



CAREER CONNECTIONS

# POST-SECONDARY PREPAREDNESS HANDBOOK



STUDENTS ABILITIES  
CONFIDENCE ADAPT PLAN  
SKILLS TRANSITION  
CLEAR WORLD IMPLEMENT

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## **PART 1: EXPLORING POST-SECONDARY**

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## GRADE-BY-GRADE EXPLORATION

<b>Grades 1-3</b>	<b>CAREER EXPLORATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk about careers and have conversations about different types of jobs.</li> <li>• Expose them to as many career pathways as possible.</li> <li>• Make examples of the people around them and their jobs, like family &amp; friends.</li> </ul>
<b>Grades 4-6</b>	<b>IDENTITY EXPLORATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk about who they are, what their interests are, what skills they have or would like to develop, and what they value most in life.</li> <li>• Helping them get to know who they are and what they like can help them think about what careers or jobs they may enjoy most.</li> </ul>
<b>Grades 7-8</b>	<b>TRAINING EXPLORATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk about career training and what might be required for different jobs.</li> <li>• Get a basic understanding of the different types of programs (apprenticeship, diploma, degree) and the types of institutions (university, college, polytechnic).</li> </ul>
<b>Grade 9</b>	<b>CAREER EXPLORATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk about career areas that they are most interested in. (ie. science, trades, healthcare)</li> <li>• Get an idea of the types of training required for those career areas.</li> <li>• Make a plan to ensure they get the correct high school courses so they can access the training they will need...try to keep as many opportunities open as possible!</li> </ul>
<b>Grade 10</b>	<b>IDENTITY EXPLORATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delve deeper into what their areas of interest are and what skills they have (or need to develop) in order to have the type of career they want.</li> <li>• Help them to see the “big picture” and how their school courses can support them. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ This can help them develop the motivation they need to be successful.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Encourage them to try different experiences in high school to help identify areas of interest (dual credit, work experience, etc).</li> </ul>
<b>Grade 11</b>	<b>TRAINING EXPLORATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Narrow down the programs and institutions they are most interested in.</li> <li>• Ensure they are on-track for the admission requirements needed.</li> <li>• Visit institutions to ensure it’s a good “fit”.</li> <li>• Encourage them to try Dual Credit courses to see how they perform at that level.</li> <li>• Identify important dates and deadlines relating to post-secondary/training application, registration, scholarships, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Grade 12</b>	<b>MAKING IT HAPPEN</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finalize plans for post-secondary/training and submit application(s), if applicable.</li> <li>• Take advantage of work experience opportunities to try a career before you start your training, just to make sure it’s a good “fit”.</li> <li>• Apply for Financial Aid and FREE MONEY!</li> <li>• Make plans for living arrangements (residence) if moving away from home is required.</li> <li>• Enjoy the final year of high school knowing you’ve set yourself up for a successful transition to post-secondary/training!</li> </ul>

## **CAREER EXPLORATION & PROGRAM CHOICE**

### **How can I choose a career that is a good fit?**

- Personal reflection and evaluation:
  - Skills - What are the things you know how to do?
  - Values - What do you value most or what things are the most important to you?
  - Areas of Interest - Favourite subjects in school, hobbies, extracurricular activities.
  - [ALIS - Know Yourself Quizzes](#)
- Do your Career Research!
  - [ALIS - Occupational Profiles](#)
  - MyBlueprint
  - Career Assessments
  - Volunteer or get a job in your field of interest
  - Find someone that has the job you want and then see if you can interview and/or job shadow with them
- Don't stress over "what will I like doing for the rest of my life?"
  - Most people will make major career changes at least 3-7 times in their life.
  - Focus on what you might like to do for the next 5-10 years, as that's more likely!
- Be cautious of the idea of "take your hobby and make it your job." Sometimes hobbies are meant to be hobbies! If you make it your job, it might not be fun for you anymore! You definitely want to find a job that is interesting and fulfilling, but not every hobby makes for a good career path!

### **What are some other ways to explore career options while in high school?**

- Dual Credit
  - Earn credits towards high school diploma and post-secondary credits at the same time.
  - Allows students to understand post-secondary expectations.
  - Opportunity to try a program before applying.
- Internships & Work Experience
  - This can be done through general Work Experience and [CAREERS Internships](#).
  - Earn credits towards high school diploma, gain work experience and earn money.
  - Allows students to understand employer expectations.
  - Opportunity to try a career before deciding if it's the right path.
- Green Certificate
  - Earn high school credits in a variety of agriculture-related fields.
  - Learn under the direction of experienced farm personnel.
  - Must pass testing to earn credits.
- Volunteering
  - Explore different opportunities, develop "soft skills" and give back to the community
- Job Shadow
  - Connect with a mentor in a career area and see what a "day in the life" is like.

## **How do I choose a post-secondary/training program that is a good fit?**

- Based on the career path you are considering, find out what type of training you require.
  - Apprenticeship, Certificate, Diploma, Degree, etc
- Research post-secondary institutions that offer the program you are interested in.
  - Websites
  - Viewbooks & Publications
  - Visit Events
    - Open House, Student for a Day, Campus Tours
  - Webinars & Information Evenings
- Take a Dual Credit course, if possible, to see if you really like the program.
- Don't go to post-secondary just for the sake of going.
  - Save your time and \$\$\$ until you have a better idea of what program or field you are interested in.
- Consider other factors that may influence your decision to attend career training
  - Admission Requirements
    - Do you have the right classes and the necessary grades to be admitted?
  - Costs
    - Do you know how much your training is going to cost?
    - Do you know how you will be able to pay for your training?
  - Distance from Home
    - Will you have to move away from home in order to attend?
  - Campus Life & Activities
    - Are there extracurricular activities available that you're interested in?
    - Is there support available to help you be successful?
  - Housing
    - If you have to move away, is there on-campus housing available?

