

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 for LPNS, 3rd edition, June 2015](#) Students are required to seek self-remediation as needed prior to registration in NURS 401, NURS 435, and NURS 437. Throughout the clinical courses, students (with guidance from instructors/preceptors) will be expected to progress toward meeting [College and Association of Registered Nurses of Alberta, Entry-Level Competencies for the Practice of Registered Nurses \(March 2019\)](#)

Read this entire document prior to planning to register in clinical courses to understand all requirements.

Note: A program GPA of 3.0 is required for all clinical courses.

Students are responsible for:

- meeting all deadlines;
- completing pre-requisite courses;
- earning 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 clinical courses *prior* to deadlines.

Clinical Courses

Clinical courses are offered three times per year and are “paced” over a four month term. One clinical course can be taken per term.

- **Fall term:** September–December
- **Winter term:** January–April
- **Spring term:** April–July for NURS 401; May–August for NURS 435, 437, 441

[NURS 401: Professional Practice with Adults Experiencing Health Alterations](#)

- An invigilated **Medication Safety and Calculation Midterm Exam** must be successfully completed prior to the four week clinical rotation, in the first month of NURS 401. The passing grade for the exam is 80%. Students have two attempts to earn the grade of 80%. Students who do not earn 80% on this exam after two attempts will fail the course; a grade of “U” (unsuccessful) in NURS 401 will be assigned. These students are not permitted to continue to the four week clinical rotation and will be removed from the on-line portion of NURS 401.
- NURS 401 is a paced course with a blended format of on-line and in-person learning.
- NURS 401 is accessible on the first day of the term (e.g., September 1, January 1 or April 1).
- NURS 401 includes a clinical rotation of four consecutive weeks of eight hour shifts with an instructor on an acute care medical, surgical, or combined medical/surgical unit in Calgary or Edmonton. The four week clinical rotation may occur any time during the term.
- All students must wear a plain, white nursing uniform top; the uniform bottoms can be any colour. This helps AHS staff, patients, and other nursing students to recognize our group as AU students.
- All charting is to be signed with the designation NS, AU. This stands for Nursing Student, Athabasca University.

[NURS 435: Professional Practice in Mental Health Promotion](#)

- NURS 435 is a paced, on-line, instructor-led course.
- NURS 435 is accessible on the first day of the term (e.g., September 1, January 1 or May 1).
- Students are required to attend several synchronous meetings with their instructor and classmates via Adobe Connect. These meetings are mandatory.

[NURS 437: Professional Practice in Family and Community Health Promotion](#)

- NURS 437 is a paced course with a blended format of on-line and in-person learning.
- NURS 437 is accessible on the first day of the term (e.g., September 1, January 1, or May 1).
- NURS 437 includes a clinical rotation of four consecutive weeks with an RN preceptor in a community health nursing setting in Calgary, Edmonton or in the surrounding rural areas of Calgary or Edmonton. The four week clinical rotation may occur any time during the term. All students are also assigned to an AU instructor.
- NURS 437 clinical placements are at the sole discretion of AU.
- A vehicle is required for the duration of NURS 437. Driving distance to clinical placements is typically under 125 km.
- Students are required to dress in “business casual” attire.
- All charting is to be signed with the designation NS, AU. This stands for Nursing Student, Athabasca University.

[NURS 441: Consolidated Professional Practice](#)

- NURS 441 is a paced course with a blended format of on-line and in-person learning.
- NURS 441 is accessible on the first day of the month (e.g., September 1, January 1 or May 1). Most clinical rotations in NURS 441 starts two to three weeks later.

- In NURS 441, students are required to do 380 practice hours under the guidance of an RN preceptor. Shifts could be 8-hours or 12-hours in length. Shifts could be days, evening, and/or nights. It is the expectation that the student follows the preceptor's schedule. All students are also assigned to an AU instructor.
- For acute care placements, students must wear a plain, white nursing uniform top; the uniform bottoms can be any colour. This helps AHS staff, patients, and other nursing students to recognize our group as AU.
- For community placements, students may be advised to dress in "business casual" attire. For more information, students can discuss attire with preceptor prior to the beginning of the clinical rotation.
- All charting is to be signed with the designation NS, AU. This stands for Nursing Student, Athabasca University.
- **For detailed information about NURS 441 clinical placements refer to:**
 - [NURS 441 Placement Suggestion Process](#)
 - NURS 441 clinical placements are at the sole discretion of AU.
 - Students are required to submit a completed NURS441 Placement Suggestion Form using [Placement Preference Dropbox](#) for the applicable term (Fall or Winter or Spring). This must be done after receiving confirmation that your name is on the Course Eligibility List.
 - **Students are not authorized to contact clinical placement sites including management/managers, clinical educators, or staff to request/arrange their own clinical placements.**

AU Email Address

All nursing students must activate their Office 365 for a student email account; all nursing students must use their [AU email address](#) all communications with AU.

