

Alberta Health Care Aide Examination Candidate Handbook



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Background*

To be eligible for a Government of Alberta Health Care Aide Provincial Curriculum (2019) Certificate, students enrolled in an Alberta Health Care Aide (HCA) Program delivering the 2019 curriculum must successfully pass the Alberta Provincial HCA Examination (this document will refer to it as the Exam).

1.2 *Purpose of the Handbook*

The Alberta HCA Examination Candidate Handbook (Handbook) is a resource for exam candidates and instructors to assist in preparing for the Exam and understanding related processes. This handbook contains relevant guidelines, procedures, and other supporting information.

From time to time, this handbook may be amended. Potential candidates are encouraged to visit the Alberta HCA Directory Website at <https://www.albertahcadirectory.com/> to obtain the most current version of the Handbook as well as other HCA resources and contact information for Yardstick or ProctorU.

For more information, please contact the Alberta HCA Directory (Directory).

Email: exam@albertahcadirectory.com

Phone: 1:844-HCA-IDES (1-844-422-4337) or 780-670-5050

2. EXAM DETAILS

To be eligible to write the Exam, candidates must meet all requirements of the Government of Alberta Provincial HCA Examination Policies-2020 (HCA Exam Policies). See the Directory Website for a copy of the policies.

2.1 What are the specific eligibility requirements?

Candidates must meet the following eligibility requirements to register for the Exam:

1. Candidate has applied to the Directory;
2. The appropriate Exam fees are paid;
3. The HCA program confirms completion of all required course work; and
4. Candidate has signed consent.

2.2 When and where does the Exam take place?

The Exam is computer-based, accessible on-line, with 24/7 access (excluding statutory holidays). Candidates are provided with available dates and times during the booking process. Exam-related technical support is available via phone, email, live chat, and remote support. Candidates should be in a private, well-lit room with a clear workspace with photo ID ready. See Section 6. Day of the Exam, for more details about the Exam experience.

2.3 What are the computer and internet requirements to take the Exam?

Google Chrome and Mozilla Firefox are the only supported browsers.

Candidates must have the following:

- Access to a laptop or computer with a webcam and microphone.
- A reliable internet connection (test internet speed here: <https://fast.com>);
- The ProctorU extension must be downloaded to take the Exam; however, candidates can only download it on Exam day. Proctor U will provide instructions. As a result, candidates must ensure their laptop permissions allow installations by individual users or have access to any required passwords.

For more information on equipment requirements, visit: <https://support.proctoru.com/hc/en-us/articles/115011772748-Equipment-Requirements>

2.3.1 Devices Not Supported:

- Google Chromebooks (for Live Proctoring only)
- Tablets (Nexus, iPad, Tab, Note, etc.)
- Smartphones
- Linux operating systems
- Windows 10 in S mode or Surface RT

- No running inside a virtual machine. You will be asked to reconnect using your host operating system to take your exam

An additional component on the Day of the Exam is connecting to a live proctor, and it will be necessary to ensure the browser's pop-up blocker is disabled by following this help link: <https://support.google.com/chrome/answer/95472?co=GENIE.Platform%3DDesktop&hl=en>

For more information about system requirements and how to test equipment, visit the ProctorU help center for test-takers at <https://www.proctoru.com/proctoru-live-resource-center>.

To test your equipment with the Virtual ProctorU Equipment Testing, visit: <https://go.proctoru.com/testitout>

2.4 What is the cost of the Exam?

Candidates will be charged the full Exam fee for each Exam attempt.

If accommodations are required, it is necessary for Candidates to apply and receive confirmation of accommodation prior to paying and booking the desired Exam date. Students who are approved for accommodations will receive separate instructions on how to book and pay for the exam. See section 4: Exam Accommodations, for more details about accommodations.

See Fee Schedule on the HCA Directory Website Provincial Exam page for a complete list of fees. Please note, credit, or debit cards are the only acceptable form of payment.

Section 7 in this Handbook has information about potential refunds; however, candidates should visit the Directory Website for updated fees and refund information.

3. REGISTRATION PROCESS

3.1 *How does the registration process work?*

Candidates must apply to be on the Directory. Post-secondary institutions are required to provide students with access and time during regularly scheduled classes to complete this step. The Directory website is at <https://www.albertahcadirectory.com>

Once the PSI confirms Candidates are complete their course work to the Directory, Candidates will be emailed from the Directory with instructions on how to submit fees and book the Exam within their Directory profile.

