CELBAN™

CANADIAN ENGLISH LANGUAGE
BENCHMARK ASSESSMENT FOR NURSES

TEST INFORMATION MANUAL

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INTRODUCTION

Preparing for CELBAN means reflecting on and practicing how nurses communicate in Canada. Unlike other high stakes language proficiency exams, which may move you away from your occupation-specific subject area, CELBAN grounds you in healthcare – your area of expertise.

This manual outlines important information and will help prepare you for CELBAN.

Overview

CELBAN is an English language proficiency exam designed for internationally educated nurses (IENs) that is recognized by Canadian nursing regulators. Assessment tasks in CELBAN are informed by an analysis of the language demands of the nursing profession in Canada and replicate authentic communication tasks nurses use routinely.

CELBAN assesses four language skill areas:

- Speaking
- Listening
- Writing
- Reading

The Speaking Test takes place separately with two trained assessors. The Listening, Writing, and Reading sections take place in a group setting, referred to as the Group Test.

Speaking	Writing	Listening	Reading
• Answer questions to demonstrate ability to narrate, describe, summarize, synthesize, state and support opinion, and advise. • Engage in role plays to ask questions to obtain information, give instructions, and offer explanations. • 20 - 30 minutes	Complete two different tasks to demonstrate your writing skills: *Task A* • Descriptive writing, using complete sentences in paragraph form *Task B* • Express and support an opinion using complete sentences in paragraph form • 45 minutes	• View multiple audio and video scenarios • Scenarios include interactions between nurses and patients, family members, and other professionals • Questions are in multiple choice format • 60 minutes	• Read passages in the form of charts, patient notes, manuals, and information texts related to healthcare • Questions are in multiple choice format and includes a cloze exercise • 60 minutes

What to Expect on Test Day

Once you register for CELBAN through our online portal, you will receive a confirmation email that lists the date and time for your Group Test and your Speaking Test. Pay close attention to the dates and times in this email confirmation. Print it and take it with you on test day as this confirmation email is required when you sign in for your test.

Identification Requirements

On the day of the test, you will be required to provide two pieces of identification. Your primary identification must be one of the following pieces of photo identification:

- Passport
- Permanent Resident/Citizenship Card
- Driver's License

You will also be asked to present a second piece of identification to confirm your name. The second ID does not have to have your picture, but it must have your signature. This second ID can be one of the above or another official identification such as:

- Health Card
- Credit Card
- Student Card

The names on your pieces of identification must match exactly with each other and with the names on the confirmation letter (including spelling). If your names and your photo do not match the identification documents that you present on test day, you will not be allowed to complete the test.

Signing In

You must sign in at the test site 30 minutes before your scheduled test time. When you sign in, you will be asked to present your identification and confirmation email. You will be required to sign in before your Group Test and again before your Speaking Test.

Bags, coats, purses, and electronic devices (cell phones, MP3 players, recorders, dictionaries, pagers, etc.) are not permitted in the testing rooms. Each test site offers a secure area where you can leave your personal belongings. Neither the test site nor The CELBAN Centre are responsible for stolen items. We encourage you to leave valuable personal items at home on the day of your test.

Please note that pencils and erasers are provided for you in the testing room. You will not be permitted to bring any pens, pencils, erasers, or other personal belongings into the room with you.

Signing Out

You are required to sign out after your Group Test and again after your Speaking Test. You are not required to stay at the test site between your scheduled test times. If you choose to leave the test site, please ensure you arrive back 30 minutes before your next scheduled test time to sign-in again.

SPEAKING

Overview

During the speaking test, you will interact face-to-face with two CELBAN speaking assessors. The speaking assessment lasts 20-30 minutes and is recorded for future reference to verify your score, if needed.

The speaking test has four different types of spoken interactions:

- Opening and introductory questions about familiar, every day topics
- Role plays with nursing scenarios and/or nursing-related topics
- Discussion questions about concepts, ideas, and opinions
- Conclusion

During the question portions of the test, one assessor will be conversing with you while the other will be taking notes. During the role plays, one of the assessors will take on the role of a patient or a nurse, and test takers will assume a nurse role.

