NCLEX-RN 2019:

Canadian and International Results

Published by the Canadian Council of Registered Nurse Regulators (CCRNR)

Canadian Council of

CCRNr

Registered Nurse Regulators

Contents

Executive Summary

The NCLEX-RN has now been in use for five years (2015 to 2019, inclusive) and its results have improved since its first year.

First-attempt pass rates by Canadian-educated writers have increased to 85.5% in 2019 from 69.7% in 2015 (see Tables 2 and 6).

First-attempt pass rates by internationally-educated writers have increased to 59.5% in 2019 from 49.7% in 2015 (see Tables 2 and 6).

By the end of 2019, 90.5% of people who started writing the NCLEX-RN in 2019 had passed (see Table 2).

Newfoundland and Labrador had the highest first-attempt pass rate of any Canadian province or territory in 2019, at 93.6%. The province or territory with the second-highest first-attempt pass rate in 2019 was Manitoba, at 91.4% (see Table 7).

All provinces have seen an increase in their first-attempt pass rates in 2019 compared to 2015 (with the exception of Northwest Territories and Nunavut, whose pass rates are expected to fluctuate more due to their low number of writers) (see Table 7).

For writers who wrote their first attempt of the NCLEX-RN in French, their first-attempt pass rate has increased to 58.1% in 2019 from 26.9% in 2015 (see Table 8). Only the first-attempt pass rate is shown in this report because, on subsequent attempts, NCLEX-RN writers can change the language in which they write the exam. This means it is not possible to compare pass rates across all attempts by language of write.

The average exam duration (in hours:minutes) of Canadian-educated writers who passed the NCLEX-RN has decreased from 2:13 in 2015 to 1:56 in 2019. They also answered fewer questions on average, from 120 to 107 questions answered (see Tables 9 and 10). These statistics show that the writers are more strongly passing than they were in 2015.

The NCLEX-RN is separated into several categories (see Table 1). Canadian-educated writers' performance in all of the categories saw a sharp increase in 2016, and since then, the performance has either seen a small increase or a maintaining of the performance from 2016 (see Figure 1).

Background of the NCLEX-RN in Canada

The role of Canada's provincial nursing regulators

In Canada, registered nursing is professionally regulated in collaboration with the public. Each province or territory has a regulator and all of these regulators are members of the Canadian Council of Registered Nurse Regulators (CCRNR).

Through provincial and territorial legislation, Canada's Registered Nurse (RN) regulators are accountable to the public for ensuring RNs are safe, competent and ethical practitioners within their province or territory.

Regulators achieve their mandate by taking responsibility for such activities as:

- registering and licensing RNs

- overseeing reviews of professional conduct

- setting standards that govern nursing education and how RNs perform their work

- identifying the competencies needed by RNs entering the profession

- implementing an entry exam that tests for the specific skills RNs need in order to practice safely

- monitoring the exam results to identify trends and areas for improvement

The purpose of the regulators' nursing exam

When an RN starts their first day of nursing practice, the public needs to feel confident they have the skills, knowledge and judgment to provide safe care. For example, can the RN:

- assess and respond to a patient's vital signs?

- evaluate a patient's need for pain management?

- administer medications?

- maintain the confidentiality of a patient's personal health information and respect their privacy?

Legislation gives Canada's regulators the responsibility to ensure RN applicants have these abilities before they start practicing nursing. This means that, before an applicant can be licensed/registered to practice as an RN in Canada, they must pass a regulator-selected registration exam.

The registration exam used by 10 of Canada's nursing regulators is the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX-RN).[1] The NCLEX-RN is a computer-adaptive test

---

[1]Yukon Registered Nurses Association processes applicants via endorsement from other Canadian provinces or territories, and the Northwest Territories and Nunavut have a combined nursing regulator. Applicants for RN licensure in Québec complete the OIIQ's (Ordre des infirmières et infirmiers du Québec) professional examination.

administered by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN). NCSBN has administered the NCLEX-RN as a registration exam for licensure in the United States since 1982 and in Canada since 2015. NCSBN is an independent, not-for-profit organization whose members include boards of nursing in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, four U.S. territories and 24 associate members (including all members of CCRNR).[2]

The groundwork leading up to the new nursing registration exam

Throughout the early 2000s, Canada's RN regulators reviewed and discussed best practices for an entry-to-practice exam. This review resulted in 10 of Canada's RN regulators (excluding Québec and Yukon) choosing the NCLEX-RN as the exam to test applicants' readiness to enter the practice of nursing.

In late 2011, regulators informed Canada's RN educators and other stakeholders that they would be adopting the NCLEX-RN on January 1, 2015. NCSBN gave educators access to resources to help prepare students for the exam. These resources included: webinars, teleconferences, FAQs, a quarterly NCLEX-RN newsletter, conferences organized by NCSBN, information about computer-adaptive testing (CAT) and links to test plans. NCSBN continues to update and provide these resources.

---

[2]Visit ncsbn.org/about for more information on the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN).

Developing the NCLEX-RN for Canada

Developing the test questions[3]

NCSBN consulted with Canadian RNs in the 10 provinces and territories that use the NCLEX-RN when developing the test questions. This was to ensure test questions were suitable for Canadian writers. For example, NCSBN modified questions to include metric measurements and generic drug names familiar to Canadian writers. Canadian RNs continue to assess the exam to ensure it meets the needs of Canadian writers.

French translation process

NCSBN used Canadian translation standards to translate NCLEX-RN questions from English to French. A translation panel consisting of three to six Canadian bilingual RNs then reviewed the translated questions. NCSBN required these RNs to be practicing in a bilingual facility or setting and have their nursing regulators approve their participation in the process or ensure they are in good standing with their nursing regulators. NCSBN removed questions not approved by the translation panel from both the French and English versions of the NCLEX-RN exam.[4]

Topics covered on the exam

NCSBN divides the content of the NCLEX-RN exam (referred to as the test plan) into four categories, with two of the categories having sub-categories.[5] The NCLEX-RN asks exam writers questions from each category. The breakdown of the number of questions asked within each category and subcategory is in Table 1.

---

[3]Visit ncsbn.org/9011.htm for more information on NCLEX-RN exam development.
[4]Visit the Canadian French Translation section of ncsbn.org/1213.htm for more information on the NCLEX-RN translation process.
[5]Visit ncsbn.org/testplans.htm for more information about the NCLEX-RN's test plan.

Table 1: NCLEX-RN exam categories

Category	% of questions asked from each category
Safe and effective care environment **The nurse promotes achievement of patient outcomes by providing and directing nursing care that enhances the care delivery setting to protect patients and health care personnel:**	
Management of care • Providing and directing nursing care that enhances the care delivery setting to protect patients and health care personnel.	17–23%
Safety and infection control • Protecting patients and health care personnel from health and environmental hazards.	9–15%
Health promotion and maintenance **The nurse provides and directs nursing care for the patient that incorporates the knowledge of expected growth and development principles, prevention and/or early detection of health problems, and strategies to achieve optimal health.**	6–12%
Psychosocial integrity **The nurse provides and directs nursing care that promotes and supports the emotional, mental and social well-being of the patient experiencing stressful events, as well as patients with acute or chronic mental illness.**	6–12%
Physiological integrity **The nurse promotes physical health and wellness by providing care and comfort, reducing patient risk potential and managing health alterations:**	
Basic care and comfort • Providing comfort and assistance in the performance of activities of daily living.	6–12%
Pharmacological and parenteral therapies • Providing care related to the administration of medications and parenteral therapies.	12–18%
Reduction of risk potential • Reducing the likelihood that patients will develop complications or health problems related to existing conditions, treatments or procedures.	9–15%
Physiological adaptation • Managing and providing care for patients with acute, chronic or life-threatening physical health conditions.	11–17%

The format of the NCLEX-RN

Computer-adaptive test (CAT)

The NCLEX-RN is a computer-adaptive test.[6] A computer-adaptive test is different from a traditional pen-and-paper exam in the way it presents the questions, how the exam writer responds to the questions and how the test determines a pass.

Typically, with a pen-and-paper exam, all writers receive the same questions and the same number of questions. Some questions are easy and others are more difficult. In the end, a percentage of correct responses on the test indicates the candidate's ability and whether they pass or fail. An exam writer with a high level of ability will have to answer all the questions, even the easy ones. Having to do this is an inefficient way to test someone's level of ability.

On a pen-and-paper exam, multiple-choice questions can also make the results of a lower-ability writer seem higher than they are. For example, if the writer can choose from one of four answers to a question, they can guess at an answer. This gives them a 25%

---

[6]Visit ncsbn.org/356.htm for more information on computer-adaptive tests (CAT).

chance of getting the answer right, even if they did not know the answer. Therefore, the question is not measuring their ability. In contrast, a computer-adaptive test uses computer technology and measurement theory to provide a more efficient and effective means of assessing a writer's ability.

With the NCLEX-RN, writers must answer questions covering several categories. As the exam proceeds, the computer selects each question from its question bank. NCSBN has classified each question by its level of difficulty.

After the writer answers the question, the computer calculates an *ability estimate* based on all of the writer's previous answers. The computer selects the next question from its question bank based on this ability estimate. It selects a question with a level of difficulty that should give the writer a 50% chance of answering the question correctly. That way, the question will not be too difficult or too easy for the writer.

If the writer answers the question correctly, the next question they see will be more difficult than the previous one. If they answer the question incorrectly, the next question will be slightly easier. The exam repeats this process for each question and across each category, recalculating the writer's ability estimate each time. This process creates an exam tailored to the writer's ability. Two writers in the same examination room will not get the same exam.[7]

The exam continues until the computer determines if the writer has passed or failed.

How is a pass or fail determined?

The computer decides whether a writer has passed or failed the NCLEX-RN using one of three rules:

95% confidence interval rule:[8] The exam will stop once the computer has calculated with 95% certainty that the writer's ability is clearly above or below the passing standard. This is the most commonly applied rule.

