

# Study in Canada: Navigating Education Options, Admissions, Trends and Immigration



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# Introductions



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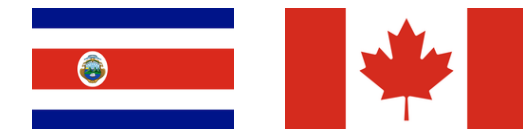
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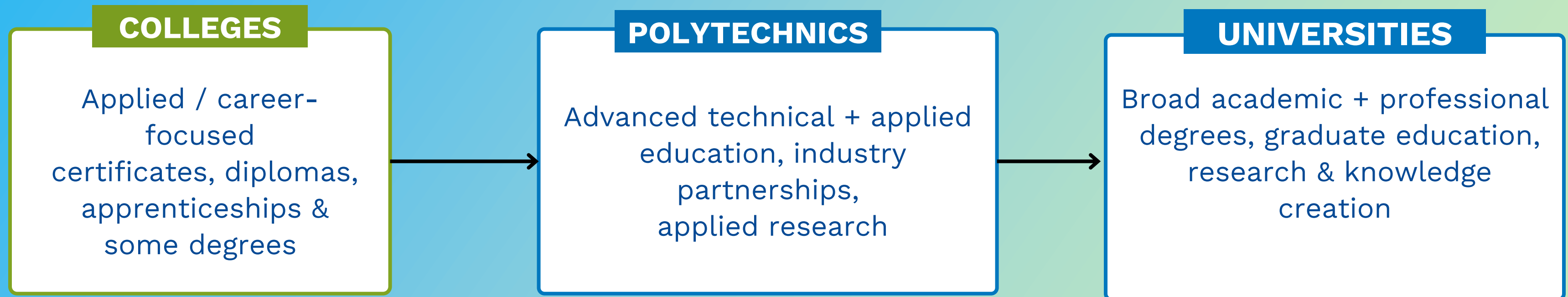
# Presentation Focus

- Understanding the Canadian Higher Education Landscape
- Student Pathways & Strategic Decision-Making
- Career Readiness & Cooperative Education
- From Study Permit to Post-Graduation Work (PGWP)



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# The Canadian postsecondary landscape



These are overlapping models—not rigid boxes. Canadian institutions can combine applied, academic, research and industry-facing functions.



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# Community College vs. Polytechnic vs. University

| Dimension                       | Community College / College          | Polytechnic                                     | University                      |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Primary orientation</b>      | Career / community                   | Advanced technical + applied                    | Academic / research             |
| <b>Typical credentials</b>      | Certificates, diplomas, some degrees | Certificates, diplomas, applied degrees, trades | Bachelor's, master's, doctorate |
| <b>Learning emphasis</b>        | Hands-on + practical                 | Hands-on + technical + applied research         | Theory + analysis + research    |
| <b>Industry connection</b>      | Very strong / often co-designed      | Very strong / often co-designed                 | Varies by discipline            |
| <b>Work-integrated learning</b> | Common                               | Core feature                                    | Common, but varies              |
| <b>Research profile</b>         | Applied / community-facing           | Applied research                                | Research + knowledge creation   |



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# Why Canadian colleges matter?

## ACCESS + MOBILITY

Colleges provide multiple entry points into postsecondary education and multiple ways to continue learning later.

**CERTIFICATE**

**DIPLOMA**

**DEGREE**

## WORKFORCE RELEVANCE

Programs are commonly designed around occupational skills, employer needs, work-integrated learning and practical application.

## REGIONAL IMPACT

Public colleges are deeply connected to local communities, employers and regional labour-market needs.



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# Canadian Universities Makes a Difference

- Approximately 100 universities, almost all public, funded by provincial governments
- Provincial accrediting bodies –consistent, high-quality education across the country
- Canadian education recognized globally
- Highest proportion of population with a post-secondary credential in the G7

## High Value Education

University – 4-year bachelor degrees, 2-year master's degrees, PhD

- Depth and breadth
- Broad-based and specialized degrees
- Professional programs (e.g. law, medicine, pharmacy, veterinary medicine)
- Work-integrated learning and research opportunities
- Merit and need-scholarships (Renewable vs. non-renewable)
- Co-op earnings (CAD100,000+)
- Part-time work
- Volunteering (community aspect)
- Flexibility – create your own adventure



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# How Canada differs from many other systems

## THE WORD “COLLEGE” TRAVELS BADLY

In some countries, “college” can mean secondary school, a university subdivision, a two-year institution, or a private provider. In Canada, public colleges are firmly part of postsecondary education.

## APPLIED + ACADEMIC CAN CONNECT

Canada has formal transfer and articulation mechanisms that can connect diplomas and degrees. This makes the system more permeable than a simple university-vs-vocational binary.

## REGIONAL AND LABOUR-MARKET ROLE

Canadian colleges often have a strong local economic mandate: training for regional industries, employers and community needs, while also serving international learners.