Throughout the speaking test, including the role plays, only your language skills are being assessed, not your clinical skills. Communicate your intent and meaning in a clear and purposeful way. Do not worry about making mistakes in medical knowledge. In this interview, your language proficiency is being assessed, not your medical knowledge. However, correct and accurate non-technical, nursing-related vocabulary is required to get a high score.

Speaking Tasks

During the test, you will be asked to perform any of the following speaking tasks:

- Talk about a personal experience or story
- Offer suggestions and advice
- Describe or compare
- Respond to questions, comments, and concerns
- Ask for information
- Give instructions or educate
- Encourage, motivate, and persuade
- Discuss an issue and give/support an opinion
- Explain a problem, and propose solutions

Speaking Role Plays

Role plays are designed to elicit the type of language that may be required in a professional nursing context.

For a successful interaction, note the following communication strategies listed below:

- Establish rapport and engage the role player.

- Use appropriate tone, level of formality, and vocabulary for the situation.

- Ask for clarification (ask further questions) to make sure you understand.

- Explain the reasons for your questions and instructions.

- Support any suggestions or directions with a rationale.

- Don't be afraid to correct yourself.

- Be empathetic, but firm.

- Acknowledge the person to whom you are speaking.

Speaking Rating Criteria

The criteria listed below are used to rate your speaking. Consider these criteria when practicing for the test.

Communication	Are you able to express your ideas and opinions clearly so that others can follow your thoughts?
Intelligibility	Is your pronunciation clear? How about stress and intonation of your sentences? Do other people usually understand your speech without much effort?
Grammar	Is the language you use grammatically accurate? Do you use sentences that are short and simple, or long and complex?
Vocabulary	Do you use appropriate and accurate vocabulary to discuss different topics? Is your vocabulary basic (you can talk about everyday, familiar topics) or more advanced (you can talk about concepts, ideas, and other abstract topics)?
Fluency	How much do you hesitate and pause when you are speaking? Is the tempo of your speech fairly even?
Organization & Cohesion	Do you present your main ideas and clearly support them with a rationale and/or evidence? Do you introduce and conclude topics appropriately, and use connecting words and phrases to connect your ideas?
Initiative	Are you able to take initiative for an interaction with some confidence? Do you have the language skills to help you take initiative and engage confidently?
Strategies	Do you apply communication strategies to help you communicate effectively?

WRITING

Overview

The Writing Test includes two different tasks and takes 45 minutes to complete. You will receive a writing test booklet with instructions and space for you to write your response.

Task A

- Descriptive writing, based on the information provided
- You will use complete sentences in paragraph form

Task B

- Express an opinion, based on the information provided
- You will use complete sentences in paragraph form

Writing Rating Criteria

The criteria listed below are used to rate your writing. You can use these criteria to self-assess your writing.

Tasks A & B

Task Purpose	Does your written response meets the task requirements? Did you effectively describe (Task 1) and express an opinion (Task 2)?
Content & Organization	Is the writing organized in a way that makes it easy for the reader to understand the incident and recognize your opinions? Have you used cohesive devices to connect the various ideas and parts of the text?
Grammatical Structures	Are you able to use a variety of sentence structures, both simple and complex? Are the words and phrases placed accurately according to grammatical rules so your written message is clearly understood?
Vocabulary, Word Forms and Usage	Are you able to use a variety of general and health related vocabulary? Did you choose the right word based on meaning? Did you use the right word form (i.e. noun, adjective, gerund, etc.)?
Overall Impression and Fluency	Does your writing have a flow that makes it easy for the reader to read along, follow, and understand your meaning?

LISTENING

Overview

The Listening Test consists of a series of audio and video clips with multiple choice questions. It takes 60 minutes to complete. You will receive a test booklet in which you will record all of your answers. Before the test begins, there is an example video clip and example questions to practice. All the instructions are heard on the video, and are also written in the test booklet. Answers can be marked as soon as you hear them. Marks are not deducted for incorrect responses.

