

Post-LPN BN Professional Practice (Clinical) Preparation Guide

Post-LPN BN students registering in Professional Practice (Clinical) Courses must be prepared to demonstrate, at a minimum, the knowledge, skills, and clinical behaviours outlined in the College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta [Competency Profile](#). Students are required to seek *self-remediation as needed prior* to each registration in NURS 401, NURS 435, and NURS 437. Throughout the Professional Practice (Clinical) Courses, students (with guidance from instructors/preceptors) will be expected to progress toward meeting CARNA entry-to-practice competencies. Please refer to the *Clinical Evaluation Tool* or detailed information about the evaluation criteria once you have started the course.

To ensure that you understand and can meet all requirements for the Post-LPN BN Professional Practice Courses, read this document completely and prior to planning for registration in professional practice courses (also referred to as clinicals).

Important note: a Program GPA of 3.0 is required in order to be eligible for all clinical courses.

Students are responsible for

- meeting all deadlines;
- completing pre-requisite courses with a Program GPA of 3.0;
- submitting pre-requisite clinical placement documentation;
- reviewing Alberta Health Services (AHS) and other clinical placement agency modules; and
- registering in professional practice courses *prior* to the deadlines.



About the Professional Practice Courses

These courses are paced, meaning they are offered 3 times per year, over a 4 month term. **Only 1 clinical course can be taken per term.**

- Winter semester: January–April
- Spring/Summer semester: May–August **(Except NURS 401 April – July)**
- Fall semester: September–December

NURS 401 – Professional Practice with Adults Experiencing Health Alterations

- **An invigilated Medication Safety and Calculation Exam must be successfully completed in the first month of the course. If a passing grade of 80% is not achieved after 2 attempts, a grade of “F” is assigned for the course and the student is not permitted to continue to clinical and will be removed from the course.**
- 4 week consecutive, instructor-led clinical in an acute care medical, surgical, or medical/surgical combined unit
- Offered in Calgary and Edmonton area
- All charting is to be signed with the designation NS, AU. This stands for Nursing Student, Athabasca University.
- All students must wear a plain, white nursing uniform top. Bottoms can be any colour of nursing uniform. This helps AHS staff, patients, and other nursing students to recognize our group as Athabasca University students.

NURS 435 - Professional Practice in Community Mental Health Nursing

- Paced, online instructor-led course
- The only pre-requisite clinical document required is the proof of completion of the Medication Calculation Module.

NURS 437 – Professional Practice in Community and Family Health Promotion

- 4 week consecutive, preceptored clinical in a community-focused setting
- Offered in Calgary, Edmonton or surrounding rural areas



- Most sites require you to have your own vehicle for the duration of each clinical day, whether placed within or outside the city.
- Driving distance to the clinical placement agency from your residence is typically under 125km.
- All charting is to be signed with the designation NS, AU. This stands for Nursing Student, Athabasca University.

NURS 441 – Consolidated Professional Practice

- **Placement assignments are at the sole discretion of Athabasca University.**
- The course starts on the first of the month and the clinical portion starts 2 – 3 weeks later.
- The required number of practice hours are 380 (equivalent to slightly more than 10 weeks of 8hr shifts), preceptored by a Registered Nurse.
- Students are required to submit a completed *NURS441 Placement Suggestion Form* via the drop box in the [NURS 441 Placement Suggestion Process Course](#) for the term they plan to enroll. **This must be done immediately after you receive confirmation that your name is on the Course Eligibility List.** As mentioned above, the placement process guidelines stipulate that students *not contact* management, clinical educators, or staff to request their own placements.
- **Reminder: NURS 441 has a separate course eligibility list sheet in the Moodle course: NURS 441 Placement Suggestion Process.** Ensure you read the information carefully and well in advance of planning the final preceptorship, as there are restrictions on eligibility for specialty and high acuity practice areas.

