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## POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIALS IN ONTARIO

Ontario has developed an extensive Qualifications Framework that describes the main purposes and features of each postsecondary credential offered within the province. The framework outlines the knowledge and skills expected of holders of each type of qualification and shows the relationship and differences between qualifications. It also sets out the minimum admissions requirements for each credential and the expected length of time required to complete it. For further information on postsecondary credentials offered by Ontario public colleges and universities, see the [Ontario Qualifications Framework \(FAQs\)](#).

Essential information about the postsecondary credentials offered by public colleges and universities is described below.

### Apprenticeship Credentials

#### ONTARIO CERTIFICATE OF APPRENTICESHIP

Granted by: Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

Length of Program: Up to five years depending on the trade or occupation; apprentices are paid employees while in training

Description: Programs develop the skills and knowledge to work in a specific trade or occupation. Training is workplace-based with an in-school component often provided by Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology and Institutes of Technology and Advanced Learning. Certification requires successful demonstration of standards of skills and safety recommended by the industry and successful completion of formal instruction incorporating a blend of theory and practice. Learning outcomes and performance objectives are defined in provincial curriculum and training standards.

Admissions Requirements: Academic entry requirements vary depending on the trade or occupation. Admission may require an Ontario Secondary School Diploma as well as other entry requirements depending on the trade or occupation. Students must be at least 16 years of age. Students taking apprenticeship programs as part of college co-op diploma programs must also meet the admissions requirements for an Ontario College Diploma.

Application of Credit Transfer: Apprentices may be able to receive transfer credit toward college diploma programs in related areas of study.

#### ONTARIO CERTIFICATE OF QUALIFICATION

Granted by: Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

Length of Program: Varies depending on the trade or occupation; apprentices are paid employees while in training

**Description:** Programs develop the knowledge and skills to work in a specific trade or occupation that requires the successful completion of qualification/certification examination. A holder of a Certificate of Qualification is qualified to be employed in a specific trade or occupation in Ontario. A holder of the Ontario Certificate of Qualification with a Red Seal is qualified to practice a specific trade or occupation in participating Canadian jurisdictions.

**Admissions Requirements:** Persons with entry level knowledge, skills and experience in a trade or occupation can become an apprentice by applying directly to an employer, union or local committee. Other routes to apprenticeship programs include pre-apprenticeship training programs that provide training in the trade-related skills essential to becoming an apprentice, and college co-op diploma apprenticeship programs which help students train as an apprentice while completing a related college diploma program. Applicants to college co-op diploma programs must also meet the admissions requirements for an Ontario College Diploma.

**Application of Credit Transfer:** Apprentices may be able to receive transfer credit toward college diploma programs in related areas of study.

## **Certificates, Diplomas and Degrees**

### **ONTARIO COLLEGE CERTIFICATE**

**Granted by:** Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology, Institutes of Technology and Advanced Learning

**Length of Program:** One year, two or three semesters

**Description:** Programs develop the level of skills, knowledge and attitudes to allow graduates to perform a defined range of varied activities within a prescribed range of functions involving known routines and procedures. Programs also engage students in some learning in disciplines outside their main field of study.

**Admissions Requirements:** Ontario Secondary School Diploma with C (college preparation), M (university/college preparation) or U (university preparation) credits or equivalent, or mature student status; there may also be additional requirements specific to the program.

**Application of Credit Transfer:** Students who transfer from a Certificate program in one institution to a Certificate program in a related field of study in another institution prior to graduating from the program may be eligible for some transfer credits. Graduates of Ontario College Certificate programs will generally receive credit toward an Ontario College Diploma or Ontario College Advanced Diploma program in a related area of study.

### **ONTARIO COLLEGE DIPLOMA**

**Granted by:** Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology, Institutes of Technology and Advanced Learning

**Length of Program:** Two years, four semesters

**Description:** Programs develop the level of skills, knowledge and attitudes to allow the graduates to work within a broad range of technical and/or administrative responsibilities, including coordination and evaluation, and engage students in learning in disciplines outside their main field of study.

**Admissions Requirements:** Ontario Secondary School Diploma with C (college preparation), M (university/college preparation) or U (university preparation) credits or equivalent, or mature student status; there may also be additional requirements specific to the program.