Pre-requisite Courses for Clinical Courses

When planning your program, check each course syllabus for course pre-requisites. In order to be eligible for clinical courses, all final grades for pre-requisite courses must be on your transcript **before** you sign up on the Course Eligibility List. To ensure that your final grades will be processed in time to be on your [transcript](#). **Complete all course requirements four to six weeks before you need the final grade.**

- **Fall term: May 1**
- **Winter term: September 1**
- **Spring term: January 2**

Clinical courses in progress are the only exception to this deadline.

Clinical Placement Process

- **There are no guarantees that students will receive clinical placements in the term, location, dates, or clinical setting of their choice. The Post-LPN to BN Program may have more students requesting clinical placements than there is capacity to accommodate. Clinical placements are at the sole discretion of AU.**
- **Students are not authorized to contact clinical placement sites including**

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management/managers, clinical educators, or staff to request/arrange their own clinical placements.

- AU is bound by Student Placement Agreements that stipulate clinical placement requests are to be completed by the educational institution (not the students).

How to Request a Clinical Course

NURS 401, NURS 435 and NURS 437: Students need to sign-up to request a clinical course in the Moodle course, **Clinical Course Preparations**, for the term in which they would like to enroll (e.g., Fall or Winter or Spring). Each clinical course has a Course Eligibility List. **Students can add their name to just one Course Eligibility List per term.** Students who sign up on more than one Course Eligibility List will have their names removed from the lists and may be unable to enroll in a clinical course that term.

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

The Course Eligibility Lists are available at midnight MST:

- **Fall term: May 1**
- **Winter term: September 1**
- **Spring term: January 2**

Being on the Course Eligibility List does not guarantee that a clinical placement will be available. Clinical Course Eligibility lists may fill quickly, depending on demand. Students who do not receive a placement because requests were not accepted by clinical placement agencies, will be given priority for the next term. Priority does not apply to waitlisted students.

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

Student names and their order on the Course 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: The order in which students enroll in the clinical courses of NURS 401, NURS 435, and NURS 437 is not prescribed. The demand for clinical courses is unpredictable; it varies each term. Students may have to wait up to two terms to get into a clinical course. Students will not 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 understand the challenges associated with waiting for clinical placements. The flexibility of the Post-LPN to BN program allows students to complete theory courses at their own pace. We are

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working within a placement process that is governed by contractual obligations between Alberta Health Services, academic partners, and Student Placement Agreements. For these reasons, this flexibility in the Post-LPN to BN program does not extend to the clinical courses.

Pre-requisite Clinical Placement Documentation

NURS 435: There are no pre-requisite clinical placement documents for NURS 435.

NURS 401, NURS 437, and NURS 441: Pre-requisite clinical placement documentation (as outlined below) must be completed and uploaded to the appropriate clinical placement preparation drop box for the correct term by the document submission deadline.

Deadlines to submit pre-requisite clinical placement documentation:

- **Fall term: July 10**
- **Winter term: November 10**
- **Spring term: February 10 for NURS 401; March 10 for NURS 435, 437, 441**

Students are responsible for accurately completing and correctly submitting the required documentation to the correct drop box. Some documents take time to complete/process; students need to account for this time. Check drop boxes regularly to ensure you have met requirements on or before the deadline.

Clinical placements are being managed for hundreds of students each term. Individual reminders are not sent to students regarding document submissions. As submissions are processed, they will show as “marked” if they meet the requirements or “returned” for additional follow-up with instructions provided in the “Feedback Comments” area. Do not email/call to ask whether documents have been checked or to indicate that you have submitted/resubmitted specific documents.

There are no deviations from meeting the course and documentation pre-requisites. Students will be removed from being considered for a clinical course if there are any outstanding requirements after the dates listed above.

Prior to submitting pre-requisite clinical placement documentation, refer to the following items listed. Instructions are posted in each drop box.