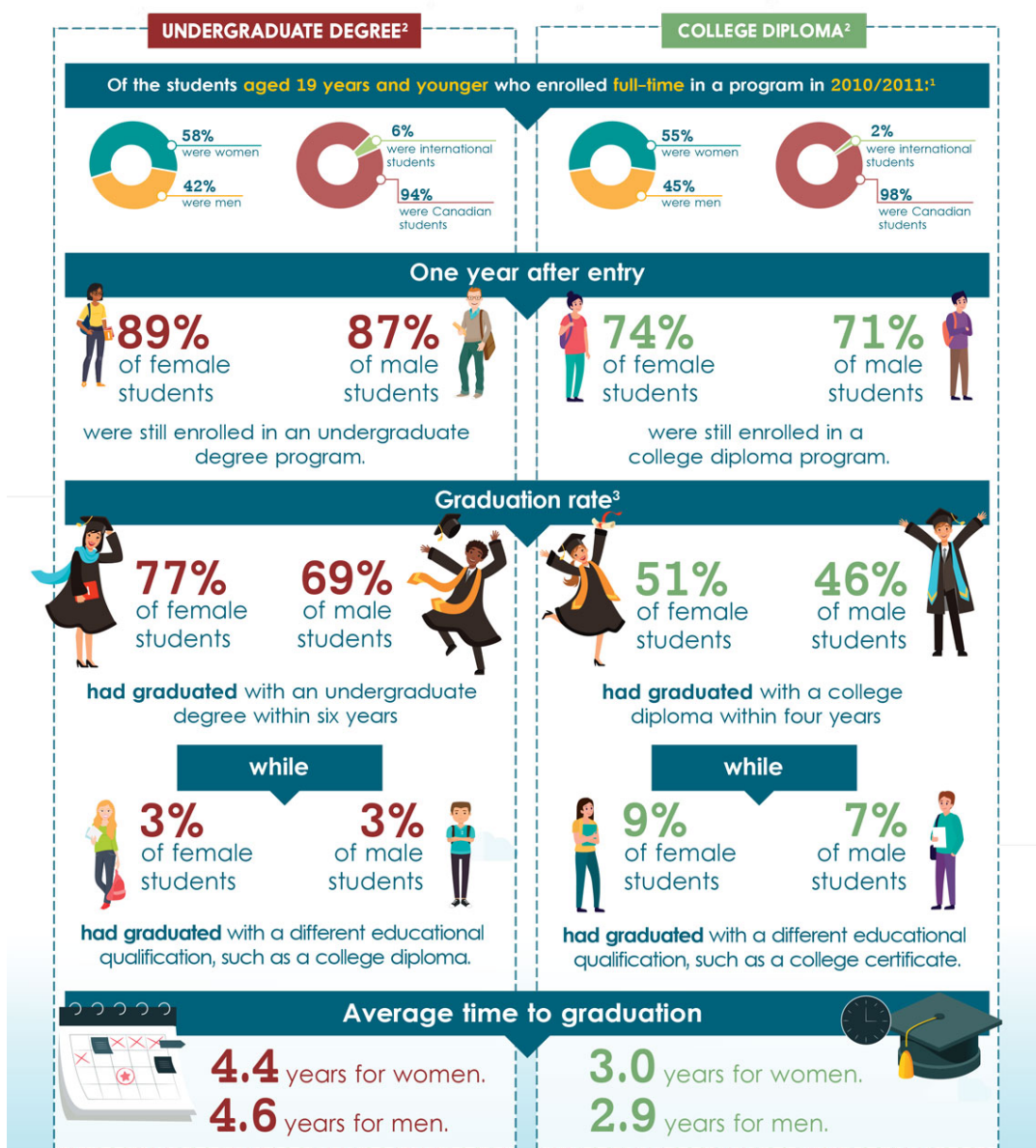
## **Why is “fit”, motivation and aspiration important?**

- Lack of program “fit” is one of the main reasons that students drop out of post-secondary.
- Lack of “fit” can lead to lack of motivation, poor grades and potentially failure or withdrawal.
- Students who are motivated will be more likely to succeed.
- Students who aspire to post-secondary, because they've been encouraged to do so by parents, family, teachers, etc, will be more likely to succeed, regardless of grades and other factors.

*“There is clear evidence that aspirations have an effect on participation, independent of ability and achievement. Whether people see themselves participating in post-secondary education is important. Whether others encourage them to see themselves as participating is important. Aspiration is an area that needs attention.”* (Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Ben Levin, November 5, 2009)

## What if I pick a program and it's not a good fit?

- That's OK! Over 50% of students change their minds, so it's totally normal.
- It's better to change your mind than spend the time/\$\$\$ on a program you don't like.
- You might just need to pick a different major to find the right "fit", or you might have to take a completely different type of program.
- It's important to talk to someone at your institution (Academic Advisor, etc) who can help you see what other options might be available to you....don't just leave!!
  - There are financial consequences for withdrawing from your courses in the middle of a term, so make sure you talk to someone before making a final decision!
  - It might be in your best interest to finish off the term (if you're doing OK in your classes) versus withdrawing from the course.
  - There might be opportunities to transfer the courses you've already completed into another program at your same (or a different) institution.





## **POST-SECONDARY BASICS**

### **What are the post-secondary options in Alberta?**

- **University**

- 7 Universities in Alberta:
  - [University of Alberta](#)
  - [University of Calgary](#)
  - [University of Lethbridge](#)
  - [Alberta University of the Arts](#) (Calgary)
  - [MacEwan University](#) (Edmonton)
  - [Mount Royal University](#) (Calgary)
  - [Athabasca University](#)
- Programs offered (not all program types are offered at all institutions):
  - Undergraduate Degrees (4 years)
  - Graduate Degrees (2+ years)
  - Doctoral Degrees (2+ years)
  - Professional programs
- Professors teach and do research.
- Some programs are competitive for admission, others are not.
- Almost all will require English 30-1 for admission.

- **College**

- 9 Colleges in Alberta:
  - [Bow Valley College](#) (Calgary)
  - [Keyano College](#) (Fort McMurray)
  - [Lakeland College](#) (Vermillion/Lloydminster)
  - [Lethbridge College](#)
  - [Medicine Hat College](#)
  - [NorQuest College](#) (Edmonton)
  - [Northern Lakes College](#) (Grouard)
  - [Olds College](#)
  - [Portage College](#) (Lac La Biche)
- Programs offered (not all program types are offered at all institutions):
  - Academic Upgrading
  - Pre-Employment Programs
  - Apprenticeship Training
  - Certificates (1 year)
  - Diplomas (2 years)
  - Applied Degrees (3-4 years)
  - University Transfer
  - Undergraduate Degrees (4 years)
- Instructors are often highly connected to industry.
- Many programs are hands-on and involve a work term or practicum.
- Job-specific training.



- **Polytechnic or Technical Institutes**

- Alberta has 4:
  - [Northwestern Polytechnic \(GPRC\)](#) (new name coming soon)
  - [NAIT \(Northern Alberta Institute of Technology\)](#) in Edmonton
  - [Red Deer Polytechnic](#)
  - [SAIT \(Southern Alberta Institute of Technology\)](#) in Calgary
- Programs Offered (not all program types are offered at all institutions):
  - Academic Upgrading
  - Pre-Employment Programs
  - Apprenticeship Training
  - Certificates (1 year)
  - Diplomas (2 years)
  - Applied Degrees (3-4 years)
  - University Transfer
  - Undergraduate Degrees (4 years)
- Focuses on programs which deal with trades and technology.
- Hands-on training.

- **Private Institutions**

- 6 in Alberta:
  - [Ambrose University](#) (Calgary)
  - [Burman University](#) (Lacombe)
  - [Concordia University of Edmonton](#)
  - [King's University](#) (Edmonton)
  - [Prairie College](#) (Three Hills)
  - [St. Mary's University](#) (Calgary)
- Programs Offered (not all program types are offered at all institutions):
  - Diplomas (2 years)
  - University Transfer programs
  - Undergraduate Degrees (4 years)
  - Graduate Degrees (2+ years)
- Smaller than other types of institutions.
- Typically has a religious affiliation, but students are not required to share that affiliation in order to attend.
- Can be slightly more expensive, due to less public funding, but they also typically offer a lot of bursaries and other financial aid.

- **First Nations Colleges**

- 5 in Alberta:
  - [Maskwacis Cultural College](#)  
(Samson Cree Nation)
  - [Old Sun Community College](#)  
(Siksika Nation)
  - [Red Crow Community College](#)  
(Kainai Nation)
  - [University nuhelot'jine thaiyots'j nistameyimâkanak Blue Quills](#)  
(St. Paul)
  - [Yellowhead Tribal College](#)  
(Edmonton)
- Programs Offered (not all program types are offered at all institutions):
  - Academic Upgrading
  - Apprenticeship Training
  - Certificate (1 year)
  - Diplomas (2 years)
  - University Transfer programs
  - Collaborative Degrees (4 years)
  - Undergraduate Degrees (4 years)
  - Graduate Degrees (2+ years)
- Offer adult learning opportunities in an Indigenous context.
- Students benefit from wraparound services, including cultural support.
- Most of these colleges (except Old Sun Community College) are part of [Alberta's transfer & pathways system](#) which allows students to transfer between programs and institutions.