Listening scenarios are only played once. Be sure to:

- Pre-read questions before viewing/listening to the scenarios.
- Mark answers in your test booklet as soon as you hear the information needed. You will view the video, read the questions, and select your answers at the same time.
- Use the dedicated time at the end of each scenario to check your answers. Do not use the time allotted for pre-reading the next task's questions.

READING

Overview

The Reading Test consists of a series of health related text passages, each followed by multiple choice questions. It takes 60 minutes to complete. Texts include charts, patient notes, manuals, and short articles related to health issues.

You will also complete a Cloze exercise (fill in the blanks) with multiple choice options.

RESULTS

Reports

After you take the CELBAN, two reports will be generated:

1) Unofficial Score Report (for test takers)

This report will be sent to you by email. Your Unofficial Score Report includes your test scores and a description of your strengths and weaknesses for speaking and writing.

2) Official Test Results (for institutions)

These results will be sent to the licensing body or institution you requested on your registration form. This report contains your test results only. It does not include a description of your strengths and weaknesses.

Additional Reports

To receive additional reports, visit the CELBAN Centre website and complete a request form. There is a fee for each additional report requested.

Understanding your Test Scores

Speaking and Writing

In CELBAN Speaking there are eight criteria used in scoring. Two assessors independently assign a CLB level for each criteria, and a conversion process is applied to arrive at a final overall CLB.

In CELBAN Writing, there are five criteria used in scoring each task. Once each task is rated, the scores for each criterion are added up and a conversion process is applied to arrive at a final overall CLB.

Listening and Reading

In CELBAN Reading and Listening, test items answered correctly are added up to determine a raw score. A conversion process is then applied to arrive at a final overall CLB.

Regulatory Requirements

In Canada, language proficiency requirements for nursing practice are established by nursing regulatory bodies. The minimum scores required for registration are set by Canadian Nursing Regulators and are as follows:

- Listening: CLB 10
- Speaking: CLB 8
- Reading: CLB 8
- Writing: CLB 7

CELBAN and the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB)

CELBAN test results are related to the CLB scale, which is described in the document *Canadian Language Benchmarks: English as a Second Language for Adults*.

There are 12 CLB levels, and CELBAN test results reflect levels 6 to 10 for Listening and Reading, and levels p6 to 9 for Speaking and Writing.

Stage I Basic Ability				Stage II Intermediate Ability				Stage III Advanced Ability			
CLB 1	CLB 2	CLB 3	CLB 4	CLB 5	CLB 6	CLB 7	CLB 8	CLB 9	CLB 10	CLB 11	CLB 12

The Meaning of a CELBAN Test Result

The charts below describe abilities associated with CELBAN test results for each of the four language skills. Many people get a different score for each skill, as it is normal to be stronger in some aspects of communication and weaker in others.

LISTENING

CELBAN 6 or lower	CELBAN 7	CELBAN 8	CELBAN 9	CELBAN 10
This score means that you have not met the requirements for CELBAN 7. Your ability level could be anywhere from level 1 to level 6 on the CLB scale. CELBAN does not distinguish these lower levels. When you receive this score, it means that you may be able to understand some formal and informal familiar conversations. You understand main ideas, some factual details, many common words, and perhaps some idioms. You are most comfortable when the conversation is concrete and familiar. You sometimes misunderstand, and need the speaker to slow down or repeat. When the conversation is fast, you have difficulty following the meaning and understanding idiomatic and specialized language.	This score means that you understand many formal and informal work-related conversations. You don't always understand conceptual language, and you have difficulty when people speak quickly or use colloquial or idiomatic language. You are usually able to identify main ideas and factual details in routine conversations that are not too complicated, and you understand some indirect meanings. You are able to understand most common words and some language that is specialized for the health-care field.	This score means that you understand most formal and informal work-related conversations. You understand conceptual language, but you have difficulty following faster conversations and understanding colloquial or idiomatic language. You are usually able to identify main ideas, factual details and some indirect meanings in conversations that are not too complicated. You can often assess a speaker's intent and attitude. You are able to understand an expanding range of common and less common vocabulary, including some language that is specialized for the health-care field.	This score means that you are starting to understand more advanced, formal and informal work-related conversations. You understand most conceptual language, but you have difficulty following faster conversations and understanding less common idioms and colloquial expressions. You are able to identify main ideas, factual details and indirect meanings in some complicated conversations. You can usually assess a speaker's intent and attitude. You are able to understand a range of common and less common vocabulary, including language that is specialized for the health-care field.	This score means that you understand a range of advanced formal and informal work-related conversations. You understand abstract ideas, but you may have difficulty following faster conversations and understanding less common idioms and colloquial expressions. You are able to identify main ideas, factual details and indirect meanings in many complicated conversations, and you can assess a speaker's intent and attitude. You are able to understand an expanding range of common and less common vocabulary, including language that is specialized for the health-care field.