After Candidates submit their fees, they will need to go back to their Directory profile to the Exam Launchpad. When they click on the Exam Launchpad they will be taken to an area where they will see the following “You ARE eligible to book/write the HCA Practice Exam/Provincial HCA Exam @ Measure”. Candidates will need to book their examination date and time.

Candidates have a **maximum of 60 calendar days from the date of program completion** to complete all three attempts of the Provincial Exam.

Exams can be booked within 24 hours and can be written at any time with no accommodation request. If accommodations are required, it is necessary for Candidates to apply and receive confirmation of accommodation prior to paying and booking the desired Exam date. See Section 4 of this Handbook for more information on accommodations.

Click on this link for a short video on what this process looks like for booking your Exam date and time: [Booking Demonstration Video](#). Please note that a 24 hour clock is used in the booking system.

All communication with candidates will be done by email using the current contact information provided within their Directory profile. Candidates are responsible to log into their Directory profile to update any changes to their contact information.

The email confirmation will come directly to Candidates and they will be provided with information on how to prepare, check their equipment and access their Exam.

3.2 *Collection of Information*

Information provided during the Exams is being collected and used pursuant to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act. The CLPNA and Alberta Health will use this information to administer and evaluate the Provincial HCA Exam. The CLPNA has contracted Yardstick Strategies Inc. to provide IT services and store information related to the Provincial HCA Exam in the United States subject to privacy and security controls required by FOIP in Canada. Prior to writing the proctored Provincial HCA Exam all Candidates must agreed to a detailed consent and terms of service. If you have questions related to the collection, use, and storage of this information or would like to receive a copy of the consent and terms please email exam@albertahcadirectory.com.

3.3 Consents in the HCA Directory

Candidates are asked to consent to the collection of information as described in the above section when they access the proctor during the writing of the Provincial HCA Examination.

Candidates are also asked to consent to the release of their exam results to their PSI for determining eligibility for an Alberta Health Care Aide Curriculum 2019 Certificate. This consent is collected when enrolling to the Alberta HCA Directory.

3.4 Registering for Exam Rewrites

The same process is used for up to two (2) Exam rewrites. See Section 8: Passing Score, for more information about Exam rewrites.

4. EXAM ACCOMMODATIONS

4.1 What Exam accommodations are available?

The Directory will consider all requests from candidates for Exam accommodations. Each request will be evaluated on an individual basis. Candidates should refer to the timelines below.

4.2 How does a candidate request Exam accommodations?

Candidates requesting Exam accommodations may download a form for accommodations from the HCA Directory Website.

Candidates must submit the completed form to exam@albertahcadirectory.com which includes one of the following:

- Information from a health care provider identifying any restrictions and limitations the candidate experiences due to their disability, OR
- Information from the HCA program identifying the accommodations received (when a candidate is not under the care of a health care provider)

4.3 What are the timelines for approval of accommodations?

Candidates must submit requests for accommodations a **minimum of 15 business days prior** to the desired Exam date. This is especially important to ensure the candidate has the opportunity to complete all 3 exam attempts within **60 calendar days from the date of program completion**.

4.4 Is there a cost for accommodations?

There is no cost to the candidate for the accommodation itself.

However, in some cases, a candidate may be required to travel to an approved exam centre if special resources are required to support the accommodation request (reader). If travel is required, candidates are responsible for any associated travel costs.

4.5 How will a candidate know if requested accommodations are approved?

The Directory will notify candidates if accommodations are approved. Candidates are required to sign an agreement specifying which accommodations have been approved. The Directory will not approve any additional accommodations without prior approval.

Where a candidate's request cannot be accommodated, the Directory and candidate will discuss whether a mutually agreeable alternative is available. If the Directory denies a candidate's request for accommodations, they will be notified by email. All decisions align with the Alberta Human Rights Duty to Accommodate and cannot be appealed.

5. PREPARING FOR THE EXAM

5.1 What is the best way to prepare for the Exam?

Exam questions are based on the Alberta HCA Competency Profile (2018) which outlines the roles and responsibilities of HCAs in Alberta and is mapped to the Alberta HCA Provincial Curriculum (2019). Students are encouraged to review the competency profile and their course materials before attempting the Exam. Appendix B: HCA Exam Blueprint (2019) provides more specific information on the structure of the Exam. The Alberta HCA Competency Profile is included in Appendix C.