Maximum-length exam rule:[9] When a writer's ability is very close to the passing standard, the computer continues to give questions until the writer reaches the maximum number of questions (265). At this point, the computer disregards the 95% confidence rule and decides whether the writer has passed or failed based on their final ability estimate.

Run-out-of-time rule:[10] When a writer runs out of time before reaching the maximum number of questions and the computer has not been able to determine whether they passed or failed with 95% certainty, the computer has to use an alternative rule to determine if the writer has passed or failed. If the writer hasn't answered the minimum number of questions (75), then they will fail. However, if the writer has answered at least the minimum number of questions, the computer will review the last 60 ability estimates. If the writer's last 60 ability estimates were above the *passing standard*, then they will pass. However, if their ability dropped below the passing standard, even once, during their last 60 questions, then they will fail. This does not mean the writer must have answered the last 60 questions

---

[7]Visit ncsbn.org/5906.htm for more information on the question selection process.
[8]Visit ncsbn.org/5908.htm for more information on the 95% confidence rule.
[9]Visit ncsbn.org/5910.htm for more information on the maximum-length exam rule.
[10]Visit ncsbn.org/5912.htm for more information on the run-out-of-time rule.

correctly; the computer bases each ability estimate on all the previous items the writer has answered.

Each time the computer estimates the writer's ability, the estimate becomes more precise. The test measures this ability against a passing standard that reflects the amount of nursing ability an RN needs when they start in their profession.

What is a passing standard?

The *passing standard* is a cut point along an ability range that marks the minimum ability requirement. For the NCLEX-RN, it is the minimum ability required to safely and effectively practice nursing at the entry-level.

Since the skills and knowledge needed by RNs change over time, the passing standard must reflect these changes. To ensure the passing standard remains accurate, NCSBN reviews it at least once every three years.[11] The exam reviewers look at information such as:

- the results of a survey in which NCSBN asks employers and educators for their opinions on the competency of the current cohort of nurses entering the profession, and
- a historical record of candidate performance on the NCLEX-RN since it was started.

The current passing standard is set at 0.00 *logits*. NCSBN does not alter the passing standard to set a maximum number of writers who are successful on the exam.

What is a logit?

A *logit* is a unit of measurement used to report relative differences between a writer's ability estimates and the difficulty of the questions.

Because the exam questions vary in their level of difficulty, there is no linear way to measure the writer's performance on the exam. The computer has to factor in the level of difficulty of the questions each writer received and the writer's ability estimates. The logit puts ability estimates and question difficulty on the same measurement scale. If the writer keeps answering questions correctly, their ability estimate will increase as the difficulty of the questions increases.

The logit scale ranges from negative infinity to positive infinity, with most of the ability distribution being within the range of -3.0 to 3.0 logits.

---

[11]Visit ncsbn.org/2630.htm to learn more about the current passing standard.

Introduction to the report

Who is included in this report?

This report provides statistics on the performance of people who wrote the NCLEX-RN between 2015-2019 as part of their registration/licensure application to one of the 10 provinces or territories where regulators require nursing graduates to successfully complete the NCLEX-RN.

Most Québec-educated nursing graduates write the OIIQ's (Ordre des infirmières et infirmiers du Québec) professional examination and do not write the NCLEX-RN. These graduates are not included in this report. However, some Québec-educated nursing graduates choose to write the NCLEX-RN as part of their application to one of the 10 provinces or territories where the regulators require the successful completion of the NCLEX-RN. These graduates are included in this report. When this report refers to *Canadian-educated writers*, this term includes writers from the above 10 provinces or territories and Québec.

Nursing graduates educated outside of Canada and applying to one of the above 10 provinces or territories are also included in this report as *internationally-educated writers*.

What is a cohort?

This report separates exam writers into *cohorts* based on the first year in which they wrote the NCLEX-RN. By using cohorts, the reader can follow a group of writers every year in which they attempt the NCLEX-RN.

Pass rates by cohort and attempt

Table 2: Pass rates by attempt and location of nursing education for the 2019 cohort

Attempt	Canadian-educated writers*		Internationally-educated writers		All writers	
	Writes	Pass rate	Writes	Pass rate	Writes	Pass rate
First	9,856	85.5%	1,115	59.5%	10,971	82.9%
Second	997	63.7%	200	44.5%	1,197	60.5%
Third	168	54.8%	40	15.0%	208	47.1%
Fourth or more	27	40.7%	17	29.4%	44	36.4%
Final write pass rate by the end of 2019	**9,856**	**93.0%**	**1,115**	**68.4%**	**10,971**	**90.5%**

* Canadian-educated writers include writers educated in Québec who wrote the NCLEX-RN. See the section "Who is included in this report?" for more information.

Table 3: Pass rates by attempt and location of nursing education for the 2018 cohort

Attempt	Canadian-educated writers*		Internationally-educated writers		All writers	
	Writes	Pass rate	Writes	Pass rate	Writes	Pass rate
First	9,527	85.6%	1,150	61.0%	10,677	82.9%
Second	1,292	60.8%	368	39.9%	1,660	56.2%
Third	429	49.4%	167	38.9%	596	46.5%
Fourth or more	263	36.9%	113	27.4%	376	34.0%
Final write pass rate by the end of 2019	**9,527**	**97.1%**	**1,150**	**82.1%**	**10,677**	**95.4%**

* Canadian-educated writers include writers educated in Québec who wrote the NCLEX-RN. See the section "Who is included in this report?" for more information.

Table 4: Pass rates by attempt and location of nursing education for the 2017 cohort

Attempt	Canadian-educated writers*		Internationally-educated writers		All writers	
	Writes	Pass rate	Writes	Pass rate	Writes	Pass rate
First	9,659	82.1%	966	59.1%	10,625	80.0%
Second	1,660	59.2%	352	42.3%	2,012	56.2%
Third	611	48.9%	161	29.2%	772	44.8%
Fourth or more	541	34.9%	183	24.0%	724	32.2%
Final write pass rate by the end of 2019	**9,659**	**97.3%**	**966**	**84.0%**	**10,625**	**96.1%**

* Canadian-educated writers include writers educated in Québec who wrote the NCLEX-RN. See the section "Who is included in this report?" for more information.

Table 5: Pass rates by attempt and location of nursing education for the 2016 cohort

Attempt	Canadian-educated writers*		Internationally-educated writers		All writers	
	Writes	Pass rate	Writes	Pass rate	Writes	Pass rate
First	9,338	79.9%	573	65.4%	9,911	79.1%
Second	1,823	63.9%	169	50.3%	1,992	62.8%
Third	593	50.9%	66	40.9%	659	49.9%
Fourth or more	576	33.5%	58	31.0%	634	33.3%
Final write pass rate by the end of 2019	**9,338**	**97.7%**	**573**	**88.1%**	**9,911**	**97.1%**

* Canadian-educated writers include writers educated in Québec who wrote the NCLEX-RN. See the section "Who is included in this report?" for more information.

Table 6: Pass rates by attempt and location of nursing education for the 2015 cohort

Attempt	Canadian-educated writers*		Internationally-educated writers		All writers	
	Writes	Pass rate	Writes	Pass rate	Writes	Pass rate
First	9,074	69.7%	746	49.7%	9,820	68.2%
Second	2,635	64.4%	265	44.5%	2,900	62.6%
Third	832	59.6%	122	47.5%	954	58.1%
Fourth or more	493	37.3%	94	35.1%	587	37.0%
Final write pass rate by the end of 2019	**9,074**	**95.9%**	**746**	**77.7%**	**9,820**	**94.5%**

* Canadian-educated writers include writers educated in Québec who wrote the NCLEX-RN. See the section "Who is included in this report?" for more information.

First-attempt pass rates by location of nursing education

Table 7 shows the first-attempt pass rates of writers broken down by the Canadian province of education or by the country of education. The top five international countries are displayed in descending order of total number of writes from 2015 to 2019.

Table 7: First-attempt pass rates by location of nursing education

Location of nursing education	2015 Writers	2015 First-attempt pass rate	2016 Writers	2016 First-attempt pass rate	2017 Writers	2017 First-attempt pass rate	2018 Writers	2018 First-attempt pass rate	2019 Writers	2019 First-attempt pass rate
Alberta	1,633	69.1%	1,568	78.1%	1,500	84.5%	1,427	86.9%	1,407	88.9%
British Columbia	1,282	80.2%	1,482	87.0%	1,502	89.7%	1,433	89.9%	1,456	89.5%
Manitoba	489	74.2%	466	85.8%	494	87.2%	355	88.2%	417	91.4%
New Brunswick	322	50.3%	321	60.4%	287	63.4%	225	74.7%	207	79.2%
Newfoundland and Labrador	251	78.9%	223	87.9%	226	91.6%	241	91.3%	234	93.6%
Northwest Territories and Nunavut	19	84.2%	16	68.8%	14	92.9%	14	71.4%	16	62.5%
Nova Scotia	393	75.8%	382	77.5%	399	79.2%	430	87.0%	601	78.9%
Ontario	4,021	67.7%	4,216	80.1%	4,506	79.5%	4,710	83.9%	4,767	83.9%
Prince Edward Island	62	66.1%	66	87.9%	72	86.1%	75	89.3%	75	82.7%
Québec*	53	66.0%	53	67.9%	77	59.7%	79	70.9%	80	68.8%
Saskatchewan	549	60.5%	545	69.2%	582	80.8%	538	85.9%	596	86.1%
Canada	**9,074**	**69.7%**	**9,338**	**79.9%**	**9,659**	**82.1%**	**9,527**	**85.6%**	**9,856**	**85.5%**
India	311	35.7%	214	56.1%	486	47.5%	563	51.5%	512	50.0%
Philippines	169	66.9%	173	73.4%	253	72.7%	357	72.8%	406	68.0%
Great Britain	33	51.5%	23	56.5%	33	63.6%	31	51.6%	23	78.3%
Australia	30	56.7%	17	70.6%	30	63.3%	36	66.7%	20	70.0%
Ireland	7	71.4%	14	57.1%	22	72.7%	35	62.9%	38	57.9%
All other countries	196	55.1%	132	72.0%	142	70.4%	128	69.5%	116	66.4%
International	**746**	**49.7%**	**573**	**65.4%**	**966**	**59.1%**	**1,150**	**61.0%**	**1,115**	**59.5%**

* Most graduates of Québec nursing programs write the OIIQ's (Ordre des infirmières et infirmiers du Québec) professional examination and are not included here. This Québec category only includes Québec-educated graduates who wrote the NCLEX-RN. See the section "Who is included in this report?" for more information.