Student Email Address

If you have not yet activated your **Office 365 for a student email account**, please click on the link and follow the directions <http://office365.athabascau.ca/welcome>. **All Nursing students must activate the new email address, update it in their personal information, and use it to communicate with the university.**



Pre-requisite Courses for Professional Practice Courses

When planning your program, be sure and check each course syllabus for the necessary course pre-requisites. In order to be eligible for clinical courses, **all final grades for prerequisite courses must show on your transcript *before* you sign up on the course eligibility list.**

Note: You need to plan to complete all of your course requirements at least 4 - 6 weeks before the dates below to ensure that your final grade will be processed in time to show on your transcript.

<http://www.athabascau.ca/students/transcripts-grades/>

- Winter semester – September 1st
- Spring/Summer semester – January 2nd
- Fall semester – May 1st

Clinical courses in progress are the only exception to this deadline. These dates have been selected in order to meet clinical agency request deadlines/release dates.

Placement Process

There are NO GUARANTEES that students will receive clinical placements in the term, location, dates, or clinical agency of their choice. The Post-LPN BN Program has more students requesting clinical placements each term than there is capacity within Alberta Health Services and out of province facilities to accommodate placement requests. Placement assignments are at the sole discretion of Athabasca University.

All clinical placements are arranged through Athabasca University's Post-LPN BN Program's Clinical Coordination team. **Students are not authorized to contact clinical agencies directly**, as we are governed by Student Placement Agreements with clinical agencies that stipulate clinical placement requests are to be completed ***only by the educational institution*** on the student's behalf. Clinical agencies can stipulate that a particular student *not* be given a placement if he/she does not follow the process; for example, contacting clinical educators, managers, or staff directly and asking about placements.

All placement requests for NURS 401 and 437 in Alberta are submitted through an electronic system. All placement requests for NURS 441 in Alberta and BC are also only submitted through an electronic system. Only one request, per student, at a time, can be entered into the system. If a request is declined, we can then enter



another choice. For NURS 441 requests in other provinces, only one request, per student, at a time remains the process. All Student Placement Agreements have consistent messaging around this process.

Any student who receives a failing grade in either NURS 401, NURS 435, NURS 437, or NURS 441 will not be given priority for the next term. The entire sign up process must be completed again.

How to Request a Clinical Placement

NURS 401, NURS 435 (online, paced course with an enrollment limit) and NURS 437:

Students will need to sign-up to request a clinical placement, in the Moodle course *Clinical Course Preparations*, for the term in which you plan to enroll. **Each course will have a course eligibility list and students can only add their name to one course, in fairness to their fellow students. Any students who sign up on more than one list will have their names removed from all lists and will not be eligible to enroll in a Professional Practice course that term.**

NURS 441: Students will need to sign-up through the Moodle course *NURS 441 Placement Suggestion Process*.

The Clinical Course Eligibility Lists will be available at midnight MST*:

- Winter semester – September 1st
- Spring/Summer semester – January 2nd
- Fall semester – May 1st

*These dates have been selected to ensure that all coursework has been completed so as to not disadvantage fellow students. There are potentially 48 clinical spaces in each course, based on agency capacity and CARNA designated instructor-student ratios, but **this number is not guaranteed each semester.**

To reiterate, being on the clinical course eligibility list does not guarantee a placement. The number of confirmed placements is dependent on health care agency capacity and acceptance.

The clinical course eligibility lists may fill *in less than one minute*, depending on the demand. Any students on a list, who do not receive a placement because some requests were not accepted by clinical agencies, will be given priority for the next term. This priority does not apply to waitlisted students.



Student names and their order on the eligibility lists are not visible. Students will be prioritized based on a combination of the following criteria: date of pre-requisite course completion; number of previous sign up attempts; courses remaining; and program end date.

NOTE: We do not prescribe the order in which students enroll in clinical courses and we are also unable to predict the demand for clinical courses as it varies each term. Students may have to wait up to 2 terms to get into each clinical course but no student has, or will be disadvantaged, by program end dates if all theory courses have been completed, their Program GPA is a 3.0 or higher, and they were delayed waiting for a clinical placement.

