

DISCOVERY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES

Health Care Assistant English as a Second Language Program

CURRICULUM GUIDE

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Recent Revision Dates: April 2023, May 2023, January 2024; March 2024.

Current revision: October 2024.

PURPOSE

Discovery Community College's Health Care Assistant English as a Second Language (HCA ESL) diploma program is designed to provide students who are at the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLBs) of Listening 6, Speaking, 6, Reading 5, and Writing 5 to enter the program and improve their English language level and abilities while developing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to function effectively as front-line caregivers and respected members of the health care team. Under the direction and supervision of a health care professional and an experienced ESL instructor, graduates provide person-centred care aimed at promoting and maintaining the physical, emotional, cognitive, and social well-being of clients.

Upon completion of the program, graduates are prepared to work at English language CLB levels of Listening 7, Speaking 7, Reading 6, and Writing 6 in a variety of practice settings including home support, assisted living, group homes, complex care, special care units, other home and community care settings, and acute care.

PROGRAM Methods of Delivery

This program is offered in these delivery models:

- In person in the classroom and in the simulation classroom at a DCC campus for theory and practice courses, with work experience placements on site in the community.
- Combined in person in class over video conference (using MS Teams) and in person in the classroom for theory courses; in the simulation classroom at a DCC campus for practice courses, with work experience placements on site in the community.

Video conference learning for theory courses is synchronous, meaning students attend classes virtually in 'real time' with instructors and classmates.

PROGRAM DESIGN

Courses are listed below in order of delivery.

Course name	Hours	Delivery method
ESL 1: Introductory English for HCA	100	In class
GO Week 901: online learning, DCC policy and procedure, financial literacy	20	In class or video conference
Workshops: first aid (16 hrs), FoodSafe (8 hrs)	24	In class
ESL 2: Integrated English for HCA (delivered over 25 weeks and must be completed before Practice Experiences)	200	In class
Concepts for practice	70	In class or video conference

Introduction to practice	30	In class or video conference
Interpersonal communications	50	In class or video conference
Lifestyle and choices	30	In class or video conference
Common health challenges	120	In class or video conference
Cognitive and/or mental health challenges	60	In class or video conference
Personal care and assistance	120	In class simulation centre 85 hrs; in class of video conference 35 hrs.
Practice experience in multi-level and/or complex care placement including a placement focused on specialized dementia care: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Instructor led clinical placement 160 hrs. ▪ Practicum or preceptor placement 60 hrs. 	220	On site
Practice experience in home support, assisted living, and/or group home setting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Preceptorship 60 hrs 	60	On site

TOTALS

- **ESL classes = 300 hours**
- **Orientation and Workshop classes = 44 hours**
- **Theory and Simulation Centre classes = 480 hours**
- **Practice Education classes = 280 hours**
- **Total program = 1,104 hours delivered over 46 weeks**

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of the HCA program, graduates will be able to:

1. Provide person-centred care and assistance that recognizes and respects the uniqueness of each individual client.
2. Use an informed problem-solving approach to provide care and assistance that promotes the physical, psychological, cognitive, social, and spiritual health and well-being of clients and families.
3. Provide person-centred care and assistance for clients/residents experiencing complex health challenges.
4. Provide person-centred care and assistance for clients experiencing cognitive and/or mental health challenges.
5. Interact with other members of the health care team in ways that contribute to effective working relationships and the achievement of goals.
6. Communicate clearly, accurately, and sensitively with clients and families in a variety of community and facility contexts.
7. Provide personal care and assistance in a safe, competent, and organized manner.
8. Recognize and respond to own self-development, learning, and health enhancement needs.
9. Perform the care provider role in a reflective, responsible, accountable, and professional manner.

ESL LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of the ESL portion, graduates will be able to:

Listen (CLB 7)

- Interpret and identify between moderately complex social exchanges, persuasive communication, directions/instructions, short group interactions, discussions/meetings, requests/reminders/orders/pleas and extended descriptive or narrative monologues or presentations.
- Distinguish between facts and opinions, implied meaning/intent, details, language functions/expressions, style and register, emotional state/mood/attitude, and context.
- Identify purpose, main ideas, and supporting/factual details.
- Identify requests/reminders, patterns of chronological order and sequence, comparison and contrast and cause and effect.
- Review sequence markers, cohesive devices (connecting words, reference, parallel structure, substitution) or other linguistic clues.
- Make inferences and predict consequences/outcomes.
- Respond with actions and clarifying questions.

