



**BC Care
Providers**
A S S O C I A T I O N



Apprenticeships:
A new pathway to careers in care

November 2019

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

Purpose

Given the critical shortage of qualified health care workers in BC's seniors care sector, BC Care Providers Association (BCCPA) is exploring innovative solutions to boost recruitment of qualified health care workers. One identified area of opportunity is to create alternative pathways to train health care assistants (HCA).

Currently, there is only one pathway to becoming a registered health care assistant—complete a seven-month training program at one of BC's certified career colleges. However, enrollment numbers in HCA programs are declining, despite recent government investments in expanding the number of training seats available in rural and remote regions.

Identified challenges include the cost of HCA training; tuition ranges from \$3,500 to \$11,000 depending on the institution. Many potential students cannot afford to forgo employment for seven months, while also paying \$10,000 in tuition.

One potential solution is to develop an apprenticeship program. Care provider operators (such as long-term care homes) would partner with career colleges to offer on-the-job training, as well as theoretical classroom education. The apprentice would be compensated for their on-the-job training hours, thus addressing affordability challenges.

Care providers would benefit from being able to fill vacant positions in their organization with well-trained care aides who are fully integrated into their care team, thus promoting continuity of care and a stable workforce.

SECTION 2: APPRENTICESHIPS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

About

Apprenticeships offer training in several practical skills, from construction and carpentry to baking and cooking.¹ In British Columbia, the apprenticeship program provides a combination of classroom learning (approximately 20% of training time) and job training (approximately 80% of training time) that eventually leads to certification.² Over 100 trades offer apprenticeship programs that are open to anyone including new immigrants, youths, and Indigenous people. They also welcome people with varying levels of education such as high school students or college graduates.³

After completion of roughly four years of apprenticeship that involves in-school training, on-the-job hours, examinations, and recommendation from a sponsoring employer, an apprentice becomes qualified as a certified tradesperson.¹ The two forms of certification, the **Interprovincial Red Seal** and **BC Certificate of Qualification**, respectively allow independent trade practice across Canada and in British Columbia.³

Occupations and Employment Outlook

More than 100 trade programs in British Columbia are under the management of the **Industry Training Authority (ITA)**. The three sectors with the most apprenticeships offered are construction, services and agriculture, as well as marine and shipbuilding; few apprenticeships are offered for occupations in health care or social assistance.⁴ Most of these apprenticeships are classified as **Skill Level B Jobs** under the National Occupational Classification.⁵ These occupations require more than high school education but less than a four-year university degree, such as a diploma, certificate, or apprenticeship training in technician, operator, and other skilled trade positions.⁴

For more complex occupations, various standard level exams account for 20% of the mark obtained in the apprenticeship program.⁶ Among several, complex positions such as carpenter and industrial mechanic have two or three levels that must be chronologically completed with standard level examinations for each one. A challenge level exam can be taken to bypass specific levels, but pre-requisites must be fulfilled beforehand.⁷ There is a special certification reserved for individuals with a Military ranking and Military Trade Certification which can be used instead of completing a Certification Challenge Package exam.⁸

¹ <https://www.workbc.ca/Training-Education/Trades-Training/About-Apprenticeship.aspx>

² <https://www.tradetrainingbc.ca/WhatIsApprenticeship>

³ <https://www.itabc.ca/about-apprentices/apprenticeship-basics>

⁴ <https://www.itabc.ca/discover-apprenticeship-programs/search-programs>

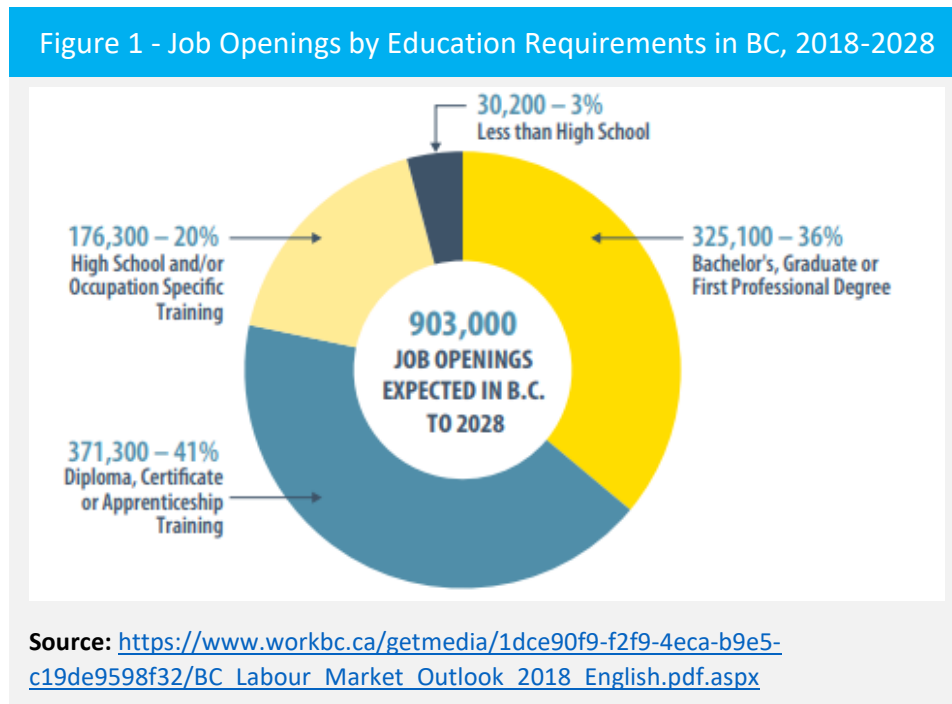
⁵ <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/express-entry/eligibility/find-national-occupation-code.html>

⁶ <https://www.itabc.ca/manage-your-apprenticeship/exams>

⁷ <https://www.itabc.ca/sites/default/files/docs/Challengeable-Level-Exams-June-26-2019.pdf>

⁸ <https://www.itabc.ca/exams/holders-military-trade-certification>

In the next 10 years, many of the jobs and skills that will highly be in-demand are occupations that will require apprenticeship training. According to the BC's Labour Market Outlook, a 10-year prediction on the supply and demand for labour in the market, 41% of jobs will require some type of diploma, certificate, or apprenticeship training. This accounts for 371,300 of the 903,000 projected positions.⁹



Across British Columbia, 110,000 trades job positions are expected to open in a period of five or so years. The top demanding trade jobs will be carpenters, automotive service technicians, electricians, welders, and heavy-duty equipment mechanics.¹⁰ This includes 6,400 job openings for automotive technicians, mechanics, and mechanical repairers up to the year 2028. Many of these positions have highly competitive wages, such as a median wage of \$33.65 for computer network technicians.¹¹ Well over 11,000 employers are registered to sponsor these apprentices.¹⁰

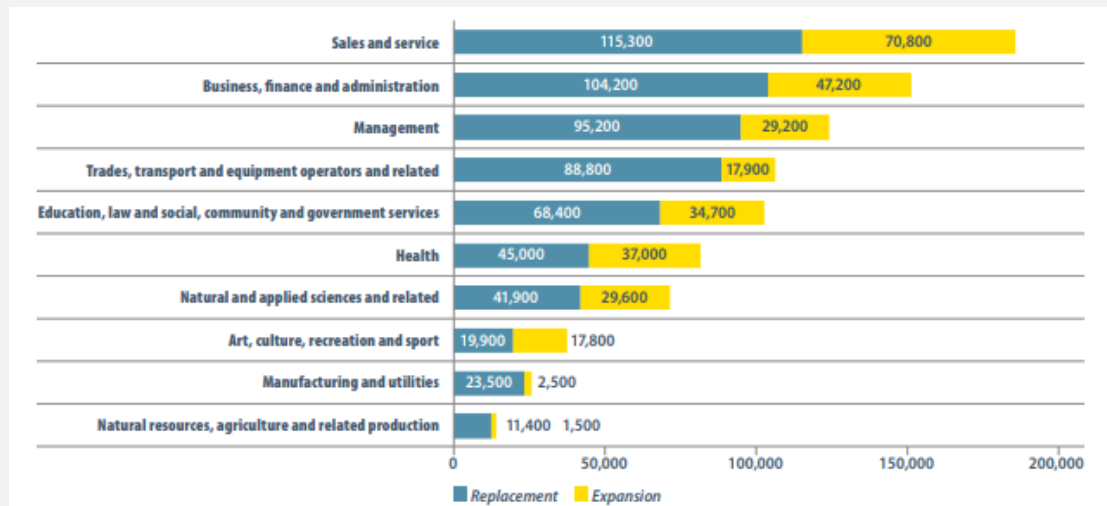
Aside from this, the number of job openings in the health field will amount to 82,000 positions within the next 10 years. Presently, 34,720 positions are in health care assistant roles in hospitals, long-term care homes, group homes, home support, and community care, and there will be 19,210 HCA job openings in the following decade.⁹ Despite the substantial anticipated growth in the health care sector, few apprenticeship opportunities exist for health care careers in British Columbia. Aligning apprenticeship opportunities with in-demand occupations may promote employment among under-employed groups.

