

EMPLOYMENT ONTARIO / COLLEGE CONNECTIONS REPORT

Examining how college LBS, ES & Apprenticeship programs
can support apprentices now and in the future



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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NOTE: The opinions expressed in this document are the opinions of the College Sector Committee for Adult Upgrading, individual survey respondents and subject matter experts. The Government of Ontario and its agencies are in no way bound by any recommendations contained in this document.

ABOUT THE CSCAU

The College Sector Committee for Adult Upgrading (CSC) is the support organization representing academic upgrading programs and staff in Ontario's 24 public colleges. The CSC created and administers the Academic and Career Entrance program (ACE), a recognized grade 12 equivalent certificate program provided on campus and online, and the Skillsmarker suite of academic & vocational assessment tools.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In Ontario, there is widespread commitment to promote skilled trades and to increase and support the number of apprentices who complete their training and obtain certification. There are many factors that affect the progress and success of a potential or registered apprentice, including the apprentice's literacy and numeracy skills.

The College Sector Committee for Adult Upgrading (CSCAU) agreed to undertake research regarding the opportunities, challenges and limitations in the role that Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) can play in supporting current and potential apprentices in Ontario.

Since Ontario's public colleges deliver three main components of Employment Ontario (EO) programming — LBS, Employment Services (ES), and Apprenticeship — this report seeks to highlight the connections and services across college sector EO programs that support potential and current apprentices. Results and recommendations from this project may be used by LBS providers to inform development of additional supports for learners on (or considering) the Apprenticeship goal path in LBS, and by policy-makers and other stakeholders to inform apprenticeship reform in Ontario.

Using primary and secondary research, this report provides essential background information on apprenticeship training in Ontario and the role that our public colleges play in the delivery of three EO programs and services that have, or may have, an impact on the progress and success of a current or potential apprentice. A review of recent literature indicates the assumption of a link between literacy and numeracy skills and apprenticeship success, echoed by college LBS providers and the apprenticeship training network.

A survey of college LBS programs provided firsthand accounts of current supports for learners on the Apprenticeship goal path, the limitations in providing those supports, and the current state of referrals among college and community EO programs. Interviews with key collaborators identified and confirmed gaps and limitations in information, programs and services as well as some strategies to address these gaps.

OPPORTUNITIES

- establishing or re-establishing internal college connections and/or external linkages
- improving promotion of the skilled trades as postsecondary options leading to professional careers
- improving information for referral partners
- ensuring EO program linkages appear on college program webpages

CHALLENGES

- lack of time (apprentices have no time for LBS/Academic Upgrading once in training due to work schedules, school and personal commitments)
- lack of awareness of the math requirements for certain trades
- lack of assessment of literacy and numeracy skills prior to the commencement of an apprenticeship

LIMITATIONS

- time required to upgrade literacy and numeracy skills
- lack of assessment of literacy and numeracy skills (not required to become a registered apprentice)
- perception that participating in LBS/Academic Upgrading is a 'step backward' for those who already have the academic requirement for the trade
- Apprenticeship goal path definition within the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework (OALCF) documentation does not accurately reflect LBS learner activity leading to an apprenticeship

This report identifies opportunities to improve and increase connections across college sector EO programs while taking into account broader systemic challenges in Ontario's apprenticeship training system.

ABOUT THE COLLEGE SECTOR COMMITTEE FOR ADULT UPGRADING (CSCAU)

The CSCAU represents and supports Ontario's public colleges in their delivery of academic upgrading programs to adults, including the Academic and Career Entrance (ACE) grade 12 equivalent program.

The CSCAU supports its members by sharing resources and innovative practices, as well as providing access to relevant and current information through collaboration and professional development. As a service provider, the CSCAU delivers ACE Distance, providing e-learning ACE courses to students as an alternative to in-person, classroom-based ACE programming.

Adult upgrading programs are transformational for many adult learners, providing them with the foundation and preparation for success in postsecondary education (including apprenticeship) and employment. Through collaboration, advocacy, innovation and service delivery, the CSCAU supports the efforts of adult learners as they seek to achieve their goals.

1. INTRODUCTION

All stakeholders — employers, government, education providers, organized labour and employment services providers — are faced with one or more of the challenges of recruiting, training and retaining apprentices. In Ontario, indeed across Canada, the need for qualified workers in the skilled trades is significant and stakeholders are keen to eliminate or mitigate the numerous obstacles that individuals may face in obtaining and successfully completing an apprenticeship in a compulsory or non-compulsory trade.

Since Ontario's public colleges deliver three main components of EO programming — LBS, ES and Apprenticeship — this report seeks to highlight the connections and services across college sector EO programs that support potential and current apprentices.

Results and recommendations may be used by LBS providers to inform development of additional supports for learners on (or considering) the Apprenticeship goal path in LBS, and by government policymakers and other stakeholders to inform apprenticeship reform in Ontario.

The first section of this report provides background information on the three components of EO programming noted above and the role that Ontario's public colleges play in the delivery of those EO programs and services. A description of the Government of Ontario's role in apprenticeship training is also included.

The remainder of this report outlines the findings of both a literature review pertaining to literacy and numeracy skills of apprentices in Canada and/or Ontario and key informant interviews with various apprenticeship stakeholders in Ontario.

This is followed by the findings and analysis of the primary research conducted with college LBS providers regarding their linkages with apprenticeship and support for potential and current apprentices.

The final section of the report summarizes the opportunities, challenges and limitations surrounding the support that LBS programs can provide to current and potential apprentices in Ontario in the context of some of the broader systemic challenges that prevail in Ontario's apprenticeship training system.

2. BACKGROUND

This section provides some context and background information to ensure that basic aspects of the current situation are clear.

2 A | EO PROGRAMS

Historically, the province of Ontario has focused on workforce development issues, providing supports and funding for programs and services which assist individuals who have barriers to employment, and which provide skills training to enable sustainable employment.

The Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development (MLITSD or also referred to as the Ministry), is responsible for the current suite of programs, known as Employment Ontario (EO), which includes LBS, ES and Apprenticeship.