Post Secondary Institutions and HCA Programs may provide additional supports such as how to prepare to write multiple choice exams.

Students must apply to the Directory and select the 2019 Curriculum option on their application to receive access to a practice exam. Information about purchasing the practice exam will be emailed to Candidates within seven (7) business days of applying to the Directory.

The cost for the practice exam is \$40 plus GST, which provides candidates up to 5 attempts. Following each attempt, candidates are provided with diagnostic information reflecting areas of strength and areas of focus in a graph format. This graph will show performance based on each area being tested. Candidates can sign into the HCA Examination Site through the HCA Directory to access the diagnostic information as needed. The results can be saved or printed and should be used by the candidate to prepare for additional practice exam attempts.

5.2 What is the Exam going to be like?

The Exam is composed of 100 multiple choice questions that cover various aspects of the HCA role and responsibilities. A subject matter expert advisory group comprised of educators, employers, health care providers, and other expert groups working with HCAs in Alberta developed the exam.

5.3 Will my Exam be proctored (supervised)?

The Exam is proctored to ensure fairness and integrity of the Exam content. The proctor supervises the student for the duration of the Exam using a virtual platform. The following information provides an overview of the virtual proctoring experience with additional resources to become familiar with the process and prepare for the day of the Exam.

5.4 What is virtual proctoring?

ProctorU is a live online proctoring service that allows candidates to take their Exam from the comfort of their home or other suitable location. ProctorU is available 24/7 except for Statutory Holidays. However, candidates will need to schedule their proctoring session at least 24 hours in advance to avoid any on-demand scheduling fees. Yardstick Assessment Strategies will email each Candidate with confirmation of timelines and instructions once they have registered to take the Exam.

In order to use ProctorU, candidates will need a high-speed internet connection, a webcam (internal or external), a Windows or Apple operating system, and a government issued photo ID.

Once candidates receive the instruction email from Yardstick Assessment Strategies, they will receive links to check hardware and software configurations ahead of time (Please refer to section 2.3 for additional information).

Please make sure the most current version of Chrome is being used and have downloaded the ProctorU extension available [here](#) for Chrome.

Additionally, please visit and review the test-taker resource center at <https://support.proctoru.com/hc/en-us>

Additional resources can be found at <https://support.proctoru.com/hc/en-us/categories/115001818507>

Candidates should expect the startup process with the proctor to take about 10-15 minutes. However, this time will not affect the total exam time. Candidates should direct any questions to the test taker support team via the live chat within their account.

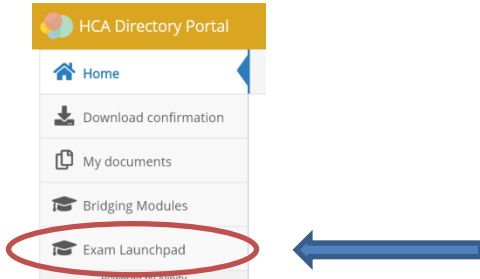
Copy and paste this address into the Chrome browser to access a video on how to prepare. This video walkthrough will guide test-takers through the [ProctorU Live+ start-up process](#) to prepare the Candidate for the Exam day.

Please note that candidates are responsible to test all equipment prior to their scheduled exam to ensure their equipment and internet are adequate to support completion of their exam.

6. DAY OF THE EXAM

6.1 What happens the day of the Exam?

On the day of the Exam, candidates will log into their Directory Profile and go the Exam Launchpad to access the Exam as below:



The Exam Launchpad will take Candidates to an area that provides a link that states “You ARE eligible to book/write the HCA Practice Exam/Provincial HCA Exam @ Measure”. Candidates click to be taken to the Measure (Exam) platform. The Exam grant for the HCA Exam will have 3 stages:

1. “Status”: This appears from the moment the Exam is booked up until the time candidates are to be connecting to the proctor. A count-down timer will show how much time is remaining until the exam.
2. “Launch”: Once the scheduled time begins, candidates can click on “Start Exam” to be connected to the proctor. This will be available for 15 minutes starting at the scheduled start time with a 15-minute window to connect to the proctor.
3. “Expired”: This is displayed when an exam has lapsed and is no longer available to candidates.