- **Other Institutions**

- Many are located in cities across the province.
- Include institutions like [MC College](#), [Reeves College](#), [Academy of Learning](#), [CDI College](#), etc.
- Can be more expensive than public post-secondary institutions and they don't always qualify for government student loans.
- Sometimes offer more flexible delivery options than traditional post-secondary.

## **What are the post-secondary program options?**

- **Academic Upgrading**

- High school level courses offered at a post-secondary institution.
- Allows students to take courses they didn't complete in high school, or want to improve a final grade, so they can meet post-secondary admission requirements.
- These courses typically do NOT count back towards a high school diploma, unless they are approved by Alberta Education.
- Each course can cost anywhere from \$400-\$700, so it's ideal to try and get as many required courses completed during high school, when the courses are fully subsidized.
- **FYI** - You can still take courses through your high school/division until you turn 20 (for free!), so consider that option first before paying for upgrading courses.

- **Pre-Employment Program (Trades Careers)**

- Typically 8-12 weeks in length.
- Equivalent to the 1st period of technical training in an apprenticeship program.
- Allows graduates to gain skills that can help them secure employment as an apprentice.
- Any student not apprenticed should consider this level of skill training to better market themselves for a job.
- See the [Trades & Apprenticeship Preparedness Handbook](#) for more information

- **Apprenticeship Training (Trades Careers)**

- Regulated by Alberta [Apprenticeship and Industry Training \(AIT\)](#).
- An apprenticeship program lasts 1 to 4 years, depending on the trade.
- Completers earn a Journeyperson certification.
- Training each year is comprised of three parts:
  - On-the-job training hours (1500 +)
    - Must be under the supervision of a qualified employer/journeyman
  - Technical training with an approved provider (College or Polytechnic)
  - AIT industry exam requiring 70% pass rate
- May also be able to work in other provinces if they obtain a [Red Seal](#).
- Some trades are Compulsory while others are Non-Compulsory
  - Compulsory Trades - A worker in a compulsory trade must be either a registered apprentice or a certified journeyman.
  - Non-Compulsory Trades - Individuals can work in this trade without being a registered apprentice or a certified journeyman, although formal training is still recommended.
- See the [Trades & Apprenticeship Preparedness Handbook](#) for more information

- **Certificate**
  - One year or less of full-time study.
  - Short-term training in a specific career area.
  - Typically have a set Program of Study, with little to no elective selection.
  - Can include work integrated learning opportunities, like a practicum or internship.
  - May be able to lead into a diploma program.
- **Diploma**
  - Up to 2 years of full-time study.
  - Prepare graduates to work in a particular field or group of careers.
  - Typically have a set Program of Study, with little to no elective selection.
  - Can include work integrated learning opportunities, like a practicum or internship.
  - May be able to lead into a post-diploma certificate or degree program.
- **Post-Diploma Certificate**
  - Some institutions offer certificate programs that require a completed diploma or degree for admission.
  - Vary in length, but are typically 1 year or less.
  - Generally focused on increasing specialized, job-specific skills.
- **Applied Degree**
  - Typically 3 years of full-time study and a 4th year of work experience.
  - Some diplomas can ladder into the 3rd year of an applied degree.
  - Provide enhanced preparation that can lead to higher-level career opportunities.
- **Undergraduate (Bachelor's) Degree**
  - Usually 4 years of full-time study, but program length can vary by program and institution.
  - Focus on creating well-rounded learners.
  - Students pick a specific area of focus, but also take additional courses in other areas.
  - Programs may include co-op or work integrated learning opportunities.
  - Can lead to direct access to graduate studies
- **Professional Programs**
  - Programs that require post-secondary coursework for admission, such as Dentistry, Veterinary, Medicine, Pharmacy, Law, etc.
  - Minimum requirements for admission may include:
    - 2-4 years of general or specific post-secondary study with a competitive GPA
    - Exam scores (MCAT, LSAT, etc)

- **Graduate Certificate or Diploma**

- Provide graduate-level options, without committing to a master's program.
- Need a bachelor's degree and potentially other program-specific requirements.

- **Graduate / Masters Degree**

- Usually involves 2-4 years of full-time study.
- Build on a student's undergraduate degree, which is required for admission.
- Can be either thesis or course-based.

- **Doctoral Degree / PhD**

- Usually involves 2-4 years of full-time study and research.
- Plan & conduct research, as well as prepare and defend a dissertation, about an approved topic.
- Generally need a master's degree for admission.

## Post-Secondary Institutions & Programs

### UNIVERSITIES

Undergraduate Degrees, Professional Programs,  
Graduate Degrees (Masters, Doctoral)

### COLLEGES

Degrees, Diplomas, Certificates, Apprenticeships,  
University Transfer, Upgrading

### TECHNICAL INSTITUTIONS

Degrees, Diplomas, Certificates, Apprenticeships,  
University Transfer, Upgrading

### PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS

Degrees, University Transfer, Diplomas

### OTHER

Diplomas, Certificates, Upgrading



## **Post-Secondary Pathways**

There are many ways to navigate post-secondary education, so you should explore different options to see what might suit you best.

Many programs are built to “ladder” into the next level, so you can start in a Certificate, then continue into a Diploma and then into a Degree.

Many institutions collaborate with each other, to allow students to begin their studies at one institution and then transfer to another to complete their program.

Some institutions even offer their entire program at another institution.

These pathways have many benefits, including:

- have greater access to education closer to home.
- students can save money by not having to move away.
- the opportunity to start their education in a more familiar environment.
- study at an institution that is smaller, thereby making it an easier transition.

Some of the opportunities that can help students access different pathways include:

### **University Transfer**

- Take university courses at a smaller institution, potentially closer to home.
- May be able to take 1-2 years worth of courses (10-20 courses) prior to transferring to a university to complete the program.
- Important to confirm what courses will transfer by using the [Alberta Transfer Guide](#) and by speaking to Academic Advisors at both institutions.
- It's important to work with an Advisor at your current institution to ensure that courses are as transferable as possible. If possible, connect with an Advisor at the institution you are transferring too as well, to get them to confirm your choices.