⁹ https://www.workbc.ca/getmedia/1dce90f9-f2f9-4eca-b9e5-c19de9598f32/BC_Labour_Market_Outlook_2018_English.pdf.aspx

¹⁰ https://archive.news.gov.bc.ca/releases/news_releases_2017-2021/2017AEST0066-001872.htm

¹¹ <https://www.workbc.ca/Labour-Market-Industry/High-Demand-Occupations.aspx>

Figure 2 – Job Openings by Major Occupational Group, British Columbia, 2018-2028



Source: https://www.workbc.ca/getmedia/1dce90f9-f2f9-4eca-b9e5-c19de9598f32/BC_Labour_Market_Outlook_2018_English.pdf.aspx

Gender and Racial Equity

In the trades across Canada, women earn approximately equal wages in comparison to men. However, they are severely underrepresented, with only 4.5% of all trade workers being women.¹² This trend continues in apprenticeship programs, where out of approximately 1600 machinist apprentices, only 66 are women.¹³

In total, merely 14% of currently enrolled apprentices are women with the highest registration rates in cook and hairstylist programs. Out of these participants, only 59.2% are enrolled in a Red Seal trade program, compared to a rate of 81.2% for men.¹⁴

This creates the impression that the trade industry is unwelcoming for women, leading to a small female applicant pool for apprenticeship programs and trade.¹² A vicious cycle results from this as women actively avoid trade and manufacturing jobs because of a lack of women in the field, resulting in even fewer women enrolling in apprenticeships.¹³

In total, merely 14% of currently enrolled apprentices are women with the highest registration rates in cook and hairstylist programs.

Barriers and challenges are existent in all three aspects of apprenticeship for women:

- **Pre-Apprenticeship**
 - Occupations in trades have traditionally not been marketed towards women or girls. Family and friends usually do not promote or expose women to trade apprenticeships due to underlying misconceptions and misinformation about them, as well as

¹² <https://vancouversun.com/opinion/op-ed/kendall-ansell-wanted-more-women-in-trades>

¹³ <https://globalnews.ca/news/3823621/women-skilled-trades-manufacturing/>

¹⁴ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/81-598-x/2017001/sect09-eng.htm>

unconscious bias. This includes prevalent attitudes and ideologies about gender roles and expectations.¹⁵

- **Apprenticeship**

- o Most women choose to leave the trade industry during the apprenticeship phase. Women experience a significant amount of bullying and harassment as well as isolation. This is due to a lack of mentors and supportive networks made available for women alongside discriminatory recruitment and hiring practices.¹⁶

- **Certified Journeyperson**

- o Following the completion of an apprenticeship, one of the most challenging aspects includes organizational barriers, coupled with prejudiced hiring and advancement policies continuing from the apprenticeship phase. There are also gender-specific health and safety concerns on job sites.¹⁶ To illustrate this discrepancy, currently, only one construction company is led by women called “Belle Construction” across the entirety of British Columbia.¹⁷

To address these significant challenges, the Government of Canada has developed a fund for self-identified women called the **Apprenticeship Incentive Grant for Women**. Every year, up to \$3,000 is used to provide support to women in Red Seal trades, on top of the annual \$1,000 grant from the **Apprenticeship Incentive Grant**.¹⁸ Besides monetary incentives, becoming a tradesperson offers a much better salary, roughly double that of a retail job.¹⁹

Indigenous and immigrants registered as apprentices make up, respectively, 6 and 9 percent of all apprentices. Aboriginal individuals have a more difficult time than non-Aboriginal apprentices progressing through their apprenticeship, finding employment, and acquiring permanent job positions. Although immigrants do not experience the same difficulties in employment, they are less likely to enroll in Red Seal Programs than non-immigrants.²⁰

This creates the impression that the trade industry is unwelcoming for women, leading to a small female applicant pool for apprenticeship programs and trade.

¹⁵ https://www.workbc.ca/getmedia/08872319-a2db-45bc-935e-a4d44f8a3ac0/Construction_Retention_and_Advancement_of_Women_in_Trades_Feb-2017.pdf.aspx

¹⁶ https://www.workbc.ca/getmedia/08872319-a2db-45bc-935e-a4d44f8a3ac0/Construction_Retention_and_Advancement_of_Women_in_Trades_Feb-2017.pdf.aspx

¹⁷ <https://vancouversun.com/opinion/op-ed/kendall-ansell-wanted-more-women-in-trades>

¹⁸ https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/apprentices/grants.html?utm_campaign=not-applicable&utm_medium=vanity-url&utm_source=canada-ca_apprenticeship-grants

¹⁹ <https://www.itabc.ca/women-trades/overview>

²⁰ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/81-598-x/2017001/sect09-eng.htm>

SECTION 3: CURRICULUM

Structure and Curriculum

The apprenticeship program is very well-developed in British Columbia, and most take four years to reach completion, depending on the trade chosen. There are some useful tools and programs to expedite entry into an apprenticeship.

- Before entering an apprenticeship, it is recommended to take an online assessment that gauges **Essential Skills**, as it has been proven that acquisition of these skills results in a higher likelihood to pass the technical exams in an apprenticeship.²¹ This includes general competency in reading, document use, and numeracy. Following the completion of the assessment, a customized learning plan is provided to improve deficient skills and assist in initiating a successful apprenticeship.²²
- Another medium that guides entry into a trade is the **foundation program**. Employer sponsors are not required, and basic knowledge and skills are taught in both a classroom and in-school shop setting. These programs offer an opportunity to gain experience and familiarity with the trade and make it easier to find an employer sponsor. Credit towards apprenticeship completion is also rewarded.²³

Apprenticeships are open to anyone, including men, women, and youth and accepts people with varying levels of education, from individuals still in high school to those just finishing up college or just want a change in careers.²⁴ The BC government strongly promotes secondary students to learn and join trades and technology training through various initiatives, including **Discover Skills BC** and **Skills Canada BC**.^{25,26}



During the apprenticeship, the apprentice experiences a mix of classroom training with examinations and on-the-job hours. About 20% of the time is spent in a classroom or shop setting and the other 80% is work-based training that is paid.²⁷ Technical training is offered by 15 public post-secondary and 25 non-public trades training providers.²⁸ The Industry Training Authority exclusively awards credit for

²¹ <https://ita2.essentialskillsgroup.com/?p=about>

²² <https://ita2.essentialskillsgroup.com/>

²³ <https://www.itabc.ca/get-job-ready/foundation-programs>

²⁴ <https://www.itabc.ca/about-apprentices/apprenticeship-basics>

²⁵ <http://discoverskillsbcc.ca/about/>

²⁶ <https://skillscanada.bc.ca/>

²⁷ <https://www.tradetrainingbc.ca/WhatIsApprenticeship>

²⁸ https://archive.news.gov.bc.ca/releases/news_releases_2017-2021/2017AEST0066-001872.htm

training from these Designated Training Providers, as only they meet the strict program standards.²⁹ Altogether, the 15 public institutions have formed a consortium called Trades Training BC that promotes the training of trades in British Columbia.³⁰ Outside the classroom setting, the apprentice is working on-the-job under a certified journeyman or an employer with Sign Off Authority from the Industry Training Authority.²⁴

Completion of the apprenticeship program requires four aspects: adequate on-the-job hours; enough in-school training; completion of the final examination; and confirmation by a certified journeyman.²⁴

Once the skill-level and competence of the apprentice are verified by the tradesperson, a **BC Certificate of Qualification**, accepted only in British Columbia, or **Interprovincial Red Seal**, recognized throughout Canada, is conferred.³¹

Throughout their training, an apprentice can choose to pursue a career anywhere in Canada without fear of interruption. A framework has been established by Canada's Premiers called the *Provincial-Territorial Apprentice Mobility Protocol and Agreement* that facilitates this. It enables apprentices and pre-apprentices to temporarily or permanently train or work in different provinces and territories and receive acknowledgement for their training and hours completed, without a need for repetition or redundancy.³² An outline of the requirements for each province and territory is found in the *Provincial-Territorial Apprentice Mobility Transfer Guide*, including specifics with regards to grant and subsidy applications.³³

Similar Programs

Nursing

Several types of nurses are found in British Columbia, requiring different levels of knowledge and skillsets.

- **Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN)**
 - o Caring for a wide range of patients, licensed practical nurses are frontline health care professionals with foundational abilities in their scope of practice.³⁴ Their nursing proficiency is developed through a combination of an entry-level program, on-the-job experience, and continuing education activities.³⁵ Offered at 18 different educational institutions, the diploma program, costing upwards of \$16,000, is a full-time, 16-month-long curriculum subdivided into four levels.³⁶ Students actively engage in the classroom, nursing lab, and clinical activities.³⁷

²⁹ <https://www.itabc.ca/training-providers/overview>

³⁰ <https://www.tradetrainingbc.ca/About>

³¹ <https://www.itabc.ca/about-apprentices/apprenticeship-basics>

³² <https://www.itabc.ca/apply-apprenticeship/apprentice-mobility>

³³

[https://www.itabc.ca/sites/default/files/docs/apply/Apprentice%20Mobility%20Transfer%20Guide%20September%202017 EN.docx-%20Final.pdf](https://www.itabc.ca/sites/default/files/docs/apply/Apprentice%20Mobility%20Transfer%20Guide%20September%202017%20EN.docx-%20Final.pdf)

³⁴ https://www.bccnp.ca/becoming_a_nurse/Pages/Types_of_nurses.aspx

³⁵ https://www.bccnp.ca/becoming_a_nurse/Documents/LPN_requisite_skills_abilities.pdf

³⁶ https://www.bccnp.ca/becoming_a_nurse/Pages/study_to_be_a_nurse.aspx

³⁷ <https://www.vcc.ca/programs/courses/program-areas/health-sciences/practical-nursing/#fees>