First-attempt pass rates for the French NCLEX-RN

Table 8 shows the first-attempt pass rates of writers who wrote their first attempt of the NCLEX-RN in French, from 2015 to 2019.

Only the first-attempt pass rate is shown because, on subsequent attempts, NCLEX-RN writers can change the language in which they write the exam. This means it is not possible to compare pass rates across all attempts by language of write.

Table 8: First-attempt pass rates for writers who wrote in French

	2015		2016		2017		2018		2019	
	Writers	First-attempt pass rate	Writers	First-attempt pass rate	Writers	First-attempt pass rate	Writers	First-attempt pass rate	Writers	First-attempt pass rate
Writers who wrote in French*	145	26.9%	91	35.2%	64	29.7%	57	61.4%	62	58.1%

* Fewer than five internationally-educated writers wrote in French between 2015 and 2019.

Exam duration statistics

Exam duration statistics provide a look at how close writers are to passing or failing.[12]

- **Average exam duration**: This number is generally longer if a writer:
    - passes but is close to failing or
    - fails but is close to passing.

- **Average number of questions answered**: This number is generally larger if a writer:
    - passes but is close to failing or
    - fails but is close to passing.

- **Percentage of writers answering the minimum number of questions**: This number is generally higher if the writers are:
    - strongly passing or
    - strongly failing.

- **Percentage of writers answering the maximum number of questions**: This number is generally higher if the writers are:
    - close to failing or
    - close to passing.

Canadian-educated writers

Table 9: Canadian-educated writers: Average exam duration of their first attempt (in hours:minutes)

Average exam duration	By writers who passed	By writers who failed	By all writers
2019	**1:56**	**3:02**	**2:05**
2019: Total number of first attempts	8,430	1,426	9,856
2018	**1:57**	**3:10**	**2:08**
2018: Total number of first attempts	8,151	1,376	9,527
2017	**2:00**	**3:09**	**2:12**
2017: Total number of first attempts	7,926	1,733	9,659
2016	**2:02**	**3:04**	**2:15**
2016: Total number of first attempts	7,461	1,877	9,338
2015	**2:13**	**3:00**	**2:27**
2015: Total number of first attempts	6,325	2,749	9,074

Maximum test time: 6 hours

---

[12]See the section "How is a pass or fail determined?" for more information.

Table 10: Canadian-educated writers: Average number of questions answered on their first attempt

Average number of questions answered	By writers who passed	By writers who failed	By all writers
2019	**107**	**167**	**116**
2019: Total number of first attempts	8,430	1,426	9,856
2018	**107**	**173**	**116**
2018: Total number of first attempts	8,151	1,376	9,527
2017	**109**	**173**	**121**
2017: Total number of first attempts	7,926	1,733	9,659
2016	**107**	**168**	**119**
2016: Total number of first attempts	7,461	1,877	9,338
2015	**120**	**165**	**134**
2015: Total number of first attempts	6,325	2,749	9,074

Number of questions: minimum of 75 and maximum of 265

Table 11: Canadian-educated writers: Percentage of writers answering the minimum number of questions on their first attempt

Percentage of writers answering the minimum number of questions	By writers who passed	By writers who failed	By all writers
2019	**59.6%**	**24.8%**	**54.6%**
2019: Total number of first attempts	8,430	1,426	9,856
2018	**59.8%**	**22.0%**	**54.3%**
2018: Total number of first attempts	8,151	1,376	9,527
2017	**59.2%**	**21.8%**	**52.5%**
2017: Total number of first attempts	7,926	1,733	9,659
2016	**60.6%**	**23.0%**	**53.1%**
2016: Total number of first attempts	7,461	1,877	9,338
2015	**49.5%**	**25.0%**	**42.1%**
2015: Total number of first attempts	6,325	2,749	9,074

Minimum of 75 questions

Table 12: Canadian-educated writers: Percentage of writers answering the maximum number of questions on their first attempt

Percentage of writers answering the maximum number of questions	By writers who passed	By writers who failed	By all writers
2019	**9.0%**	**32.3%**	**12.4%**
2019: Total number of first attempts	8,430	1,426	9,856
2018	**8.7%**	**33.9%**	**12.4%**
2018: Total number of first attempts	8,151	1,376	9,527
2017	**9.9%**	**34.6%**	**14.3%**
2017: Total number of first attempts	7,926	1,733	9,659
2016	**8.8%**	**30.5%**	**13.2%**
2016: Total number of first attempts	7,461	1,877	9,338
2015	**13.8%**	**30.4%**	**18.8%**
2015: Total number of first attempts	6,325	2,749	9,074

Maximum of 265 questions

Internationally-educated writers

Table 13: Internationally-educated writers: Average exam duration of their first attempt (in hours:minutes)

Average exam duration	By writers who passed	By writers who failed	By all writers
2019	**2:31**	**3:13**	**2:48**
2019: Total number of first attempts	663	452	1,115
2018	**2:42**	**3:04**	**2:51**
2018: Total number of first attempts	701	449	1,150
2017	**2:32**	**3:00**	**2:43**
2017: Total number of first attempts	571	395	966
2016	**2:32**	**3:14**	**2:46**
2016: Total number of first attempts	375	198	573
2015	**2:42**	**2:57**	**2:50**
2015: Total number of first attempts	371	375	746

Maximum test time: 6 hours

Table 14: Internationally-educated writers: Average number of questions answered on their first attempt

Average number of questions answered	By writers who passed	By writers who failed	By all writers
2019	**111**	**142**	**123**
2019: Total number of first attempts	663	452	1,115
2018	**117**	**138**	**125**
2018: Total number of first attempts	701	449	1,150
2017	**110**	**134**	**120**
2017: Total number of first attempts	571	395	966
2016	**109**	**143**	**121**
2016: Total number of first attempts	375	198	573
2015	**113**	**128**	**121**
2015: Total number of first attempts	371	375	746

Number of questions: minimum of 75 and maximum of 265

Table 15: Internationally-educated writers: Percentage of writers answering the minimum number of questions on their first attempt

Percentage of writers answering the minimum number of questions	By writers who passed	By writers who failed	By all writers
2019	**58.4%**	**42.7%**	**52.0%**
2019: Total number of first attempts	663	452	1,115
2018	**50.4%**	**39.0%**	**45.9%**
2018: Total number of first attempts	701	449	1,150
2017	**58.5%**	**42.3%**	**51.9%**
2017: Total number of first attempts	571	395	966
2016	**59.7%**	**36.9%**	**51.8%**
2016: Total number of first attempts	375	198	573
2015	**53.9%**	**46.1%**	**50.0%**
2015: Total number of first attempts	371	375	746

Minimum of 75 questions

Table 16: Internationally-educated writers: Percentage of writers answering the maximum number of questions on their first attempt

Percentage of writers answering the maximum number of questions	By writers who passed	By writers who failed	By all writers
2019	**10.3%**	**19.5%**	**14.0%**
2019: Total number of first attempts	663	452	1,115
2018	**10.8%**	**16.9%**	**13.2%**
2018: Total number of first attempts	701	449	1,150
2017	**9.6%**	**12.2%**	**10.7%**
2017: Total number of first attempts	571	395	966
2016	**8.8%**	**17.7%**	**11.9%**
2016: Total number of first attempts	375	198	573
2015	**11.6%**	**10.7%**	**11.1%**
2015: Total number of first attempts	371	375	746

Maximum of 265 questions

Test plan performance

To pass the NCLEX-RN, the writers must exceed the passing standard,[13] which is set at 0.00 logits. Higher numbers indicate better performance.

---

[13]See the section "What is a passing standard?" for more information.

Canadian-educated writers

Figure 1: Canadian-educated writers: Average first-attempt performance in each category (in logits)