### **Articulation and Transfer Agreements**

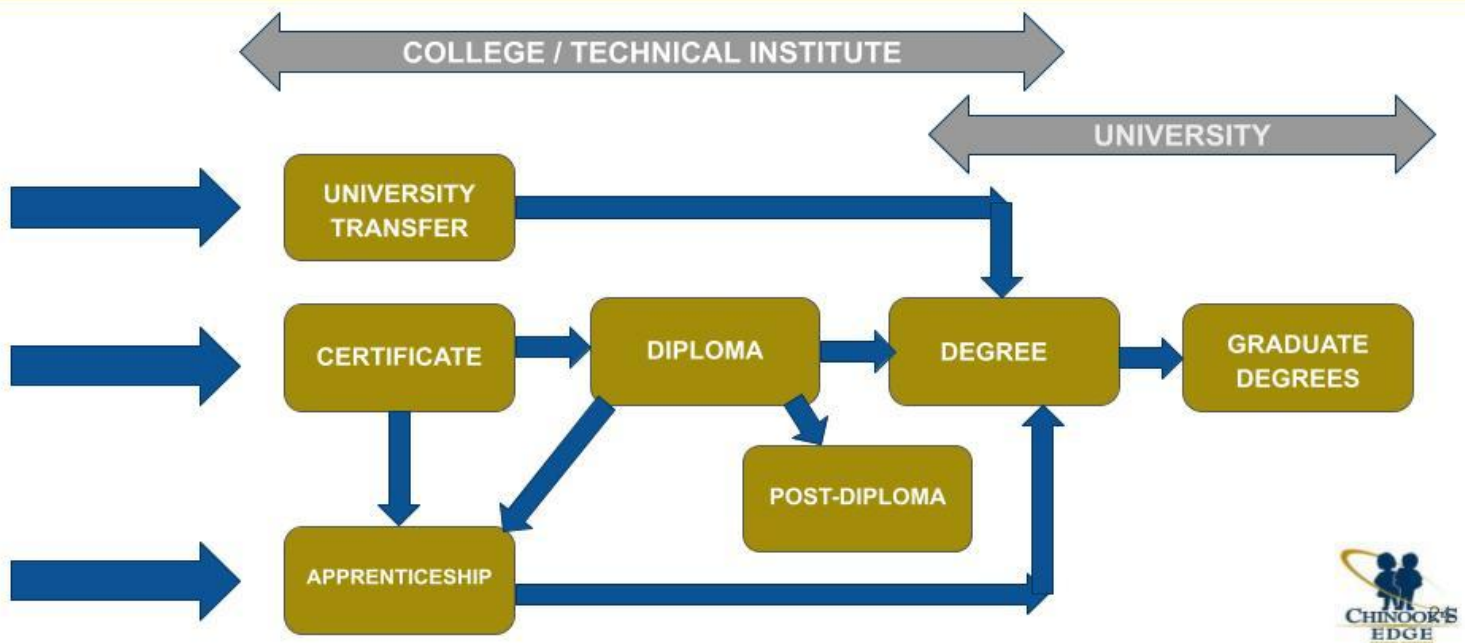
- Institutions have agreements where students can transfer courses taken at one institution and have them “count” towards their education at another institution.
- For example: take a Business Management diploma at a college that transfers to a university, so that you enter into the 3rd year of the university program and only have 2 more years of school left to complete your degree in Business.
- Institutions will typically post their transfer agreements on their website or you can look them up through the [Alberta Transfer Guide](#).
- It's always up to the “receiving” institution to determine what courses or programs they will accept for Transfer Credit....so if there is not a set Transfer Agreement in place, you may still be able to get some credit!

- Save your Course Outlines! Institutions may request these in order to determine if a course you have taken is similar enough to the course offered at their institution, and therefore eligible for Transfer Credit.

### Collaborative Degrees

- Take a university degree at a smaller institution, like a college.
- You are a student of that university, even if you are physically attending classes at another institution.
- For example: students can take the University of Alberta Education Degree entirely at Red Deer Polytechnic OR students can take the University of Calgary Social Work or Nursing Degrees entirely at Medicine Hat College.
- Allows students to stay closer to home while still having access to university degree programs.
- Sometimes the competitive average to get into these Collaborative Degrees can be a bit lower than what they would be if you applied directly to the University.

## Post-Secondary Pathways





## **PART 2: PREPARING FOR POST-SECONDARY**

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## APPLICATION & ADMISSION

### How do you apply?

- [ApplyAlberta](#) Account:
  - You will need your Alberta Student Number (ASN), which can be found on your report cards and other documents from your school or through the [ASN Search](#).
  - You will need to set up a [MyAlberta Digital ID \(MADI\)](#) account in order to access the online application. **A “basic” MADI account is required to access ApplyAlberta.**
  - **IMPORTANT:** use a personal email address, NOT your school email address, to create this account, so that you will have access to it even after you graduate from high school.
  - You will be asked for personal information (citizenship, SIN, etc) and academic history (high school courses completed & grades) when you set-up your profile, so make sure you have all that information handy. **IMPORTANT:** If you don't already have a SIN, make sure you get one, as it will be important for applications, scholarships, etc.
  - Once you have set-up your ApplyAlberta account and profile, you will be able to proceed to the application stage. **IMPORTANT:** Students should set-up their ApplyAlberta account in advance (ideally in Grade 11), so that it's ready to go when it comes time to apply for post-secondary.
- Select Institution:
  - Select from the available list of Alberta institutions.
  - You will be transferred to that specific institution's portion of the online application.
- Institution Application:
  - Every institution has a different set-up and will potentially ask for different information.
  - Typically, you want to know:
    - The intake you are applying for (Fall 2022, Winter/Spring 2023, etc).
    - The program you are applying for.
    - The major that you are applying for, if applicable.
  - Some institutions (typically universities) will ask you to indicate what your “second choice” is, in case you are not admissible to your first choice program, so consider that prior to applying as well.
- Application Fee:
  - You must pay the respective application fee for each institution/program that you apply for, using a credit card.
  - Application fees range from \$50 to over \$100, depending on the institution.
  - **REMEMBER:** Application Fees are typically non-refundable.
- Submit Supporting Documents:
  - If you are still in Grade 12 when you apply, then you may be asked to submit unofficial transcripts or a timetable from your school in order to show which courses you have completed and which you are currently registered in.
  - Depending on the program you are applying for, you may be required to submit additional documentation (Letter of Reference, Resume, etc), so have those prepared and ready to submit once you apply.

## When do you apply?

- Most institutions open for applications through ApplyAlberta on October 1 for the following September (Fall) intake. A few institutions open for application on November 1.
  - Prepare in Grade 11 so you know when & where you want to apply in Grade 12.
- Some institutions may have multiple application opening dates, so make sure to check their website for specific dates.
- Some institutions or programs will have an application deadline...so make sure you familiarize yourself with their specific rules & regulations so you don't miss an important date!
- It's encouraged to apply as early as possible...many programs fill up fast, so the earlier you apply, the better your chances of getting into the program you want.

## Types of Admission

- ***First Applied, First Qualified, First Admitted (FA, FQ, FA)***
  - The applicants who apply first, and meet the minimum admission requirements, will be the first admitted into the program.
  - Grades don't matter, as long as the minimum grades/course requirements are met.
  - Programs can still fill up, which could result in you not getting a spot, even if you have the required courses and grades.
- ***Competitive Admission***
  - Applicants are admitted based on who has the highest grades or average in the required courses.
  - This type of admission is typically found in programs that are extremely popular, so there are too many applicants for the number of spots available.
- **REMEMBER:** Not all Universities are competitive and not all College's are FA, FQ, FA. Some Colleges have competitive programs! The type of admission is not determined by the type of institution, but by the individual program.
- These are the two most common types of admission, but some institutions might have slight variations on how they process applications. It's always recommended that you connect directly with the institution you are applying to in order to confirm how they process applications for the program you are applying to.

## What other factors might impact my admission to a program?

- Some programs have additional requirements that must be met before you can be admitted, such as: Volunteer or work experience hours; Portfolio submission; Testing or Interviews.
- The faster you can get supporting documents to the institution, the faster you can potentially be admitted to the program.
- Make sure you get all documents in before the deadline, if there is one. Many institutions will not make exceptions if you miss a deadline.

## **Admission Status**

- ***Conditional or Early Admission***

- Given to applicants who do not currently meet all admission requirements, as they are still finishing high school or completing upgrading.
- Must submit final grades/transcripts prior to program starting, so the institution can verify successful completion and that grades/averages have been met.
- All applicants must achieve Full Admission prior to their program starting.

- ***Full Admission***

- Applicants have met all admission requirements for their program.

## **What if I end up on a Waitlist?**

- If a program is full when you apply, or you don't have a competitive enough average to be directly admitted, then you may end up on a waitlist.
- If someone who was admitted to a program before you decides to withdraw, they will fill that vacant spot with the next in line on the waitlist. They will keep making offers until they find someone to take the seat, so it is still possible to get into a full program, even if you are further down on the waitlist.
- Applicants on a waitlist may receive a very last-minute Offer of Admission, so that is something to be prepared for.
- If you do not get into the program, you can try to apply earlier for the next intake, or you can do some upgrading to improve your average to make yourself more competitive...or both!