6.2 Candidate Statement of Understanding

At the beginning of the exam, Candidates receive a statement of understanding in the Measure Exam Platform. This statement relates to exam security and responsibilities of the Candidate. Candidates must accept the terms as listed below before they can proceed to the proctor connection.

Measure Candidate Statement of Understanding:

The Alberta Health Care Aide Directory, managed under the College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta (CLPNA), requires that you agree to maintain the confidentiality and security of the test questions on this examination. You will not be permitted to take this examination unless you agree to abide by the following statements:

- Exam security is a high priority. Any candidate who receives assistance without authorization during the examination will be subject to sanctions as described below.
- This examination is the exclusive property of the CLPNA.
- This examination and the items contained therein are protected by copyright laws.

- No part of this examination may be copied or reproduced in part or as a whole by any means whatsoever.
- You must not remove copies of exam questions and answers from the testing platform and may not share or discuss the questions or answers seen in your exam with anyone.
- The theft or attempted theft of any examination material is punishable by law.
- Your participation in any irregularity occurring during this examination, such as giving or obtaining unauthorized information or aid, as evidenced by observation or subsequent statistical analysis, may be sufficient cause to terminate your participation, invalidate the results of your examination, deny, or revoke your examination results, or take other appropriate action.
- During the time you are taking the examination, you may not use the telephone or speak to any individual other than your proctor. Such activity is grounds for immediate dismissal from the examination and invalidation of your test results. If you leave the immediate vicinity of the testing area without permission, your test will end, and you will not be permitted to resume testing.
- Exceptions to the above may include unplanned interruptions.
- If you do not follow the above rules, tamper with the computer or if you are suspected of cheating, appropriate action will be taken.

Click the **ACCEPT** checkbox to accept these terms.

6.3 Connecting to the Proctor

Once connected to the proctor, there are orientation and registration processes required before the Exam is released to a candidate.

Candidates are advised that the Exam session is being recorded and information about the data being collected and how it will be used.

Candidates must verify their identification (ID) by showing an approved government picture ID (see the Alberta HCA Examination Policies, 2020 for a list of approved ID). As part of the identification process, a picture of the candidate and their photo ID will be taken. Please refer to the privacy information contained in the application consent.

Review the [video](#) to see the process.

6.4 How long is the Exam?

Candidates have a maximum of two (2) hours to complete the 100 multiple choice exam questions (unless accommodations have been approved).

6.5 What materials can the Candidate bring into the Exam room?

Candidates are not allowed to bring additional materials into the room with the exception of those meant to support approved accommodations. Candidates who are granted accommodations will be notified in writing if additional supports are allowed in the Exam room.

6.6 Can I have food or drinks at my computer?

Candidates may have a clear water bottle beside their computer station. No paper labels are allowed on the water bottle.

6.7 Are there any breaks?

Candidates are allowed to leave the Exam room to use the washroom. Please alert the proctor if a washroom break is required during the Exam. After returning to the computer, the proctor will ask the candidate to re-secure the room before resuming the Exam. Candidates have a maximum of two (2) hours to complete and the time is not paused during breaks.

6.8 What time should candidates arrive for the Exam?

Candidates should log into their Directory account and then go to the Alberta Provincial Exam link 2-3 minutes before the scheduled time of the Exam.

6.9 What behaviour will the proctor be expecting?

Candidates should stay seated, facing the webcam during the Exam. The proctor may interact with a candidate if they do not stay seated, facing the webcam. Irregular or suspicious behaviours can lead to an incident report being issued to the HCA Directory by the proctor.

- Candidates must test on a hard surface (not a bed, couch, or floor)
- Candidates are not permitted to wear watches.
- Candidates require a mirror or reflective surface to show the proctor the monitor to ensure there are no notes or writing attached to the monitor. A cell phone with a front facing camera can be used for this purpose.

6.10 What behaviours are considered to be irregular?

Examples of irregular or suspicious behaviours that proctors might observe and could lead to an incident report include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Candidate moves out of the camera's range without permission
- Candidate attempts to open browsers or multiple disconnections
- Suspicious movements by the candidate
- Additional person or other voices heard in the room

NOTE: This is not a complete list and there may be other behaviours that are considered irregular. See "*Appendix A: Actions and Behaviours That Will Be Flagged During an Exam*" for more information.