2 A.1 | APPRENTICESHIP

It may be surprising to some that apprenticeship is considered one of the three pillars of postsecondary education along with college and university. Most apprenticeships, and indeed most employers/sponsors, require a minimum of grade 12 for entrance into an apprenticeship, and many employers now require additional related postsecondary qualifications. Though some trades such as the construction trades require a minimum of grade 10 for entry, employers and sponsors also often require grade 12 or more.

The academic requirements for apprenticeship are stated in Ontario Reg 877/21 (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/r21877>).

In order to identify the challenges, opportunities and limitations in the role that LBS can play in supporting apprentices, an examination of what an apprenticeship is and what it entails is necessary. While the basic concepts of apprenticeship seem to be straightforward — working and learning on the job — the complexities of apprenticeship are likely not as well understood.

“Apprenticeship programs combine on-the-job and in-school training for employment in a skilled trade. The goal of Apprenticeship training is to enable workers to obtain the workplace and classroom training they require to successfully become certified in their trade of choice.”

—<https://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/eopg/programs/appr.html>

(retrieved November 15, 2022)

“Apprenticeship is a post-secondary pathway consisting of on-the-job training provided by an employer and technical training delivered at a college, vocational school or union training centre.”

—<https://caf-fca.org> (retrieved September 13, 2022)

Apprentices begin an apprenticeship by securing employment with an employer or a sponsor, such as a union, and both parties sign a Registered Training Agreement (RTA). There are compulsory trades and non-compulsory trades, and these fall within four sectors: industrial; construction; motive power; and service.

In 2021, the Ontario government passed the Building Ontario Skilled Trades Act (BOSTA) which provides the legislative framework for apprenticeship training in Ontario. BOSTA identifies 23 compulsory trades, which means that only apprentices and licensed journeypersons may legally perform the work of these trades. Some examples of compulsory trades in Ontario include Plumber, Electrician - Construction and Maintenance, Steamfitter, Automotive Service Technician and Hairstylist.

All compulsory trades have certifying exams. Successful completion of an apprenticeship and the passing of the certifying exam results in a Certificate of Qualification (C of Q). Skilled tradespeople in compulsory trades must renew their Certificate of Qualification each year.

*“To work in one of the **23 compulsory trades** in Ontario, you must hold a:*

- Certificate of Qualification that is valid, or*
- Provisional Certificate of Qualification that is valid, or*
- Registered Training Agreement”*

—<https://www.skilledtradesontario.ca/about-trades/work-in-the-compulsory-trades/>

(retrieved November 15, 2022)

In Ontario, there are **121 non-compulsory trades**. Some examples of non-compulsory trades include Cook, Industrial Electrician, Arborist, Welder and Child Development Practitioner. One does not need to be a registered apprentice nor a certified journey-person to work in a non-compulsory trade.

However, some non-compulsory trades offer certifying exams and Certificates of Qualification. Certificates of Qualification are available in 60 non-compulsory trades and confirm that an individual has passed the required certifying exam for the trade.

The **Red Seal Program** sets common standards to assess the skills of skilled trades professionals across Canada.

“Tradespersons who have successfully passed the Red Seal examination receive a Red Seal endorsement (RSE) on their provincial/territorial trade certificate. The Red Seal, when affixed to a provincial or territorial trade certificate, indicates that a tradesperson has demonstrated the knowledge required for the national standard in that trade.”

—<https://www.red-seal.ca/eng/about/pr.4gr.1m.shtml> (retrieved November 15, 2022)

In Ontario, there are compulsory and non-compulsory trades that may lead to a Red Seal endorsement.

Apprenticeships are usually two to five years in duration and include two or three levels of in-school training. In-school training may be completed in one of several different formats.

- BLOCK RELEASE consists of 8 to 12 weeks of full-time, in-school training and absence from work for this duration. Apprentices may be eligible for Employment Insurance (EI) for the duration of the block release training. Apprentices may need to re-locate for the duration of the block release training, if the in-school training is not available in their area.
- DAY RELEASE consists of one day per week in-school and the remainder of the week spent working on-the-job.
- PART-TIME consists of one or two evenings per week or weekend classes while the apprentice works full time.

Apprenticeship in-school training is delivered by Training Delivery Agents (TDAs) which include colleges, unions and other private sector organizations. MLITSD contracts with TDAs to provide the in-school training and this annual plan is known as the seat purchase plan. Apprentices pay tuition fees for in-school training.

Apprenticeships are not to be confused with co-op work terms, placements, internships, or practicums which are different types of work integrated learning at the postsecondary level.

2 A.2 | LITERACY & BASIC SKILLS

Ontario's LBS program helps adults in Ontario to develop and apply communication, numeracy, interpersonal and digital skills to achieve their goals.

The LBS program serves learners who have goals to transition successfully to employment, postsecondary, apprenticeship, secondary school or increased independence.

The program includes learners who may have a range of barriers to learning. Through the LBS Program, individuals access five services that contribute to the successful completion of their learner plan.

Service providers may focus on preparing learners for different goal paths but each learner, regardless of the focus of the service provider's programming, receives the same five services:

- Information and Referral
- Assessment
- Learner Plan Development
- Training
- Follow-up

—<https://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/eopg/programs/lbs.html>

(retrieved November 15, 2022)

Learners in LBS programs do not pay tuition fees if they meet the program's eligibility criteria. Each learner's plan is individualized and thus the time spent in LBS may vary from a few weeks to two years. It is also not uncommon for LBS learners to "stop-out" and then restart in the LBS program when life circumstances require them to do so.

Colleges, as well as school boards and a variety of community- and literacy-based organizations, provide LBS programming in person and virtually.

The description of the Apprenticeship goal path (AGP) in LBS documentation is broad and encompasses both potential apprentices and learners who are seeking skills training in a range of fields.

The Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework (OALCF) provides direction to LBS service providers by articulating the description of the various learner goal paths, including the Apprenticeship goal path (AGP).

The following definition was published in the OALCF's October 2011 *Goal Path Description for Practitioners and Learners – Apprenticeship*:

“This goal path description addresses options available to learners who wish to enter into a skilled trade or enter a specific occupation which requires the completion of a skills training program.

