

Canada's Career Colleges

Bridging the Gap Between Courses and Careers



Career colleges, also called vocational or technical schools (depending on the province or territory), offer students career-based training to fill industry gaps immediately.

The Canadian career college sector is open to international students who want to gain the kind of hands-on skills that are relevant to employment in today's competitive job market.

What are career colleges?

Career colleges are educational institutions that provide career-specific, outcome-based programs. Graduates of career colleges can earn a diploma or a certificate. Applicants may be required to have a high school diploma or equivalent as a pre-requisite.

Regulatory framework

In Canada, provincial and territorial governments are responsible for regulating career colleges. Each province and territory has a regulatory framework to protect the rights of consumers (e.g. against misrepresentation of products and services).

Regulations on career colleges can vary from one province/territory to another based on their legislation. However, for the majority of career colleges, provincial and territorial governments approve:

- Educational programs/curriculum
- Instructors
- Facilities

Most provinces and territories require that regulated career colleges provide:

- Financial bonds or other financial sureties
- Annual financial statements

Why choose a career college in Canada?

- Earn a certificate or diploma in a short-term outcome-based program.
- Programs meet student needs and provide career-specific training.
- A wide variety of programs, from business, healthcare and technology to tourism and hospitality.
- Benefit from small class sizes and individualized attention; intensive training in a short period of time; and multiple intakes throughout the year.

Did you know?

- Career colleges in eight Canadian provinces enrol over 170,000 domestic and international students annually.
- Some career colleges offer pathway programs to other postsecondary institutions in Canada and across the world.

Designated learning institutions

Designated Learning Institutions (DLIs) are institutions approved by a provincial or territorial government to host international students.

International students are required to obtain a study permit for engaging in academic, professional, vocational education or training that is more than six months in duration at a DLI. International students must be accepted at a DLI before they can qualify for a study permit.

There are over 500 career college campuses in Canada, which are DLIs that offer a wide variety of training options for students.

Recognized skills and credentials

Many provincially/territorially regulated career colleges offer programs accredited by respected national organizations and government bodies, such as the Canadian Medical Association and Transport Canada.

For more information about study permits, consult:

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), formerly known as Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC):

▶ www.cic.gc.ca/english/study/study.asp

For more information about career colleges in Canada, consult:

Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials (CICIC):

▶ www.cicic.ca

Each province and territory designates the career colleges that fall within the legal framework; consult the official website of each province and territory for additional information:

The Government of Alberta

▶ advancededucation.alberta.ca/post-secondary/institutions/private/

The Government of British Columbia

▶ www.privatetraininginstitutions.gov.bc.ca/

The Government of Manitoba

▶ www.edu.gov.mb.ca/ald/pvi/list/index.html

The Government of New Brunswick

▶ www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/post-secondary_education_training_and_labour/Skills/content/Institutions/PrivateCareerColleges.html

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

▶ www.aesl.gov.nl.ca/postsecondary/private.html

The Government of Northwest Territories

▶ www.ece.gov.nt.ca/en/services/adult-and-postsecondary-education/northern-post-secondary-institution-information

The Government of Nova Scotia

▶ pcc.ednet.ns.ca/

The Government of Nunavut

▶ www.gov.nu.ca/education/information/advanced-education

The Government of Ontario

▶ www.ontario.ca/page/private-career-colleges

The Government of Prince Edward Island

▶ www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/topic/education-and-lifelong-learning

The Government of Quebec

(In Quebec, career programs are offered by school boards, whereas technical training is offered by colleges and cegeps)

▶ www.education.gouv.qc.ca/references/etudier-au-quebec/avantages-detudier-au-quebec/
(French only)

▶ prod.mels.gouv.qc.ca/gdunojrecherche/rechercheOrganisme.do?methode=rechercheBase&typeRecherche=base
(French only)

The Government of Saskatchewan

▶ www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/education-and-learning/universities-colleges-and-schools/career-colleges

The Government of Yukon

▶ www.education.gov.yk.ca

Fields of study (with professions)

- Culinary arts (caterer, chef);
- Education (early childcare assistant);
- Hair and beauty (makeup artist);
- Healthcare (dental assistant, paramedic);
- Information technology (IT administrator, video game designer and developer);
- Tourism and hospitality (flight attendant, travel agent);
- Transportation (marine pilot, pilot, truck driver);
- And many more...



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