- **Registered Nurse (RN)**

- There are higher entry requirements to become a registered nurse in British Columbia than a licensed practical nurse. The major component is the baccalaureate nursing education program recognized by the British Columbia College of Nursing Professionals (BCCNP).³⁷ Offered in many universities and colleges, it is a three-year full-time program that involves both simulated and clinical practice experience.³⁸ Other major requisites are the fulfillment of competency requirements, passing the registration examination, and giving consent to a criminal record check.³⁷

There are two categories of advanced practice possible following registered nursing, nurse practitioners (NP) and registered nurses with certified practice (RN-C).³⁹

- **Nurse Practitioners (NP)**

- To become a nurse practitioner, very advanced requirements must be met as they work in a variety of practice settings that complements the work of physicians.⁴⁰ Usually, a master's degree program, such as a Master's in Nursing – Nurse Practitioner Program, recognized by the BCCNP must be completed. There are only three accredited programs which are respectively offered at the University of British Columbia, the University of Northern British Columbia, and the University of Victoria.³⁹

- **Registered Nurses with Certified Practice (RN-C)**

- Registered nurses with certified practice are responsible for the independent diagnosis and treatment of patients.⁴⁰ To qualify, certified practice courses can be taken at the British Columbia Institute of Technology, the University of Northern British Columbia, and the BC Centre for Disease Control. An alternative to coursework is available by meeting the practice experience requirements. This involves working in Certified Practice areas and meeting the practice hour requirements. Nurses working in Remote Practice can also receive eligibility to challenge the exit evaluation through the Remote Certified Practice Registration.³⁹

Altogether, education for some nursing occupations (such as LPN) could potentially be delivered by apprenticeships. Presently, it is very expensive and oftentimes require a full-time commitment to obtain a nursing license, certification, or registration. As a regulatory college, the BCCNP does not make any scholarship or bursary program available for students to apply, though they may be eligible for financial support through their post-secondary institution.⁴¹ In the status quo, students employed in a health care setting while in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) must register with the BCCNP and work under the supervision of a registered nurse.⁴⁰ With an apprenticeship, this process could be streamlined, and an even split could be made between education and training. The gradual progression in both aspects, careful evaluation and supervision, as well as financial assistance, are other possible benefits.

Post Graduate Workers Permit (PGWP)

The post-graduate work permit enables students to gain work experience in Canada following graduation from eligible post-secondary institutions. The program length ranges from 9 months to 3

³⁸ <https://www.bcit.ca/study/programs/8875bsn>

³⁹ <https://www.graduatenuisingedu.org/british-columbia/>

⁴⁰ https://www.bccnp.ca/becoming_a_nurse/Pages/Types_of_nurses.aspx

⁴¹ https://www.bccnp.ca/becoming_a_nurse/Pages/study_to_be_a_nurse.aspx

years and can help graduates qualify to become a permanent resident in Canada.⁴² Opportunities for post-graduate workers are available for new Canadians in the seniors' care sector, where there is a critical shortage of health care personnel.⁴³ Present educational restrictions under the PGWP are harming the care Canadian seniors deserve. Health care aide training programs are offered by both private and public learning academies, which includes numerous renown accredited private institutions with proper curriculums.⁴⁴

However, under present federal regulations, the programs they offer are not eligible despite having the same curriculum as public establishments. The only valid programs that can utilize a PGWP are those provided by publicly designated learning institutions. It is a critical matter that the Canadian government addresses this gap in PGWP program eligibility and participation in the private sector.⁴⁵

Health Care Assistant (HCA)

The Health Care Assistant (HCA) Program aids in the development of the necessary knowledge and skills required to be a front-line caregiver as a member of the healthcare team.⁴⁶ To be registered as an HCA, individuals are required to complete a 28-week training program at an educational institution recognized by the **BC Care Aide & Community Health Worker Registry**. This includes places such as the Kwantlen Polytechnic University and the Vancouver Community College.⁴⁷ However, perhaps reflecting the financial burden of the tuition cost which varies between \$3,500 and \$11,000, enrollment numbers in HCA programs have dropped significantly in recent years.⁴⁸

To address this, an apprenticeship program can be implemented mirroring the current system with the trade industry. Offering a combination of on-site training as well as classroom learning would help ease the financial burden of students and fill the current labour shortage in care-aide positions. As a result, continuity of care and a stable workforce would be promoted.

⁴² <http://www.cic.gc.ca/English/helpcentre/answer.asp?qnum=507&top=15>

⁴³ <https://bccare.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Situation-Critical-July-2018-updated.pdf>

⁴⁴ <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1x-9b7nmaXnY0ksfd6UmsRZJvSVmaEeBYvh22H3be68M/edit?usp=sharing>

⁴⁵ <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1x-9b7nmaXnY0ksfd6UmsRZJvSVmaEeBYvh22H3be68M/edit?usp=sharing>

⁴⁶ <https://www.vcc.ca/programscourses/program-areas/health-sciences/health-care-assistant/#fees>

⁴⁷ <https://www.cachwr.bc.ca/About-the-Registry/List-of-HCA-programs-in-BC.aspx>

⁴⁸ <https://bccare.ca/2018/03/hca-program/>

SECTION 4: FINANCIAL

Cost

The cost of funding an apprenticeship program is much less than paying for college or university and there is a higher likelihood of entering an occupational field with a greater demand that pays well.⁴⁹ The annual cost to pay 4 to 10 weeks of in-school technical training is approximately \$1,400 and takes about 4 years to receive certification.⁵⁰ For example, the tuition cost over 4 years for an electrical apprentice, accounting for about 20% of all trades students, is approximately \$5,000 without including the cost for supplies and books.⁵¹ This amount is comparable to only one year of tuition as a full-time undergraduate student at a university.

During on-site training, apprentices are paid an hourly wage that increases yearly and eventually reaches the salary of a certified tradesman upon completion of the program.⁴⁹ The median hourly wage for a certified journeyman is between \$30 and \$50.⁵¹

Provincial Funding

Apprentices registered with the Industry Training Authority may be eligible for several provincial funds before and during their apprenticeship. Below are six such funds of interest:

- To promote interest in trades early on, the BC Ministry of Education has partnered with the Industry Training Authority to design several programs for younger adults.⁵¹ High school students have the option to start their trade career ahead of time while still getting credit towards school. Other incentives include free tuition for their first year of post-secondary school and eligibility to a \$1,000 scholarship.⁵²
- Overseen by the BC Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, the **WorkBC Apprentice Services Financial Support** provides financial assistance while the apprentice undergoes in-school training. This fund includes coverage over the basic living and dependent-care expenses, daily commuting and travel costs, disability-related costs, and temporary residence costs.⁵³
- The **BC Access Grant for Labor Market Priorities** is a non-repayable fund provided by the provincial government to promote students to register in high-priority programs at public post-secondary institutions. This grant reaches a maximum of \$16,400 towards supporting trade education.⁵⁴ The four components covered by this grant are financial assistance in purchasing tools, relocating to other areas, replacing their BC student loan, and covering unmet financial needs. Some of these eligible in-demand programs include plumbers, industrial electricians, and bakers.⁵⁵

⁴⁹ <http://apprenticeshipcareerconnections.ca/what-is-the-cost-of-an-apprenticeship-program/>

⁵⁰ <https://www.tradetrainingbc.ca/WhatIsApprenticeship>

⁵¹ https://archive.news.gov.bc.ca/releases/news_releases_2017-2021/2017AEST0066-001872.htm

⁵² <https://www.itabc.ca/about-apprentices/pathways-apprenticeship>

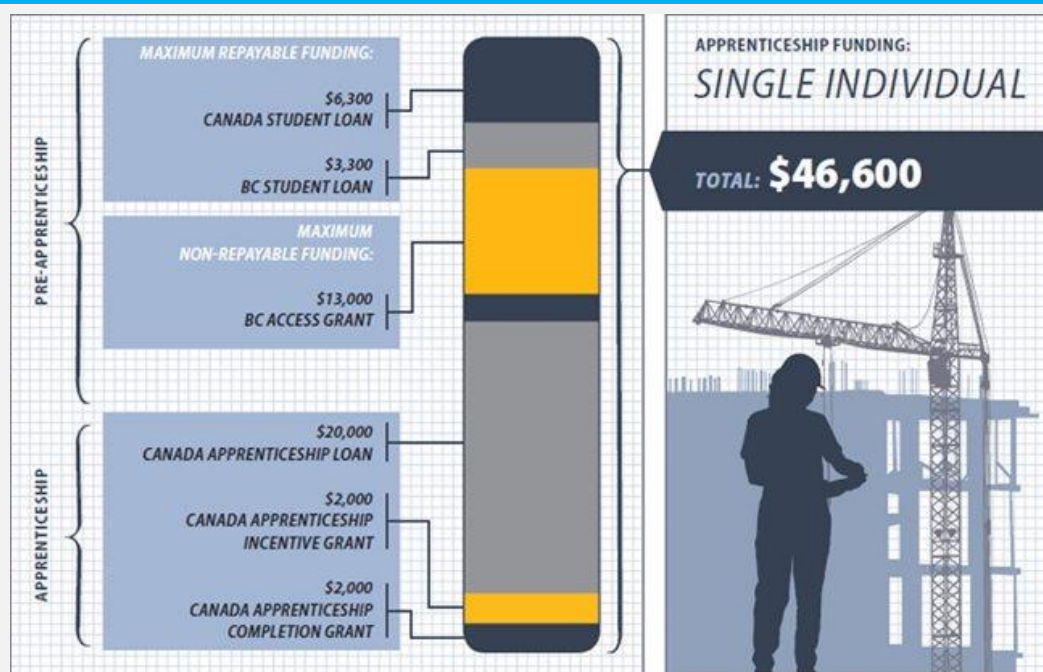
⁵³ <https://www.workbc.ca/Employment-Services/Apprentice-Services/Access-Online-WorkBC-Apprentice-Services.aspx>