Apprenticeship is on-the-job workplace training for those who want to pursue a career in the skilled trades. Apprenticeship training has often been termed ‘earning while learning.’ An apprenticeship is a legal contract between the apprentice and the employer that is registered with the apprenticeship authority, namely the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) in Ontario. Once the apprentice has signed an apprenticeship training agreement, they will receive on-the-job training from the employer or sponsor and also participate in classroom-based trade-related theoretical and practical training (usually referred to as ‘in-school’ training).

Skills training programs are designed to provide participants with job-specific skills. There are many skills training program providers. Programs vary in length, ranging from a few hours to several weeks or months. Generally, however, these programs do not exceed a 52-week period or an academic year (a period of 8 months). Many skills training programs grant certificates recognized by a specific professional body (e.g. Personal Support Worker, Truck Driver, Security Guard, etc.).”

—https://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/eopg/publications/OALCF_GPD_Apprenticeship_Oct_11.pdf (retrieved December 13, 2022)

In other words, the Apprenticeship goal path is used for learners who are apprenticeship bound and for learners who are interested in pursuing skills training. Apprenticeship goal path data would, therefore, include both types of learners.

In addition, some learners on the Apprenticeship goal path may be registered apprentices who are seeking support with some element of their in-school training, e.g. mathematics, reading, test-taking/study skills.

It should be noted that the reference document quoted above (the *OALCF Goal Path Description for Practitioners and Learners – Apprenticeship*) is out of date as the references to apprenticeship legislation are no longer valid.

2 A.3 | EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

ES offers a range of resources, supports and service components to respond to the career and employment needs of individuals and the skilled labour needs of employers, helping individuals on a path to higher skills training and employment. The five components of the Employment Service provide a highly flexible tool kit of services that can be customized to a client's particular needs. —<https://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/eopg/programs/es.html> (retrieved November 15, 2022)

ES is currently undergoing a transformation with the introduction of Service System Managers (SSM) which are pivotal to the Ontario's new integrated employment services model. ES service providers in SSM regions hold contracts with the SSM rather than the Ministry. The new model, along with the integration and collaboration with Ontario Works, has shifted the emphasis of ES to clients who face more significant barriers to employment.

ES is also delivered by a variety of community groups, agencies and colleges, with three prototype SSMs in operation and more being added through 2024.

2 B | GOVERNMENT & APPRENTICESHIP

Shortages of workers in the skilled trades in Ontario and across Canada are well-publicized. Consumers are likely aware of, or have personally experienced, delays in goods and services as a result of these shortages. The Government of Ontario, other provincial governments and the federal government are continuing their efforts to encourage individuals and employers to invest in apprenticeship training.

The Government of Canada has indicated that the skilled trades are critical to Canada's economic recovery and highlighted its recent efforts in a May 2022 announcement that \$247 million would be invested in projects to assist small and medium enterprises to hire 25,000 apprentices. —<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/news/2022/05/government-of-canada-helps-to-create-more-than-25000-apprenticeship-positions-across-canada.html> (retrieved November 14, 2022)

The federal government provides financial incentives and a variety of supports for employers and apprentices. These include Employment Insurance (EI) for eligible apprentices during block release in-school training, tax deductions and tax credits, supports specifically for employers, and funding opportunities for skilled trades and apprenticeship. —<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/jobs/training/support-skilled-trades-apprentices.html> (retrieved October 13, 2022)

In its 2022 Budget, the Government of Ontario committed to additional funding for promotional efforts to encourage apprenticeships while maintaining its ongoing investments such as apprenticeship in-school training, pre-apprenticeship training programs, and financial supports for apprentices and employers.

“Ontario is investing an additional \$114.4 million over three years in its Skilled Trades Strategy to break the stigma associated with the skilled trades, simplify the system and encourage employer participation.”

—<https://budget.ontario.ca/2022/chapter-1b.html#s-2> (retrieved October 13, 2022)

SKILLED TRADES ONTARIO (STO) is a new Crown agency created by the Government of Ontario, replacing the Ontario College of Trades. It operates at arms-length from the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development and is responsible for skilled trades certification in Ontario, which includes:

- establishing apprenticeship programs, including training standards, curriculum standards and certification exams
- assessing experience and qualifications of individuals who have not completed an apprenticeship program in Ontario
- issuing Certificates of Qualification in all trades with certifying exams
- renewing Certificates of Qualification in compulsory trades
- maintaining a Public Register of people authorized to work in compulsory trades
- conducting research in relation to apprenticeship and the trades

STO is also working toward:

- addressing the labour shortage in the skilled trades sector
- simplifying access to services by building a “one-window” online channel for all skilled trades and apprenticeship clients
- promoting the trades as a career of choice

—<https://www.skilledtradesontario.ca/about-us/mandate/> (retrieved November 15, 2022)

Ontario established STO as the ‘customer-facing’ entity responsible for compulsory trades. By providing distinct portals for employers and apprentices, individuals and employers may complete applications for apprenticeships, grants and exams directly on STO's website. STO also serves as a registry for licensed journeypersons. A record of all apprentices and licensed journeypersons in the compulsory trades can be found on the STO website.

2 C | ONTARIO'S PUBLIC COLLEGES & EO PROGRAM DELIVERY

Ontario's 24 public colleges have a commitment to workforce development, offering a wide array of relevant postsecondary programs (including apprenticeships) and innovative, community-based initiatives. Colleges are recognized for their collaboration with all levels of government, employers and stakeholders in their communities. The colleges have been integral to the delivery of EO programs and services, with digital services and delivery sites reaching learners, employers, apprentices and clients across the province. Most colleges are involved in the delivery of all three EO programs: LBS, Apprenticeship and ES.

2 C.1 | APPRENTICESHIP

Colleges are among the Training Delivery Agents (TDAs) approved by the Government of Ontario to deliver in-school apprenticeship training. Colleges currently deliver over 80% of in-school apprenticeship training in a wide range of compulsory and non-compulsory trades. Apprentices who enter in-school training at a college have already secured employment, have signed a Registered Training Agreement (RTA) and have likely been working for about one year prior to in-school training, according to college representatives. The average age of an apprentice is ~28 years old.

Ontario's public colleges also offer pre-apprenticeship training and Co-op Diploma Apprenticeship (CODA) programs as well a variety of one-, two- and three-year post-secondary skilled trades programs which lead to employment — and which may then lead to an apprenticeship.

