

English for Academic Purposes (EAP) Learning Outcomes and Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLBs) 2024 ALIGNMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

In 2024, BC’s English as an Additional Language articulation committee revised the alignments of the provincial EAP (English for Academic Purposes) learning outcomes with the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLBs). The CLBs and the EAP outcomes both assess English proficiency for the purposes of post-secondary admission, program admission, and/or course placement. They are also used by some professional regulatory bodies as standards for program admission, or requirements for professional designations.

This summary provides an overview of the new alignments. The summary is intended for use by registrars, academic advisors, institutional staff, and other participants in the BC post-secondary system who may not be familiar with the two frameworks or their applications. The information in this document is drawn from the full report on the alignment project, which was funded by the BC Council on Admissions & Transfer.

As this is a summary document, readers seeking information on EAP or CLB requirements for a specific post-secondary institution or program are encouraged to contact the institution or program directly.

The alignments in this document replace previous alignments published in 2007 and 2014. The new alignments are based on the CLBs from 2010 (the most recent revision) and the EAP learning outcomes as revised in 2018.

All EAL and EAP course transfer equivalencies in the BC Transfer System are published annually on the BC Transfer Guide website (<https://www.bctransferguide.ca/learn-more-about/program-specific-transfer/english-as-an-additional-language-eal/>).

TABLE 1: EAP-CLB Alignments 2014 and 2024

	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
EAP I	CLB 5/6 CLP 5	CLB 5/6 CLB 5	CLB 6/7 CLB 5	CLB 5/6 CLB 5
EAP II	CLB 7 CLB 6	CLB 7 CLB 6	CLB 7/8 CLB 6	CLB 7 CLB 6
EAP III	CLB 7/8 CLB 7	CLB 7/8 CLB 7	CLB 8 CLB 7	CLB 8 CLB 7
EAP IV	CLB 8 CLB 8	CLB 8 CLB 8	CLB 9 CLB 8	CLB 9 CLB 8

NOTE: This table shows 2014 and 2024 EAP-CLB alignments. The 2024 alignments are in **bold/blue**. The 2024 alignments were approved by the EAL articulation committee at its May 2024 meeting.

STRUCTURE OF THE EAP LEARNING OUTCOMES AND THE CLBs

The CLB framework has 12 levels describing English language proficiencies. There are benchmarks at each level for four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. The CLBs are organized into three stages of ability. Stage I (basic) includes CLB levels 1-4, Stage II (intermediate) includes CLB levels 5-8, and Stage III (advanced) includes CLB levels 9-12.

The EAP learning outcomes are organized into Levels I to IV. Each level describes English language proficiency in academic settings. Like the CLBs, there are EAP learning outcomes at each level for listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Table 2 presents the descriptors used to classify skills and levels in the EAP and CLB frameworks.

TABLE 2: EAP and CLB Descriptors

EAP Descriptors	CLB Descriptors
<p><i>Performance Conditions:</i> Features and characteristics of materials, texts, and parameters within each skill and at each level</p> <p><i>Learning Outcomes:</i> Academic language tasks that students are able to do within each skill, upon successful completion of a level.</p>	<p><i>Profiles of Abilities:</i> snapshot of a learner's ability in each skill</p> <p><i>Competency Statement:</i> what a learner can do within each skill</p> <p>Competency areas are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interacting with others • Giving and comprehending instructions • Getting things done • Comprehending and sharing information • Reproducing information (writing) <p><i>Features of Communication:</i> specific conditions and characteristics of the text or task, e.g. length, time constraints, rate of speech</p> <p><i>Indicators of Ability:</i> describe a learner's successful accomplishment of the competency</p> <p><i>Sample Tasks:</i> in work, study and community contexts</p>

USES OF THE EAP LEARNING OUTCOMES AND THE CLBs

The EAP learning outcomes provide descriptors that BC adult education programs can use to compare EAP courses at different institutions, for the purposes of articulation.

The CLBs are a reference for Canadian learning, teaching, programming and assessing of adult English as a Second Language skills. They provide a common, national basis for development of programs, curricula, resources and assessment tools. The CLBs include language for work, community and educational contexts.

The CLBs are used in federally funded Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) classes. Provincially funded adult EAL programs at BC post-secondary institutions can use the CLBs to structure their own curriculum, if they wish.

EAP LEARNING OUTCOMES AND CLBs IN THE BC POST-SECONDARY SYSTEM

Students who have successfully completed EAP Level IV generally have the language skills necessary to enter BC post-secondary academic, technology, career and vocational programs, including those requiring English 12 completion or equivalent.

EAP IV is considered by most institutions to be equivalent to CLB 9. Some institutions accept CLB 7 or 8 as equivalent to a score of 6.0 on the IELTS (International English Language Testing System).

Institutions that accept CLB scores for admission generally require CLB 8 in each of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Several BC programs and institutions accept scores from CLB-based tests as evidence of English language proficiency. These include the CLBPT (Canadian Language Benchmark Placement Test), recently replaced by the Canadian Language Benchmarks Placement Assessment (CLBPA), and the Canadian English Language Proficiency Index Program (CELPIP).

Health Care Assistant certificate programs must follow the admission requirements set by the BC Care Aide and Community Health Worker Registry. These include English language proficiency at a minimum level of CLB 6 (reading/writing) and CLB 7 (listening/speaking). Scores of CLB 9 (Listening), 8 (Speaking/Reading), and 7 (Writing) on the Canadian English Language Benchmarks Test for Nurses (CELBAN) are generally required for admission to Nursing and Practical Nursing programs.

Other programs may have specific CLB requirements for admission, some of which are mandated by external regulatory bodies.

THE ALIGNMENT PROCESS

The process of aligning the CLBs and the EAP learning outcomes began by comparing descriptors within each of the four language skills. The researchers reviewed the previous alignments between each EAP descriptor and the parallel CLB descriptor. The CLB descriptors at one level above and below each identified match were also reviewed, to ensure the best possible match of each EAP descriptor with a CLB descriptor.

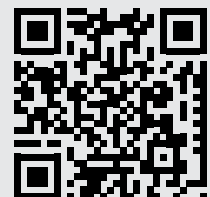
After each match was completed, the EAP level for each individual skill was matched with the CLB level with the most similar descriptors. For an EAP course to be articulated provincially, there must be a match of 70% or higher between the course's content and the descriptors for a specific EAP course in the EAL Transfer Guide. Therefore, for this alignment process there had to be at least 70% similarity in the descriptors of an EAP level and a CLB level for them to be aligned.

There were also changes to previous alignments that had two CLB levels aligned with a single EAP level. Instructors, program heads and assessors indicated that it was challenging to determine equivalencies when an EAP level did not directly match a single CLB level. To facilitate each CLB level being aligned with a single EAP level, the articulation committee made minor amendments to the learning outcomes of three EAP levels.

The 2014 and 2024 alignments are presented in **Table 1** (on page 1). The 2024 alignments were approved by the EAL articulation committee at its May 2024 meeting.



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