Speak (CLB 7)

- Reproduce less routine social conversations, routine phone calls, instructions/directions, and procedures/processes.
- Devise extended warnings, suggestions, recommendations, or advice.
- Explain detailed information; express and qualify opinions and feelings; express reservations, persuasiveness, politeness, approval, disapproval, possibilities, and probabilities one-on-one and in small group discussions or meetings.
- Introduces a person formally to a group in a way that is appropriate to the situation and audience.
- Create presentations about moderately complex processes, to tell stories (including future scenarios), to describe, or to compare/contrast in detail 2 events, jobs or procedures using, connected discourse, structure, and non-verbal communication.
- Duplicate a short formal conversation, closing with 3 customary steps (pre-closing, closing, leave-taking).
- Demonstrate questioning to keep the conversation going or to clarify, holding the floor and resuming after an interruption, changing the topic appropriately and confirming comprehension by repeating or paraphrasing.
- Report information, give instructions or leave accurate messages in some detail by using sequence, references, or intonation.
- Summarize information and ideas to clarify and confirm understanding.

Read (CLB 6)

- Identify and interpret moderately complex social messages, instructions and instructional texts for multistep procedures related to everyday situations, business/service texts containing advice, requests, or detailed specifications and descriptive or narrative texts on familiar topics contained in formatted texts.
- Identify purpose, main ideas, details, fact from opinion and implied meanings.
- Identify reader/writer relationship, including mood/attitude of writer and the context.
- Interprets sequence and location signals and implied meanings to infer correct sequence.
- Use instructions as required to complete a task.

- Identify layout and organization of text and links to find the information needed.
- Retells or summarizes.
- Recognize 2 or 3 pieces of information by scanning the text.
- Access, locate and compare relevant online references/information using effective search strategies.

Write (CLB 6)

- Compose personal messages in short, formal, and informal correspondence for an expanding range of everyday social purposes, short business or service correspondence for routine purposes and connected paragraphs to relate a familiar sequence of events, a story, a detailed description or a comparison of people, things, routines, or simple procedures.
- Produce short, factual oral discourse to notes or messages/page of information to an outline or summary using common conventions such as point form.
- Complete forms requiring detailed personal information.
- Organize writing with an introduction, development, and conclusion in adequate paragraph structure.
- Explain the intended meaning and purpose of various writing samples.
- Use language, content, and format appropriate/relevant to the situation.
- Express sense of audience in language and format, main ideas, and support with some detail.
- Report details (such as names, addresses, dates, times, and directions) legibly and with correct spelling, capitalization, punctuation and appropriate connective words and phrases.

The above learning outcomes will be achieved as the students' progress through the program courses. Knowledge, skills, and behaviours are learned and practiced and reinforced until each student is competent and confident.

As students' progress through the program, they will begin to take responsibility for their knowledge and application of that knowledge, for the caring practice they provide to their clients, for identifying and suggesting remedies for either making further progress in their own development or overcoming deficits, and for all professional and ethical aspects of their behaviour in all areas of the program.

Career Occupation

The Health Care Assistant program prepares students for career occupations as health care assistants, care aides, community health workers. They are frontline care providers in a variety of institutional and community settings including home support agencies and residential care facilities. They may be employed by public and/or private health care providers (NOC 2021 code 33102).

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Revised: October 2024.

Applicants must meet these minimum program entry requirements:

- Proof of Grade 10 completion (or equivalent)¹ OR mature student status²
- Proof of meeting HCA program entry – English language competency requirements

¹ To determine equivalency, refer to [ICES Country Specific Information - BCIT](#)

² Must be 19 years of age on the first day of class.

- 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 years of full-time secondary and/or post-secondary education in the English language at a recognized institution on the list of approved English-speaking countries³. Secondary education starts at grade 8. ESL courses will not be considered.*

Note: applicants wishing to apply to Student Aid BC for financial aid, must have graduated from a BC secondary school (grade 12) or equivalent from another school system OR be a mature applicant (19 years of age on the first day of class).

Note: International students must provide a clear police certificate from their country of origin prior to acceptance – this is a program entry requirement. 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. Please refer to information provided at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/application/medical-police/police-certificates/how.html>.

Applicants must also:

- Submit completed application forms.
- Meet with a DCC official and complete required documents.

HCA program entry – English language competency requirements

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.

Applicants who provide evidence of three years of full-time instruction in English* must also provide proof of one of the following:

- Completion of grade 10 English⁴ (or higher); a minimum C grade is acceptable.
- Completion of college courses determined to be equivalent to grade 10 English by post-secondary institutions. A minimum C grade is acceptable.
- Accuplacer next generation test: reading 230, writing 230, WritePlacer 4.

**Applicants must provide a transcript or a BC personal education record as evidence to confirm completion. Applicants must have studied over a period of three years and completed a minimum of two semesters of studies within each year. It is expected that the student will be taking full time studies (30 credits to a minimum of 18 credits per academic year). Typically, a minimum of six semesters with between 54-90 total credits would be completed over the three-year timeframe.*

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

³ Refer to DCC admissions advisor for list of approved English-speaking countries.

