

Meeting the English Language Requirements

Effective: February 2, 2026

INTRODUCTION

The College of Licensed Practical Nurses and Health Care Aides of Alberta (CLHA) has the **authority** under the *Health Professions Act* (HPA) to carry out its activities and **govern** Health Care Aides (HCAs)* in a manner that serves and protects the public interest.

All CLHA applicants must be able to provide evidence of their English language skills as a **requirement** for registration. This is important to ensure safe and effective delivery of care. HCAs must be able to provide **professional services** to clients by communicating and documenting clearly in English, as required by section 28(1)(f) of the HPA.

Terms found in the definition section are **bolded** where they appear for the first time in this document.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline how applicants can demonstrate English language skills to the CLHA.

POLICY

English language skills involve four criteria: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. All applicants must demonstrate adequate English language skills before registration, which can be done in one of the following ways.

1. Provide satisfactory evidence of successful completion of studies in English at a recognized high school in Canada or an approved **secondary school** in any country with at least three consecutive years of full-time academic study (proof of **original transcripts** is accepted directly from the educational institution or through MyCreds).
2. Provide satisfactory evidence of successfully completing a college course **equivalent** to grade nine English (or higher) offered by a post-secondary institution, with a minimum of grade C required (proof of original transcripts is accepted directly from the educational institution or through MyCreds).

* In this document, "Health Care Aide" has the same meaning as "regulated member(s)" in the *Health Professions Act*.

3. Provide satisfactory evidence of current HCA registration or registration that expired within the last two years in another Canadian province where that jurisdiction has assessed English language skills as meeting the requirements.
4. Obtain a passing score from one of the following tests:
 - Test of English as a Foreign Language Internet Based Testing (TOEFL iBT),
 - International English Language Testing System (IELTS—Academic Version only),
 - Canadian English Language Proficiency Index Program (CELPIP),
 - Canadian Language Benchmarks Placement Test (CLB PT),
 - Occupational English Test (OET),
 - PTE Academic administered by Pearson, or
 - Canadian English Language Benchmark Assessment for Nurses (CELBAN).

Details about the tests and satisfactory scores are presented in the Appendix. Results are **valid** for up to two years, and originals should be sent directly to the CLHA from the testing facility. **Combined scores** from more than one test or from more than one attempt of the same test are not accepted.

5. Submit satisfactory evidence of providing professional services to clients in English in Canada. This evidence must be **verified** by a regulated healthcare professional or an employer who works directly with the applicant, confirming the last date on which the applicant provided professional services in English. English language skills are considered valid for two years from the last date on which the applicant provided professional services to clients in English within Canada.
6. Provide a letter, satisfactory to the **Registrar**, from an employer confirming English as the primary language used by the applicant in providing professional services; the letter should be from the current or most recent employer and is valid for two years from the date of issue.

If you cannot meet any of the above requirements, please contact the CLHA Registration Department to discuss your situation.

TEST SCORE REQUIREMENTS

English Test	Passing Score	Contact to Write Test	Notes
Test of English as a Foreign Language Internet Based Testing (TOEFL iBT)	Listening: 4.5 Reading: 3.5 Writing: 3.5 Speaking: 4.0	Test of English as a Foreign Language TOEFL	
International English Language Testing System (IELTS) Academic Version only	Listening: 6.0 Reading: 5.5 Speaking: 5.5 Writing: 6.0	International English Language Testing System Alberta: 1-403-543-7300 IELTS	It is recommended that applicants first complete a sample test.
Canadian English Language Proficiency Index Program (CELPIP)	Listening: 7 Reading: 6 Writing: 6 Speaking: 7	Canadian English Language Proficiency Index Program CELPIP	
Canadian Language Benchmarks Placement Test (CLB PT)	Listening: 7 Reading: 7 Writing: 7 Speaking: 7	Canadian Language Benchmark Test Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks	
Occupational English Test (OET)	Listening: C Reading: C Writing: C Speaking: C	Occupational English Test OET	
PTE Academic	Listening: 73 Reading: 66 Writing: 68 Speaking: 75	PTE Academic PTE Academic	
Canadian English Language Benchmark Assessment for Nurses (CELBAN)	Listening: 7 Reading: 7 Writing: 7 Speaking: 7	Canadian English Language Benchmark Assessment for Nurses The CELBAN Centre	

CONCLUSION

Confirming an HCA's English language skills in the registration process ensures that all HCAs can provide professional services in English as required by the HPA and that applicants can demonstrate that they have met the language requirements in one of the ways described in the policy.

Documents are updated frequently. For the most current version and access to related documents and resources, please visit the Knowledge Hub on clha.com.

If after reading this document you have questions, please contact the CLHA's Registration Team at registration@clha.com or 780-484-8886 or 1-800-661-5877 (toll free in Alberta).

DEFINITIONS

Authority: refers to the power or right to give orders, make decisions, and enforce obedience. It can also mean the appropriate person to give orders or make decisions.

Combined scores: the total of the sum of specific passing scores.

Equivalent: equal to or having the same effect as something else.

Govern: to lead, control, or manage an organization or group, often by creating rules and making decisions that guide their actions.

Original transcript: means a student record that includes grades and credit hours earned and that has the official seal of the educational institution or certifying body, along with the signature of the registrar.

Professional services: defined in the *Health Professions Act* as a service that falls within the practice of an HCA. This includes one or more of the following:

- assist and support activities of daily living to provide basic personal care and health services,
- assist in teaching a Health Care Aide certificate program approved by the Council,
- participate in client education and promotion of client wellness across the lifespan,
- teach Health Care Aide techniques and practices to practitioners in the workplace, and
- provide restricted activities provided by the regulation.

Registrar: the individual responsible for registering HCAs with a regulatory health college and other operations of the college. The Chief Executive Officer of the CLHA is also the Registrar of the CLHA.

Requirements: something that is needed.

Secondary school: a school for students between elementary and college, usually grades nine to 12.

Valid: legally or officially acceptable.

Verified: to prove that something is true or to make certain that something is correct.