## **What can I do to make myself admissible to as many programs as possible?**

- Every program has different admission requirements, but some general advice to follow is:
  - Take English 30-1, if at all possible.
    - All university programs require English 30-1 for admission.
    - Many colleges will accept 30-2, but 30-1 will keep more options open.
  - Take at least Math 20-2 (preferably Math 30-2), if at all possible
    - Some programs, like apprenticeships, only require Math 20-3, but taking 20-2 or even a 30-level math course, will leave more options open to you in the future.
  - Take at least one 30-level Science....two or three if you can manage it!
    - Having at least one grade 12 science course will give you another “academic” subject, which can help you greatly with admission to a variety of programs.
  - The more grade 12-level courses you can take, the better! If you ever decide to change programs or go back to school in the future, this lessens the likelihood that you will have to spend time and money on upgrading.
  - “Academic” subjects include: English 30-1, Math 30-1 or Math 30-2, Social 30-1, Science 30, Physics 30, Chemistry 30, Biology 30, a 30-level second language, or one of: Art 30, Drama 30, Music 30, Dance 35

## **OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

### **How do I know what the rules and regulations are?**

- Every institution has their own set of rules, regulations, policies and procedures.
- These can often be found in the Academic Calendar for the institution, as well as on their website.
- Students should familiarize themselves before their program starts with all the student-specific policies and procedures at their institution, so they know what standards they are being held to.

### **How is a post-secondary academic year structured?**

- Every institution may have a slightly different structure, depending on the institution or the program, but the typically year is structured as:
  - Fall Term (September - December)
  - Winter or Spring Term (January - April)
  - Spring and/or Summer Term (May - June, July - August or May - August)
- The majority of programs are structured so they are taken during the Fall and Winter/Spring terms. This means students are typically in school from September through to the end of April.
- Some programs may have students doing courses or participating in work integrated learning opportunities in the Spring and/or Summer term.
- Most programs will allow students to be “off” during the Spring/Summer term (May through August), which gives them time to work and earn money for the upcoming year.

### **What is “full-time” and why is it important?**

- To be considered a “full-time” student, the institution typically has a certain number of courses or credits that students must be enrolled in each semester.
- Most institutions plan for students to take 5 courses or 15 credits per semester, but the minimum to be considered full-time is typically 3 courses or 9 credits.
- Often, you need to be a full-time student in order to access certain types of financial aid and to play competitive varsity athletics, among other things.
- One tip for first year students to transition successfully....
  - talk to your Academic Advisor about spreading out your program and only taking 3-4 classes in the first semester and/or second semester.
  - This will allow you to remain a full-time student for financial aid, athletics, etc, but it also gives you more time to learn how to be a post-secondary student, work to earn money and give you more time to focus on your studies.
- If students take courses in the Spring/Summer term (May-June, July-August), then full-time status is typically met by taking 2 courses.
  - If students are in a longer Spring/Summer term (May-August), then full-time status is typically similar to the Fall or Winter terms, with 3 classes or 9 credits being the minimum.

## **How do I know what courses to take?**

- Most programs will have a “Program of Study” that outlines what classes you should take each semester in order to complete the program in the traditional timeframe.
  - You don’t necessarily have to follow this timeline exactly, but if you are going to deviate from the Program of Study, it’s always recommended to speak with an Academic Advisor about what those changes will mean.
- Some programs are very “canned”, where the Program of Study tells you exactly what courses you need to take and there is no (or very little) choice in terms of class selection.
  - This is typically more common with shorter programs, like Certificates and Diplomas.
- Other programs will have certain core classes that must be taken, but they will also have a lot of opportunities to select elective courses.
  - This is typically more common in longer programs, like Degrees.
- The Academic Calendar at the institution (typically posted on the website), will contain all of the Programs of Study for each program offered at the institution. Many institutions have pages on their website for each program, and the Program of Study can often be found there as well.
- Students are responsible to complete the Program of Study that was active the year they started at the institution...so even if the program changes during their time there, students still follow the Program of Study that they started with.
  - If students take a break from their studies (typically of one year or more), they would then be required to complete the Program of Study that is active when they return to studies.

## **How do I register for classes?**

- Some institutions will automatically register you in the classes you need to take, while others will require you to select and register yourself into classes. Some institutions do both!
- Make sure you know what type of institution you are attending, so that you are prepared to register yourself for classes, if applicable.
- Most institutions will have a specific date when registration opens for the upcoming semester or year, so make sure you know what that date is.
- If you do have to register yourself, the earlier you register, the easier it may be for you to get into the classes you need and want before they fill up.
- Self-registration is now typically done online, but some institutions may still register students through a phone system or with paper forms.
- If you are unsure how to register or are unsure what classes you need to take, make an appointment with an Academic Advisor and they can help guide you through the process.
- If you are automatically registered in classes, but wish to make changes to your schedule, you should contact an Academic Advisor to see what might be possible. Not all institutions have multiple class sections available, so you might just have to stick with the schedule you are given.

## What is GPA, how do I calculate it and why is it important?

- Grade Point Average is how most institutions calculate the grades of their students.
- Every institution might be slightly different in their grading scale, but the way GPA is calculated remains the same. Here is an example of a Grading Scale:

Letter Grade	Percent Range	Grade Point Value
A, A+	92-100	4.0
A-	87-91	3.7
B+	82-86	3.3
B	77-81	3.0
B-	72-76	2.7
C+	67-71	2.3
C	62-66	2.0
C-	58-61	1.7
D+	54-57	1.3
D	50-53	1.0
F	0-49	0.0

- GPA is calculated by taking the number of credits that a course is worth and multiplying it by the Grade Point Value the student achieved in the course. This is done for each class taken in a given semester and then averaged to come up with the GPA for that semester.

Course	Credits	Grade	GPV	Total Points (# of Credits x GPV)
English	3	90	3.7	11.1
Biology	3	77	3.0	9.0
Psychology	3	88	3.7	11.1
Kinesiology	3	82	3.3	9.9
Chemistry	3	63	2.0	6.0
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>15</b>			<b>47.1</b>

### **SEMESTER GPA CALCULATION:**

47.1 Grade Points / 15 credits = 3.14 GPA

- GPA is calculated each semester and also cumulatively for the students' entire program.
- GPA is important as it determines a students' Academic Standing.



- Many institutions will have different Academic Standing levels, like:
  - Honours, Dean's List, President's List - Hitting this level can result in scholarships.
  - Good Standing - This means you are achieving the minimum grades for success.
  - Probation - This means your grades are too low and you are at risk.
  - Suspension, Disqualification - This means your grades are too low and you are not allowed to continue.
- If your GPA is not high enough to be in Good Standing, it's important to connect with supporters on campus (Advising, Tutors, etc) to see how you can work to improve your grades.
- Many institutions will have minimum GPA requirements for graduation, so students need to ensure they hit that GPA if they want to receive their credential.
- GPA is also used by institutions to determine if students can gain admission into other programs (graduate degrees, etc).

### **Can parents get information about their child's application, grades, account balance, etc?**

- No. Once a student applies to post-secondary, they are treated as an adult, even if they are not over the age of 18. The student is the only contact that a post-secondary will communicate with.
- FOIP regulations dictate that information cannot be released to anyone other than the student, unless the student has given permission.
- Even if the parents are the ones paying for the tuition, institutions cannot release the amount owing unless they have the consent of the student.
- Students can fill out a Consent to Release Information form that is then kept on file, so that the institution knows what type of information can be released and to whom.