7. NOTIFYING THE DIRECTORY IF UNABLE TO ATTEND

7.1 *What if a candidate cannot attend the Exam, after registering?*

If a candidate feels unprepared or incapable to write the Exam, they are required to notify Yardstick to defer (transfer or reschedule) an exam sitting. Candidates may contact Yardstick via email at testingsupport@getyardstick.com or 1-888-900-0005.

Candidates experiencing technical issues on the **day of their exam** should contact Yardstick for immediate assistance at [1-888-900-0005](tel:1-888-900-0005).

Candidates are required to contact ProctorU if experiencing any issues with connectivity as ProctorU will work to troubleshoot any connection issues experienced by the candidate during the exam time. See [contact page](#) on the Directory website for more information.

Candidates who require further assistance and were unable to write their Provincial Exam as a result of connection issues that could not be resolved with ProctorU are encouraged to email the Directory at exam@albertahcadirectory.com. The Directory requires up to one (1) week to review the incident with ProctorU and provide the next steps to the candidate.

A minimum of five (5) business days prior to the date and time of the exam appointment are required to defer (transfer or reschedule) an exam.

A minimum of 1-business day prior to the date and time of the exam appointment is required to cancel the Exam write.

An attempt counts when a candidate begins writing the Exam even if they leave before completing the Exam.

Candidates who choose not to write the Exam or do not complete any **or all 3 attempts prior to the 60 calendar day limit**, will **not** be eligible for a Provincial HCA Certificate.

Any cancellation with less than one (1) business day notice will count as a 'no show' and will not be issued a refund.

Candidates who fail to write their exam at the scheduled time are considered a "no show" and will not receive a refund. This missed attempt will not be counted as one of the three (3) attempts, however, they are required to pay and book another exam attempt. The ten (10) business day or **14 calendar day** time limit between attempts will not apply in this case.

7.2 *What if a candidate arrives late?*

Any candidate arriving 15 or more minutes late to sit the Exam will be given the status of "did not write" and will forfeit the Examination fee.

7.3 Will any fees be refunded?

See the Directory Website for the complete Exam Fee Schedule details, including information about potential refunds.

7.4 Withdraw/Cancelling the Exam write

Candidates are required to comply with the policies for withdrawing or cancellation as determined by Alberta HCA Directory. If they wish to cancel their booking, they must email the Yardstick team at testingsupport@getyardstick.com. Each candidate must provide a minimum of one (1)-business day notice of cancellation. See Section 7.1 for more information.

Candidates experiencing technical issues on the **day of their exam** or within 24 hours should contact Yardstick prior to the start of their exam for immediate assistance at [1-888-900-0005](tel:1-888-900-0005).

Candidates who fail to contact Yardstick to resolve technical issues prior to the start of their exam will be considered a “no show” and will not be issued a refund.

8. PASSING SCORE

8.1 What is the passing score?

Candidates will only receive a Pass or Fail mark.

A panel of experts were asked to evaluate and score each exam question. An average of all judges' scores is used to determine a rating for each question. The rating for all questions creates a reliable and psychometrically defensible pass mark for the Exam. This results in a fair and valid process.

The pass mark for each exam may be adjusted based on an analysis of the answer results for each question. If a question(s) is determined to be confusing and/or flawed the pass mark for the Exam will be adjusted. Any adjustments to the pass mark due to question analysis are always in favour of the candidate.

8.2 How is the exam marked?

All exams across the province are marked electronically. This method ensures that the Exam is secure and confidential, and that all exams are scored in the same manner.

8.3 How are the results communicated?

Candidates will receive unconfirmed pass or fail results immediately after completing the Exam; that appear on the computer screen. An email will also be sent with the same unconfirmed pass or fail results. Candidates who fail the Exam will receive diagnostic information with their results in order to help prepare for subsequent exam date.

Candidates will be provided with instructions on how to log back into their account and view their account and exam history where they can then see their performance and review diagnostic information for failed exam attempts.

Candidates are monitored for irregularities which may indicate cheating during the proctored exam writing. Incident reports related to irregularities will be evaluated using established criteria and used to determine final results. If cheating is confirmed during the review of incident report a pending pass result is invalidated.

The official pass or fail results will be emailed within five (5) business days to the HCA through the Directory.

The HCA Post Secondary Education programs receive notification of exam pass/fail results to ensure students' eligibility for graduation. Candidates who pass the Exam are eligible to receive the Alberta Health Care Aide Curriculum (2019) Certificate. No one else will receive a Candidate's results.

