

Applying to College: A Guide for OUTCAN Students

The last year of high school is an exciting and important time. But it can be tough striking a balance between attending to your studies, pursuing extra-curricular activities and planning for your life after high school. This guide is intended as a general source of information to help you through the college selection and application process. Please note that every student's educational journey is unique and some of the recommendations may not apply to your situation.

Step 1	Research programs
Spring of grade 11/ fall of grade 12	Ontario colleges: • The best place to start is the ontariocolleges.ca website, where all the information about Ontario's publicly-funded colleges can be found in one place. The Find a Program page on this website allows you to browse by college or by program category: https://www.ontariocolleges.ca/en/programs. Once you have determined what programs and colleges interest you, visit the individual college websites to learn more about admission requirements and courses of study. • For a comprehensive overview of the research and application process, consult the following: https://www.ontariocolleges.ca/documents/applicant-tutorial.pdf.
	Alberta colleges: • For colleges in Alberta, you can start your research with the government of Alberta's post-secondary program search website: https://alis.alberta.ca/occinfo/post-secondary-programs/.
	British Columbia colleges: • For colleges in British Columbia, you can start your research with EducationPlannerBC: • https://www.educationplannerbc.ca/search.
	Other Canadian colleges: • For colleges outside of Ontario, visit individual college websites. • You can find a comprehensive list of Canadian colleges here: http://www.collegesinstitutes.ca/

	Other notes: • Make note of all admission requirements (pre-requisite courses, supplemental requirements such as portfolios). • Make note of all deadlines. Note that each college may have its own deadline for Canadian students who are applying from outside of Canada. Note also that you are not “international” students, for whom different deadlines and requirements might apply. You may need to call the admissions office of the college to determine what deadlines may apply to you. • Make note of all program costs. These costs may include tuition, student fees, and books, for example. Note again that as a Canadian citizen, you will pay domestic tuition and fees. • See if you can get on mailing lists. Because you are residing outside of Canada, you may not be able to visit college campuses. The recruiting departments of Canadian campuses often send promotional and informational emails to interested high school students. This will help you “visit” the campus. • Narrow down your college program selections by talking to your parents, teachers and guidance counsellor about your interests and options. • Learn about the different pathways you can take if you study at college. Students attending college can earn 1-year certificates, 2 or 3-year diplomas, and 4-year university degrees, for example. Some programs are part-time; some are offered online. Some colleges have agreements with universities: students can earn a college diploma and then apply to university to pursue a degree in a related field. These articulation agreements allow students to earn university credits based on their college diploma credits, and to earn a bachelor’s degree in fewer than the standard four years. • Consult the following websites for more information about articulation agreements with Ontario colleges: https://www.ontransfer.ca/index_en.php and for information about articulation agreements in general: https://www.collegesinstitutes.ca/policyfocus/transferability/.
Step 2	Gather information needed to apply
Fall of grade 12	Ontario colleges: • Students must apply via ontariocolleges.ca. This organization receives all applications and forwards them to the colleges. Be sure to choose the “domestic student” option as you work through the application. • Here is some more information on how to apply with ontariocolleges.ca: https://www.ontariocolleges.ca/en/apply

	Alberta colleges: Students apply via ApplyAlberta. This organization receives all applications and forwards them to the colleges. Learn how to plan for your application here: https://applyalberta.ca/about-applyalberta/before-you-start/.
	British Columbia colleges: Students apply via EducationPlannerBC. This organization receives all applications and forwards them to the colleges. Learn how to plan for your application here: https://www.educationplannerbc.ca/plan/apply/how.
	Other Canadian colleges: Double check the application dates and deadlines. You can apply directly to these colleges.
	Other notes: - Ask the admissions office how they would like you to indicate that you are an OUTCAN student rather than an international student. - It might be helpful to use your “Station Forces” military mailing address to demonstrate that you are a CAF dependent. - For students graduating with a US diploma: determine the deadlines for forwarding SAT/ACT/AP scores to the colleges, if they are required. Here are links to the SAT/AP and ACT sites: https://www.collegeboard.org/, https://www.act.org/ - For students graduating with an International Baccalaureate diploma: determine the deadlines for forwarding any IB documentation to the college. Here is a link to the IB site: https://ibo.org/ - Some colleges may require that your high school transcript be evaluated by an equivalency agency; this is a way of “interpreting” transcripts from outside of Canada. Some colleges may request that you use a specific equivalency agency. Here are some commonly-used organizations: https://www.wes.org/fr/ca/, https://learn.utoronto.ca/comparative-education-service, https://www.icascanada.ca/home.aspx
Step 3	Apply (deadlines vary according to college)
Fall/winter of grade 12	Ontario colleges: Take note of the costs. Outside Ontario, the application fees will vary by college. If you are applying to an Ontario college, you will have to pay \$95 for the ontariocolleges.ca application. Please note