## **COSTS OF POST-SECONDARY**

### **How much does it cost to attend post-secondary?**

- Often not as much as many people think!
- Tuition and fees generally range from \$4,000-\$10,000 per year, depending on the program, and assuming students are taking a full course load.
- Living expenses are where the biggest cost comes in, so living at home and attending a local institution can help keep costs down.
  - Living expenses can be around \$10,000 per year.
- Books & supplies can be between \$500-\$3,000 per year, depending on the program.
- Most institutions will have a “cost calculator” or a “fee schedule/table” on their website.

### **What do I have to pay and when?**

- *Application Fee* - ranges from \$50 to over \$100 dollars; must be paid at the time of application.
- *Tuition Deposit* - ranges from \$100 to over \$500; to be paid once an Offer of Admission is made, in order to secure your seat in the program.
- *Tuition & Fees* - ranges from \$4,000 to over \$10,000 per year, depending on the program; typically paid per semester, by the due date set by the institution.

### **Can I get my money back?**

- *Application Fee* - typically non-refundable.
- *Tuition Deposit* - some institutions it is non-refundable & others will refund up to a certain date.
- *Tuition & Fees* - refundable up to a certain date in each semester.
  - “Drop” Deadline
    - If you drop a class or withdraw from your program prior to this date, most institutions will refund any tuition/fees paid.
    - Nothing will show on your transcripts that you were ever in those classes.
    - This date typically falls within the first week or so of each semester.
  - “Withdraw” Deadline
    - If you withdraw from a class or program after the “Drop” deadline but before the “Withdrawal” deadline, you will only receive a “W” grade on your transcript, which does not impact your GPA.
    - You will not receive any tuition or fees refund for the courses/program.
    - This date is typically about halfway through the semester or course.

### **How am I going to pay for it all?**

Check out the [Post-Secondary & Apprenticeship Financial Aid Handbook](#) for more information on paying for career training.

## **POST-SECONDARY NEXT STEPS**

### **What are my next steps after I get admitted?**

- Typically you will be sent an email with your admission decision. This will sometimes be followed-up with an official letter or even a package of information.
- You will be required to pay a tuition deposit to secure your seat in the program.
  - Tuition deposits can range from \$100 to over \$500.
- Set-up your student portal so you can access important information like your timetable, the amount you owe for tuition, etc.
  - Some institutions give you access to this at the time you apply.
  - Instructions on how to access your portal are typically sent by email.
- Set-up and check your student email account
  - Institutions do this at various points throughout the admissions process...some do it at the point of application and others do it once you've been admitted.
  - Students should be checking this email account frequently, as most institutions will communicate only by email and students don't want to miss important information.
- Apply for student housing, if applicable.
  - Living on campus is a great way to connect with your institution, make friends and live in a safe and secure environment.
  - Residence can fill up fast, so apply early!
- Visit the campus, if you haven't already done so.
  - Get comfortable on campus before your program even starts. Go for a tour, take a look at your classes and the residence, and be ready to go when your program starts.
- Register for classes, if applicable.
  - Some institutions will automatically register you in the classes you need to take....others will require you to select and register yourself into classes....and some are a mix of both!
  - Always ask if you need to register yourself, so that you don't miss out!
- Apply for Financial Aid
  - Government student loan applications typically open in June (in Alberta) for the upcoming school year.
  - Some institutions have scholarships, awards and bursaries that you can apply for prior to your program starting. Others have you apply for awards once your program begins.
    - Make sure you're aware of any deadlines so you don't miss out on opportunities!
- Attend any Orientation activities that are offered.
  - Many institutions offer pre-Orientation and Orientation programming that will help set you up for success....so make sure you attend those wherever possible!
- Prepare to pay for your Tuition & Fees for the semester.
  - Some institutions require payment prior to classes starting, while others give students a week or two at the beginning of each semester to pay the tuition & fees owing.
- Purchase Books & Supplies
  - Most institutions will have a Campus Store where students can purchase much of what they require.

## **PART 3: ATTENDING POST-SECONDARY**

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# POST-SECONDARY SERVICES & SUPPORTS

## Who is there to help me be successful?

- Lots of people!
- Most institutions will have a variety of services and supports available to help you be a successful student. They may include, but are not limited to:
  - Accessibility Services (students with disabilities)
  - Academic Advising
  - Athletics
  - Counselling & Mental Health
  - Financial Aid
  - Fitness & Recreation services
  - Health Services (doctors & nurses)
  - Indigenous Student support
  - Information Technology
  - Learning Supports (tutoring, academic coaching)
  - Office of the Registrar (registration, schedule, transfer credit)
  - Students' Association/Union (student government & advocacy, Health & Dental plans)
- The biggest advice is to **ASK FOR HELP!**
  - Students need to advocate for themselves and their success and ask for the help they need, as early on as possible.
- These services are, for the most part, provided through the fees you pay as a student, so there is no additional cost. You definitely want to take advantage of them while you can!

## What should I get in place before my first day?

There are a variety of services and supports that you can (and should!) ensure are in place prior to your first day of classes. They include:

- **Accommodations** - if you have a diagnosed learning disability or require accommodations in order to be successful in your studies, make sure to register with your institutions' Accessibility Services department as soon as possible. They will be able to help you ensure that accommodations are available to you in all of your classes.
- **Academic Coaching** - many institutions have Academic Coaches who can help you improve your time management skills, learn how to study better, and more! Find out where these folks are located and connect with them early to get a head start on being a successful student.
- **Financial Aid** - if you are applying for government student loans, ensure you have done so as early as possible, so that all the necessary paperwork can be submitted and your money will be available before your tuition and fees are due.
- **Health & Dental Benefits** - most institutions will automatically register their students into a Health & Dental plan. If you already have coverage through a parent, partner or employer, then you can "Opt Out" of this coverage, typically before a specific date, and then the cost of that plan will not be charged to you. You can also choose to keep that extra coverage, so you have more comprehensive benefits while attending post-secondary.
- **Learning Platform** - many institutions will have an online learning platform (Moodle, Blackboard, etc) that is used by instructors to post grades, facilitate classroom discussions, and share course materials. Make sure you have logged into this platform and familiarize yourself with it prior to classes beginning.

- **Mental Health Support** - most institutions will offer FREE and confidential mental health support. Moving away from home and/or starting post-secondary can be stressful, so reach out to these individuals right away and get that extra level of support.
- **Student ID Card** - most institutions require students to have an ID Card to access facilities and services on-campus. Many will have a way to submit an ID Photo in advance, so you should get that done so your ID Card is ready for you on your first day.
- **Student Portal** - most institutions will have a Student Portal that is used to post official grades, tax documents, class schedules, registration information, etc. You want to ensure you have accessed this portal prior to your first day of classes and that you know what information can be found there.
- **Tutoring** - many institutions offer tutoring to their students, and it's often free of charge! Connecting with tutoring services early on will ensure that one is available for you and that you have their support right from the beginning for any classes that are especially challenging for you.

### **What should I do if I'm struggling in my classes?**

Ideally, you want to reach out for support before your grades are too negatively impacted. There are many people available to help you, including:

- Instructors and Assistants
- Academic Advisors
- Academic Coaches
- Tutors

If your grades have started to slip, you might want to talk to your Academic Advisor about the possibility of withdrawing from the course.