8.4 What happens if a candidate fails?

Candidates who do not pass their first exam writing, are eligible for two (2) additional attempts to write the Exam, for a total of three (3) attempts at passing the provincial HCA Exam.

If a candidate fails the first exam attempt, it is recommended that they share diagnostic information with their education program and ask for additional support before attempting another write.

If a candidate fails a second attempt, it is strongly recommended that they share diagnostic information with their education program and work with HCA program instructors to prepare for the final attempt.

8.5 Can a candidate review the Exam and their answers?

For security purposes, candidates are not permitted to review exam content. If a candidate fails any attempt, they should review the diagnostic information provided. The report highlights the percentage of success in each of the 6 competency areas so the candidate can focus their studying efforts for the next attempt.

8.6 How soon can the Candidate schedule another attempt?

Candidates must wait a minimum of 14 calendar days between each exam attempt but must ensure all attempts are completed within the time limit as described below.

Candidates have a maximum of 60 calendar days from the date of program completion to complete all three attempts of the Exam.

8.7 What happens after the third (3rd) attempt?

Candidates, who fail the Provincial HCA Exam three (3) times, or do not complete any or all writes within the time limit, must re-take the HCA Program to be eligible for three (3) additional attempts.

8.8 What happens if a candidate does not complete their exam writes within the 60 calendar days limit?

Candidates who choose not to write the Exam or do not complete any **or all 3 attempts prior to the 60-calendar day limit**, are **not** eligible for a Provincial HCA Certificate and must re-take the HCA Program to be eligible for three (3) additional attempts.

8.9 Can Exam results be appealed?

Exam results themselves cannot be appealed. Candidates may appeal the exam administration process only if they believe an irregularity in the process may have affected their success. (See Government of Alberta HCA Examination Policies (2020) 12.0 Examination Appeals)

- Technical issues related to Yardstick or ProctorU can be appealed.
- A written appeal related to the process must be submitted to the HCA Directory at exam@albertahcadirectory.com within a maximum of 5 business days of the official Exam results.
- An appeal will be reviewed by an independent person appointed by the HCA Directory within 5 business days following receipt of the written request. The HCA Directory will notify the candidate of the appeal outcome, in writing.
- Appeal decisions are final and will not be reviewed again.
- Candidates are encouraged to review HCA Program re-take options with their Post-secondary Institution.

8.10 What is not considered an exam administration issue that can be appealed?

- Missed attempts or “no shows”, including those related to a mix-up of the time.
 - Candidates are responsible to review the email from the Directory confirming the date and time of their exam.
 - Candidates are to revisit their original booking platform to transfer (reschedule) their booking date and time if required.
- Technical issues related to a candidate’s equipment that has not been checked prior to start of the exam or reported to the HCA Directory or Yardstick following the exam attempt.
- Candidates who are unable to take the exam because they fail to produce the accepted or agreed upon Identification documents.
- Candidates who do not complete any or all writes prior to the 60-calendar day limit.

9. APPENDIX A: ACTIONS AND BEHAVIOURS DURING VIRTUAL PROCTORING THAT WILL BE FLAGGED IN THE INCIDENT REPORT¹

Actions and behaviors that the Proctor will flag during an exam, includes but is not limited to:

1. **Talking aloud:** Unless you have an accommodation, talking or whispering aloud during the exam is not permitted.
2. **Being out of camera view:** Your face, chin to forehead, must be in the camera view at all times.
3. **Anyone entering your testing area:** You may not have anyone else in your testing location with you.
4. **Anyone talking to you while you're in your testing area:** Additional noises, including other people talking to you, while you're in your exam are not allowed.
5. **Looking off-screen:** If you aren't allowed any materials, your eyes should stay on the screen at all times while testing.
6. **Utilizing materials that are not allowed:** You're only allowed the permitted materials.
7. **Taking pictures or screenshots of the exam:** You are not permitted to take pictures while in your exam, including screenshots. If you're on a Mac and have a live human proctored launch, your proctor will even turn off the ability to use your keyboard screenshot hotkeys.
8. **Copying and pasting any elements of the exam:** In most cases, our system will not allow you to copy and paste any content from your exam. Regardless of whether you can or cannot perform this function, our system will capture all events of copy and paste that occur.
9. **Utilizing a virtual machine:** Virtual machines can be detected through the pre-exam system check and are not permitted.
10. **Utilizing a secondary monitor:** You are only allowed to use one monitor attached to one computer during your exam.