In trades with higher technical and math requirements, it is not uncommon for employers to seek and hire college graduates as a prerequisite for an apprenticeship.

2 C.2 | LITERACY & BASIC SKILLS

Ontario's public colleges deliver the Literacy and Basic Skills program and a range of academic upgrading programs to assist learners who wish to upgrade their skills as a requirement for employment or postsecondary education, including entry into an apprenticeship. All 24 colleges deliver LBS in-person on college campuses at over 80 sites in cities and smaller communities across Ontario.

A cornerstone of college LBS programs is individualized scheduling with a variety of delivery options available to learners. LBS programs may be offered as day, evening or weekend classes and may include virtual components.

The Academic and Career Entrance (ACE) program offers adults in Ontario the chance to achieve their grade 12 equivalency, improve their high school marks and qualify for the college program, apprenticeship and career of their choice. ACE students prepare for college at college, as college students, with all the advantages and supports that colleges offer.

Only Ontario public colleges and the ACE Distance program, an e-learning option exclusively available online, can deliver ACE courses and provide the ACE credential (certificate).

Typically, ~10% of the learners in LBS identify the Apprenticeship goal path as their choice in a given year.

In addition to providing communications and math courses, colleges also provide relevant science courses for learners on the Apprenticeship goal path.

2 C.3 | EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Most colleges deliver Employment Services, often in off-campus locations in communities throughout Ontario.

College ES service providers have a good understanding of local labour market conditions and strong connections to local employers. Some college ES service providers are now under contract to Service System Managers, rather than directly with the Ministry, as a result of the recent ES delivery model transformation.



3. FINDINGS

A variety of sources and resources were used to help identify issues and determine findings relative to LBS and apprenticeship in the college environment, including:

- a review of recent, relevant literature regarding apprenticeship in Ontario;
- a survey of college LBS managers;
- a scan of college websites; and
- discussions with program collaborators.

Following is a summary of these issues and findings.

3 A | LITERATURE REVIEW

Educators, government and employers have consistently indicated concerns regarding the low completion rates among apprentices. Though it may vary somewhat by sector, approximately 50% of apprentices complete an apprenticeship or obtain their certification in Canada.

An infographic released by StatsCan on December 9, 2020 notes:

“Despite the increasing need for skilled tradespeople, data suggest that the overall certification rate has declined over time. Over the past three decades, the number of certificates awarded to apprentices has been growing at a slower rate than the number of new registrations in apprenticeship programs. Indeed, the number of new registrations per year has more than doubled during this period—increasing from 31,368 in 1991 to 77,573 in 2019—while the number of certificates granted has increased by only 47% during the same period (from 35,634 to 52,368).”

—<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75-006-x/2020001/article/00008-eng.htm>

(retrieved November 22, 2022)

Generally, factors such as finances, job instability, personal issues and program issues, which may include administration or academic preparedness, are cited as reasons why individuals do not complete their apprenticeship. Organizations like the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum are at the forefront of advocacy and research regarding apprenticeship, most recently receiving \$575,000 to develop and implement an opioid harm reduction strategy for apprentices working in construction. —<https://canada.constructconnect.com/dcn/news/ohs/2022/07/caf-receives-funding-to-tackle-apprentice-opioid-use> (retrieved November 14, 2022)

For this EO / COLLEGE CONNECTIONS project, the review was limited to reports which included references to literacy and numeracy skills of apprentices in Ontario.

For example, in 2013, the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU), which at that time was responsible for apprenticeship training in Ontario, was concerned that there were insufficient literacy and numeracy supports for apprentices who required upgraded skills, thereby contributing to low completion rates. MTCU issued an RFP for “A Consultant to Conduct Research on Effective Technical Literacy and Numeracy Supports for the Ontario Apprenticeship Context,” an indicator that solutions to these issues were being examined and considered.

An excellent resource is the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario, an agency of the Government of Ontario, and the only organization of its kind in Canada. Dedicated to evidence-based research focused on finding solutions to the pressing challenges facing higher education, HEQCO explores the pathways to critically important student and system outcomes. Its research and reports are available to the public on the HEQCO website: www.heqco.ca

HEQCO has supported extensive research and numerous reports exploring various aspects of apprenticeship in Ontario, including an excellent summary by Reffling and Dion (2009) entitled *Apprenticeship in Ontario: An Exploratory Analysis*.

Several reports have focused on issues related to apprenticeship completion rates including Graeme Stewart's 2009 report *Apprenticeship Training in Ontario: Review and Options for Further Research*. In his extensive review of the literature, Stewart identifies the following areas of concern:

- **Lack of emphasis on 'soft' employability skills.** Many studies suggest that a significant proportion of apprentices lack important literacy, numeracy, and workplace skills, and therefore are ill-prepared for entry into employment (CAF, 2004; CBC, 2002; Lehmann, 2005; Sharpe & Gibson, 2005).
- **Low completion rates.** Evidence from a variety of sources (Sharpe, 2003; Sharpe & Gibson, 2005; Skof, 2006) demonstrates that apprenticeship completion rates in Canada have remained stagnant or declined despite an increase in apprenticeship registrations. While this may be a function of the time it takes most apprentices to complete their programs, this also suggests there may be insufficient supports in place to ensure that registered apprentices are able to complete their training.

At the conclusion of Stewart's report, he recommends that additional research be conducted, including "an exploration of how the apprenticeship system can adapt to the growing importance of 'soft skills' (particularly literacy, numeracy, and communication skills) to labour market success — higher entrance requirements, academic upgrading or other approaches?"

Other factors may also affect the academic readiness of individuals beginning their apprenticeship, including time out of school and completion of other postsecondary education. In their 2020 report *Diving into the Trades: An In-depth Look at 10 Apprenticeship Programs in Ontario*, Chatoor and Brumwell identify the following:

Most apprentices begin their training several years after being in the workforce.

In most trades, apprentices were far more likely to enter an apprenticeship from the workforce rather than directly from school. Except for hairstylists (44%), electricians (42%) and machinists (38%), a majority of apprentices in our profiled trades reported having worked in a related trade before enrolling in an apprenticeship program. This was especially true in carpentry (74%) and food services (80%).