⁴ Includes any English language arts 10 course or GED indicating completion of the English requirement.

agency. *These tests and their required marks (levels) are listed in the curriculum guide for the regular HCA program. Applicants to this HCA ESL program must satisfy the following standards.*

ESL (English as Second Language) Benchmarks

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Applicants to the HCA ESL program can enter at a lower language benchmark than applicants to the regular HCA program. Applicants must provide evidence of one of the following test scores:

- Canadian Language Benchmark Placement Test (CLBPT) or CLBPT Remote – test in the last year:
 - Listening 6, Speaking 6, Reading 5, Writing 5
- Canadian Language Benchmarks Placement Assessment (CLBPA) – test in the last year.
 - Listening 6, Speaking 6, Reading 5, Writing 5
- Canadian English Language Proficiency Index Program (CELPPI General or CELPIP Online) – test in the last two years:
 - Listening 6, Speaking 6, Reading 5, Writing 5
- International English Language Testing System (IELTS Academic, IELTS General, IELTS Academic Online) – test in the last two years:
 - Listening 5.5, Speaking 5.5, Reading 5.0, Writing 5.0, Overall score 5.5
- 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
- Test of English as Foreign Language (TOEFL iBT or TOEFL iBT Home Edition) – test in the last two years:
 - Listening 15, Speaking 15, Reading 13, Writing 13, Overall score 56

Note:

- An applicant may be accepted if s/he already has Canadian English Language Benchmark Assessment for Nurses (CELBAN) results, test in the last two years with scores of: Speaking 6, Listening 6, Reading 5, Writing 5.
- An applicant may be accepted with a CLB Report Card from a LINC Program indicating “Completing” CLB Speaking 6, Listening 6, Reading 6, Writing 6, AND “Recommended Class Placement” as Speaking 7, Listening 7, Reading 7, Writing 7.

REQUIREMENTS for PRACTICE EDUCATION PLACEMENTS

Prior to being placed in the first practice education experience, evidence of completion of the following must be in each student’s file:

- First aid certification
- CPR level “C” certification or “Basic Life Support (BLS)” certification
- FoodSafe level 1 certification (or a certificate course deemed equivalent [Food Handlers Training Courses Equivalent to BC FOODSAFE Level 1.pdf \(bccdc.ca\)](#))
- Completion of the Student Practice Education Core Orientation (SPECO), available on the Learning Hub, which must include the following:
 - A signed checklist [SPECO Checklist.pdf \(phsa.ca\)](#)
 - Proof of meeting current immunizations / vaccinations as per health care organization policies / guidelines (or a signed vaccination exemption form, except TB)⁵

⁵ For placements at BC Health Authority sites, consult the Practice Education Guidelines of BC (PEGs) to ensure compliance with practice guideline standards.

- Criminal record check from the Criminal Records Review Program, including clearance to work with vulnerable adults⁶
- Provincial Violence Prevention Curriculum e-Learning modules
- WHMIS – Provincial course
- Completion of the Health Care Assistant Practice in BC e-Learning modules (learning hub)
- Completion of the Recognizing and Responding to Adult Abuse course (learning hub)

Information about additional practice education and workplace specific health and safety requirements and/or additional training or certification standards will be given to students prior to their practice placements.

The required courses listed above (e.g., first aid, FoodSafe etc.,) are not included in the HCA Program Provincial Curriculum and will be provided in addition to the course/program hours required. Discovery Community College will schedule these. Applicants already having any of these certifications must provide the originals to a college official prior to program start so that a copy may be made and witnessed and placed in the student file.

Immunization Guidelines

Discovery Community College refers to the *Practice Education Guidelines for BC* for guidance on immunization requirements in Regional Health Authorities. All health care staff (including students and PSI educators) should be protected against vaccine preventable diseases. Health care organization (HCO) immunization guidelines and policies are based on the Communicable Diseases and Immunization Guidelines from the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) (www.bccdc.ca) – on their website is an “immunization manual” in which they post information updates. PHO orders are also posted at <https://www2.gov.bc.ca>.

The *Practice Education Guideline 1-3 Communicable Disease Prevention* (July 2021) describes in detail the immunizations required for students and on-site PSI educators for experiences in practice education settings, including the requirements for maintaining current records of immunizations. Here is a link: [PEGs | HSPnet \(hspcanada.net\)](http://www.hspcanada.net). Applicants to the HCA programs must also be aware that immunization requirements may be changed at any time by Public Health Order (PHO).

All students and on-site PSI educators must meet the immunization guidelines and policies to participate in a practice education experience. Immunization records for students and PSI educators must be maintained and stored by the PSI. Proof of immunization must be available upon request by the HCO; the HCO may request these records at any time in preparation for, or during the placement.

Any student whose immunization status does not meet these guidelines before the first practice education placement may not be accepted by the receiving agency. Students who cannot be placed in a practice education experience cannot graduate from this program and will be withdrawn.