¹ ProctorU (2020). Test-taker resource center: What am I allowed and not allowed to do during my exam? Retrieved on June 9, 2020, from <https://support.proctoru.com/hc/en-us/articles/360043127892-What-am-I-allowed-and-not-allowed-to-do-during-my-exam->

10. APPENDIX B: HEALTH CARE AIDE EXAM BLUEPRINT (2019)

DOMAINS

Exam Content framework

Competency domains to be assessed on the Alberta Health Care Aide Exam are specified in the Alberta Health Care Aide Competency Profile (2018).

Competency Domain	% of marks
HCA Role and Responsibility	13-17%
Provision of Care	25-35%
Collaborative Care	8-12%
Communication	12-16%
Health Across the Life Span	11-15%
Safety	16-20%

STRUCTURAL VARIABLES

Exam length and format

Candidates have two (2) hours to complete the closed-book examination. The examination includes 100 independent multiple-choice questions with 4 response options.

Cognitive Level

Cognitive Level	% of marks
Remembering & Understanding	18-38%
Applying	53-73%
Critical Thinking	7-11%

CONTEXTUAL VARIABLES

Client Type

The client type refers to individuals (or their designated representative), families, groups, and communities.

Age

Clients described in the exam represent the demographic population encountered by entry-level Health Care Aides (HCAs). The distribution of client age listed below serves as a guideline for test development.

Age Range	Target %
0-18 years	Approx. 5%
19-60 years	Approx. 30%
61+ years	Approx. 65%

Gender

Balance evenly

Diversity

Questions are included that measure awareness, sensitivity and respect for diversity and inclusion, without introducing stereotypes.

Work Environment

It is recognized that HCAs work in a variety of settings and contexts where health care is delivered. As a result, the work environment is *only* specified when it is required for clarity or to provide guidance to the candidate.

Note: This document is intended for general exam preparation. Candidates should consult the Alberta HCA Directory website for further details.

11. APPENDIX C: ALBERTA HEALTH CARE AIDE (HCA) COMPETENCY PROFILE: DOMAINS AND CORE COMPETENCIES (2018)ⁱ

Competency Profile Domains

Domain 1: HCA Role and Responsibility

This domain refers to understanding the role and responsibility of HCAs.

Core Competencies:

- 1.1 Understand and perform competencies as defined by this competency profile, activities noted in the job description, employer policies and procedures, applicable legislation, or standards and within personal competency levels.
- 1.2 Demonstrate professionalism, responsibility, and accountability for actions.
- 1.3 Demonstrate organizational, time-management, and problem-solving skills.
- 1.4 Demonstrate conflict management skills.
- 1.5 Understand and demonstrate the principles of privacy and confidentiality.
- 1.6 Recognize the importance of personal wellness and self-care and use strategies to promote personal well-being.
- 1.7 Utilize feedback and self-reflection to continuously improve on the competencies defined in this profile.
- 1.8 Understand the HCA role within the health system, and the range and boundaries that apply to that role.

Domain 2: Provision of Care

This domain refers to application of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to deliver person-centred care, which includes recognizing and supporting the unique needs and abilities of the client. Care activities in this domain are directed to supporting, promoting, and maintaining the health and well-being, safety, independence, and comfort of the client. HCAs provide care under the supervision of a regulated professional and follow the client's care plan.

Core Competencies

- 2.1 Demonstrate an understanding of the client's care plan and the role of the HCA in implementing the care plan.
- 2.2 Utilize knowledge of growth and development, the aging process, and related health conditions when implementing the care plan.
- 2.3 Encourage and support the client's efforts to maintain and/or enhance their health, wellness, independence, and quality of life.
- 2.4 Promote the client's ability to guide and participate in their own care to the greatest degree possible.
- 2.5 Provide individualized, age appropriate, person-centred care, with a focus on physical, psychological, social, emotional, cognitive, cultural, and spiritual support.
- 2.6 Recognize and respect the client's uniqueness, diversity, rights, and concerns and their ability to make choices, take risks, and have control over their life.
- 2.7 Provide medication assistance as assigned by a regulated health care professional.
- 2.8 Demonstrate the ability to provide basic palliative and end-of-life care.
 - 2.8.1 Demonstrate sensitivity, compassion, and respect for the client's beliefs and cultural traditions related to death, dying, and end-of-life care.

