



Health Care Aide Program Approval Standards and Indicators

Effective Date: May 28, 2026 (Council Approval)

College of LPNs and HCAs of Alberta



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Program Review Mission Statement	1
Program Review Framework	1
Standard 1: Program Leadership.....	2
Standard 2: Resources	3
Standard 3: Curriculum Delivery	4
Standard 4: Faculty	5
Standard 5: Student Support	6
Standard 6: Collaborative Relationships	7
Definitions.....	8

PROGRAM REVIEW MISSION STATEMENT

The College of LPNs and HCAs of Alberta (CLHA) conducts reviews of health care aide programs to safeguard public interest. The purpose of program review is to support the delivery of quality programming, thereby facilitating competent graduates to the provincial workforce.

PROGRAM REVIEW FRAMEWORK

The program review framework is the lens through which all health care aide programs are reviewed. Six broad standards have been identified as contributing to a program's ability to produce competent graduates.

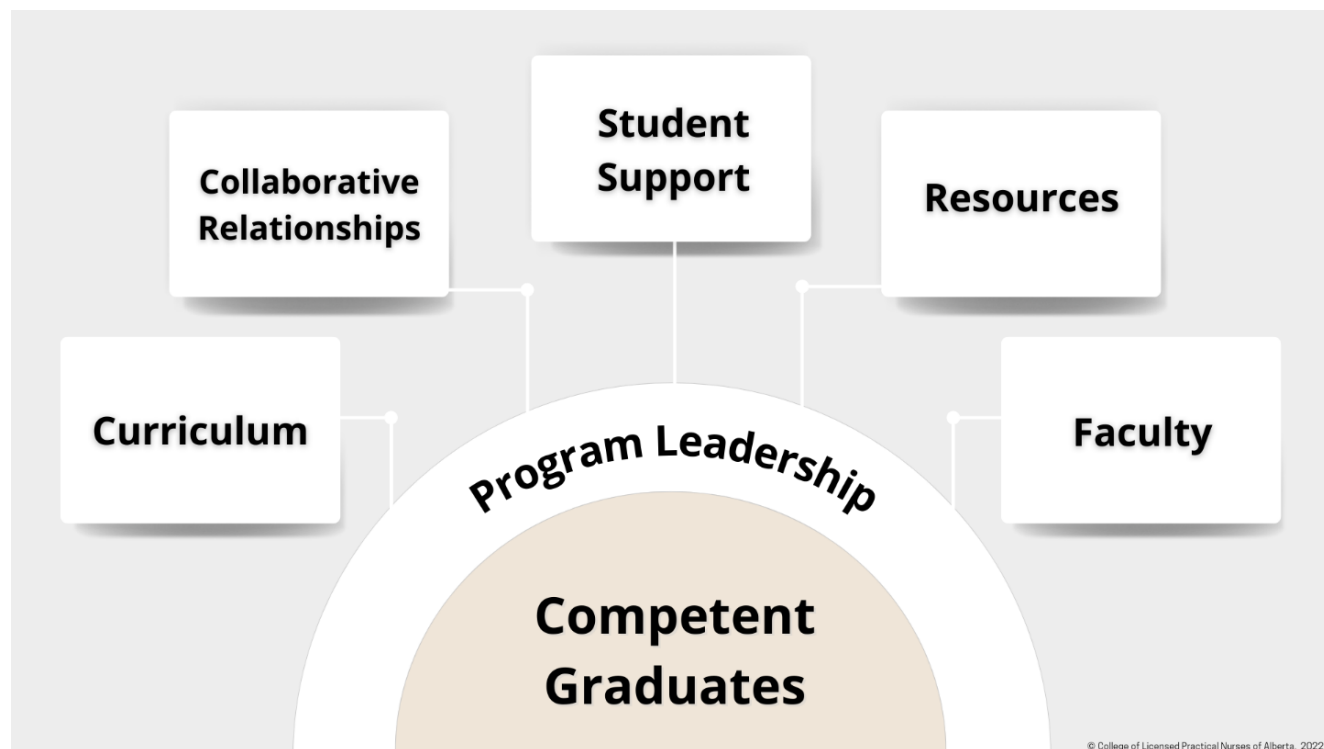


FIGURE 1.1 FRAMEWORK

STANDARD 1: PROGRAM LEADERSHIP

Program leadership is the foundation for which all other standards are supported. The leadership team has control over a program budget, has autonomy to make decisions regarding the program, and engages in ongoing program evaluation and improvement. A minimum of one member of the leadership team holds an active practice permit in nursing in the province of Alberta. In addition, the leadership team is comprised of individuals with related industry, academic and administrative experience to set the program's mission, and provide the strategic direction to address immediate and long-term goals and challenges.