We do understand and appreciate the frustration with having to wait for clinical placements. We do our very best to work within a Placement Process that is governed by contractual obligations between Alberta Health Services and all Academic Partners. The flexibility of our program allows students to complete theory courses at their own pace and to balance life and work commitments. This flexibility does not translate to the clinical courses because we are entirely dependent on our external clinical partners.

Pre-requisite Clinical Placement Documentation

NURS 401, NURS 437, and NURS 441: Pre-requisite Clinical Placement Documentation **must be submitted** as listed below and must be uploaded to the appropriate Clinical Placement Preparation Moodle drop box for the correct term.

NURS 435: Only the Medication Calculation Module is required; do not submit any other pre-requisite clinical placement documents to drop boxes.

Deadlines to submit pre-requisite clinical placement documentation are:

- Winter semester – November 10th
- Spring/Summer semester – March 10th; note: **February 10 for NURS 401 only**
- Fall semester – July 10th

It is a student's responsibility to be attentive to submitting the documentation to the drop boxes. Begin submitting documents immediately upon receipt of the email confirming you are on the Course Eligibility List. Some documents take time for processing and receipt via mail. Monitor drop boxes regularly to ensure you have met requirements well in advance of the deadline.



We are managing clinical placements for hundreds of students each term and cannot send individual reminders for document submissions. As we work through the submissions they will show as “marked” if they meet the requirements, or returned for additional follow-up with instructions. Again, please refrain from emailing to ask whether we have checked documents, or to tell us that you have submitted/resubmitted specific documents. This allows us to focus on getting through the process in a timely manner.

There will be no deviations from meeting the course and documentation prerequisites. Students will be removed from consideration if there are any outstanding requirements after the dates listed above (Exception: CLPNA License for Winter term).

Prior to submitting Pre-Requisite Clinical Placement Documentation, pay attention to the following 12 items listed. **There are instructions for each posted in the drop boxes.**

Network Questionnaire for IT Access: Must be completed prior to the first clinical course in Alberta and valid for the duration of the program, as long as continually enrolled. Be sure to indicate your CLPNA number in the "Professional ID #" area. Note to Alberta residents: Please update if there are changes in AHS/Covenant employment or login information.

Athabasca University (AU) Student Oath of Confidentiality: Must be updated annually.

HSPnet Consent Form: Dated prior to first clinical course and valid for the duration of the program, as long as continually enrolled. Can be currently dated if you cannot locate your original form.

Alberta Health Services Confidentiality User Agreement: Must be updated annually. Proceed to the AHS site <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/info/page3962.aspx#> and complete the module. The 2-page Agreement will be generated upon completion of the module. Ensure the "Role" (on page 1) checkbox is indicated as: **Student or Educator (Educational Institution Liaison)**. Submit both pages to the drop box.



Health Care Provider CPR: Must be Heart & Stroke Foundation of Canada, **BLS Provider** level or equivalent. Online courses without hands-on skills testing by a certified instructor are not accepted. The card must show an expiration outside of clinical dates. If the card expires during the specific clinical dates, it is your responsibility to renew prior to the start of clinical, and submit new card to the drop box.

CLPNA Registration (Practice Permit): Dated in the year of clinical course work. An invoice or payment receipt is not acceptable. The submission must be the *Practice Permit*. **For Winter placements only**, we accept submissions until the end of December for the renewed permit. Active registration is still required for students who complete the final NURS 441 course in Winter term outside Alberta. This is a program requirement.

Police Information Check with Vulnerable Sector Screening: Must be dated within 90 days prior to first in-person clinical term (NURS 401 or NURS 437) start date; valid for the remainder of the program, as long as continually enrolled.

Note: Toronto Police Service area students are to contact bnclinical@athabascau.ca to receive direction, as there is a special process.

Athabasca University Bachelor of Nursing Photo ID: All students must have a wearable *Nursing ID Card* to participate in clinical courses. Complete the [Student Photo ID Card Request Form](#) and check the boxes to indicate you are an AU nursing student in the Bachelor of Nursing Program. Once you obtain the Photo ID card **you must update it for each academic year** by requesting an annual update sticker. New stickers will be available mid to late August.