Average logit

Passing standard: 0.00 logits
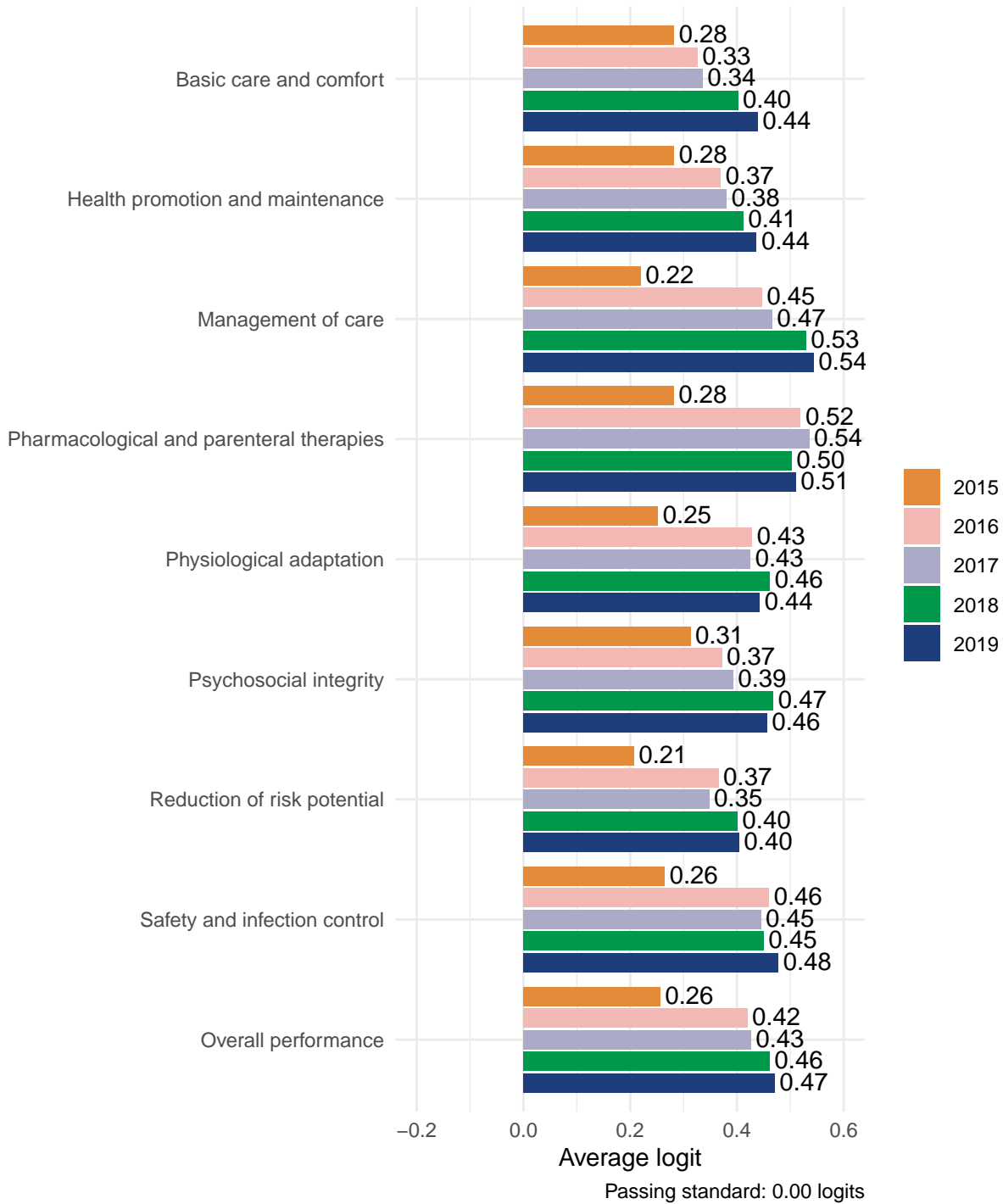
Figure 2: Canadian-educated writers: Average first-attempt performance in each category in 2019 in logits (presented separately for those who passed and those who failed)

NCLEX-RN 2019: Canadian and International Results
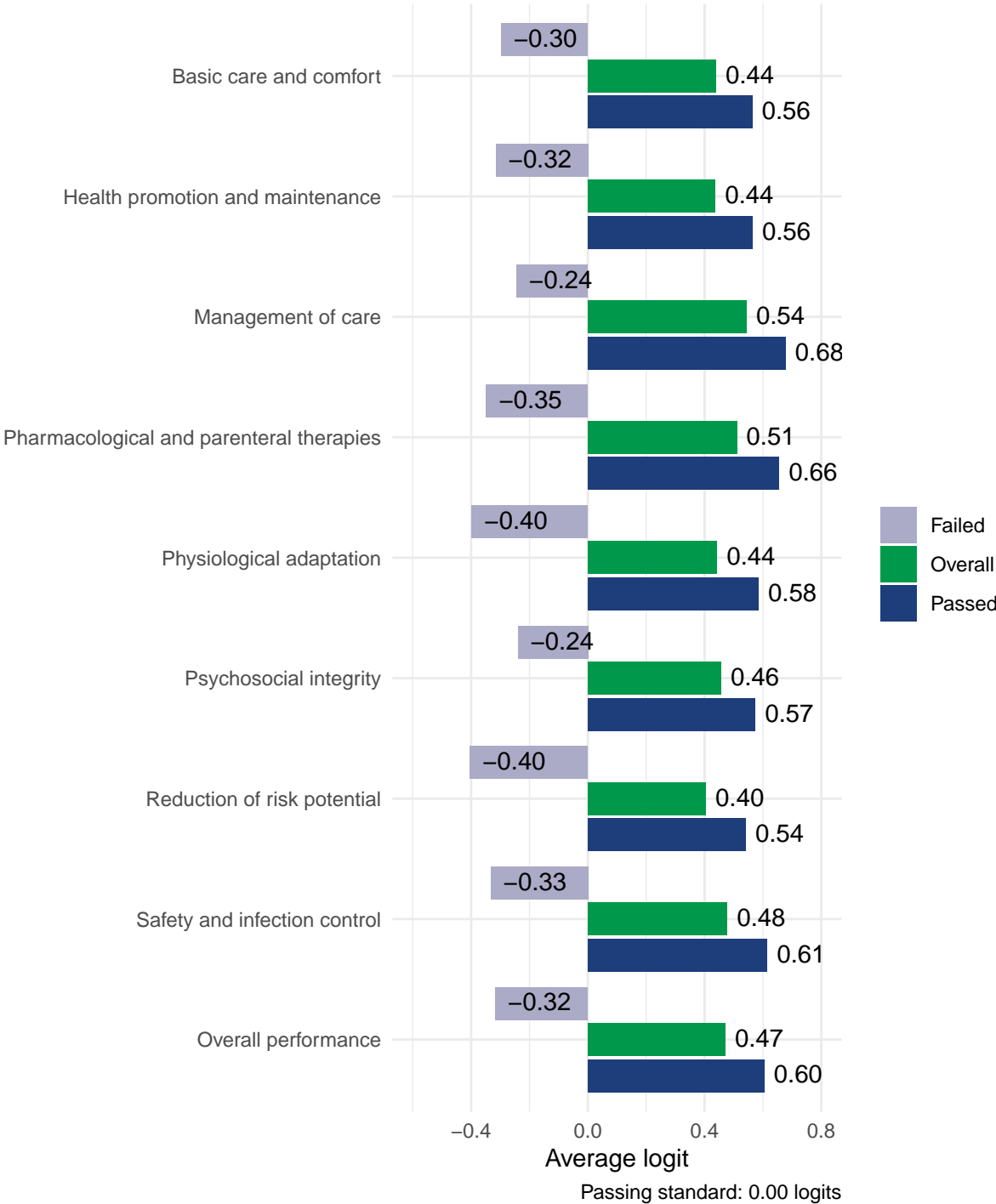
Internationally-educated writers

Figure 3: Internationally-educated writers: Average first-attempt performance in each category (in logits)

Passing standard: 0.00 logits

Figure 4: Internationally-educated writers: Average first-attempt performance in each category in 2019 in logits (presented separately for those who passed and those who failed)
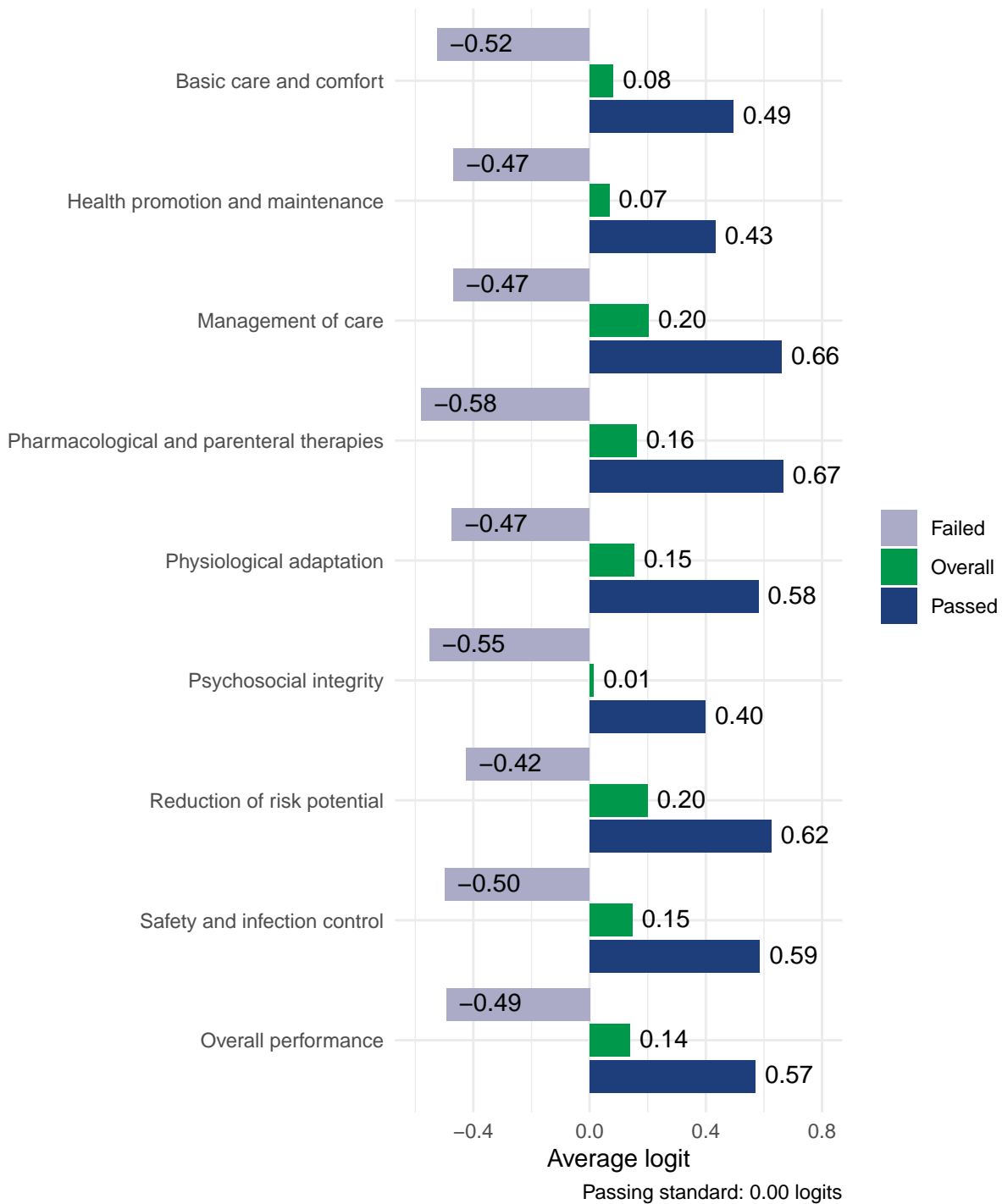
Appendix: Provincial and territorial test plan breakdown