The following indicators apply to ALL Health Care Aide programs

- 1.1 The program has a defined leadership team comprised of individuals with industry, administrative, and/or academic experience.
- 1.2 A minimum of one member of the leadership team holds an active practice permit, free from restrictions from either the CLHA, CRNA or CRPNA.
- 1.3 The leadership team has the authority to direct and manage the program budget and resources.
- 1.4 The leadership team engages in ongoing program evaluation and quality improvement.
- 1.5 The leadership team demonstrates continued learning, growth and development related to leadership.

STANDARD 2: RESOURCES

The program has adequate space, financial, human, and technical resources in addition to relevant clinical-placement capacity to facilitate student learning and practical experiences. The program has the infrastructure and security to support the maintenance, cataloging and retrieval of student records.

The following indicators apply to ALL Health Care Aide programs

- 2.1 The program has the physical and/or technological resources to facilitate in-person and/or online learning.
- 2.2 The program has access to infrastructure that simulates care settings and students are provided with adequate laboratory supplies and time to achieve learning outcomes.
- 2.3 The program has the infrastructure needed to maintain, catalog, and retrieve student records.
- 2.4 The program has adequate faculty to deliver the program.
- 2.5 The program has clinical and individual consolidated placements to support student enrollment.
- 2.6 The program provides students with adequate and relevant clinical learning opportunities to support attainment of entry-level competencies by caring for diverse patients throughout different care settings (supportive living, long-term care, acute care, home care, etc.).

STANDARD 3: CURRICULUM DELIVERY

Curriculum delivery follows a logical sequencing which allows for development of knowledge, skills, behaviours, and attitudes. The program delivers curriculum which is mapped to the related scope of practice and competency profiles. Student evaluation focuses on the standardized curriculum and program outcomes which align with the scope of practice, competency profile as well as legal and professional expectations. The program has a formalized method to engage in an ongoing review of the curriculum delivery, including consultation with subject matter experts.

The following indicators apply to ALL Health Care Aide programs

- 3.1 The program aligns with the current version of the Alberta standardized HCA curriculum.
- 3.2 The program utilizes course syllabi for their HCA Program that reflect the intended objectives, course content, course hours, delivery methodology and sequencing as outlined in the Alberta standardized HCA curriculum.
- 3.3 The program's instruction and evaluation methods (formative and summative), comply with the Alberta standardized HCA curriculum.
- 3.4 The program applies exam blueprinting.
- 3.5 The program demonstrates a consistent trend of being equal to or above the provincial pass rate for first-time Alberta Health Care Aide Registration Exam (AHRE) exam writers.
- 3.6 The program has a formalized process in place to facilitate a review of curriculum delivery and monitors program outcomes.
- 3.7 The program demonstrates a consistent pattern of progress toward full compliance in the HCA program approval standards and indicators.

STANDARD 4: FACULTY

Program faculty have instructional and clinical experience relevant to their role in the program. Faculty have practical knowledge of the scope of practice, challenges and opportunities facing the profession. Faculty also have and are supported in further developing facilitation skills to administer the Alberta standardized HCA curriculum. The program supports faculty in maintaining industry connections and currency in clinical practice. The program has a formalized method to gather and respond to trends in faculty attrition and faculty feedback regarding courses, teaching practices, program structure, policies, and procedures.