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# Research, Internships, Experiential Learning,

## CO-OPERATIVE EDUCATION (CO-OP)

Full-time, paid work experience in the student's field of study. Alternating periods of study and work. Co-op programs help students apply theoretical concepts in real-world settings, develop career clarity, and enhance their employability by the time they complete their degree.

## INTERNSHIPS

Full-time/part-time, paid work experience in the student's field of study  
Longer than one semester

## PART-TIME WORK

Part-time, paid work experience, no need to be related to the student's field of study

| YEAR  | FALL     | WINTER   | SUMMER |
|-------|----------|----------|--------|
| ONE   | Academic | Academic | Off    |
| TWO   | Academic | Academic | Work   |
| THREE | Work     | Academic | Work   |
| FOUR  | Academic | Work     | Work   |
| FIVE  | Academic | Academic |        |



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# What applied learning looks like

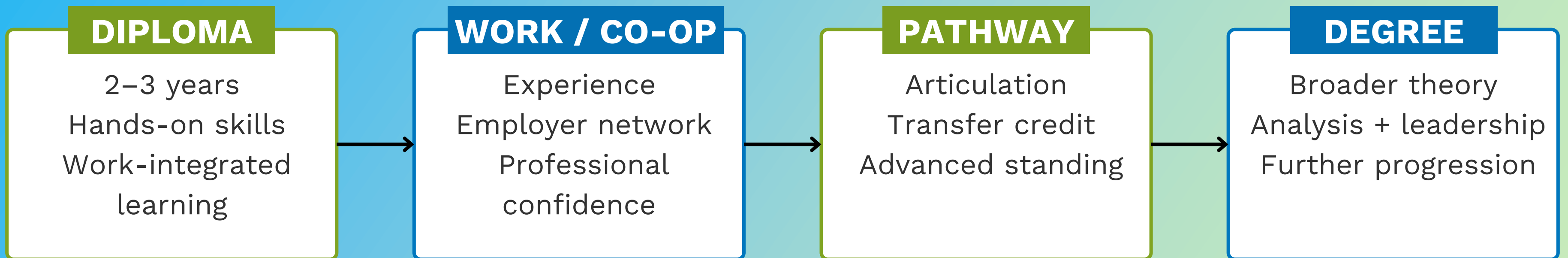


The differentiator is not simply “more hands-on hours.” It is the deliberate integration of knowledge, practice, feedback and evidence of capability.



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# The pathway advantage: Diploma + Degree



## Why this is powerful

Students can gain occupational competence and labour-market experience first, then add a degree-level credential that broadens analytical, managerial or professional opportunities.



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# Niagara College: a practical example of the pathway model

## EXAMPLE 1 — DIPLOMA → UNIVERSITY DEGREE

Business Accounting diploma → Brock University Bachelor of Accounting

NC graduates meeting the published criteria can receive transfer credit toward the degree, shortening the remaining university study.

## EXAMPLE 2 — COLLEGE + UNIVERSITY TOGETHER

Brock University + Niagara College Game Design / Game Programming collaboration

Students study across both institutions in a joint degree/advanced-diploma model—an especially strong example of combining academic depth with applied technical learning.

Pathways are not all identical: transfer credit, GPA, admission and time-to-completion depend on the specific agreement.



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# Canadian University Degree's Value

## **Academic Excellence**

Gain a rigorous, internationally respected education that develops knowledge, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills.

## **Career-Ready Learning**

Connect classroom learning with practical experiences, projects, research, internships, and co-op opportunities.

## **Global Recognition**

A Canadian university degree is widely recognized and can support career and further-education opportunities internationally.

## **Skills for the Future**

Develop communication, collaboration, leadership, digital, analytical, and entrepreneurial skills valued by employers.

## **Professional Experience**

Co-op and work-integrated learning can allow students to graduate with meaningful Canadian workplace experience and professional connections.

## **Personal & Professional Growth**

Build confidence, independence, networks, cultural awareness, and lifelong relationships.



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# Why this matters for international students

## EMPLOYABILITY

Graduate with skills you can demonstrate—not just subjects you have studied.

## CAREER CLARITY

Hands-on exposure helps students test a career direction before committing to a longer academic route.

## ACADEMIC MOBILITY

A diploma can be a destination—or the first stage toward a degree.

## VALUE + FLEXIBILITY

Pathways can recognize prior learning and reduce duplication where formal agreements exist.