Of all those who participated in an apprenticeship, 20% had previously completed a postsecondary credential.

About one-fifth of apprentices across the 10 profiled trades said they had attained a postsecondary credential before starting an apprenticeship. In some trades it is common to complete a college or university credential before starting an apprenticeship. This is true for food-services workers, refrigeration and heating tradespeople, and millwrights. In each of these groups, at least 40% of new entrants already held a postsecondary credential. On the other hand, only 10% of automotive tradespeople and 13% of plumbers enter their field with a postsecondary credential.

In 2014, data related to a project evaluating an essential skills assessment tool revealed that 20% of the apprentices who completed the assessment did not meet the minimum skill levels in reading and an even greater group did not meet some of the minimum skill levels in math.

"The concerns of college educators that some apprentices lack the foundational math and communications skills were validated by the assessment results of the 106 apprentice test-takers, where fully one-fifth did not meet the minimum skill levels in reading and document use and an even larger group did not meet some of the minimum skill levels in math." —Clark, B., & Jurmain, M. (2014). *Evaluating Essential Skills for Ontario's Tradespeople (ESOT) Project*. Toronto: Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario.

3 B | SURVEY OF COLLEGE LBS PROVIDERS

College LBS managers and staff are aware of the priority that the Ministry has placed on apprenticeship and LBS integration. It was important, therefore, to survey college LBS managers to identify the opportunities, challenges and limitations that this emphasis on integration poses for staff and learners/apprentices.

The CSCAU prepared and distributed a survey to each college LBS manager indicating that responses could reflect college wide experiences or be site-specific, as many colleges deliver LBS in more than one location or community. The CSCAU received 19 responses representing 17 colleges or 70% of college LBS deliverers. The survey and responses appear in this report as [APPENDIX B](#).

3 B.1 | LEARNERS IN THE APPRENTICESHIP GOAL PATH

The Ministry's Employment Ontario Information System-Case Management System (EOIS-CaMS) data for the years 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-21 reveals that colleges delivered LBS to more than 19,000 learners in "normal" years but fewer than this during the height of the pandemic closures in 2020-21. The percentage of learners identifying the Apprenticeship goal path (AGP) has increased from 9% to 11% in the last three years. The learner data for the LBS e-Channel ACE Distance program, also shown below, indicates both an increase in the number of learners and an increase in the number of learners identifying the AGP.

This data, however, does not accurately reflect the varied paths that learners in LBS may take to achieve their apprenticeship goal.

FIRST, as noted previously, the AGP learner data captures both apprenticeship-bound learners and "skills training"- bound learners. Since there is no distinction made in EOIS-CaMS data between these groups, the number of learners on the Apprenticeship goal path is inflated. In addition, registered apprentices who come to LBS for support are also included on the AGP. Although the number of registered apprentices in LBS programs is tracked separately in EOIS-CaMS (outside of the AGP data), the fact that they are attached to the Apprenticeship goal path further inflates the number of learners on the AGP who are actually seeking an apprenticeship.

There may also be inaccuracies in the AGP numbers where learners are attached to the AGP, due to outdated information in the 2011 *OALCF Apprenticeship Goal Path Descriptions* document, when in fact they should be attached to a different goal path for the LBS program. A good example of this is for learners who are in LBS to prepare for entry to the PSW (Personal Support Worker) program. The 2011 *OALCF Apprenticeship Goal Path Descriptions* document indicates that PSW is a skills training program, so learners who are preparing for PSW should be attached to the AGP.

Although PSW was a skills training program in 2011, now, and for the past many years, PSW has been a postsecondary program (at public or private colleges), or more recently a secondary school credit program at a school board. Since some LBS learners pursuing PSW (and other programs) are still being incorrectly attached to the Apprenticeship goal path, the AGP numbers are further inflated.

SECOND, many LBS learners interested in apprenticeship are first preparing in LBS for a postsecondary certificate or diploma program (usually in the skilled trades) both to make themselves more marketable to apprenticeship employers and for their own knowledge and preparation. In that case, they will be recorded in LBS on the Postsecondary goal path, since apprenticeship is not their next destination when they leave LBS.

THIRD, some LBS learners pursuing apprenticeship will do so by seeking entry level employment in the trade first. In fact, many employers “test drive” potential apprentices in this way before hiring them as apprentices. So, these learners may be recorded on the Employment goal path in LBS, not the Apprenticeship goal path, since their destination on leaving LBS is direct employment.

FOURTH, learners pursuing an apprenticeship who do not have the academic requirement for the trade may be pursuing OSSD credit courses or GED testing, after LBS, and thus may be recorded on the Secondary School Credit goal path. Learners seeking to complete the ACE certificate to qualify for apprenticeship registration are likely recorded correctly on the Apprenticeship goal path as they can move directly into apprenticeship (if they have an employer or sponsor) after completing their ACE certificate.

FIGURE 1
LBS DASHBOARD DATA,
COLLEGE SECTOR

Year	Registered Apprentices in LBS	App Goal Path	Total LBS	AGP % of total
18/19	1443	1719	19859	9%
19/20	1056	1976	19244	10%
20/21	977	1749	15159	11%

FIGURE 2
ACE DISTANCE
(LBS E-CHANNEL,
COLLEGE SECTOR)

Year	Apprenticeship Goal Path	Total Learners	AGP % of total
18/19	76	1609	5%
19/20	98	1901	5%
20/21	167	2324	7%

Source: *Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) Dashboard Reports, 2018-19, 2019-20, & 2020-21*
(Ontario Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development)

Survey respondents were asked to indicate how the numbers of learners in the Apprenticeship goal path during the pandemic compared to previous years. Most respondents indicated that the number was relatively the same, with most sites reporting fewer than 40 learners on the AGP during 2020-21.

As mentioned above, potential apprentices may be on the Postsecondary goal path in LBS because they wish to take a trade-related certificate or diploma program, prior to seeking an apprenticeship. Based on their general observations, respondents were asked how common this route is for learners and more than half indicated that this was somewhat or very common.