⁵⁴ <https://www.tradetrainingbc.ca/FinancialAssistance>

⁵⁵ <https://studentaidbc.ca/explore/grants-scholarships/bc-access-grant-labour-market-priorities>

- Refundable income tax credits are provided through provincial **training tax credits** for apprentices that are part of the Industry Training Authority.⁵⁶ Basic and completion tax credits are redeemable following completion of various program levels. Enhanced tax credits are available for apprentices that are Indigenous or have disabilities.⁵⁷ Tax credits for tool expenses are also redeemable.⁵⁶
- The **Workforce Development Agreement** funds entry-level pre-apprenticeship programs directed towards under-represented individuals in the trades including youths, women, immigrants, and Indigenous people. These programs are also developed for people facing challenges entering trade apprenticeships and assists in trades exploration, training, and employment services.⁵⁸
- Through StudentAid BC, individuals enrolled in the foundation and pre-apprentice programs can receive a **BC student loan** to pay for said post-secondary education.⁵⁹ This student financial assistance is funded by the provincial government and is available for everyone who meets the basic eligibility requirements. Requirements include enrolment in an eligible program of study at participating post-secondary institutions and being able to exhibit financial need.⁶⁰ The provincial government will not charge interest for any of these loans in their lifetimes.⁶¹

Figure 3 - Apprenticeship Funding: Single Individual



Source: <https://www.workbc.ca/Training-Education/Finance-your-Education/Apprenticeship-Financial-Supports.aspx>

⁵⁶ https://www.itabc.ca/sites/default/files/docs/discover/ITA_Financial_Support_2018_webversion.pdf

⁵⁷ <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/taxes/income-taxes/corporate/credits/training/apprentice#basic>

⁵⁸ <https://www.itabc.ca/apprentice-service/workforce-development-agreement>

⁵⁹ <https://www.workbc.ca/Training-Education/Finance-your-Education/Apprenticeship-Financial-Supports.aspx>

⁶⁰ <https://studentaidbc.ca/apply/eligibility>

⁶¹ <https://studentaidbc.ca/news/general/eliminating-interest-bc-student-loans>

Federal Funding

Numerous types of funding are offered by the Government of Canada, including various loans, grants, and tax credit programs. Listed below are a few such programs:

- People enrolled in a designated Interprovincial Red Seal trade apprenticeship program are eligible for the **Apprenticeship Incentive Grant**. Examples of Red Seal programs include apprenticeships for automotive service technicians, industrial technicians, and mobile crane operators. Upon completion of the first or second year, a cash grant of up to \$1,000 is offered, to a maximum amount of \$2,000 per individual.⁶²
- Enhanced support is available for women entering, progressing, and completing Red Seal trade apprenticeships. The **Apprenticeship Incentive Grant for Women** provides an additional grant of \$3,000 per year with the upper limit of \$6,000 per person.⁶²
- Upon completion of apprenticeship training and certification as a journeyperson of a Red Seal trade program, individuals are eligible for an **Apprenticeship Completion Grant**. This is a one-time grant of up to \$2,000 for each person.⁶²
- People in post-secondary institutes for foundation and pre-apprenticeship coming from low- and middle-income families are eligible for a **Canada Student Grant for Full-Time Students**. Up to \$375 per month of study is available, amounting to a maximum of \$3,000 for an eight-month school year.⁶³ Additionally, tailored for low-income students with dependents studying full-time at a post-secondary institution is the **Canada Student Grant for Full-Time Students with Dependents**. Each month, a \$200 grant is given for every dependent child while undergoing full-time study if qualifications are met.⁶⁴
- A loan is also available under the **Canada Student Loan** program that is dependent on eligibility and the place of permanent residence. Eligibility factors include family income, number of dependents, tuition cost, and living expenses.⁶⁵ For people living in BC, the application process is carried out through StudentAid BC.⁶⁶
- Initiated by the federal government, apprentices in Red Seal apprenticeship programs can apply for the **Canada Apprentice Loan**. A maximum amount of \$4,000 can be requested during each period of technical training that remains interest-free until completion or termination of the training program.⁶⁷
- Apprentices can receive **Employment Insurance** while unemployed and attending in-school technical training. A single one-week waiting period needs to be served for each apprenticeship before receiving EI and the cessation of benefits coincide with the last day of classes.⁶⁸

⁶² <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/apprentices/grants.html>

⁶³ <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/education/student-aid/grants-loans/full-time.html>

⁶⁴ <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/education/student-aid/grants-loans/dependants.html>

⁶⁵ <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/education/student-aid/grants-loans.html>

⁶⁶ <https://studentaidbc.ca/about-us>

⁶⁷ <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/apprentices/loan.html>

⁶⁸ <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/apprentices/ei-apprentices.html>

SECTION 5: EMPLOYER REQUIREMENTS AND BENEFITS

Employer Requirements

Hiring an apprentice is usually a four-year commitment and requires the employer sponsor, who is a certified journey person or have extensive experience alongside Sign Off Authority, to train the apprentice and track and report progress to the Industry Training Authority.⁶⁹ The sponsor must also allow the apprentice to have up to ten weeks off for technical training and conduct general supervision, evaluations, and feedback throughout the apprenticeship. Another role is recommending the apprentice for certification after completion of program requirements.⁷⁰

Although there are a few tasks and responsibilities that must be fulfilled as an employer, hiring an apprentice is investing in the future. Within the next ten years, there will be a jump in difficulty to attract and retain good and able workers as a third of the Canadian workforce enters retirement. To personally train apprentices means they will learn the specialized skillset in the business and be a better overall fit, with established long-term relationships with clients.⁷¹ In a survey conducted by the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum, employers noted that employees graduating from their apprenticeship programs are almost 30% more productive than the external alternative. However, the risk of poaching of apprentices by other employers is seen as a legitimate concern.⁷²

Return on Investment (ROI)

Employers receive an average return on investment (ROI) of \$1.47 per \$1 invested in apprenticeship training. In other words, the benefits of hiring an apprentice outweigh the costs, as an apprentice generates revenue that surpasses total training expenses, with an average net return of \$0.47 for every dollar spent.⁷¹

This trend is found across the country in all business sizes, with an annual increase in ROI throughout the apprenticeship program. Over a four-year apprenticeship, the ROI could amount to anywhere from \$39,524 to \$245,264.⁷¹

Although taking on an apprentice presents an up-front cost, the net benefits accrued over subsequent years generally outweigh it. However, employers have noted other reasons that they do not invest in apprenticeship training including a lack of continuous contracts, having enough workers, and an absence of apprenticeship applications.⁷¹

⁶⁹ <https://www.itabc.ca/hiring-apprentices/supervision-and-sign-authority>

⁷⁰ <https://www.itabc.ca/hiring-apprentices/apprenticeship-basics>

⁷¹ <https://www.itabc.ca/hiring-apprentices/apprenticeship-advantage>

⁷² <https://mcac.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/CAF-ApprenticeshipReport2009.pdf>

Figure 4 - Total Per Apprentice Costs and Benefits by Trade, 2009

Trades	Duration ¹ of Apprenticeship (Years)	Costs ² (\$)	Benefits ³ (\$)	Net Benefit ⁴ (\$)	Benefit-Cost Ratio ⁵
Automotive Service Technician	4	250,016	423,138	173,122	1.69
Boilermaker	4	246,889	473,696	226,807	1.92
Bricklayer	4	237,687	316,853	79,166	1.33
Cabinetmaker	4	180,369	247,298	66,929	1.37
Construction Electrician	4	196,811	293,048	96,237	1.49
Construction Millwright and Industrial Mechanic	4	254,287	403,272	148,985	1.59
Cook	4	125,344	164,868	39,524	1.32
Electrical Power Line and Cable Worker	4	336,770	319,759	(17,011)	0.95
Hairstylist	2	77,096	42,620	(34,476)	0.55
Heavy Duty Equipment Mechanic	4	252,371	497,636	245,264	1.97
Machinist	4	204,921	383,877	178,955	1.87
Motor Vehicle Body Repairer	4	210,088	362,237	152,149	1.72
Plumber	4	237,681	329,728	92,047	1.39
Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Mechanic	4	240,060	344,601	104,541	1.44
Sheet Metal Worker	4	258,160	322,022	63,862	1.25
Partsperson	4	215,323	361,276	145,954	1.68
Average	4	220,242	330,371	110,128	1.47

Source: <https://mcac.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/CAF-ApprenticeshipReport2009.pdf>

Employer Benefits

Several types of tax credits and grants are available for employers of apprentices from both the provincial and federal governments:

- Businesses that have apprenticeship programs can claim the employer's **training tax credit**, dependent on the salary and wages paid to the employees. The first component of the training tax credit is the basic credit. It is available for non-Red Seal training programs that go up to \$4,000 for the first two years. Completion credit of \$2,500 or \$3,000, respectively for level 3 and level 4 of both Red Seal and non-Red Seal training programs, is the second part of this tax credit. The last component, claimable only by First Nations individuals and people with disabilities, is the enhanced credit of up to \$2,000.⁷³