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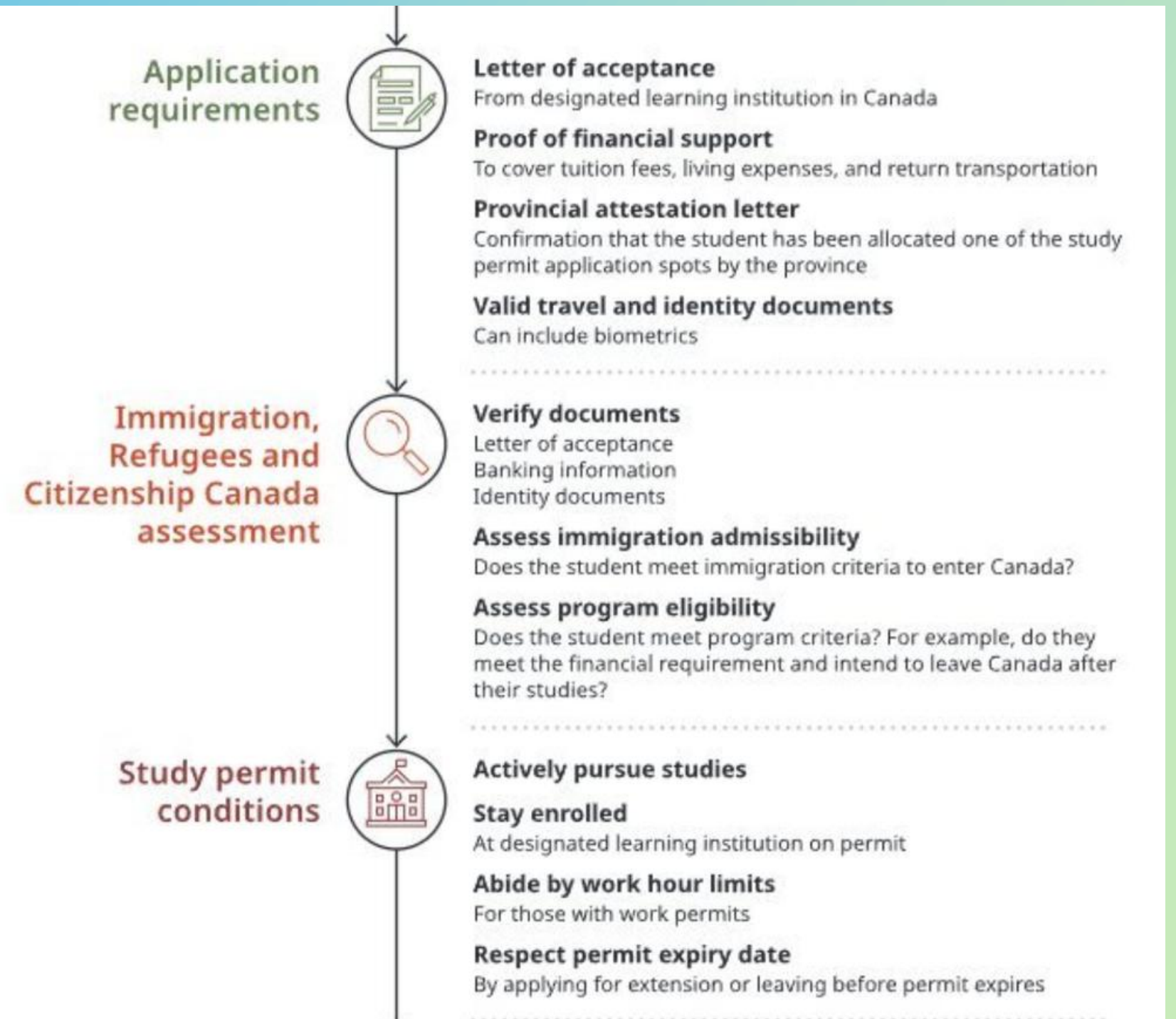
# Study Permits

What misconceptions do you hear from parents and students about studying in Canada?



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# Immigration Process



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# Immigration Policy Changes – what has happened so far:

- Study permit caps continue; as such PALS are still required for study permit applications
- Post-Graduation Work Permit (PGWP) rules are stricter
  - Language proficiency
  - Level and type of program completed
- Off-campus work hours increased to 24 hours
- Co-op work permits
- Financial requirements increased



# How have post-secondary schools adapted?

- Education amongst the institutions and prospective/current students
- Counsellor information sessions
- More immigration support in helping navigate those misconceptions
  - Example: Queen's University and Niagara College hiring more International Student Advisor strictly for recruitment only; University of Guelph has implemented a comprehensive Global Pre-Arrival Support Team (GPS-Team), including RISIA-certified counselors.
  - Use of BorderPass
  - Passage Loans



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# Immigration Recap

- The introduction of ‘caps’ on Canadian study permits has not reduced capacity for undergraduate programming at Canadian universities; colleges adjusted to programs that remain in compliance to future immigration pathways
- Post-Graduate Work Permit (PGWP) still available for graduates of bachelor degree programs in all fields of study and work;
- Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) remains committed to issuing study permits to qualified applicants and Canada remains ‘open for business’ as a welcoming destination for international students.



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# Questions?



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# Thank you

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