3 B.2 | SUPPORTS FOR APPRENTICESHIP GOAL PATH LEARNERS

Support for potential apprentices has primarily taken two forms at most colleges: integration with pre-apprenticeship programs, and/or curriculum development or adaptation to meet the needs of AGP learners. Most college LBS programs have undertaken one or both approaches, while only three respondents indicated that their program has not done anything specific to support potential apprentices.

Integrating with pre-apprenticeship programs	Curriculum development or adaptation	We haven't done anything specific to support potential apprentices
8 responses	10 responses	3 responses

Several colleges also provided examples of other supports for apprentices including a partnership with the Ontario Masonry Training Centre to provide math support and participation in local apprenticeship committees and networks which support apprenticeship initiatives.

3 B.3 | RESULTS OF THE SUPPORTS FOR AGP LEARNERS

Respondents were asked to describe any results that they are seeing due to the efforts noted above. Pre-apprenticeship activities were cited as successful initiatives by several colleges, though these programs were hampered by the pandemic. Other colleges cited specific curriculum development/adaptation in math and options for writing exercises and topics that support trades. One college indicated that EARAT (Evaluating Academic Readiness for Apprenticeship Training) is used to assess and support AGP learners. The use of the ESOT tool (Essential Skills for Ontario Tradespeople) was also mentioned.

3 B.4 | SUPPORT FOR REGISTERED APPRENTICES ATTENDING IN-SCHOOL TRAINING AT A COLLEGE

College LBS/Academic Upgrading programs may also be a resource and support for registered apprentices who are at risk academically while taking their in-school training at a college. Respondents were asked to indicate whether support is provided to registered apprentices at their college and if so, how is it provided and if not, what barriers exist to doing so.

Of the nineteen responses received, seven respondents have tried and/or do provide support for registered apprentices, while fourteen respondents indicate that they no longer or do not currently provide this support.

Q: HAS YOUR LBS/AU PROGRAM SUPPORTED REGISTERED APPRENTICES ATTENDING YOUR COLLEGE?

A: Yes, in a limited fashion. A couple of campuses have tried to provide structured upgrading support to registered apprentices; however, despite encouragement from the Trades faculty, the students did not engage. It's unclear what the cause of this was.

A: *Previous work included boot camp style approach to year 1 apprentices and integrated support. In summary....nothing has been perfect, but similar to above, good results for some learners.*

A: Yes, our campus completed a project with registered apprentices supporting them with their in-schooling learning/ training.

A: *Yes, about 1% of our total learners (15) have been registered apprentices. Most of these are seeking additional training or certifications.*

A: Yes, we provide math support workshops to student in the electrical and plumbing programs.

Q: IF NO, INDICATE BARRIERS THAT YOU AND/OR THE APPRENTICES FACE.

A: *No. Our pre- and apprenticeship programs have developed a math course of their own similar to LBS/AU. This is provided when students are a risk resulting in limited referrals. Perception of students having to 'go backwards.' Not enough collaboration to work on scheduling offer courses.*

A: “No, we no longer support registered apprentices attending our college. In 2016, 2017, 2018 we used to be provided with a list of registered apprentices who we contacted to determine if they would be interested in upgrading their literacy and numeracy skills. As participation was not mandatory, no one ever took us up on the offer.”

A: “No. Barriers include:

- *Apprentice's time and commitment level. Apprentices may not be inclined to commit to upgrading when they are engaged in work and training in their field. They may not see the benefit to participation.*
- *Lack of communication/collaboration among internal college departments.”*

A: “Little/no support of registered apprentices. We have been invited by APPR program officer to attend orientation for all levels of electrician, carpenter, plumber. Prior to pandemic this was a regular info session provided regarding AU.

Barriers include (not limited to referrals from college program):

- apprentices are often working long hours – too tired to be able to access supports, often parent advocate.
- Limited time to engage with AU due to demands of trades class; may change now that we can offer online training supports
- Cost for apprentices to do block training (may limit the number of available referral candidates)

A: “No, as any registered apprentices are working full-time so they are referred to our Distance Education ACE online program.”

A: “We do not generally have students interested in an apprenticeship. However, if we did, we would absolutely support them in any way we can.”

A: “Need additional resources to dedicate to making a stronger connection with our Apprenticeship Department”

3 B.5 | WHAT IS PREVENTING COLLEGES FROM PROVIDING THESE SUPPORTS?

Though most college LBS providers seem keen to support potential and /or current apprentices, there may be obstacles that prevent this from occurring. Respondents were asked to identify or describe what prevents them from doing more in LBS/AU to support potential and/or current apprentices.

Responses ranged from “nothing prevents us” to concerns about lack of resources, to opportunities to improve linkages and other current circumstances such as lack of apprentices or apprenticeship programs in a geographic area.

Here is a sampling of the nineteen responses received:

Q: WHAT IS PREVENTING YOU FROM PROVIDING THESE SUPPORTS?

RESPONDENTS WHO DID NOT IDENTIFY BARRIERS

- A:** *"Nothing is preventing us. We have the tools to support these potential learners."*
- A:** *"Nothing - currently apprentices use in-house/faculty support, not within the LBS area"*
- A:** *"Nothing prevents us from it. We are available to all students at any time to help them. We just haven't had any current apprentices asking for assistance. Our welders take our program before entering into an apprenticeship. We do support our welding students."*
- A:** *"Nothing prevents us from supporting apprentices. Have seen low/no interest from apprentices."*

RESPONDENTS WHO IDENTIFIED LACK OF RESOURCES AS BARRIER

- A:** *"Limited marketing funding"*
- A:** *"Funding"*
- A:** *"Time and resources"*
- A:** *"Lack of people resources to properly market AU services to other departments. Helping these departments to understand the benefits to both the learner and the host school (i.e., program retention, success in post-education)."*

RESPONDENTS WHO IDENTIFIED CIRCUMSTANCES AS BARRIERS

- A:** *"Registered apprentices' willingness to participate and see our support as a value-added service. They are not willing to take on any extra work in addition to their apprenticeship training."*
- A:** *"Having enough registered apprentices in our geographic area to work with (which we don't)"*
- A:** *"We have considered offering a 'Pathways to Apprenticeship' workshop to interested participants but we find that most of our learners have goal paths of employment or postsecondary."*
- A:** *"Voluntary participation - offering apprentices 'pre' support tends to be very low participation rates; however, offering integrated training for year 1s results in not enough time available as we are trying to cram our support in with level 1 [apprenticeship] curriculum."*