**Application of Credit Transfer:** Students who transfer from a Diploma program in one institution to a Diploma or Advanced Diploma program in a related field of study in another institution prior to graduating from the program may be eligible for transfer credit. Graduates of Ontario College Diploma programs will generally receive block credit toward an Ontario College Advanced Diploma program or a college or university Bachelor's Degree program in a related area of study and may receive specific course credits toward an Advanced Diploma or Bachelor's Degree program in an unrelated field of study. Graduates may also qualify for entry to an advanced year of a specially designed Bachelor's Degree program at a university.

## **ONTARIO COLLEGE ADVANCED DIPLOMA**

**Granted by:** Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology, Institutes of Technology and Advanced Learning

**Length of Program:** Three years, six semesters

**Description:** Programs develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes to enable graduates to work within a broad range of technical and/or management functions in a broad range of occupational areas. Graduates understand both the required conceptual frameworks as well as applications related to the specific occupational area.

**Admissions Requirements:** Ontario Secondary School Diploma with C (college preparation), M (university/college preparation) or U (university preparation) credits or equivalent, or mature student status; there may also be additional requirements specific to the program.

**Application of Credit Transfer:** Students who transfer from an Advanced Diploma program in one institution to a Diploma or Advanced Diploma program in a related field of study in another institution prior to graduating from the program may be eligible for transfer credit. Graduates of Ontario College Advanced Diploma programs will generally receive block credit toward a college or university Bachelor's Degree program in a related area of study and may receive specific course credits toward a Bachelor's degree program in an unrelated field of study. Graduates may also qualify for entry to an advanced year of a specially designed Bachelor's degree program at a university.

## **ONTARIO COLLEGE GRADUATE CERTIFICATE**

**Granted by:** Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology, Institutes of Technology and Advanced Learning, Private Career Colleges

**Length of Program:** One year, two semesters

**Description:** Programs either deepen knowledge and skills already gained by graduates of college diploma or advanced diploma program or provide graduates of baccalaureate programs with specific knowledge and skills related to an applied occupational area.

**Admissions Requirements:** Ontario College Diploma, Ontario College Advanced Diploma, private career college diploma, bachelor's degree or equivalent; there may also be additional program-specific requirements.

**Application of Credit Transfer:** Ontario College Graduate Certificate programs are post-diploma or degree programs; therefore, there is no credit transfer from Diploma, Advanced Diploma or Degree programs into Graduate Certificate programs. Students who transfer from one Graduate Certificate program to another Graduate Certificate program in a related field of study prior to graduating from the program may be eligible for transfer credit.

## **GENERAL BACHELOR'S DEGREE**

**Granted by:** Ontario public university or other university operating with the consent of the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities

Length of Program: Generally three years, six semesters

Description: Programs develop broad knowledge and conceptual sophistication in graduates, including specialized knowledge in at least one discipline or field such as arts, science, engineering, business, etc. The General Bachelor's degree prepares graduates for some second-entry professional degree programs, employment in a variety of fields, or advanced entry into an honours or specialist program of study in the field.

Admissions Requirements: Ontario Secondary School Diploma or equivalent with six U (university preparation) or M (university/college preparation) courses at the Grade 12 level, with a minimum academic average set by the institution; some programs may have additional requirements.

Application of Credit Transfer: Students who transfer from a Bachelor's degree program in one institution to a Bachelor's Degree program in another institution will be eligible to receive transfer credits consistent with the receiving institution's Transfer Policy.

## **HONOURS BACHELOR DEGREE**

Granted by: Ontario university or other university operating with the consent of the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities

Length of Program: Four years, eight semesters

Description: Programs provide more conceptual sophistication, specialized knowledge and intellectual autonomy than a General Bachelor's degree. Students learn appropriate applications of conceptual frameworks and are normally required to prepare, under supervision, a terminal research paper, thesis, project, exhibition, etc. Students may also be required to complete other practice-based exercises intended to develop and demonstrate the student's readiness for employment. There are three types of Honours Bachelor's degrees: academically-oriented, profession-oriented and degrees in an applied area of study.

Admissions Requirements: Ontario Secondary School Diploma or equivalent with six U (university preparation) or M (university/college preparation) courses at the Grade 12 level, with a minimum academic average set by the institution; some programs may have additional requirements.

Application of Credit Transfer: Students who transfer from a Bachelor's Degree program in one institution to a Bachelor's Degree program in another institution will be eligible to receive transfer credits consistent with the receiving institution's Transfer Policy.