	that you can apply for up to 5 programs overall, but you can only apply to a maximum of 3 programs at any one Ontario college. Some Ontario colleges offer bachelor's degrees. You must apply to these degree programs through the Ontario Universities Application Centre (OUAC) rather than ontariocolleges.ca, using the 105 application. Learn more about applying to university degree programs at Ontario colleges here: https://www.ouac.on.ca/guide/105-guide/
	Alberta colleges: Apply via ApplyAlberta. Application fees will vary by college. Learn how to apply here: https://applyalberta.ca/about-applyalberta/application-process/.
	British Columbia colleges: Apply via EducationPlannerBC. Application fees will vary by college. Learn how to apply here: https://www.educationplannerbc.ca/help/apply.
	Other Canadian colleges: The application fees and number of accepted program applications will vary by college.
	Other notes: - Complete your application well before the deadline. This will give you time to respond if there are problems with your application. It is important to avoid applying at the last minute, because if there are computer-related problems when you are trying to apply, you could miss a crucial deadline. - As an OUTCAN student, you may incur some extra application-related costs, like the cost of the SAT/ACT exam and the cost of having your transcript assessed by a credential evaluation service. Keep your receipts, as these costs are reimbursable.
Step 4	Follow up after applying
Winter/spring of grade 12	Ontario colleges: Record your ontariocolleges.ca reference number on the envelope of any hard copy material (or in the subject line of any email) that is forwarded to a college. This will help the admissions office match the documentation to your file as quickly as possible.
	Other notes: Once you have applied, you will need to make sure your transcripts are delivered to your colleges of choice. The method of delivery and deadlines will differ according to the college, so be sure to take

	good notes. Please note that a transcript only lists the marks for courses that you have completed. Be sure to ask the college if your school can send mid-term report cards to demonstrate how you are progressing in your final year of school. If you are in a semester high school system, you should forward a transcript with final marks at the end of the first and second semesters. • Be sure to observe deadlines for other supplemental documentation (SAT/ACT scores, portfolio packages, for example). • Note that during busy periods, such as January and February, it can take several weeks for colleges to process an application. • Ensure spam filters are set to accept email from ontariocolleges.ca and individual colleges. Check your email often because this is how these organizations will communicate with you. The colleges should email you to acknowledge that they have received your application. • Take note of additional spring and summer deadlines. Determine when you can expect an offer of admission, the deadline for accepting an offer of admission, and when you must provide a financial commitment to your institution of choice.
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Other tips to consider:

- Keep **organized!** Keep all materials handy in one place: college program information, deadlines, addresses, and account numbers, for example. Some colleges may issue you a student number when you apply. If you email or phone an admissions office for information regarding your file, have your student number and/or ontariocolleges.ca reference number ready.
- Consider creating an account with your **provincial financial aid program**. Some students plan to borrow funds to help pay for college; some do not. Even if you do not plan to borrow money, you may qualify for federal or provincial grants (free money)! The only way to qualify for grants is to apply to the aid program; this does not force you to borrow any money, but it may result in reduced tuition fees.
- Ontario residents who are applying to Ontario colleges and are interested in applying for financial aid: it is possible to link your ontariocolleges.ca application with an **Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP)** application. You will find the OSAP banner at the bottom of the ontariocolleges.ca application. This feature saves you a bit of time as you don't have to create an OSAP application from scratch. Here is some information about OSAP: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/how-apply-osap>.

- Remember that an offer to attend any given college is always **conditional upon your final marks**. This means that the offer may remain conditional until early summer, when the transcript with your final marks is delivered. Some students may be tempted to “take it easy” during their last few months of school and their marks may suffer. Keep up the good effort until the end of the school year so that you don’t compromise your offer of admission!
- Still have questions? Not to worry. You can speak to a Military Family Services guidance counsellor to get up-to-date information on the application process. Here is our contact information: Education@cfmws.com.