- A:** *“Almost all apprentices who are currently working already have their grade 12. If they do not have their grade 12 and are working towards being an apprentice, they will do their schooling at night or on the weekends when we are closed. Therefore, they would be referred to Distance Education for ACE online learning.”*
- A:** *“Lack of apprenticeship programs at our college. Difficulty faced by newcomers who are interested in apprenticeship but cannot find employers to supervise.”*

RESPONDENTS WHO IDENTIFIED INTERNAL COLLEGE LINKAGES AS BARRIERS

- A:** *“Pre-app and apprenticeship programs have developed a math course of their own similar to LBS/AU. This is provided when students are at risk.”*
- A:** *“Communication/integration between AU and college trades instructors and students (disconnect).*
 - Clear understanding of processes and resources available to apprentices – knowing the best referrals/pathway for candidates to ensure they can get what they need
 - LBS assessments: considered a barrier by some”
- A:** *“Our Construction Dept. and the apprenticeship system is very rigid; we've attempted for 10 years to do more, but their schedules are inflexible (can't support learners before they officially register, tough to support them when they're mid-stream)*
- A:** *“Lack of engagement/collaboration with other college departments who primarily support apprentices (operating in a silo).”*

3 B.6 | REFERRALS INTERNALLY FROM APPRENTICESHIP TO LBS

Respondents were asked to indicate whether they receive referrals to LBS/AU from apprenticeship programs at their college. Eight respondents indicated that yes, they do receive referrals, nine respondents said that they did not and two indicated that they do not but are open to establishing a referral process.

The respondents who indicated that they do receive referrals were asked to describe the challenges, if any, in the referral process. Several respondents noted their support of pre-apprenticeship programs and the challenge of having too few apprentices in their geographic area.

Q: DO YOU RECEIVE REFERRALS TO LBS/AU FROM APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS AT YOUR COLLEGE?

- A:** "Great linkages and referral processes in place but challenges with timing again. For example, if an apprentice is deemed in need of our support, sometimes it's 'too late' or mid-stream in the [apprenticeship] program."
- A:** "We don't usually get individual referrals from apprenticeship programs, likely because we haven't hit on the right process to identify and refer candidates, and because there are other, better-known supports that target postsecondary students, including apprentices, (e.g. tutors, drop-in supports). However, we do occasionally have discussions with apprenticeship programs about supporting whole classes, with outcomes described above."
- A:** "Very few. Have had interest in LBS/AU support but no referrals received from trades program faculty to date. Students are made aware of LBS supports but no established/intentional connection made. (Note: One college is in the process of improving processes to engage with trades faculty to support students – e.g., use of assessments and/or referrals for students who are struggling)"
- A:** "No - In the past - Perception of students having to 'go backwards.' Not enough collaboration or turnaround time to provide courses. Apprenticeship Chairs looking outside college for opportunities via Ministry offers and extra money."
- A:** "Have not received referrals from our college's apprenticeship programs. Possible lack of communication with the apprenticeship department; apprentices not seeking LBS support, or not realizing that they can register for LBS and continue their apprenticeship in-class training at the same time."
- A:** "We receive no referrals in from our apprenticeship programs. Once they are in the program, apprentices don't want to take on additional training and if they require support the college would likely refer them to our Student Academic Learning Services."
- A:** "No. Similar to above. Lack of engagement/collaboration."
- A:** "No. I feel that we need to re-connect with these programs to build a relationship that will result in students being referred to us when needed."
- A:** "No - I'm not aware of any specific barriers."
- A:** "No, needs to be more of an area of focus as we come out from the pandemic to make more connections with this area of our college"

3 B.7 | REFERRALS FROM EXTERNAL APPRENTICESHIP TDAs TO LBS

Respondents were asked to identify whether they receive referrals to LBS/AU from non-college apprenticeship training providers (TDAs such as unions or private trainers). Of the nineteen respondents, eleven said they did not receive any referrals primarily because they do not have relationships with non-college TDAs or previous promotion resulted in little or no results. Three respondents weren't sure if any of these referrals occurred and five respondents do receive referrals from unions such as LIUNA and from the Ontario Masonry Training Centre.

3 B.8 | REFERRALS FROM ES TO LBS

Respondents were asked to identify whether they receive referrals from Employment Services (college or non-college ES providers) for potential apprentices, again asking for the identification of challenges or barriers. Of the nineteen responses, half indicated that they do receive referrals and half indicated that they do not receive referrals.

Q: ARE YOU RECEIVING REFERRALS FROM ES?

- A: *"Yes, but once I speak to the apprentice and find out their hours I will refer them to Distance Education for ACE online learning."*
- A: *"Yes, for College Employment Services and No, for non-college provider, barriers are lack of learners available, location of our training centre."*
- A: *"Yes, we do receive referrals from our Employment Centre, when applicable. If we have a course that will assist/benefit one of their clients, they are referred to us."*
- A: *"Yes, on occasion, but infrequently."*
- A: *"These referrals would be few. With my ES hat on, I would say that the reason is identified above: only those who need the academic credential to be hired by an employer are interested in upgrading."*
- A: *"Yes, although numbers are low. The situation of an individual coming into ES and finding out they need LBS support and being proactive enough to seek the training prior to an apprenticeship is very unique."*

Q: ARE YOU NOT RECEIVING REFERRALS FROM ES?

- A:** *"No. I feel we need to re-connect with these service providers to re-build our relationships to increase our referrals, both in and out."*
- A:** *"This has not happened for many years."*
- A:** *"No. Barriers include:
-Networking among departments, regular conversations and opportunities to understand each other's roles.
-Inviting community partners/agencies, e.g., unions to the college"*
- A:** *"Usually provide referral to ES to facilitate connections to employers: placement and registration support"*
- A:** *"No, there seems to be a lack of interest from apprentices and a lack of communication with the Ministry apprenticeship folks. This is hopefully going to lessen once our department initiates increased communication directly with our college apprenticeship department."*
- A:** *"NO - Lack of established referrals, focused meetings allowing for knowledge sharing and partnership exploration. At this time, local LBS network not focused on apprenticeship."*

3 B.9 | REFERRALS FROM ES WITHIN THE SSM REGIONS

Respondents in the three prototype SSM regions were asked to identify if the new model has had any effect on referrals.