- Typically institutions give students until 50% of the way through the course to withdraw.
- Students will not receive a refund on the tuition they've paid for the course if they withdraw.
- Will be given a "W" grade on their transcript instead of an "F" or other low grade.
  - A "W" grade does not impact a students' GPA, whereas an "F" grade will have a negative impact on their GPA.
  - A "W" on a transcript is better than an "F"

If you complete a term or semester and end up on Academic Probation, you definitely want to connect with your Academic Advisor and other support staff.

- Identify problems in past semesters and determine how to address them.
- Determine a plan on how best to move forward with your program.
  - Consider spreading out the program so you aren't taking as many courses at one time.
- Put in place "action items" that will help you overcome issues
  - Tutoring, regular meetings with instructors, time management, financial support, etc.

If you complete a term or semester and end up on Academic Suspension or Disqualification, you may be required to take time away from your program and institution.

- Determine how long you need to be away, if applicable.
- Understand the process for returning to studies in the future.
- If you are allowed to return, you may be placed on Academic Probation in your first semester back, so you will want to follow those steps to ensure you have a plan in place to support your success this time around.

### **What if I just need to take a break?**

Ideally, you want to talk to someone about “stepping out” of your program...don’t just walk away!

Depending on the reason for needing a break, there may be options available to you besides withdrawing, such as:

- Spreading out your program and reducing your course-load each term.
- Accessing Emergency Bursaries or other sources of financial aid.
- Getting accommodations put in place or accessing tutoring to help you be more successful.
- Working with your instructor to make up for missed or poorly executed assignments, if possible.

If you are in the middle of a semester/term and need to step out, there may be impacts to you financially and from a grade perspective.

- **Before “Drop Date”** - you will receive your tuition back and there will be no record of those classes on your transcript.
- **Before “Withdrawal Date”** - you will not receive any tuition back and you will get a “W” grade on your transcript, which is still better than an “F” grade.
- **After “Withdrawal Date”** - If it is past the “Withdrawal Date”, then you will receive the grade that you have earned up to that point in the semester, which is typically a low grade or an “F”.
  - If you think you can get through the semester and pass some or all of your classes, it may be in your best interest to complete the semester.
- Talk to your Academic Advisor about the “Pros and Cons” of withdrawing versus completing.

If you are at the end of a semester/term and need to take a break, definitely talk to your Academic Advisor about your options.

- Some institutions may allow you to take a Leave of Absence, which holds your spot in the program but let’s you take a semester or two off.
  - This allows you to remain under your current Program of Study and not have to re-apply for admission.
- If a LOA is not an option, then you can do a Program Withdrawal. Institutions typically have a form that they require you to fill out.
  - If you completely Withdraw from your program/institution, you may be required to re-apply if you are out for a specified period of time.
    - You will be subject to new admission requirements, averages, etc, if applicable.
  - Students who withdraw and then return may be required to adhere to an updated Program of Study, if their program has been adjusted or changed since they left.



## **LIFE AT POST-SECONDARY**

### **Where can I live while attending post-secondary?**

- **At Home!**
  - If at all possible, live at home...it's cheaper! (unless your parents start charging you rent!)
- **Campus Housing/Residence**
  - Many institutions offer on-campus housing/residence options...those are typically a cheaper alternative than living off-campus.
  - Some benefits to living on-campus include:
    - Convenience, Safety, Community, Activities, Higher GPA
  - Most residences fill quite quickly, so apply early!
    - Some institutions do “guarantee” residence for first year students, but not all, so make sure you know which type you are applying to.
  - Some residences will include a meal plan and others may have kitchens where students can cook their own meals...so make sure you know what options are available at your institution.
    - If there is a meal plan option, you may need to decide what “level” of meal plan you prefer.
- **Off-Campus**
  - If you prefer to live off-campus, there are a variety of places to look for available apartments, rooms for rent, etc, including:
    - Some institutions have Off-Campus Housing pages
    - Rental Agencies
    - Facebook, Buy & Sell Groups, Kijiji, etc

### **How will I know where to go on my first day of classes?**

- Most institutions will offer Orientation activities throughout the summer and before the first day of classes....so take advantage of these to get familiar with and comfortable on your campus!
- Book a Campus Tour or come explore the campus on your own before classes begin.
  - Bring a copy of your class schedule, if possible, so that you can find all of your classrooms while you're walking around campus.
- Access a Campus Map
  - Many institutions will have a campus map available on their website and/or in a print version that can help you navigate your way around campus. Some may even have their own app!
- Pay attention to signage.
  - Institutions will typically have signage directing you to buildings and classrooms, so make sure you pay attention to those as they will help you find your way.

## **What will my first few weeks look like?**

There will be A LOT of stuff happening in those first few weeks, so make sure you stay on top of them and understand what to expect. These are some of the key things to be prepared for:

- **Getting to Campus**
  - **Parking** - many institutions will require you to purchase a parking pass in order to park your vehicle on-campus. You typically pay for a pass for the entire academic year.
    - Make sure you know which parking lot you're supposed to park in, so that you don't end up with a parking ticket!
  - **Public Transportation** - if your institution is on a public transportation route, make sure you know what pass you might need and where you get on and off of the bus or train.
    - institutions in larger urban centres may provide a transit pass as part of your student fees!
- **Starting Classes**
  - **Schedule** - make sure you have accessed your schedule in your student portal and know when and where all of your classes are.
    - **REMEMBER:** If you need to make changes to your schedule, go talk to your Academic Advisor about what options are available.
  - **Instructors** - they are there to help you and are your primary supporter for coursework.
    - **Contact Information** - make sure you note down your instructor's contact information so you can get in touch with them when needed.
    - **Office Hours** - every instructor will have specific days and times where they are available to meet with students and answer questions...so take advantage of them and go connect with your instructors!
  - **Course Outlines** - these are typically handed out on the first day of class and are often posted in the class learning platform. They provide important information about the class, including:
    - **Assignments & Exams** - it will show what assignments and exams will be graded as part of the course, so make sure you note down when they are due!
    - **Grading** - it will show the breakdown of how your final grade will be determined and will indicate how much each assignment and exam is worth.
    - **Important Dates** - it will show what holidays and other important dates will take place during the semester.
    - **Expectations** - will outline the expectations of the instructor for things like attendance, participation, citations in written work (MLA vs APA), and more.
  - **Books & Supplies** - these can sometimes be purchased in advance, but if not, then make sure you get everything you need during those first few days...you don't want to fall behind in reading your textbook, etc.
    - Keep an eye out for used textbooks or second-hand supplies to help keep costs down.
  - **Learning Platform** - make sure you have logged into your course learning platform (Moodle, Blackboard, etc) and are familiar with how to use it for your class.