- 2.9 Demonstrate an ability to care for and communicate with clients with cognitive, and/or mental health and addictions challenges.
 - 2.9.1 Recognize and respond appropriately to the client displaying responsive/changing behaviours.
- 2.10 Report and/or record client information in accordance with employer documentation standards and guidelines.

Domain 3: Collaborative Care

This domain refers to the ability to work collaboratively with the client, family, and all other members of the health care team to set and achieve common goals and provide safe, competent, and ethical care.

Core Competencies:

- 3.1 Communicate the role and responsibilities of the HCA to the client, the family, and other health care team members.
- 3.2 Understand the role of each member of the health care team, including the client and/or family.
- 3.3 Participate in the development and revision of the client's care plan.
- 3.4 Report changes in the client to the appropriate regulated health care team member in a timely manner.
- 3.5 Understand when to seek assistance and information from health care team members and demonstrate this ability.

Domain 4: Communication

This domain refers to the knowledge and skills required to develop, build, and maintain collaborative working relationships with the client, family, and other members of the health care team.

Core Competencies:

- 4.1 Demonstrate appropriate communication with the client, family, and other members of the health care team.
 - 4.1.1 Utilize active listening skills to communicate with the client, family, and other members of the health care team.
 - 4.1.2 Recognize, interpret, and respond appropriately to non-verbal cues.
 - 4.1.3 Recognize and adapt communication style to address client barriers to communication. Barriers could include vision, hearing, speech, and language disorders, including clients with cognitive impairment and/or mental health and addictions challenges.
 - 4.1.4 Use tone, verbal, and non-verbal communication that demonstrates respect, promotes the client's dignity, and is culturally appropriate.
- 4.2 Demonstrate proficiency in comprehension of the English language, including verbal and written communication.
 - 4.2.1 Communicate through a variety of methods: written (electronic/paper, client chart and emails), verbal (telephone and in person).
- 4.3 Demonstrate effective use of information technology appropriate for health care settings.
- 4.4 Identify and demonstrate use of verbal and nonverbal communication techniques and interventions to address responsive behaviours.
- 4.5 Use health care terminology as it relates to the HCA role.

Domain 5: Health Across the Life Span

This domain refers to the theoretical concepts, principles and knowledge required to promote physical, cognitive, psychological, cultural, social, and spiritual health and well-being of the client.

Core Competencies:

- 5.1 Demonstrate knowledge of the basic principles of growth and development, the aging process, and psychosocial dimensions of health across the life span.
- 5.2 Demonstrate knowledge of basic anatomy and physiology.
- 5.3 Demonstrate an understanding of the client's strengths, needs, rights, preferences, and expectations, and their willingness and ability to participate in their care.
- 5.4 Demonstrate an understanding of the health care team's responsibility with regard to advocacy in supporting the client to achieve optimal quality of life.
- 5.5 Demonstrate knowledge of culturally competent care by recognizing and respecting the client's unique physical, cognitive, psychological, cultural, social, and spiritual needs.
- 5.6 Demonstrate knowledge of common effects of aging, as well as the effects of acute and chronic health conditions of the client.
 - 5.6.1 Demonstrate appropriate interaction with clients who experience cognitive, behavioural, and psychological impairment (e.g., dementia and/or delirium).

Domain 6: Safety

This domain refers to providing care and services that promote and maintain the health and well-being of the client. It also refers to preventing harm to the client, HCA and/or members of the health care team.

Core Competencies:

- 6.1 Prevent, recognize, and respond to emergencies, safety hazards, and unsafe situations that may endanger the HCA and/or the client.
- 6.2 Recognize and respond to potential risks in order to prevent harm and avoid injury to the client, self and others.
- 6.3 Recognize and report signs of abuse and/or neglect.
- 6.4 Report and document incidents, adverse events and/or near misses according to practice setting guidelines and policies.
- 6.5 Demonstrate infection prevention and control principles and adhere to practice setting guidelines and policies.
- 6.6 Demonstrate the ability to operate health equipment safely.
- 6.7 Demonstrate safe use of body mechanics and patient handling techniques.
- 6.8 Understand and demonstrate the principles of safe food handling and safe mealtime assistance.

ⁱ Copied from Alberta Health, Health Workforce Planning and Accountability Health Care Aide Competency Profile, April 2018