Figure A1: Canadian-educated writers: Average first-attempt test plan performance by province or territory of education — Overall performance
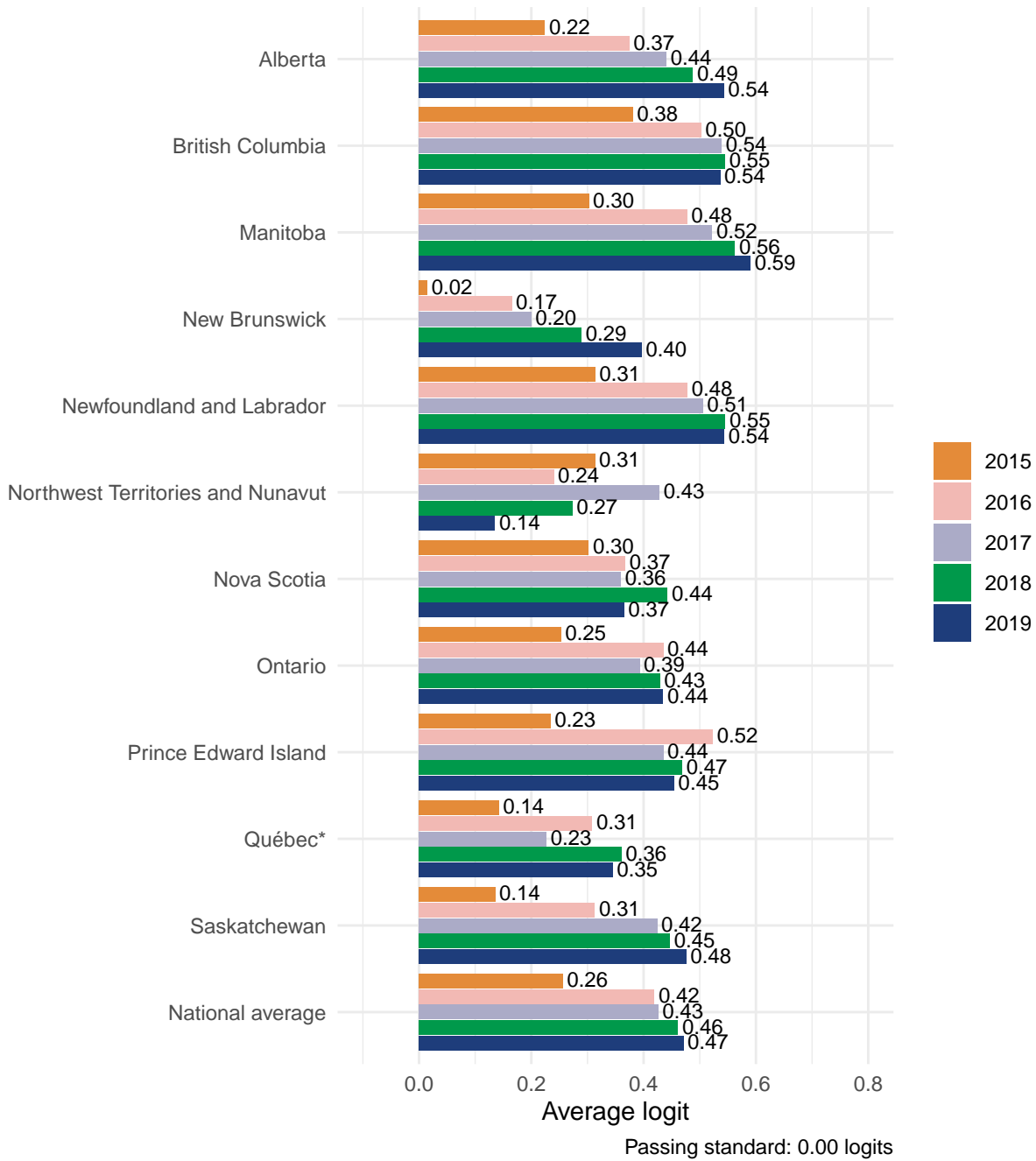
Passing standard: 0.00 logits

* Most graduates of Québec nursing programs write the OIIQ's (Ordre des infirmières et infirmiers du Québec) professional examination and are not included here. This Québec category only includes Québec–educated graduates who wrote the NCLEX–RN. See the section "Who is included in this report?" for more information.

Figure A2: Canadian-educated writers: Average first-attempt test plan performance by province or territory of education — Basic care and comfort
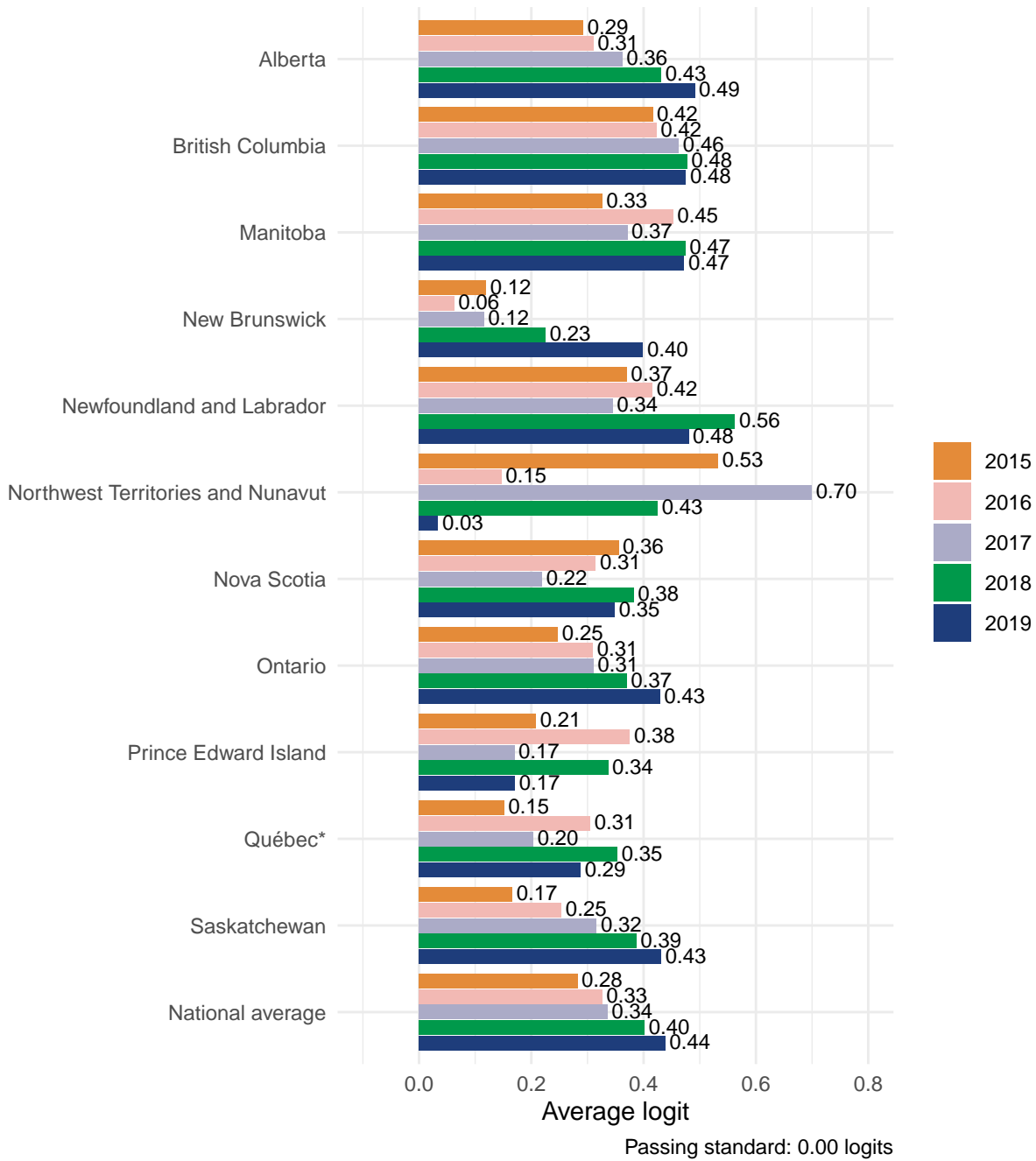
Passing standard: 0.00 logits

* Most graduates of Québec nursing programs write the OIIQ's (Ordre des infirmières et infirmiers du Québec) professional examination and are not included here. This Québec category only includes Québec–educated graduates who wrote the NCLEX–RN. See the section "Who is included in this report?" for more information.

