommended Class Placement” as Speaking 7, Listening 7, Reading 7 and Writing 7.

---

<sup>9</sup> HCA Educators must ensure that the CLBPT is conducted with a licensed CLBPT assessment centre by a certified CLBPT language assessor.

## Approved English-Speaking Countries<sup>10</sup>

The following countries are considered as those with English language systems / institutions, where English is a primary and official language, and the language used for education.

American Samoa	Ghana	Saint Lucia
Anguilla	Gibraltar	Saint Kitts and Nevis
Antigua and Barbuda	Grenada	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
Australia	Guam	Seychelles
Bahamas	Guyana	Sierra Leone
Barbados	Ireland	Singapore
Belize	Jamaica	South Africa
Bermuda	Kenya	Tanzania
Botswana	Lesotho	Trinidad and Tobago
British Virgin Islands	Liberia	Turks and Caicos Islands
Canada	Malta	Uganda
Cayman Islands	Mauritius	United Kingdom
Dominica	Montserrat	United States
Falkland Islands	New Zealand	United States Virgin Islands
Fiji	Nigeria	Zambia
Gambia	Saint Helena	Zimbabwe

---

<sup>10</sup> This list has been updated as per [countries that satisfy the English language admission standard](#) for the University of British Columbia