## **BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN APPLIED AREA OF STUDY**

Granted by: Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology, Institutes of Technology and Advanced Learning

Length of Program: Four years, eight semesters and at least one work term

Description: One of three types of Honours Bachelor's degrees, these programs provide more conceptual sophistication, specialized knowledge and intellectual autonomy than a Ontario Advanced Diploma or General Bachelor's degree. Programs combine theory and analytical skills with advanced training and education, usually in specialized areas with emerging employment needs not generally offered at universities, for example Animation, Aviation, Financial Planning. Students learn appropriate applications of conceptual frameworks and are required to complete at least one 14-week work term intended to develop and demonstrate the student's readiness for employment.

Admissions Requirements: Ontario Secondary School Diploma or equivalent with six U (university preparation) or M (university/college preparation) courses at the Grade 12 level, with a minimum academic average set by the institution; some programs may have additional requirements.

Application of Credit Transfer: Students who transfer from a Bachelor's Degree program in one institution to a Bachelor's Degree program in another institution will be eligible to receive transfer credits consistent with the receiving institution's Transfer Policy.

### **SPECIALIST/PROFESSIONAL DEGREE**

Granted by: Ontario university or other university operating with the consent of the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities

Length of Program: Generally four years, eight semesters, which may include, or be in addition to, one or more years of a bachelor's degree program prior to entry

Description: One of three types of Honours Bachelor's degrees, these programs provide more conceptual sophistication, specialized knowledge and intellectual autonomy than a General Bachelor's degree. Students learn appropriate applications of conceptual frameworks and may be required to complete a terminal research paper, thesis, project, exhibition, etc. or other practice-based exercise intended to develop and demonstrate the student's readiness for employment. Some professions require graduates to demonstrate preparedness to enter the occupation/profession by passing a licensing or other external examination.

Admissions Requirements: Ontario Secondary School Diploma or equivalent with six U (university preparation) or M (university/college preparation) courses at the Grade 12 level, with a minimum academic average set by the institution; some programs may have additional requirements. Entry to some specialist/professional degree programs is based on completion of the one year or more of a bachelor's degree program.

Application of Credit Transfer: Students who transfer from a Specialist/Professional Degree program in one institution to a degree program in another institution will be eligible to receive transfer credits consistent with the receiving institution's Transfer Policy.

### **MASTER'S DEGREE**

Granted by: Ontario university or other university operating with the consent of the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities

Length of Program: Three to five semesters

Description: Master's degree programs require the student to develop and demonstrate advanced research skills under supervision. Some programs require students to demonstrate the necessary research, analytical, interpretative, methodological and expository skills in course exercises. Master's degrees are either profession-oriented or research-oriented and prepare students for either further study in the discipline or for employment in circumstances requiring sound judgment, personal responsibility and initiative, in complex and unpredictable professional environments.

Admissions Requirements: Honours Baccalaureate/Bachelor's Degree or other undergraduate degree, plus bridging studies where necessary.

Application of Credit Transfer: Master's Degree programs are post-degree programs; therefore, there is no credit transfer from Bachelor's Degree programs into Master's Degree programs. Students who transfer from a Master's Degree program in one institution to a Master's degree program in another institution may be eligible to receive transfer credits consistent with the receiving institution's Transfer Policy.

### **DOCTORAL DEGREE**

Granted by: Ontario university or other university operating with the consent of the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities

Length of Program: Three to five years in length, depending on the field and the speed at which individuals progress through requirements.

**Description:** Doctoral programs require students to demonstrate a high degree of intellectual autonomy, an ability to conceptualize, design and implement projects for the generation of significant new knowledge and/or understanding, and their ability to create and interpret knowledge that extends the forefront of a discipline, usually through original research or creative activity. Doctoral programs are either profession-oriented or research-oriented and prepare graduates for employment requiring the ability to make informed judgements on complex issues in specialist fields, and innovation in tackling and solving problems.

**Admissions Requirements:** Normally a Masters degree, though some doctoral programs admit high-performing students with Baccalaureate/Bachelor's Degree: Honours degrees. In some cases, bridging studies may be required.

**Application of Credit Transfer:** Doctoral Degree programs are post-Master's degree programs; therefore, there is no credit transfer from Master's Degree programs into Doctoral Degree programs. Students who transfer from a Doctoral Degree program in one institution to a Doctoral Degree program in another institution may be eligible to receive transfer credits consistent with the receiving institution's Transfer Policy.



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