NCLEX-RN 2019: Canadian and International Results

Figure A3: Canadian-educated writers: Average first-attempt test plan performance by province or territory of education — Health promotion and maintenance
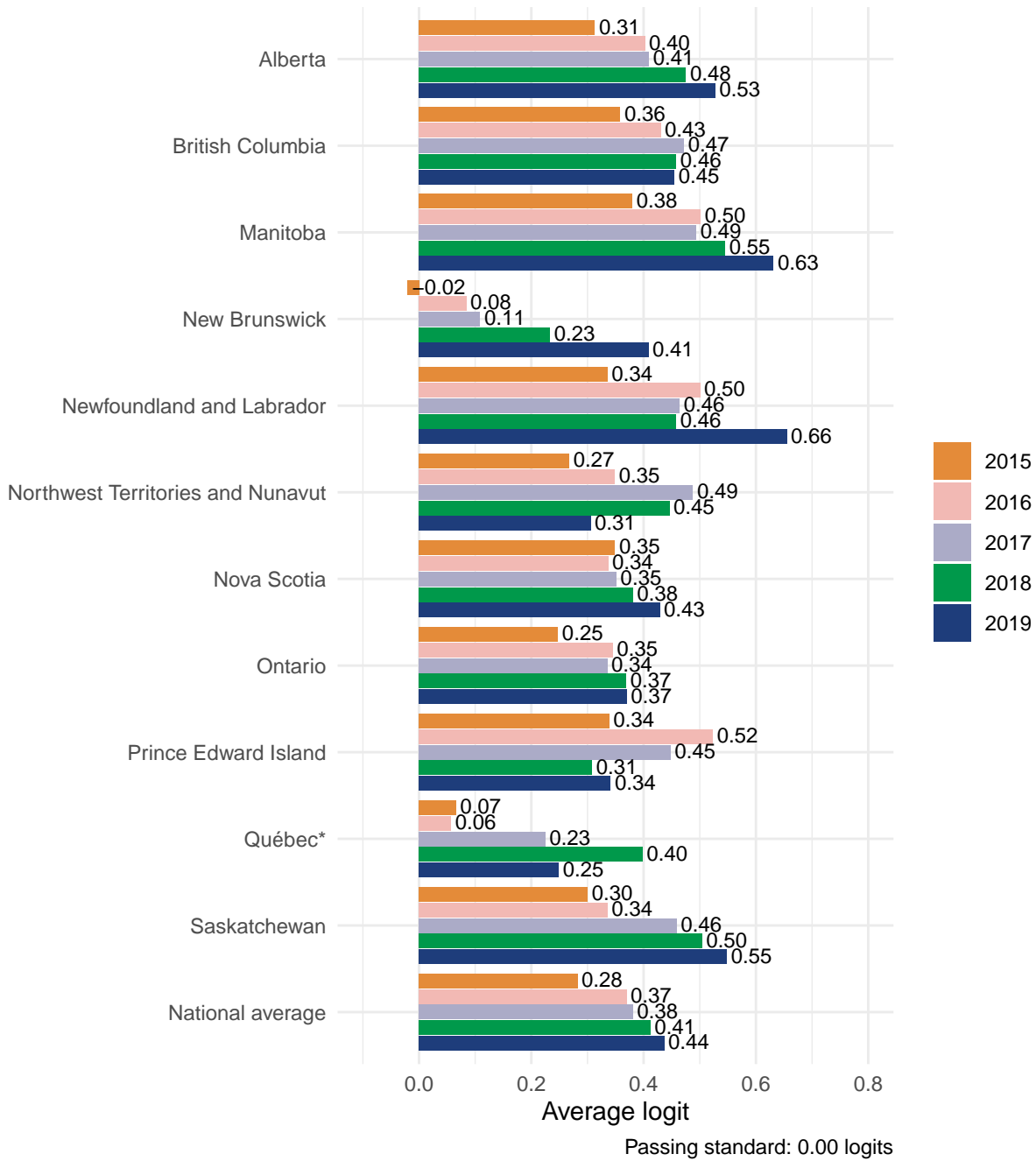

Passing standard: 0.00 logits

* Most graduates of Québec nursing programs write the OIIQ's (Ordre des infirmières et infirmiers du Québec) professional examination and are not included here. This Québec category only includes Québec–educated graduates who wrote the NCLEX–RN. See the section "Who is included in this report?" for more information.

Figure A4: Canadian-educated writers: Average first-attempt test plan performance by province or territory of education — Management of care
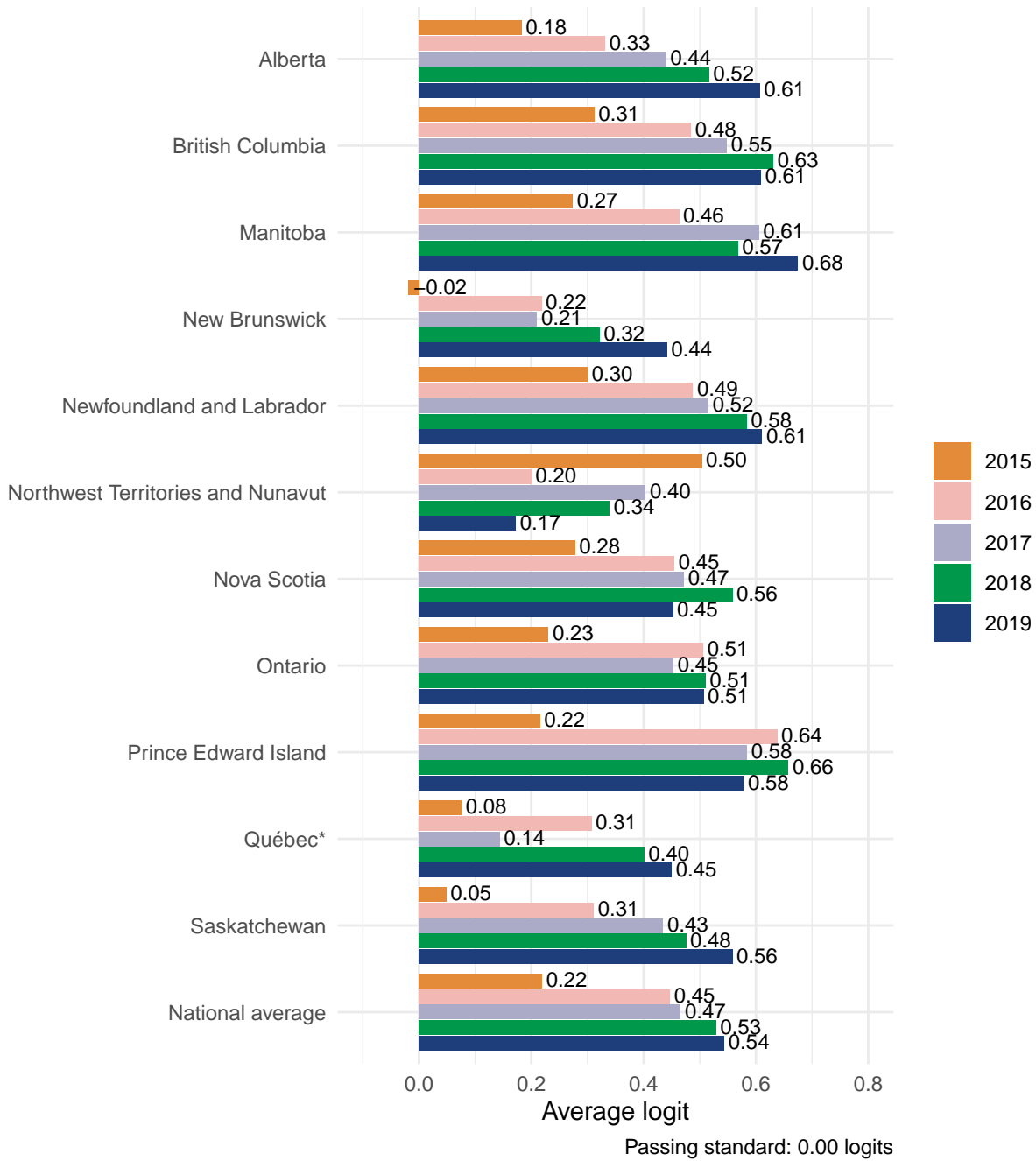

Passing standard: 0.00 logits

* Most graduates of Québec nursing programs write the OIIQ's (Ordre des infirmières et infirmiers du Québec) professional examination and are not included here. This Québec category only includes Québec–educated graduates who wrote the NCLEX–RN. See the section "Who is included in this report?" for more information.