⁷³ <https://www.workbc.ca/Training-Education/Finance-your-Education/Apprenticeship-Financial-Supports.aspx#employer>

- As a part of the Workforce Development Agreement, the **BC Employer Training Grant** funds a maximum of \$8 million to employers. This is used to develop training plans for current and new employees to enhance and upgrade skills and productivity. The primary goal is to help employees adjust to the rapidly changing job requirements in the labour market. Maximum government funding per fiscal year from this grant is \$300,000.⁷⁴
- The **Apprenticeship Job Creation Tax Credit** is a non-refundable tax credit up to an annual \$2,000 for each eligible apprentice. Some eligibility requirements are that the apprentice must be in the first two years of the apprenticeship and enrolled in a prescribed trades program, such as a Red Seal training program.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ <https://www.workbc.ca/Employer-Resources/BC-Employer-Training-Grant/What-is-the-B-C-Employer-Training-Grant.aspx>

⁷⁵ <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/tax/individuals/topics/about-your-tax-return/tax-return/completing-a-tax-return/deductions-credits-expenses/line-412-investment-tax-credit/apprenticeship-job-creation-tax-credit.html>

SECTION 6: JURISDICTIONAL SCAN

The following section explores apprenticeships on both a national and international scale. Most programs, especially in Canada, are offered under traditional trades and listed under “General Apprenticeships.” Highlighted specifically on an international scale are trade programs for occupations in health, social services, and hospitality industries.

National

Labour Mobility

After receiving certification, tradespeople greatly benefit from the labour mobility agreements that facilitate movement between provinces and territories across Canada. British Columbia has signed three major labour mobility agreements, namely the *Trade, Investment, and Labour Mobility Agreement (TILMA)* between British Columbia and Alberta, the *New West Partnership Trade Agreement (NWPTA)* signed by British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan, and the *Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT)* amongst all Canadian provinces and territories.⁷⁶

These three agreements promote mutual recognition of qualifications for certified tradespeople. In other words, other Canadian jurisdictions recognize British Columbia certification for the same or generally similar occupations. Additional training or assessment is typically not required of the journeyperson.⁷⁶

Alberta

General Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships in Alberta can range from one to four years, depending on the trade occupation, with four to twelve weeks of in-class sessions per year.⁷⁷ Upon completion of all program requirements, an Alberta Journeyman Certificate is awarded.⁷⁸ Active management of most aspects of the apprenticeship is available at **MyTradesecrets (MTS)**.⁷⁹

The Alberta government highly promotes secondary school students to become apprentices, with five hundred annual scholarships of \$1,000 made available for these students.⁷⁷ Through the **Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP)**, they can simultaneously become apprentices and earn credit towards their high school diploma. The timing of their work and school schedule is very flexible and is a joint agreement between the student, the school, and the employer. The RAP concludes when the student graduates from high school, and the graduate student is automatically registered as an apprentice. Any credit earned in the RAP is transferred to the standard apprenticeship.⁸⁰ Career and Technology Studies can also lead to advanced standing in an apprenticeship program.⁸¹

⁷⁶ <https://www.itabc.ca/our-trades-training-system/labour-mobility>

⁷⁷ <https://alis.alberta.ca/explore-education-and-training/learn-about-apprenticeship/apprenticeship-in-alberta/>

⁷⁸ <https://tradesecrets.alberta.ca/learn-on-the-job/what-is-apprenticeship/>

⁷⁹ <https://tradesecrets.alberta.ca/mytradesecrets/access-your-mytradesecrets-account/>

⁸⁰ <https://tradesecrets.alberta.ca/learn-on-the-job/who-can-learn-a-trade/registered-apprenticeship-program/>

⁸¹ <https://tradesecrets.alberta.ca/learn-on-the-job/who-can-learn-a-trade/>

Annually, nearly a thousand scholarships are provided for apprentices and occupational trainees. Many of these encourage the completion of the apprenticeship training or recognize the excellence in the performance of an apprentice. Some examples are the **Pre-Apprentice Scholarship**, the **Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training (AIT) Scholarship**, and the **Top Apprentice Scholarship**, valued between \$1,000 and \$1,500.⁸²

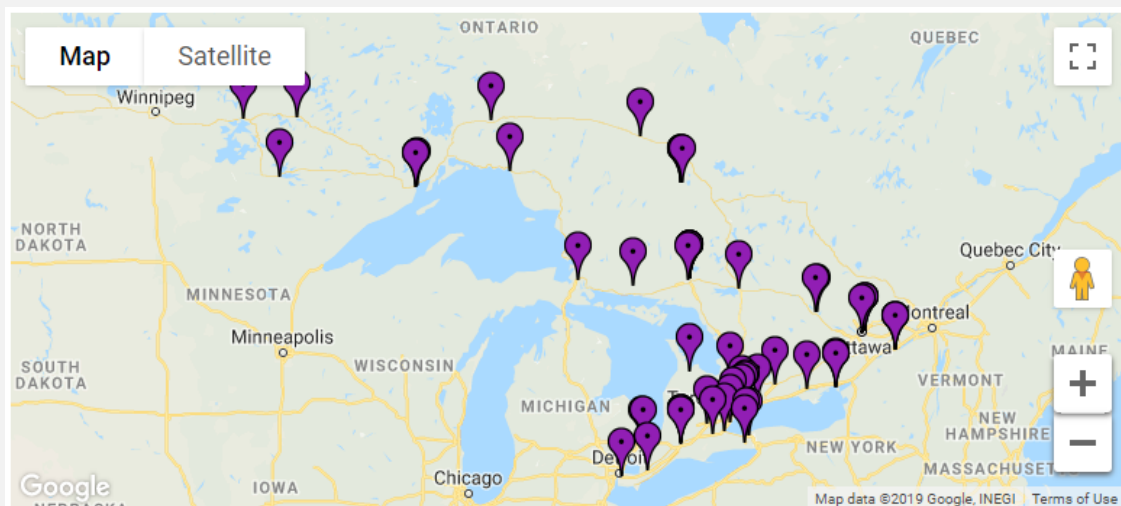
Ontario

General Apprenticeships

Over the next five years, 20% of new jobs in Ontario are expected to be in the trades or trades-related occupations with 25,000 employer sponsors and 70 in-class training sites.⁸³ Depending on the situation, training as an apprentice in Ontario involves one of three routes:

- The **Pre-Apprenticeship Training Program** is available for youths and adults that are not in high school or college but lack the skills or experience required for a job. It is offered free of charge by several colleges and community agencies at different times throughout the year and can extend up to a year. The pre-apprenticeship incorporates an eight- to twelve-week work placement as well.⁸⁴
- Secondary school credits, or more specifically co-op education credits, can be earned through the **Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program**. To qualify, the person must be enrolled in a secondary school in Grades 11 or 12 and be at least 16 years old.⁸⁴
- Overseen by the Ministry of Training, College, and Universities, the **Co-op Diploma Apprenticeship Program** is a two-year-long program. Upon completion, both a college diploma and apprenticeship requirements towards certification are awarded. Qualification requirements are dependent on both the college and trade that the apprentice desires to enter and train in.⁸⁴

Figure 5 - Colleges Offering Co-Op Diploma Apprenticeship Programs in Ontario, June 2019



Source: https://www.ontario.ca/page/prepare-apprenticeship#_Pre-Apprenticeship_Training

⁸² <https://tradesecrets.alberta.ca/financial-assistance/scholarships/>

⁸³ <https://www.ontario.ca/page/start-apprenticeship>

⁸⁴ https://www.ontario.ca/page/prepare-apprenticeship#_Pre-Apprenticeship_Training

To develop an accessible and innovative program, the skilled trades and apprenticeship system in Ontario has undergone many changes throughout recent years, with many more changes proposed for the future.

- In April 2019, the annual membership fee for the Ontario College of Trades was eliminated for apprentices and cut by half for certified journeypersons.⁸⁵
- Another improvement is more direct supervision and feedback for apprentices with a one-on-one management ratio. In other words, each journeyperson will oversee only one apprentice, which has resultingly increased apprenticeship registrations by as much as 24% for some sectors.⁸⁵
- A new framework has also been developed for the apprenticeship program called *Modernizing the Skilled Trades and Apprenticeship Act, 2019*. One of the key goals is to modernize the regulation of trades and skillsets through a risk-based approach.⁸⁵ This involves the replacement of the current trade classification of a voluntary or compulsory trade, which makes trade registration mandatory in some occupations, with a certification system to perform restricted activities.^{86,87}
- The introduction of portable skill sets will also enhance the speed of apprenticeship training and completion by bypassing the need to finish the entirety of an apprenticeship to obtain certification.⁸⁸

The Ontario provincial government is investing in the apprenticeship program to encourage more prospective employers and apprentices. In total, more than \$30 million will be invested in the **Pre-Apprenticeship Training Program** and the **Ontario Youth Apprenticeship**.⁸⁸

Quebec

General Apprenticeships

In Quebec, vocational qualification programs help in developing skills and proficiency in trade occupations. Presently, there are two types of programs – **compulsory qualification programs** and **voluntary qualification programs**.⁸⁹