READING

CELBAN 6 or lower	CELBAN 7	CELBAN 8	CELBAN 9	CELBAN 10
This score means that you have not met the requirements for CELBAN 7. Your ability level could be anywhere from level 1 to level 6 on the CLB scale. CELBAN does not distinguish these lower levels. When you receive this score, it means that you may understand some, but not all, texts in routine work-related situations. The texts you understand are factual and concrete. The vocabulary is mostly common, but some of it can be conceptual or specialized. You can sometimes identify the writer's purpose, get the main ideas and some key information. You have difficulty with more complicated texts and don't always understand the writer's attitude, opinions and implied information.	This score means that you understand many texts in routine work-related situations. The texts you understand are factual and concrete, but there can be some conceptual information. The vocabulary can be specialized for the health-care field and include some idioms. You can usually identify the writer's purpose, get main ideas and key information. You may be able to guess the meaning of some unknown words by using the surrounding context. You are beginning to understand complicated sentences and structures and can sometimes determine the writer's attitude, opinions, and implied information.	This score means that you understand most texts in routine work-related situations. The texts you understand include explicit facts, opinions, and some implied information. The vocabulary is concrete, conceptual, or specialized for the health-care field and includes some idioms. You can identify the writer's purpose, get main ideas and synthesize, integrate and compare information. You can often guess the meaning of an unknown word by using the surrounding context. You understand complicated sentences and structures and can often determine the writer's attitude, opinions, and implied information.	This score means that you understand an adequate range of texts in less routine work-related situations. The texts you understand include explicit facts, opinions, and implied information. The vocabulary can be abstract, conceptual, specialized for the health-care field, and include idiomatic and figurative language. You can identify the writer's purpose, get main ideas and synthesize, integrate and compare information. You can usually guess the meaning of an unknown word by using the surrounding context. Your knowledge of grammar and structure helps you to understand complicated sentences and structures and you can interpret the writer's attitude, opinions, and recognize nuances.	This score means that you understand a good range of texts in less routine work-related situations. The texts you understand include explicit facts, opinions, and implied information. The vocabulary can be abstract, conceptual, specialized for the health-care field, and include idiomatic and figurative language. You can identify the writer's purpose, get main ideas and synthesize, integrate and compare information. You can guess the meaning of an unknown word by using the surrounding context. Your knowledge of grammar and structure helps you to understand complicated sentences and structures and you can often interpret opinions and nuances, identify intent, mood, attitude, point of view, and line of reasoning.

SPEAKING			
CELBAN 6 or lower	**CELBAN 7**	**CELBAN 8**	**CELBAN 9**
This score means that you have not met the requirements for CELBAN 7. Your ability level could be anywhere from level 1 to level 6 on the CLB scale. CELBAN does not distinguish these lower levels.

Your speaking is adequate for some routine social interactions, and you may be able to narrate, describe, and give some complicated information.

You use some variety in grammatical structures, but make errors with complex structures.

Sometimes, it is difficult for others to understand you because of mistakes in grammar or pronunciation.

Your speaking is not yet fluent, and you may pause or hesitate.

You do not always link your ideas with cohesive devices.

Sometimes, you don't take initiative or use the right tone and register for the situation. | This score means that you can communicate with some confidence in many daily routine work-related situations.

You have the ability to explain basic concepts and discuss concrete ideas.

Most of the time, others can understand you, although errors in grammar and pronunciation may cause occasional difficulty.

There is some variety in your use of grammatical structures, and you have some control over more complicated grammatical structures.