- **Being a Student**

- **Student ID Card** - make sure you have your Student ID Card so you can access facilities and services on-campus.
- **Important Dates & Deadlines** - there are many important dates and deadlines to be aware of, especially near the beginning of the semester. Make sure you know when these deadlines are, as there could be financial implications or other consequences if you miss them.
  - **Scholarships & Awards Application Deadline** - all institutions offer a variety of “free money” options. Some require that you apply prior to your program beginning, while others have you apply once you’ve started your program. Know when and how to apply so you don’t miss out!
  - **Tuition & Fees Payment Deadline** - the cost of your schooling is broken down into tuition and fees. Some fees are mandatory and others are optional. Make sure you know how much you owe for the semester and are prepared to pay it before the deadline. Some institutions require you to pay before classes start, while others have a deadline that is a week or two into the semester.
  - **Add Date** - this is the last day in the semester when you can “add” into a class. This is typically very early on in the semester.
  - **Drop Date** - this is the last day in the semester when you can “drop” out of a class. This is typically early on in the semester. If you “drop” a class, you typically get refunded the tuition paid for it and it will not show up on your transcript.
  - **Withdrawal Date** - this is the last day in the semester when you can “withdraw” from a class. This is typically about half way through the semester. If you “withdraw” from a class, you typically **do not** get refunded the tuition paid for it and it will show up on your transcript as a “W” grade.
  - **Health & Dental Opt-Out Deadline** - most students are enrolled in a Health & Dental plan with their institution or students’ association/union. If you have coverage through a spouse, parent or employer, you can opt-out of the institutional coverage and those fees will come off of your student account. The deadline to “opt-out” of the coverage is typically within the first few weeks or the first month of the semester.
- **Accessing Services** - make sure you know where the key services are on-campus, so you can find them when you need them. Services to locate include:

■ Security	■ Tutoring & Academic Coaching
■ Health Services	■ Accessibility Services
■ Counselling Services	■ IT Help Desk
■ Academic Advising	■ Library
■ Financial Aid	■ Office of the Registrar
■ Students’ Association/Union	■ Indigenous Services
- **Email and Other Accounts** - make sure you have set-up and are checking your institutional email account frequently. Students may also have access to a student portal, a print account, etc, so make sure they are set-up and ready to go!

- **Get Involved!** The best way to learn your way around, meet people and start enjoying your post-secondary experience is to get involved!
  - **Orientation and Welcome Activities** - many institutions will have orientation sessions, activities and events throughout the first few weeks of the semester. These events help welcome students to campus and allow them to connect with their fellow students.
  - **Extra-curricular Activities** - there are a lot of opportunities to get connected with other students, through clubs, intramurals, and more, so explore your options and find what works best for you!
- **Living Life** - you also have to make sure you've got all your "ducks in a row" when it comes to basic needs. Some things to consider include:
  - **Food** - find out where all the places to eat are on-campus. Also identify where the closest grocery stores and restaurants are to where you are living.
  - **Utilities** - if needed, make sure you have your utilities hooked up...don't forget about internet service!
  - **Work** - if you are looking for work while in post-secondary, check out opportunities that may be available right on campus. Many institutions will also have a Job Posting Board where you can find available opportunities.

### How do I make the most of my time in post-secondary?

- One of the best parts about attending post-secondary is the "experience"...you definitely want to make the most of it!
- A very common reason for students leaving post-secondary is due to a lack of connection with the institution and feeling homesick.
  - Avoid this by getting involved, meeting new friends and having some fun along the way!
- Take advantage of opportunities that are shared with you by your instructors and your institution, such as:
  - Clubs & Organizations
  - Conferences & Trade Shows
  - Field Trips
  - Work Integrated Learning Opportunities
  - Leadership Opportunities
  - Micro-Credentials and Professional Development Opportunities
  - Research Opportunities
- Don't miss out on these unique opportunities! Stay informed by:
  - Talking to your instructors.
  - Checking your institutional email frequently.
  - Watching the screens and bulletin boards around campus.
  - Look for information on your institution's website and social media accounts.

## **What types of extracurricular activities are available in post-secondary?**

- There are plenty of ways to get involved, including:
  - Varsity Athletics
  - Recreational Sports or Intramurals
  - Fitness Centre and Classes
  - Students' Association/Union
    - Campus Events, Clubs & Associations and Student Government
  - Student Ambassadors/Leaders
  - Residence Life Activities
  - Student Employment
  - Research Activities
- Most of these opportunities do not have any extra cost for students, or if there is a fee, it's quite low, so students should take advantage and get involved!
- Some of these opportunities actually pay students for their participation, like Student Leadership positions, Research, being an RA, or being elected to a Student Government position.
- These opportunities are a great way to make new friends and create a network that will stay with you beyond post-secondary.
- Participation in these experiences is also a great way to add skills to your resume.

## **How do I try out for a varsity athletics team at my institution?**

If you are interested in participating in competitive athletics at your institution, there are a few things you should keep in mind.

- If you're interested in playing at an institution, you should reach out to them to let them know you are interested. Institutions might have an online form that you can submit to let them know you're interested in varsity athletics.
  - You can also ask your coach(es) to reach out on your behalf.
- Coaches may ask to see video footage of you competing, so make sure to have some video clips available from games, practices, etc.
- Many institutions will have camps where students can come and show their skills.
  - Check the institution/athletics website for information, dates, etc.
- Research the institution to ensure that you will be a good fit for their athletics program and that they offer programming that you are interested in.
- Coaches may have scholarship funds available to award to players during the recruitment process, so make sure you ask what might be possible early on in the process.

If you are successful in making it onto a team, make sure that you consider:

- Your schedule - When do you practice, train and compete? Do you need to make adjustments to accommodate your athletics?
- Your coaches and team - these folks will be a great support system to you!
- Expectations - know what grades you need to maintain in order to keep your scholarship and ensure you are eligible to play.

## **Post-Secondary Life Tips & Tricks:**

- Stay Healthy!
  - Eat often and enough...don't skip meals!
  - Drink lots of water and stay hydrated.
  - Get enough sleep.
  - Stay physically active.
- Organization and Time Management.
  - Use a variety of methods to keep yourself on top of your courses and activities
    - Planner or Agenda
    - Calendar on your laptop or phone
    - Reminders and Alarms on your phone
  - Seek the expertise of Academic Coaches if you need extra support
- Advocate for Yourself
  - Ask for help and access services **before** you really need them.
  - You are the best one to advocate for what you need to be successful.
- Have Fun!
  - Make friends, participate in activities, and make the most out of this great experience!
- Stay Safe!
  - Many institutions will have a "Safety App" that you can download.
  - Many institutions offer a "Safe Walk" program to escort students to their vehicle or their residence room.

Studying too much leads to **BURNING OUT**.  
Partying too much leads to **FLUNKING OUT**.  
Not getting involved leads to **MISSING OUT**.

Find your balance.

~ *Blake Fly*

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & RESOURCES

### How do you apply to an institution in another province or country?

- Common Application Account
  - Many provinces, states, and/or countries may have a common application, similar to ApplyAlberta. If that is the case, you must first create an account on this system in order to apply to your institution of choice.
  - Canadian provinces and territories with common applications include:
    - British Columbia - [ApplyBC](#)
    - Ontario - [Ontario Universities' Application Centre \(OUAC\)](#) or [Ontario Colleges' Application System \(OCAS\)](#)
- Select Institution:
  - Select from the available list of institutions, if using a common application system.
    - You will be transferred to that specific institution's portion of the online application.
  - Select the institution you want to apply to and find their application on their website
- Institution Application:
  - Every institution has a different set-up and will potentially ask for different information.
  - Typically, you want to know:
    - The intake you are applying for (Fall 2022, Winter/Spring 2023, etc).
    - The program you are applying for.
    - The major that you are applying for, if applicable.
  - Some institutions (typically universities) will ask you to indicate what your “second choice” is, in case you are not admissible to your first choice program, so consider that prior to applying as well.
- Application Fee:
  - You must pay the respective application fee for each institution/program that you apply for, using a credit card.
  - Application fees range from \$50 to over \$100, depending on the institution.
  - **REMEMBER:** Application Fees are typically non-refundable.
- Submit Supporting Documents:
  - If you are still in Grade 12 when you apply, then you may be asked to submit unofficial transcripts or a timetable from your school in order to show which courses you have completed and which you are currently registered in.
  - Depending on the program you are applying for, you may be required to submit additional documentation (Letter of Reference, Resume, etc), so have those prepared and ready to submit once you apply.
  - You will have to make arrangements to get final, official transcripts sent to the institution(s) you have applied to from Alberta Education.
    - This can be done through your [MyPass Account](#)