

Is Further Education Right for You?

With a challenging labour market facing many students and new grads, some of you may be thinking of continuing your studies while the economy recovers. This is a path followed by many, but is it right for you? If approached with careful planning and intent, further studies can be a key part of your career success.

What is Your End Goal?

- What roles would you like to work in? What challenges do you want to address?
- Research career paths and conduct informational interviews with people working in interesting roles.
- Researching the end goal can help determine what will work best for you, which institution is the right fit, or if you even need additional studies to achieve your goal.

Forms of Further Education

- With an emphasis on research and advanced subject-intensive knowledge, graduate programs at the master's level can be course or thesis-based, with the latter a pathway to doctoral studies.
- Professional programs emphasize skills and knowledge that are applied in specific occupations such as medicine, law, and teaching, and can have highly competitive admissions processes.
- College post-diploma and certificate programs provide an opportunity to upskill or complement a university education with more career-oriented training.

Defining Your Destination

- Consider the areas of focus in context of your strengths, interests, and career goals – do they align?
- Additional considerations include the location, types of courses, opportunities for experiential learning, and funding opportunities (federal, provincial, work study, Teaching Assistantships, scholarships).
- For graduate programs, ask your professors for suggestions; for college or professional programs, informational interviews can help shed light as to best options.
- Further education information sessions and fairs are a great way to connect with program reps.

Application Considerations

- Every program has their own requirements and deadlines. Make sure you follow the instructions!
- Official transcripts, CV's/resumes, statement of interest/intent, letters of recommendation and standardized test scores (LSAT, MCAT, GRE) are common materials required.
- Some programs require interviews, including the multiple mini interview (MMI).

Letters of Recommendation

- Most programs ask for 2 – 3 letters, with at least one academic (professor) reference.
- Think strategically. Select references who know you well and can provide a strong recommendation.
- Give your references a lot of advance notice (at least 3 weeks).

Resources:

GradSchools.com (worldwide programs) – <https://www.gradschools.com/>

OntarioColleges.ca (Ontario college programs) – <https://www.ontariocolleges.ca/en/>

Ontario Universities Application Centre (Ontario professional programs) – <https://www.ouac.on.ca/>

University Study (Canadian programs) – <https://www.universitystudy.ca/>