<http://registrar.athabascau.ca/enrolment/records/idcards.php> The *Student Identification & Library Card* or your picture/application form is *not* acceptable.

N95 Respiratory Mask Fit Results: The card must show an expiration date after clinical dates. If the card expires during the specific clinical dates, it is your responsibility to renew prior to the start of clinical, and to submit a new card to the drop box.

If the Mask Test Fitting expiry date displays on the reverse side of your documentation, please submit the reverse side as well.

- AHS sites accept only: 3M 1870+ (preferred); 3M 8110s (cuplink); 3M 8210 (cuplike); 3M 9105s (v-flex); 3M 9105 (v-flex)



- Covenant Health sites accept only: 3M 8110s; 3M 8210; 3M 9120+; 3M 9105; 3M 9105s. Operating rooms – 3M 1860; 3M 1860s; 3M 1870+

The above information is provided in advance of a confirmed clinical placement in order to ensure you are fitted for acceptable mask types. **Once your placement has been confirmed, please revisit your mask fitting submission to ensure compliance. If a new submission is required, please email bnclinical@athabascau.ca to reopen this drop box so you can submit the new mask fitting results.**

Influenza Vaccine Record: Annual vaccine required.

For Fall placements only: Given that the campaign does not start until October, please submit during your placement dates if in October clinical, or in NURS 441, or prior to November clinical.

Immunizations: Copies of records and/or bloodwork indicating immunity against these listed immunizations. Further information is also available in the Alberta Health Services Standard for Immunization of Post-Secondary Health Care Students and Students in Other High-Risk Occupational Programs, the Public Health Agency of Canada and the National Advisory Committee on Immunizations websites. **Please note that units/agencies may not accept students if immunizations are not completed and they also reserve the right to cancel placements and/or end the experience prior to completion should an outbreak occur.**

- dTap - **at least one dose after age 18 followed by Td boosters every 10 years
- MMR – 2 documented doses for healthcare workers, regardless of year of birth; **Rubella immunity is a legislated requirement in Alberta
- Hepatitis B
- Varicella
- Influenza - **Seasonal every year (submit separately to the Influenza Vaccine drop box)
- TB skin test/chest x-ray after starting the LPN-BN program and dated no more than 4 months prior to the first clinical course

**Students, particularly those outside of Alberta, may have to request and pay for vaccinations to meet the AHS requirements.



It may take several months to secure appointments with health care providers so please plan accordingly.

Medication Calculation Module – NURS 401, NURS 435, and NURS 437 ONLY

****These are basic practice exams to help prepare for clinical success. Please note that NURS 401 has an additional *course requirement* of an invigilated Medication Safety and Calculation Midterm Exam that must be completed in the first month of NURS 401. Refer to the [NURS 401 Course Syllabus](#) and to the Clinical Preparation Course [NURS 401 Preparation for Medication Safety and Calculation Midterm Exam](#)**

Again, please note there will be no exceptions to meeting the course and documentation prerequisites. Students will be removed from consideration if there are any outstanding requirements after the dates listed on page 4 (exception: CLPNA License for the Winter term).

Pre-requisite AHS and Other Modules

Students must complete the appropriate modules as assigned for each professional practice course and clinical placement location. **Failure to do so will result in removal from the clinical site and a Grade of “F” assigned in the course.**

Confirmation of Approved Clinical Placement

Students will receive an email, **only** to their AU student email address (refer to page 1: Student Email Address), notifying them of an APPROVED CLINICAL PLACEMENT and granting permission to register in the course. Notifications of placement confirmations will be sent once we receive the majority of approvals from the clinical agencies, just prior to the semester registration deadline (December 10th, April 10th (March 10th for NURS 401 only), or August 10th).

Please do not email asking about placement confirmation during this time. It is very time consuming to be responding to emails that take valuable time away from organizing the upcoming term.