

Ontario expanding degree options at publicly assisted colleges

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Beginning today, [Ontario's public colleges will be able to develop new three-year degree programs](#) and additional four-year degree programs in key sectors to address gaps in the province's labour needs.

These new programs will help build the pipeline of job-ready graduates needed to support the growth of the province's auto sector, bolstered by recent investments in electric vehicles and batteries, as well as help build roads, highways, hospitals and long-term care homes, among other critical infrastructure projects. This expansion will also enable increased access to education for students in smaller communities and rural areas, allowing learners to graduate sooner and enter the workforce more quickly in these critical fields.

"Ontario colleges play a key role in providing students with career-focused education and in addressing the labour needs of key sectors driving the province's economy," said Jill Dunlop, Minister of Colleges and Universities. "Expanding college degrees aligns with our government's priority of investing in critical infrastructure and positioning Ontario as a North American leader in the auto sector while helping learners gain the skills necessary to support this sector of the economy. This expansion will also provide students more opportunities to access high-quality education and ensure they graduate with the skills, expertise and credentials that meet the demands of today's job market."

Three-year applied degrees will provide an opportunity for colleges to develop programs to address workforce shortages, such as highly skilled technology workers in the health care, digital, data, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity and process automation sectors. To support the growth and transformation of Ontario's auto sector, the government will also be looking for programs that help to prepare the talent needed to build electric, autonomous and connected vehicles, as well as programs to support the development of workers who will help build the province's infrastructure, roads and transit.

"Ontario is facing a historic labour shortage, and we need all hands-on deck to tackle it," said Monte McNaughton, Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development. "That is why our government is taking action to ensure young people are graduating with the skills they need to earn bigger paycheques that are waiting for them. This is how we build back a stronger province and bring good jobs to every corner of Ontario."

Colleges will be allowed to develop new three-year degree programs that are in an applied area of study, career-oriented, distinct from university degrees and are reviewed by the Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board (PEQAB) and approved by the minister. The cap on degree programs that colleges can offer will be raised by five per cent for all publicly assisted colleges. This means degree cap limits will become 20 per cent for Institutes of Technology and Advanced Learning (ITALs) and 10 per cent for all other colleges.

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