- 1. 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 the student is continuously enrolled. Indicate your CLPNA number in the "Professional ID #" area, both month and day are required. Note to Alberta residents: Please update if there are changes in AHS/Covenant employment or login information.
- 2. Athabasca University (AU) Student Oath of Confidentiality:** Must be updated annually.

3. **HSPnet Consent Form:** Dated prior to first clinical course and valid for the duration of the program, as long as student is continuously enrolled. Can be currently dated if original form is unable to be located.
4. **Alberta Health Services Confidentiality User Agreement:** Must be updated annually. Proceed to the [AHS site](#). Complete the module. The two page AHS Confidentiality and User 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.
5. **Health Care Provider CPR: Must be Heart and 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 a valid date related to the date of the clinical course. **If the card expires during the specific clinical dates, it is the responsibility of the student to recertify prior to the start of clinical and to submit a valid CPR certification to the drop box.**
6. **CLPNA Registration (Practice Permit):** Dated in the year of clinical course work. An invoice or payment receipt is not acceptable. **For Winter placements only**, submissions are accepted 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.
7. **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; it is valid for the remainder of the program, as long as continuously enrolled. Note to Toronto Police Service area students: Contact bnclinical@athabascau.ca to receive direction, as there is a specific process.
8. **Athabasca University Bachelor of Nursing Photo ID:** All students must have a wearable Nursing Student ID Card to participate in clinical courses. Complete the [Student Photo ID Request Form](#). Indicate that you are an AU nursing student in the Bachelor of Nursing Program. Once the Photo ID card is obtained, it must be **updated each academic year** by requesting an annual update sticker. [New stickers](#) will be available mid-to late-August.

- 9. N95 Mask Fit Test:** Documentation must show a valid date related to the date of the clinical course for the N95 Mask. **If the N95 Mask Fit expires during the specific clinical dates, it is the responsibility of the student to go for an N95 Mask Fit Test prior to the start of clinical and to submit documentation to the drop box.** If the N95 Mask Fit test has an expiry date displayed on the reverse side of your documentation, please submit the reverse side as well.

Alberta Health Services acceptable masks:

- 3M 1870+ (preferred)
- 3M 8110s (cup)
- 3M 8210 (cup)
- 3M 9105s (VFlex)
- 3M 9105 (VFlex)

Covenant Health acceptable masks:

- Nursing and support services (acute & continuing care sites):
 - 3M 8110s
 - 3M 8210
 - 3M 9105
 - 3M 9105s
 - 3M 9210+
- Operating Room and Medical Device Reprocessing Department use fluid resistant 3M N95 masks due to the sterile environments and exposure to fluid:
 - 3M 1860
 - 3M 1860s
 - 3M 1870+

The above information is provided in advance of confirmed clinical placement to provide a guide regarding acceptable mask fitting types. **Once your clinical 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 a new mask fit test result can be submitted.**

- 10. Influenza Vaccine Record:** Annual influenza vaccination is mandatory. For Fall placements only: If in clinical in September or October, please submit proof of influenza vaccination during your clinical placement. If in clinical in November, please submit proof of influenza vaccination prior to your clinical placement.

11. Immunizations: Copies of records and/or bloodwork indicating immunity is mandatory:

- dTap: **At least one dose after age 18 years followed by Td boosters every 10 years
- MMR: Two 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

four 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 plan and complete appointments for immunizations with health care providers so please plan accordingly.**

12. AHS Information & Privacy and IT Security & Awareness Video and Module: Students are required to watch the Information & Privacy and IT Security & awareness video. Students are also required to complete an online module which will generate a certificate that they will need to submit to the drop box. The certificate would be valid for one year.

Information is also available in the AHS 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.

Clinical placement units/agencies may not accept students if immunizations are not completed. Clinical placement units/agencies may cancel or end clinical rotation prior to completion in the event of an outbreak.

Pre-requisite AHS and Other Modules

Students must complete the appropriate modules as assigned for each clinical course and clinical placement location. **Students who have not completed AHS/other modules may be removed from clinical.**

Confirmation of Approved Clinical Placement

Students will receive an email **via their AU 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 when the majority of the approvals have been received from the clinical placement agencies, prior to the term registration deadline:

- **August 10**
- **December 10**
- **March 10 for NURS 401/April 10 for NURS 435, 437, 441**

Please be patient. Please do not email asking about placement confirmation during these times. Responding to these emails takes time away from organizing and confirming clinical placements.