You use a range of concrete and some conceptual vocabulary.

Your fluency is reasonably good, but you may hesitate and make errors that interfere with meaning and impede communication.

You express main ideas clearly, but it may be difficult for a listener to follow your supporting ideas or details.

You are developing fluency and using some cohesive devices to link your ideas.
You can often take initiative, but you may not always use the right tone and register for the situation. | This score means that you can communicate with confidence in most daily routine work-related situations.

You have the ability to explain concepts, discuss and synthesize ideas, advise, and discuss some abstract concepts.

Others can understand you, and errors in grammar and pronunciation seldom cause difficulty.

There is variety in your use of grammatical structures, and you have adequate control of more complicated grammatical structures.

You use a range of concrete, idiomatic and conceptual vocabulary.

Your fluency is good, with natural pauses and hesitations that do not interfere with your communication.

You express main ideas and supporting details clearly and use cohesive devices to link your ideas.

You take initiative with some confidence, using the appropriate tone and register for the situation. | This score means that you can communicate with some confidence in demanding or challenging non-routine work-related situations.

You have the ability to explain concepts, discuss and synthesize ideas, advise, analyze, persuade, and discuss concepts that are more abstract.

Others can understand you, and errors in grammar and pronunciation rarely cause difficulty.

There is good variety in your use of grammatical structures, and you have good control of complex grammatical structures.

You use an expanded range of concrete and conceptual vocabulary, suitable for non-routine workplace interactions.

Your fluency is good, with natural pauses and hesitations that do not interfere with your communication.

You express main ideas and supporting details clearly and use a variety of cohesive devices effectively.

You take initiative with confidence, using appropriate tone and register for the situation. |

WRITING			
CELBAN 6 or lower	**CELBAN 7**	**CELBAN 8**	**CELBAN 9**
This score means that you have not met the requirements for CELBAN 7. Your ability level could be anywhere from level 1 to level 6 on the CLB scale. CELBAN does not distinguish these lower levels. You may be able to attempt a narrative and express your opinion, but you are not yet able to explain and provide supporting details, and you do not succeed in fulfilling the writing tasks. Key information is often missing, inaccurate or unclear, and the order of the information may be confusing for a reader. You do not organize the information adequately or use cohesive devices to link the ideas clearly. You use mostly common everyday vocabulary, with many errors in word choice, forms, and combinations, so your wording can be difficult to comprehend. You are not yet able to use complicated grammatical structures correctly and consistently. You make errors that interfere with the meaning you are trying to convey, and a reader may have difficulty understanding your communication.	This score means that you can compose an adequate narrative and express an opinion adequately in writing. You include most key information and sequence the details in a logical way. You organize your ideas adequately and use some cohesive devices to link the information. Your vocabulary is adequate for the task, but you have occasional difficulty with word choices, order, forms and combinations, and this may make your writing somewhat unclear or unusual. You use complicated grammatical structures with adequate control, but you still make errors, and they sometimes interfere with meaning. A reader may occasionally have to make some effort to understand your communication.	This score means that you can create a good narrative and express an opinion well in writing. You include key details and the information is accurate, clear and sequenced in a logical way. You organize your ideas well, using cohesive devices to link information. Your vocabulary is sufficient for the task. Word choices, forms and combinations are generally appropriate, although your wording can occasionally seem unusual. You use complicated grammatical structures with good control, and although you make some errors, they do not interfere with meaning. A reader can usually understand your communication.	This score means that you can create a very good narrative, express your opinion well in writing, and support your ideas with relevant details. You include all key details, and the information is accurate, very clear and well sequenced. You organize your ideas well, using cohesive devices to enhance your writing and link information. Your vocabulary is appropriate, varied, and relevant to the task. Word choices, forms and combinations are appropriate, and your wording is fairly natural. You use a variety of complicated grammatical structures with flexibility and very good control. You write with fluency, and a reader has no trouble understanding your communication.

CELBAN is the property of:

Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks | Centre des niveaux de compétence linguistique canadiens

CELBAN is administered by:

THE CELBAN CENTRE

The CELBAN Centre operates within:

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