The following indicators apply to ALL Health Care Aide programs

- 4.1 Program faculty assigned to health care aide courses hold active practice permits from either CLHA, CRNA, or CRPNA and meet the minimum qualifications for individuals teaching the HCA Provincial Curriculum as outlined in the Government of Alberta Curriculum and Licensing Policy 8.0 Instructor Qualifications (2024).
- 4.2 The program provides an orientation to all faculty prior to facilitating any in-person, online or clinical teaching.
- 4.3 The program faculty are supported by the program in maintaining currency in practice and/or subject matter expertise.
- 4.4 Faculty receive feedback on performance.
- 4.5 The program tracks attrition of faculty and is responsive to any sudden increase of faculty attrition.
- 4.6 Faculty are engaged at minimum annually to provide feedback on teaching and learning experiences and the program monitors feedback to inform program improvement.
- 4.7 Faculty demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of the HCA competency profile, code of ethics and standard of practices.

STANDARD 5: STUDENT SUPPORT

The program has policies, procedures, and resources in place to support students from application through to end of their program. The program demonstrates consistent application of the admission criteria and sound assessment of individual competency when awarding prior learning (PLAR). The program has a formalized method to gather and respond to trends in students' outcomes and student feedback regarding courses, teaching practices, program structure, policies, and procedures.

The following indicators apply to ALL Health Care Aide programs

- 5.1 The HCA Program outlines the requirements for admission, as outlined in the Alberta standardized HCA curriculum, including PLAR. These processes are clearly articulated, available to stakeholders, and communicated to students in the application process.
- 5.2 The program selection process is available to applicants.
- 5.3 Students are provided with an orientation document(s) (for example, a student handbook) inclusive of all clinical requirements, student expectations and relevant program policies and procedures at the beginning of the program.
- 5.4 The program provides students with ongoing feedback (both formative and summative) in theory, lab, and clinical courses, as well as opportunities for remediation.
- 5.5 The clinical and comprehensive practicum faculty to student ratio supports safe clinical supervision and instructor availability.
- 5.6 Students are engaged in providing formal feedback on teaching and learning experiences and the program monitors both formal and informal feedback to inform program improvements.
- 5.7 The program monitors **student attrition** and uses the data to inform program improvement.
- 5.8 The program has a method in place to monitor, respond to **near misses** and **errors** in clinical practice.
- 5.9 The program supports student clinical experiences by providing orientation material for both the site supervisor and student mentors that includes at minimum the roles of the **mentor (buddy)**, student and faculty advisor/liaison and a clear method to contact the program and the advisor/liaison.

STANDARD 6: COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

The program cultivates relationships with industry, external stakeholders such as the Government of Alberta, graduates, and the regulatory college. The program maintains current placement agreements with clinical partners and seeks opportunities for students to practice in a variety of clinical settings. External stakeholder feedback, graduate preparedness and industry needs are collected and analyzed as a part of the ongoing program evaluation.

The following indicators apply to ALL Health Care Aide programs

- 6.1 The program has formal clinical placement agreements in place identifying the responsibilities of the program/institution and clinical partners.
- 6.2 The program collaborates and seeks out the CLHA to provide information, feedback, and support in program delivery. (For example, submissions of Notices of Change.)
- 6.3 The program collaborates with, and seeks out clinical partners, employers, program graduates, and other stakeholders to provide program feedback and validate program outcomes.

DEFINITIONS

Approved Program of study: A program that has been formally assessed by Alberta Advanced Education and approved by the Minister or licensed by the Private Career Colleges.

Mentor or Buddy: A buddy works alongside the HCA student and may provide direct or indirect guidance to the HCA student. A buddy is not a preceptor. The buddy does not supervise the HCA Student.

Errors: An event that occurred in clinical practice which resulted in patient harm because of a student's action or inaction.

High Quality: Simulation experience provided to students with a high degree of realism and clinical problem solving. High Quality also includes a process to monitor and validate student outcomes. Please note high quality does not equate to high fidelity.

Near Misses: An event that occurred in clinical practice which could have resulted in patient harm because of a student's action or inaction.

Program Faculty: Any individual who is involved in direct student instruction in the theory, laboratory, or clinical setting. This includes contract, casual and sessional staff.

PLAR: Prior learning assessment and recognition

Student attrition: Students who have withdrawn from or have failed a course or program.

Transfers: A course which has been deemed to be equivalent at another approved program of study.