- **Compulsory qualification** makes it necessary for individuals to hold an apprenticeship card or a certificate of qualification to work in a specific field.⁸⁹ To receive this qualification, there are three steps usually taken in the process, which are **enrolment**, **apprenticeship**, and a **qualification examination**. A prospective apprentice must go through an application process and meet specific criteria to enroll with Emploi-Quebec. Afterwards, a journeyperson with a certificate of qualification will act as a mentor and supervisor to the apprentice during the apprenticeship. Compulsory training at a recognized institution is also required during this step. Upon completion of the apprenticeship program, a qualification examination, prepared and administered by Emploi-Quebec, must be passed to obtain a certificate of qualification in the profession.⁹⁰

⁸⁵ <https://www.ontario.ca/page/skilled-trades-and-apprenticeship-system-changes>

⁸⁶ https://www.collegeoftrades.ca/wp-content/uploads/tradesOntarioTradesCodes_En.pdf

⁸⁷ <https://www.collegeoftrades.ca/trades-in-ontario>

⁸⁸ <https://news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2019/05/ontario-takes-action-to-build-a-skilled-workforce.html>

⁸⁹ <https://www.quebec.ca/en/employment/trades-occupations/regulated-professions-trades/vocational-qualification/>

⁹⁰ <http://www.emploiquebec.gouv.qc.ca/en/citizens/developing-your-skills-and-having-them-recognized/vocational-qualification/compulsory-qualification/>

- Optional participation in the Workplace Apprenticeship Program is available for non-regulated trades with **voluntary qualification**.⁹¹ With the completion of the program, the apprentice obtains a certificate of qualification or an attestation of competency. In the apprenticeship, the required skills for the occupation are listed in the apprentice booklet which also records the progression of the program. The employer benefits from being able to utilize a pre-structured training regiment and receiving possible tax credits. Alternatives to an apprenticeship for non-regulated trades include online training, practical training, workshops, mentoring, case studies, and simulation exercises.⁹²

International

Germany

General Apprenticeships

The **Board of the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB)** monitors the apprenticeship program and related legislation across Germany. It coordinates communication and negotiations between employers, employees, the sixteen federal states, and the German federal government. The programs offered are interdisciplinary and span across both traditional and non-traditional trades, with a total of 329 recognized training occupations. This covers trades from bricklaying and carpentry to banking, insurance, and information technology.⁹³ Many of these, including some of the top apprenticeship occupations in computer and IT industries, are not offered in Canada.⁹⁴ Currently, there are around 1.3 million Germans registered as apprentices with more than 400,000 companies participating in the apprenticeship system, accounting to 20% of all companies in Germany.⁹⁵

The system is highly reliant on streaming youth from secondary schools into apprenticeships.⁹⁶ High school students are introduced to the programs by teachers and they are widely promoted as a relevant pathway following graduation. Across the country, apprenticeships are free of stigmatization and it is within expectations that some apprentices will reach senior management positions in companies.⁹⁷ In class, students practice writing letters to firms seeking apprentices and conduct mock interviews. Companies also visit local schools and offer short-term internships to students; students with better grades are offered apprenticeships at larger and reputable firms. Moreover, many job opportunities for those aged 18 and under are restricted to an apprenticeship. As a result, nearly 50% of all students will have done an apprenticeship or a similar form of training by the time they graduate.⁹⁴

⁹¹ <https://www.quebec.ca/en/employment/trades-occupations/regulated-professions-trades/vocational-qualification/>

⁹² <http://www.emploi.quebec.gouv.qc.ca/en/citizens/developing-your-skills-and-having-them-recognized/vocational-qualification/voluntary-qualification/on-the-job-training/>

⁹³ https://www.conferenceboard.ca/temp/4aa1f041-025b-4f0c-9617-ba5c5adb88d6/7549_Harmonization%20and%20Responsiveness_BR_EN.pdf?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1

⁹⁴ http://www.heqco.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/Intl_Apprenticeship_ENG.pdf

⁹⁵ <https://www.apprenticeship-toolbox.eu/germany/apprenticeship-system-in-germany/143-apprenticeship-system-in-germany>

⁹⁶ <https://caf-fca.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/CombineVolume1.pdf>

⁹⁷ <http://thebusinesscouncil.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Robert-Lerman-paper-April-20141.pdf>

Three general types of apprenticeship training are offered in the country.

- A **dual system** combines three to four days of work with one to two days of classroom training per week. In-class training is offered free-of-charge and the completion rates of programs are relatively higher when compared to other countries, such as Canada.⁹⁸
- In **school-based training**, apprentices spend most of their time in a public or private school setting and usually do not receive a salary. However, they still participate in workplace training, albeit less extensively than in the dual system.⁹⁸
- For youths not fully ready for standard apprenticeship training, **vocational training preparation** is available. It incorporates vocational school and workplace training and prepares for eventual progression into the dual system or school-based training.⁹⁸

As employers finance apprentices, they are paid lower wages than regular employees. However, under German legislation, they are nonetheless recognized and defined as an employee and receive equitable benefits. This includes representation by a worker's unions, training contracts, social insurance programs, protection from dismissal, and a salary while attending classroom school training. Apprentices also have a trial period at the beginning of their contract term where they can choose to leave the program if they find it unsuitable.⁹⁹

Led by the Board, the apprenticeship program continuously undergoes changes and reforms. This includes the continuous implementation of new regulations or revisions of existent regulations as deemed necessary by consensus of the stakeholders. Specific innovations include:

- the alignment and equivalency of school-based and in-company training;
- increased national harmonization of rules and regulations;
- increased opportunities for international experiences;
- the simplification and streamline of the reform process by reducing the number of advisory groups, with the BIBB as the sole federal advisory body;
- the ability for German apprentices to now obtain vocational training abroad, which can amount to a maximum of 25% of their training program time;
- theoretical approaches in classroom learning have been replaced with learning fields based on actual business models and work processes;
- and occupational profiles are linked directly to work processes, resulting in a better connection with current workplace requirements.⁹⁸

Although there is a strong uniform apprenticeship system that is well-coordinated nationally with diverse stakeholder groups, there are still some problems that arise from this. Reaching a consensus between all parties can sometimes be a challenge due to divided perspectives. Different regions in the country have unique requirements, as one community might be dominated by a single large business, such as Mercedes, while other places have several smaller businesses with a diverse range of needs.

⁹⁸ https://www.conferenceboard.ca/temp/4aa1f041-025b-4f0c-9617-ba5c5adb88d6/7549_Harmonization%20and%20Responsiveness_BR_EN.pdf?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1

⁹⁹ http://www.heqco.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/Intl_Apprenticeship_ENG.pdf

With strong collaboration and cooperation between the government and industries across Germany, they have fostered a strong sense of social acceptance of apprenticeships in the general populace.¹⁰⁰

In Germany, the unemployment rate amongst youth is one of the lowest in the world. Around 60% of apprentices continue working for the same employer following certification which has lowered turnover rates for several companies.¹⁰⁰ This helps in keeping the cost of recruiting new employees at a minimum. Moreover, although the certificate of apprenticeship is not legally required for most occupations with apprenticeships, preference is given to applicants with certification over applicants without one.¹⁰¹

Long-Term Care Home Apprenticeships

In some parts of Canada, there must always be a registered nurse working in a long-term care home. One of the intentions of their presence is to oversee the mentoring and training of other care workers. However, RNs in Canadian care homes are often far removed from direct resident care, with much of their work prioritizing clinical indicators and extensive documentation demands. Consequently, their role in overseeing training and mentorship of frontline care workers is limited.



Instead, training is usually provided in a solo, online context rather than utilizing hands-on, interactive, and team-based learning.¹⁰²

In Germany, long-term care homes are less regimented, and the division of roles is less hierarchical in comparison to Canada. Many jurisdictions throughout Germany have adopted the apprenticeship program to assist qualified care workers, the German equivalent of registered nurses, with carrying out daily tasks and providing care. The program offers a combination of hands-on training, mentorship opportunities, and classroom education. Apprentices receive direct, in-the-moment training and instructions tailored to the unique needs of each resident. Mentoring is provided by qualified care workers with regards to direct body care, medication, and addressing diverse, relational care needs.¹⁰²

With the implementation of a large apprenticeship program, the staffing number can nearly be doubled, and the staff-to-resident ratio can be lowered to as little as 1:3. Although initially more time will be devoted to integrating training with task completion, apprentices will undoubtedly accumulate experience and knowledge over time. This correspondingly may result in an increase in the amount of available time to complete mandatory tasks and an opportunity to dedicate time to social care in a

¹⁰⁰ https://www.conferenceboard.ca/temp/4aa1f041-025b-4f0c-9617-ba5c5adb88d6/7549_Harmonization%20and%20Responsiveness_BR_EN.pdf?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1

¹⁰¹ http://www.heqco.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/Intl_Apprenticeship_ENG.pdf

¹⁰² <https://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/National%20Office/2018/05/Negotiating%20Tensions.pdf>

relaxed and engaging manner. Seniors residents may also have their preferences and needs met and get to enjoy more freedom and autonomy in a home-like environment. Altogether, apprentices learn about engaging with residents, handling physical care, and practicing relational skills.¹⁰³

However, an apprenticeship program is not without challenges. Qualified care workers undergo higher levels of stress and pressure to ensure that safe care is provided to seniors by apprentices. The well-being and safety of apprentices when handling responsive behaviours due to cognitive impairment, including aggression, is another issue to note. Another challenge is providing continuity of care as apprentices transfer between the on-site and classroom component of their training.¹⁰²