Figure A5: Canadian-educated writers: Average first-attempt test plan performance by province or territory of education — Pharmacological and parenteral therapies
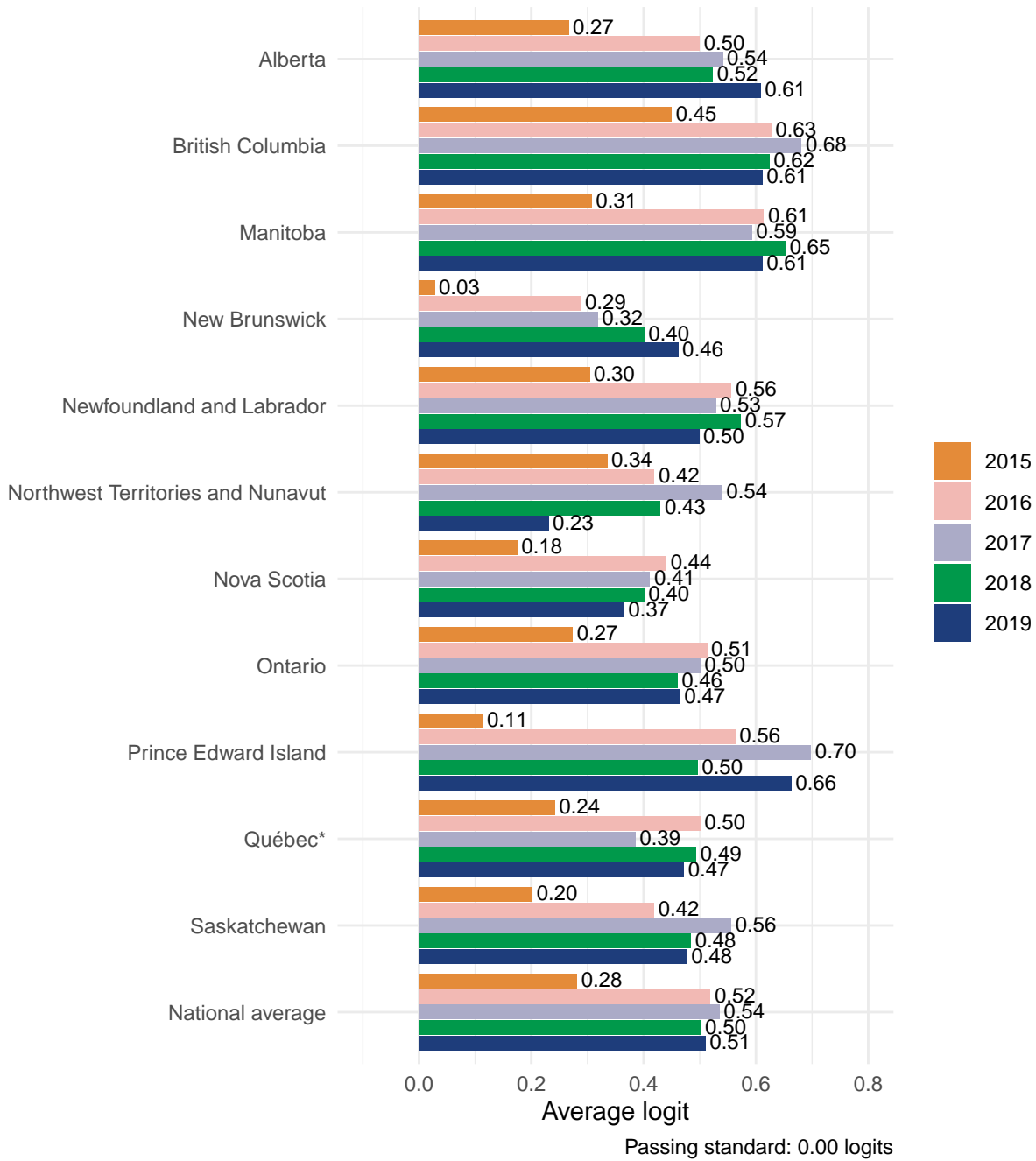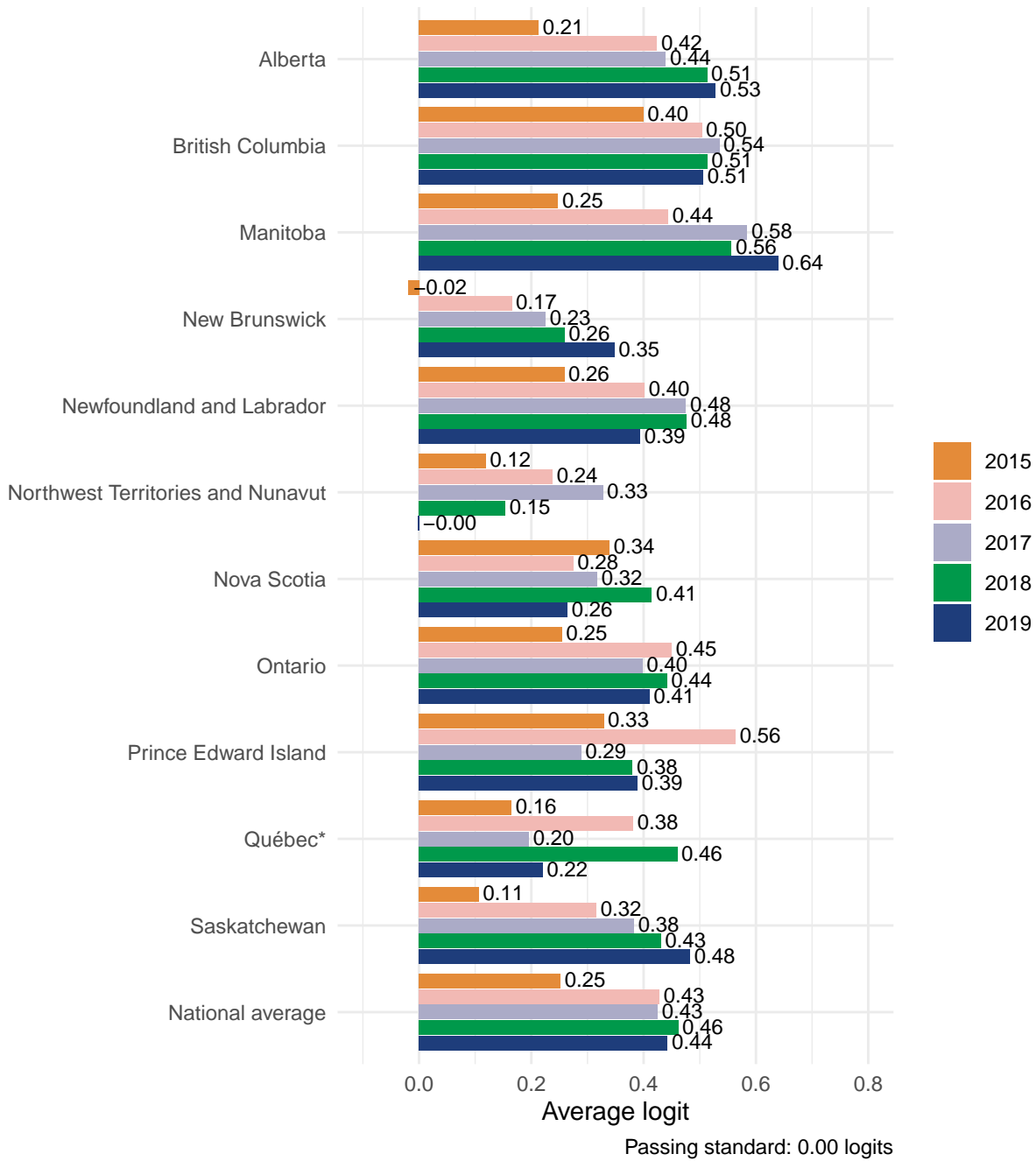

Passing standard: 0.00 logits

* Most graduates of Québec nursing programs write the OIIQ's (Ordre des infirmières et infirmiers du Québec) professional examination and are not included here. This Québec category only includes Québec–educated graduates who wrote the NCLEX–RN. See the section "Who is included in this report?" for more information.

Figure A6: Canadian-educated writers: Average first-attempt test plan performance by province or territory of education — Physiological adaptation
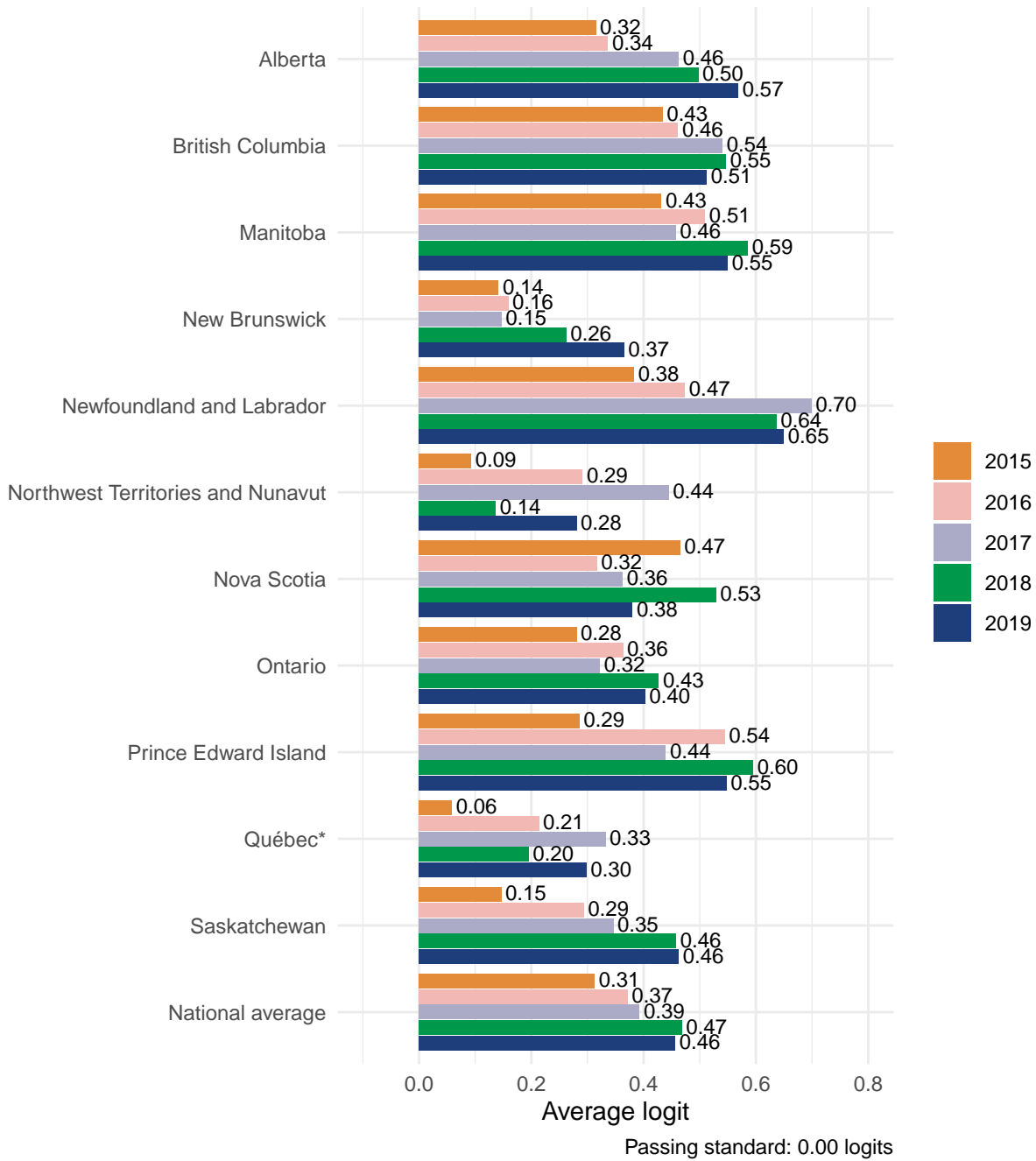
Passing standard: 0.00 logits