Applicants and/or students who are unable to comply with these immunization guidelines cannot be accepted into the HCA program.

⁶ No other types of criminal record checks are acceptable.

Criminal Record Check Guidelines

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There are two types of criminal record check (CRC):

- A CRC with the local police
- A CRC with the Criminal Record Review Program (CRRP) of BC

Because graduates of the HCA program must register with an oversight body (the BC Care Aide & Community Health Worker Registry – refer to www.cachwr.bc.ca), only criminal record checks completed through the Criminal Record Review Program (CRRP) will be accepted for students in the HCA program.

To accomplish the CRC with the CRRP, applicants must follow these steps:

- Provide DCC personnel with information required to start the application process (for example their BC Services Card account status and their email address).
- DCC will provide the link for the applicant to log in to the CRRP to complete their criminal record check request. The applicant must log into the CRRP and complete this request within two weeks of receiving the link from DCC.
- DCC personnel will log into the CRRP to verify that the applicant has completed their criminal record check request and to monitor its status. Results will be sent directly to DCC.

The status of the CRC does not automatically prevent an applicant from attending this program. However, any CRC that reveals “relevant” offences may make it difficult or impossible to place the student in a practicum or clinical. Students who cannot be placed in a practicum or clinical cannot graduate from this program and will be withdrawn.

Some practice experience hosts may require their own criminal record check. It is the student’s responsibility to provide this directly to the host. If the criminal record check reveals information that raises concerns relevant to the placement the host may decline the placement. Students who cannot be placed in a practice experience cannot graduate from this program and will be withdrawn.

A criminal record check is a requirement for registration with the BC Care Aide & Community Health Worker Registry (BCCACHWR). The Registry may not register any applicant who has a relevant criminal record. We strongly recommend that applicants who are concerned about their criminal record complete both their CRC through the CRRP and their CRC through the RCMP before they begin the Health Care Assistant program.

RECOMMENDED STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Before applying for this program, applicants should learn as much as possible about this career. Successful care aides and community health workers are genuinely interested in caring for the elderly in either long term care facilities or in their homes. You should be respectful, sensitive, and responsive to the needs of the frail elderly. You should also be mindful of the need to take care of your own health and safety needs.

Students with the following characteristics can anticipate success in the program and in their future career:

- Be in good health with an ability to work physically hard.

- Have excellent interpersonal skills.
- Enjoy being with and have a strong sense of compassion for the frail elderly.
- Be able to give very personal care and be tolerant of unpleasant odors.
- Maintain a responsible attitude with high standards of personal and professional integrity.
- Be able to communicate clearly in writing.
- Be able to work effectively as part of a team.
- Maintain a professional appearance and adhere to the dress code standards of a facility.

Students must always be willing to conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner. As part of your preparation for work in the profession of health care, instructors and staff will apply the principles of the profession to their expectations of your conduct. This will be a supportive process.

Students will be required to adhere to a clinical dress policy designed to portray the same professional image that is required in any health care facility.

Students should be interested in the complex tasks required of a health care assistant, with a special emphasis on the skills, knowledge, and behaviours needed in a health care setting. You should also possess a deep sense of compassion for and caring towards all people but especially towards the elderly and infirm.

Students should be willing to engage in class discussion and debate, enjoy reading, research, and study, and be able to write and record their thoughts and information gathered.

METHODS of EVALUATION

Student progress and success will be assessed regularly throughout the program. This will be accomplished using a variety of evaluation tools; these are fully described in course outlines.

Final transcripts will record all marks for courses within the program.

The passing grade for each course is 70%. Each course within the program must be passed to graduate and each course must be successfully completed before moving on to the next course.

A separate certificate will be awarded to each student attaining 95% or better attendance.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Schedules may vary, and students must be prepared to attend in person, online, and practice (in facility) classes as scheduled. Some practice education classes begin at 6:45 a.m., and may be scheduled on days, evenings, and weekends. Schedules will be distributed at the beginning of the program, but these are subject to change.

The practice education (clinical and preceptorship) takes place in the care facility. Students will be required to supply their own transportation to all locations. Practice education placements will be at a variety of sites in the provincial health authority region where your program is based; however, this may vary.

For online learning students will require a suitable device such as a laptop computer (preferably using Windows operating system), and access to internet services. We recommend a laptop with a keyboard (not just a touch screen) and additional devices such as a cell phone.

The instructor will use various strategies including lectures, demonstrations, group discussion and/or presentations, student practice, videos, and guest speakers. There may be field trips arranged during the program as opportunity and resources allow. Students will be required to supply their own transportation for these.

Revisions

Information contained in this curriculum guide is correct at the time of publication. Content of courses and programs is revised on an ongoing basis to ensure relevance to changing educational, employment, and marketing needs. Students will be given notice of any changes as soon as possible.