Stiftung Liebenau Apprenticeships

The Stiftung Liebenau is a Church foundation that utilizes the apprenticeship program in its long-term care homes. With over 7,000 employees, there are more than 300 care homes located in nearly a hundred different communities across Germany. The program builds a foundation towards certified qualification and offers professional and individual support for the apprentices. It is tailored for newcomers arriving in Germany that desire to learn the basics of German language and culture.¹⁰⁴ In total, there are four phases in the program:

- **Preparatory language training/trial period (internship)**
 - Before the internship, prospective apprentices spend fifteen weeks taking an online language course in a virtual classroom from home. After passing the final examination, they spend three months in an internship where they work in different departments and get to know the tasks and processes of each place. During this time, apprentices develop an understanding of the German language, culture, and regional surroundings.¹⁰⁴
- **Apprenticeship as an assistant carer for the elderly**
 - For the next two years, apprentices help regular healthcare employees with all types of tasks. One such example is assisting in providing the support and care required in everyday life, the completion of care documentations, and housekeeping responsibilities.¹⁰⁴
- **Apprenticeship as a carer for the elderly**
 - In the following phase, apprentices independently give care, support, and encouragement to seniors in daily activities and situations for two years. They also act as the contact person for family members and health professionals.¹⁰⁴
- **Employment as a skilled worker**
 - With a minimum 3-year commitment, the certified worker is employed at one of the Stiftung Liebenau's long-term care homes and gain valuable work-related experience.¹⁰⁴

United Kingdom

General Apprenticeships

In the United Kingdom, free reign is given to local governments to change and shift the apprenticeship system as national legislation to govern them is nonexistent. There is flexibility in the structure of

¹⁰³https://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/National%20Office/2015/12/Promising_Practices_in_Long_Term_Care.pdf

¹⁰⁴https://www.educommart.org/documents/pdf/EN_Factsheet_Programm_Azubis_2_Liebenau.pdf

apprenticeships leading to limited consistency on the division of on-the-job training and developmental classroom training. This lack of regulation has become a source of confusion for both employers and prospective apprentices because there is no clear definition of what an apprenticeship should entail. Simply put, apprentices are employees in paid job positions with a learning component, but the intrinsic details are confusing, cosmetic, and objectionable in the eyes of many.¹⁰⁵

Within England, 250 apprenticeship positions cover more than 1,400 roles. Most programs are one to four years long, with a minimum in-class training time of 280 hours. Many of these apprenticeships are in high-growth, high-demand industries, such as information technology, finance, legal services, and digital media. Around 75% of applicants choose occupations in business administration, retail, or healthcare roles, with the highest number of applicants in healthcare assistant and social service officer positions.¹⁰⁶

To become an apprentice, individuals must personally seek out employers or training providers. There is a general trend where younger people seek programs with lower-level requirements. Likewise, older individuals tend to look for higher-level apprenticeship qualifications. This is because most of them are already employees that are merely seeking to elevate their skills through an apprenticeship program. In other jurisdictions, this is usually labeled as work-based learning combined with continuing education and not as an apprenticeship.¹⁰⁶

Although there used to be an upper age limit for apprenticeships in the United Kingdom, this has been abolished and they are now open to candidates of all ages. However, the federal government continues to incentivize younger apprentices to apply by fully covering the cost of classroom training. Possibly due to these financial aids, there is an upward trend in the number of people currently in apprenticeships, numbering close to a million. Correspondingly, completion rates are rising, with an average completion rate of 72% over the past several years.¹⁰⁶ The classroom training component of the program is also subsidized, so employers are only required to pay the apprentice's wages and work-based learning components.¹⁰⁷

Depending on the field of apprenticeship, more than one **National Vocational Qualification** can be earned. These are recognized as transferable credentials that number in the thousands. To obtain the qualification, a person must complete a formal assessment that involves performing an occupational task to a set industry standard. However, there are two main issues with this type of assessment.¹⁰⁶

- The first problem is that the assessment examiner is also the mentor of the employee, which introduces subjectivity and bias to the test.¹⁰⁶
- The second concern is that it heavily emphasizes the practical component of the occupation and may overlook the theoretical knowledge required as well.¹⁰⁶

Nursing Apprenticeships

Before September 2017, a university degree was necessary to become a registered nurse. Nowadays, a 4-year nursing apprenticeship program can be completed in lieu that incorporates on-the-job training with academic learning. This creates more opportunities and makes nursing a more accessible career, as

¹⁰⁵ http://www.heqco.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/Intl_Apprenticeship_ENG.pdf

¹⁰⁶ http://www.heqco.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/Intl_Apprenticeship_ENG.pdf

¹⁰⁷ <http://thebusinesscouncil.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Robert-Lerman-paper-April-20141.pdf>

previous experience in nursing or any other health field is not required. The application process for this program and several others can be expedited through **OneFile**. It is an online learning platform that incorporates all the training tools needed to handle vocational apprentice training.¹⁰⁸

Throughout the program, the apprentice does not pay for any training costs as it is covered by the employer. In contrast, with a reasonable salary, they earn money on-the-job while gaining valuable experience. Following course completion, the apprentice receives the same qualifications as a graduate of a nursing degree program from a university. The overall program length can also be shortened by registering any earlier experience working as a nursing associate.¹⁰⁹

National Health Service (NHS) Apprenticeships

Presently, approximately 14,000 apprentices are enrolled in the National Health Service (NHS) apprenticeships in the United Kingdom. Varying in length from one to four years, the program opens the possibility of starting a career in healthcare for anyone aged 16 and older. Although the apprenticeship is highly competitive, there is no requirement to have a background in healthcare or its related fields.¹¹⁰

As an apprentice, they acquire knowledge and experience while being paid a regular wage that typically exceeds the National Minimum Wage.¹¹¹ Among hundreds of different positions, some of the most popular ones offered are in health and social care, including health care assistance. By next year, the NHS endeavours to expand the program to accommodate over 100,000 apprentices across the four available apprenticeship levels – **intermediate**, **advanced**, **higher**, and **degree**. The completion of the degree apprenticeship level equates to the completion of a master's or bachelor's degree from a university.¹¹⁰

Besides receiving nationally certified recognition, an NHS apprenticeship offers a stable income, an opportunity to acquire experience, continuous support from industry professionals, and the establishment of a professional network. Furthermore, when the apprenticeship comes to an end, individuals typically are offered a permanent position with the NHS or can continue developing professional skills.¹¹⁰

For younger people without adequate experience or the necessary skillset, a traineeship is available. Developed for youth who have the desire to be employed in the NHS and to overcome their inadequacies, six months of work experience can be provided, coupled with work preparation training as well as language and math support. Altogether, they help enhance their competitiveness and desirability to employers and mentors in apprenticeship or employment openings.¹¹²

¹⁰⁸ <https://www.onefile.co.uk/explore/healthcare/how-to-apply-for-a-nursing-apprenticeship/index.html>

¹⁰⁹ <https://www.onefile.co.uk/explore/healthcare/how-to-apply-for-a-nursing-apprenticeship/index.html>

¹¹⁰ <https://www.reed.co.uk/career-advice/nhs-apprenticeships-need-to-know/>

¹¹¹ <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning/study-and-training/apprenticeships-traineeships-and-cadet-schemes>

¹¹² <https://www.stepintothenhs.nhs.uk/apprenticeships>

United States

General Apprenticeships

In the United States, apprenticeships integrate in-school academic coursework with structured on-the-job training. This training is offered free-of-charge and overseen by qualified mentors and instructors with progressively higher wages and dedicated time-off to attend class. Apprenticeships are found in an increasingly diverse number of fields, including financial services, cybersecurity, early education, and healthcare, and have evolved into a pathway for both jobs and college degrees.¹¹³

Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN)

At Fairview Health Services of Minnesota, their goal is to have 80% of their nursing staff have a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN). This reflects the standards in one of the eight recommendations set by the Institute of Medicine (IOM) in the report called *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*. In its current state as the 5th largest occupation with over 3 million workers, there is a multitude of pathways available to become a registered nurse. Eligibility to take the licensure examination and carry the title of a registered nurse applies to individuals with an **associate degree** from community colleges or private institutions, a **bachelor's degree** from universities, or a **diploma** from an accredited hospital-based training program. The most popular of the three is the associate degree, acting as the main point of entry into the profession. Altogether, this has racially and ethnically diversified nursing staff, generating an overall improvement in culturally appropriate care and communication which has helped reduce health disparities amongst different racial and ethnic groups.¹¹³

There are presently three variations of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing degrees – **entry**, **accelerated**, and **bridge**. Entry degrees are akin to a normal, four-year bachelor's degree while accelerated degrees are for those who have already graduated with a bachelor's degree in a different field. On the other hand, bridge degrees are made for registered nurses already holding an associate degree. Even with a variety of degree options, going back to school for most registered nurses is difficult and unappealing. Circumstances such as family responsibilities and a lack of flexibility from employers are some such examples. There are also no immediate incentives, as a wage increase on a short-term basis is minimal succeeding the completion of the degree. Although tuition reimbursement is provided by employers, it oftentimes does not cover the full cost of school.¹¹³

These degree programs are typically designed to be completed outside of work hours, making it one of its greatest strengths but also one of its greatest deficits. With this clear separation of work and school, there is a disconnection with applying what they learn to their practice. This has been addressed by some facilities, like Fairview Health Services, with the implementation of a nursing apprenticeship program.¹¹³