* Most graduates of Québec nursing programs write the OIIQ's (Ordre des infirmières et infirmiers du Québec) professional examination and are not included here. This Québec category only includes Québec–educated graduates who wrote the NCLEX–RN. See the section "Who is included in this report?" for more information.
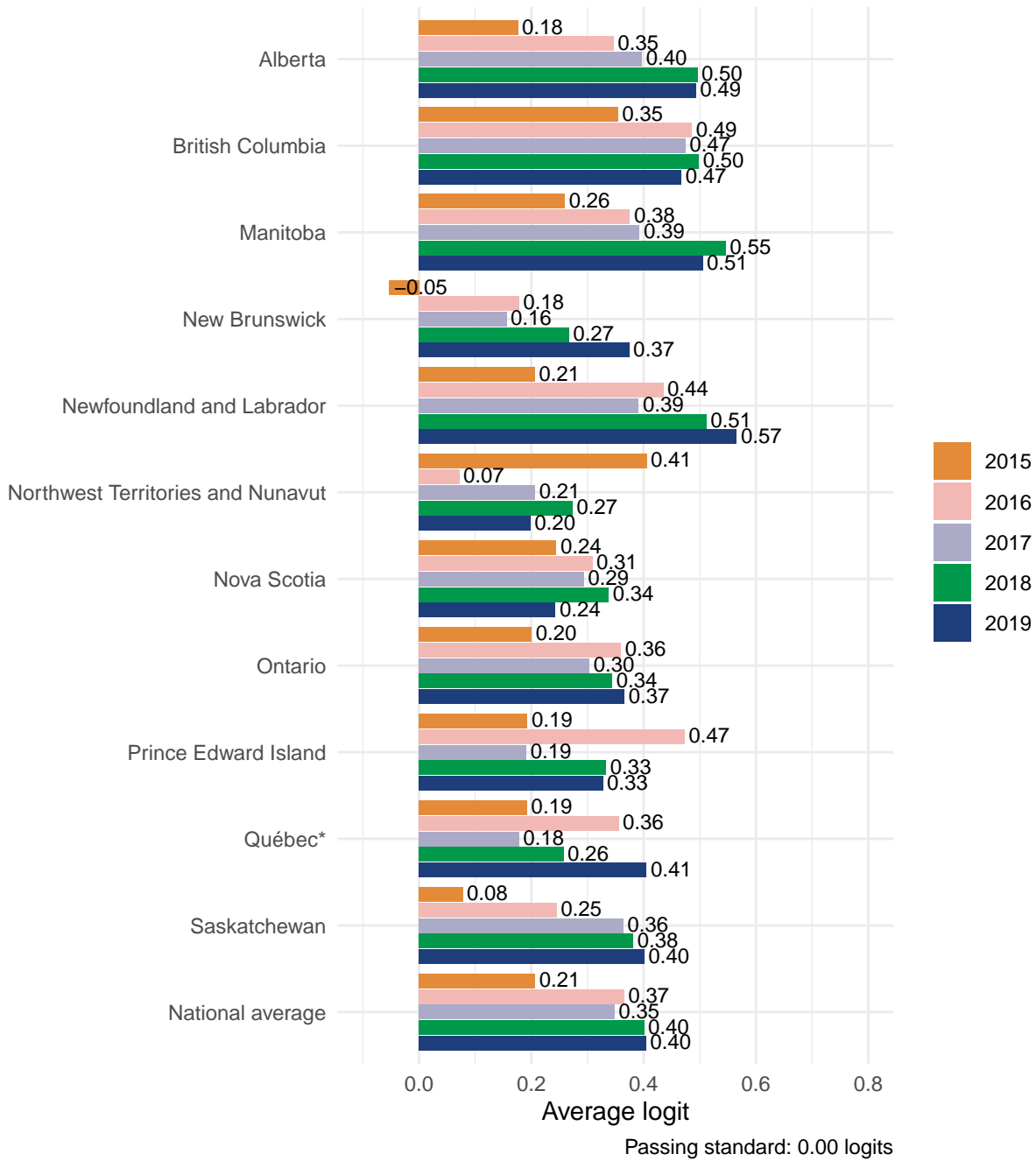
Figure A7: Canadian-educated writers: Average first-attempt test plan performance by province or territory of education — Psychosocial integrity

Average logit

Passing standard: 0.00 logits

* Most graduates of Québec nursing programs write the OIIQ's (Ordre des infirmières et infirmiers du Québec) professional examination and are not included here. This Québec category only includes Québec–educated graduates who wrote the NCLEX–RN. See the section "Who is included in this report?" for more information.

Figure A8: Canadian-educated writers: Average first-attempt test plan performance by province or territory of education — Reduction of risk potential

Passing standard: 0.00 logits

* Most graduates of Québec nursing programs write the OIIQ's (Ordre des infirmières et infirmiers du Québec) professional examination and are not included here. This Québec category only includes Québec–educated graduates who wrote the NCLEX–RN. See the section "Who is included in this report?" for more information.

Figure A9: Canadian-educated writers: Average first-attempt test plan performance by province or territory of education — Safety and infection control
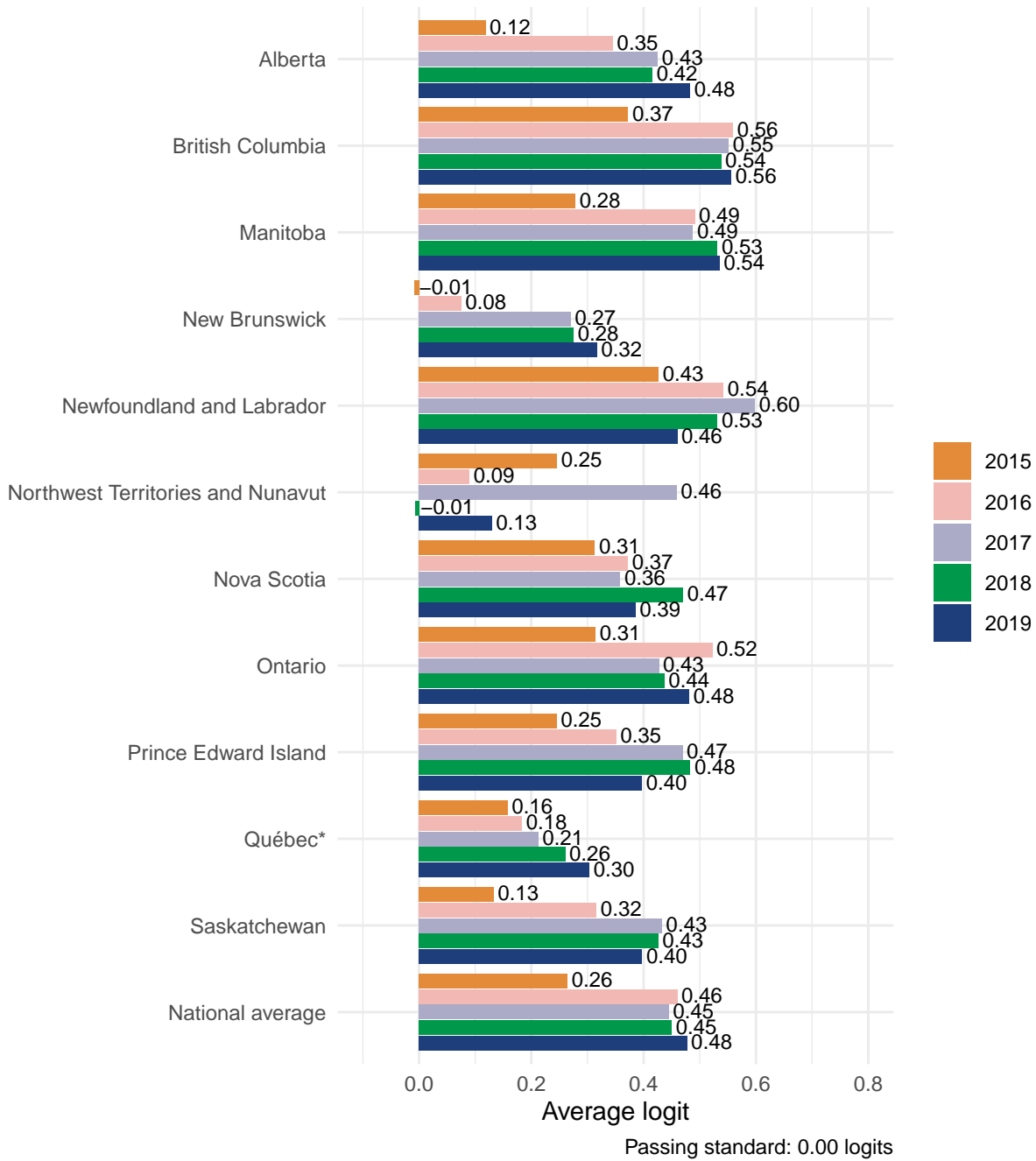
Passing standard: 0.00 logits

* Most graduates of Québec nursing programs write the OIIQ's (Ordre des infirmières et infirmiers du Québec) professional examination and are not included here. This Québec category only includes Québec–educated graduates who wrote the NCLEX–RN. See the section "Who is included in this report?" for more information.

Contact information

Canadian Council of Registered Nurse Regulators
PO Box 244
302-396 Osborne St
Beaverton, ON
L0K 1A0
Canada

Tel: 705.426.2777
Email: info@ccrnr.ca
Website: ccrnr.ca