¹¹³ <https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/reports/apprenticeship-and-future-nursing/>

Fairview Health Services Nursing Apprenticeships

Across the United States, nursing programs typically incorporate on-site learning through practicums and clinical experiences. This combination of academic and on-the-job training illustrates one of the commonalities between nursing programs and traditional apprenticeships. Further similarities are found with residencies, one of the newer trending additions to nursing education. Fundamentally identical to apprenticeships, residencies involve paid, workplace learning in conjunction with related curriculums to improve the practical skills, knowledge, and experience of entry graduates.¹¹⁴

In recognition of the inherent likeness to apprenticeships, Fairview Health Services have created the Registered Apprenticeship program in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Labour and Industry and the Department of Employment and Economic Development. With an \$800,000 sponsorship from the Minnesota Apprenticeship Initiative (MAI), the apprenticeship has been developed for nurses with an associate nursing degree who want to obtain a bachelor's degree. It presents the option of earning a degree with near-zero expenses while continuing to work full-time, thus establishing a link between classroom learning with daily job experiences. Relabelling the workplace as a location of learning and a center of theoretical and applied learning has proven to be a more productive alternative to providing tuition reimbursement to employees. Overall, this effectively improves the experience of care for patients and manages the cost of care.¹¹⁴

The Fairview apprenticeship program is inspired by German apprenticeship models and follows transparent industry standards. It is a well-designed course that incorporates components of associate, bachelor, and nurse residency programs. The in-school classroom component is delivered by accredited colleges and universities and regular performance reviews are utilized as progression assessments. Nursing apprenticeships also offer many advantages, including an income for on-the-job training, on-site mentors, and time allocated to attend classes. Moreover, Fairview employers have more influence and control over the curriculum and the instructors than a traditional bachelor's degree program.¹¹⁴

Reflecting its successful implementation, Fairview Health Services currently manages 122 nurse apprentices, making them one of the largest single-employer apprenticeship programs across the United States. One reason for its renowned popularity is in helping veteran nurses coalesce academic knowledge and mentoring with real world, on-the-job technical skills.¹¹⁴

Australia

General Apprenticeships

Organized by the Australian Apprenticeship Support Network, apprenticeships are offered in upwards of 500 careers. They are open to anyone of employable age and can be completed full-time, part-time, or while in school. The employment conditions and workplace rights are identical to any normal employee, including dedicated apprentice and trainee wages, conditions, and entitlement information. To handle the cost of apprenticeships, numerous types of financial support are available, some of which are listed below:¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴ <https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/reports/apprenticeship-and-future-nursing/>

¹¹⁵ <https://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au/apprentices>

- **Additional Identified Skills Shortage Payment**
 - Additional Identified Skills Shortage Payment applies to new apprentices initiating Certificate III or IV level qualifications in any of the top ten occupations experiencing national skill shortages in Australia. This payment is available for both apprentices and employers, although employers only qualify when they exceed their normal apprenticeship intake.¹¹⁶
- **Trade Support Loans**
 - Handled under *The Trade Support Loans Act 2014*, the Trade Support Loans assists with everyday costs amounting to \$21,078 throughout the apprenticeship. The amount provided is dependent on the year of the apprenticeship and 20% is discounted from the owed loan upon successful completion of the apprenticeship program. Repayment for this loan is performed through the tax system, with a certain percentage of income being deducted once the minimum repayment threshold is met.¹¹⁶
- **Living Away from Home Allowance**
 - The Living Away from Home Allowance is eligible for apprentices in their first three years of training who need to relocate. This allowance is specifically made for apprentices that move out of their parental or legal guardian's home to begin or stay in an apprenticeship or to receive critical supplementary on-the-job training with another employer. This fund is also applicable to homeless individuals.¹¹⁶
- **Assistance for Australian Apprentices with Disability**
 - Apprentices who experience difficulties with off-the-job training can receive additional assistance from the Australian Government. Assistance services including tutorial, interpreter, and mentor services.¹¹⁶
- **Youth Allowance, Austudy, & ABSTUDY**
 - Youth Allowance, Austudy, and ABSTUDY are three types of financial aid for students and Australian Apprentices. They respectively are tailored for individuals 24 or younger, 25 or older, or identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders.¹¹⁷

Nursing Traineeships

In Australia, enrolled nurses typically register in vocational education and training sector (VET) diplomas that require full-time, off-the-job training. However, with an inadequate number of graduates, employers are experiencing a continuous shortage of nursing personnel who oftentimes display a less-than-satisfactory work performance as they are at a lower level than registered nurses with a university degree.¹¹⁸

With a traineeship, health service operators and personnel have a greater command over on-the-job training. This attracts a wider pool of applicants, including older individuals and new immigrants, who typically cannot afford an education without a steady income. This nursing program is one of many examples of employers expanding the span of the apprenticeship system to a greater array of occupations, thus offering apprenticeships at higher academic and theoretical skill levels.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶ <https://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au/aus-apprenticeships-incentives>

¹¹⁷ <https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/students-and-trainees>

¹¹⁸ https://www.researchgate.net/publication/330537741_Apprenticeships_and_'future_work'_are_we_ready

SECTION 7: CONCLUSION

In its current state, there is a critical shortage in the number of qualified health care workers. This is in part due to expensive tuition costs and the necessity to be out-of-work for seven months. Although apprenticeships in British Columbia are primarily offered for traditional trade occupations, their expansion to non-traditional occupations may be a potential solution to education affordability issues.¹¹⁹ With the status quo, apprenticeship training will equate to over 40% of the future workforce in BC in the next decade, with approximately 370,000 job openings. Likewise, there will be nearly 20,000 new health care assistant positions in the upcoming ten years.¹²⁰

Apprenticeships are presently skewed towards men with an evident gender inequality; only 14% of apprentices are women.¹²¹ With an influx of apprenticeships from health care, this would help counterbalance this disparity. The apprenticeship program is also facilitated across Canada through the *Provincial-Territorial Apprentice Mobility Protocol Agreement*.¹²² This can be applied to health care assistants to promote easier mobility between provinces and territories. Eliminating unnecessary limitations such as restricting **Post Graduate Work Permits** to public learning academies is another possible improvement.¹²³ Besides health care assistants, nursing can be a profession that can implement apprenticeships, as done by several other countries.¹²⁴



To incentivize both employers and prospective apprentices to apply, there are numerous provincial and federal funds made available. For employers, other than getting new employees to fill in vacant positions as the population ages, there is a **return-on-investment** of \$0.47 per dollar spent throughout the apprenticeship.¹²⁵ Other provinces in Canada offer similar apprenticeships to BC and place a similar, if not higher emphasis on youth through specialized programs and scholarships. Examples include the Alberta **Registered Apprenticeship Program** and the **Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program**.^{126,127}

¹¹⁹ <https://www.itabc.ca/about-apprentices/apprenticeship-basics>

¹²⁰ https://www.workbc.ca/getmedia/1dce90f9-f2f9-4eca-b9e5-c19de9598f32/BC_Labour_Market_Outlook_2018_English.pdf.aspx

¹²¹ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/81-598-x/2017001/sect09-eng.htm>

¹²² <https://www.itabc.ca/apply-apprenticeship/apprentice-mobility>

¹²³ <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1x-9b7nmaXnY0ksfd6UmsRZJvSVmaEeBYvh22H3be68M/edit?usp=sharing>

¹²⁴ https://www.bccnp.ca/becoming_a_nurse/Pages/Types_of_nurses.aspx

¹²⁵ <https://www.itabc.ca/hiring-apprentices/apprenticeship-advantage>

¹²⁶ <https://tradesecrets.alberta.ca/learn-on-the-job/who-can-learn-a-trade/registered-apprenticeship-program/>

¹²⁷ https://www.ontario.ca/page/prepare-apprenticeship#_Pre-Apprenticeship_Training

Globally, there are apprenticeship programs that are considerably more developed and structured and span a greater number of occupations. In Germany, the **Board of the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB)** nationally unifies the apprenticeship program and highly advocates students to become apprentices. A **dual system** is utilized instead of the block system with 3-4 days of on-the-job training complementing 1-2 days of in-class learning every week.¹²⁸

Programs also undergo continuous improvements and changes and are offered in non-traditional trades such as long-term care home apprenticeships.¹²⁹ Like in Germany, the United Kingdom has adopted the apprenticeship system to their National Health Services and nursing professions, although it is comparatively more flexible and less regimented.¹³⁰ As apprentices, they are not required to pay for the cost of training, are offered a steady salary, and are usually given a position with the same employer post-completion. Furthermore, both the United States and Australia have generous funding for apprenticeships. In these two countries, the nursing program has adopted the apprenticeship system to promote the development of more qualified and experienced nurses.

Looking at Germany, as well as other countries around the world, national coordination of the apprenticeship program and extending its reach to non-traditional trade occupations would be highly beneficial to Canadians and Canada's workforce shortage. With the current nursing and health care assistant training model already reminiscent of apprenticeship training, many countries have adopted the apprenticeships program, and Canada should follow suit.

¹²⁸ https://www.conferenceboard.ca/temp/4aa1f041-025b-4f0c-9617-ba5c5adb88d6/7549_Harmonization%20and%20Responsiveness_BR_EN.pdf?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1

¹²⁹ https://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/National%20Office/2015/12/Promising_Practices_in_Long_Term_Care.pdf

¹³⁰ http://www.heqco.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/Intl_Apprenticeship_ENG.pdf