Q: HAS THE NEW SSM MODEL HAD ANY EFFECT ON REFERRALS?

- A:** *"Referrals have been negatively impacted. Seeing some improvement in late 2021-22 and into current fiscal."*
- A:** *"We received a lot more before the new system was implemented."*
- A:** *"It is hard to say because the pandemic has affected referrals from outside agencies of all types"*
- A:** *"There is only one site in our catchment that is in a SSM region. They have not seen a change in the referrals from ES (there were few before and there continue to be few)."*
- A:** *"No, needs to be more of an area of focus as we come out from the pandemic to make more connections with this area of our college."*
- +** *"No effect. In fact, SSMs are not avid proponents of apprenticeship, and have not engaged or asked any questions about LBS/AU."*

3 B.10 | HOW TO MAKE LBS SUPPORT FOR APPRENTICES EASIER

Finally, respondents were asked to identify or describe what would make it easier for their /AU program to support potential and/or current apprentices. Each of the nineteen respondents provided comments:

- A:** *“Establishing **solid connections** with ES, Union, non-union College and Apprenticeship. Providing continuous offerings similar to the math offered to Masonry. Also money to market LBS.”*
- A:** *“Communication of the opportunity via apprenticeship Ministry office, in order to **increase interest** in LBS training.”*
- A:** *“**Funding for outreach and marketing** to appropriate community connections.”*
- A:** *“Current apprentices – **incentive or buy-in** regarding the importance of LBS/upgrading in apprenticeship”*
- A:** *“Collaborate with other college LBS providers to create a common LBS pre-apprenticeship pathways training to increase **awareness of training opportunities** available and encourage learners to engage in the training.”*
- A:** *“MLITSD making **pre-apprenticeship LBS training a mandatory component of apprenticeship training.**”*
- A:** *“I’ve been promoting a plan for years to Ministry and beyond....I believe mandatory ESOT (or similar) **assessment for all incoming apprentices** would identify individuals in need early and proactively rather than finding out during level 1 training.”*
- A:** *“As the Ministry still holds the responsibility for apprenticeship sign-ups, that should be a main referral source as that’s where most of the detailed discussions take place around apprenticeship:
 1. **Formal educational requirements** set out by the government
 2. **Systematic academic testing** of potential apprentices, whether or not they meet the minimum educational requirements.
 3. **Referrals from Ministry** offices (or whoever is doing the testing) to funded LBS sites.
 4. **Messaging to potential apprentices** and employers about the importance of academic readiness for apprenticeship success.”*
- A:** *“We don’t have the volume to be able to identify what we would need. To date we have been able to support those apprentices who have come our way.”*

- A:** “Collaborative process planning - to imagine **complementary processes** from the ground up, rather than trying to add a band-aid to a leaky pipe.”
- A:** “**Expand skilled trades workshop** and math support workshops”
- A:** “More referrals
- May need **more relevant materials and resources** if a greater number of referrals were available.
 - **Greater direction/support from Ministry** and provincial working groups”
- A:** “I believe that if a potential apprentice is already working 40 hours a week at his/her job, the last thing they will want is to come to a classroom to do upgrading. **Working from home** when their partners/children go to bed would be best.”
- A:** “A **reliable source of referrals** that would justify a specialized Apprenticeship class”
- A:** “**Educating the Faculty** that trains apprentices on the value of LBS”
- A:** “We need more apprentices in our area and **additional funding** for our program.”
- A:** “**Advertising** so that students know we are here, connecting with programs within our college, and connecting with companies outside of the college so that they are aware of what we can offer.”
- A:** “I believe we have the tools needed to support potential and/or current apprentices. With more **targeted marketing**, we could support more learners with this goal path”
- A:** “Additional resources.
Curriculum development with a focus on the specific apprenticeships (ie carpenter, pipefitter, electrician) to better support their specific needs”



3 C | COLLEGE WEBSITES

In 2009, the CSCAU received financial support from the Employment Ontario Network Development Fund (EONDF) for the project *Taking Action!*, a college network development project aimed at improving student and client outcomes in Employment Ontario (EO) programs at Ontario's colleges. Expanding and formalizing internal partnerships among staff working in Employment Ontario sponsored programs and service areas - Literacy and Basic Skills/ Academic Upgrading, Job Connect (now Employment Services), Apprenticeship and Employment Assistance Services was a primary goal of the project.

One component of the project included a thorough review of each college's website as it related to the three EO programs and as seen from the perspective of a user/client/learner. The results of the review concluded that most websites would benefit from enhanced information, simple, jargon-free language, and clear linkages to the other EO programs. These results were communicated to college EO program managers at that time.

For this report, a scan of all 24 college websites was completed to assess one factor only, that of cross referencing to other EO programs. In other words, did the apprenticeship information on a college's website also include links to LBS/AU and ES, perhaps making it easier for an apprentice/learner/client to find additional resources and assistance when needed.

First, it should be stated that every college's web pages for apprenticeship, LBS and ES have improved significantly since the review completed in 2009. Overall, each college provides more information for the apprentice/learner/client, the information is much easier to find using the website search functions, and most web pages have links or references to other EO programs and supports. There are numerous examples of this which can be found on Algonquin, Boréal, Conestoga, and Canadore Colleges' websites, to name a few. Some college websites do not have these linkages or references to the support and services provided by other EO programs.

3 D | SKILLED TRADES ONTARIO

As stated previously, Skilled Trades Ontario (STO) was formed in 2021 by the Government of Ontario and it is still in its start-up phase, with limited information on its website at this time. The STO website was scanned for any references to LBS or ES and the role that these EO programs may have in assisting apprentices or those wishing to enter an apprenticeship. There were two citations worth noting.

FIRST, the Exam Preparation Guide provides apprentices with information about the final certification exams which are taken upon conclusion of an apprenticeship (completion of all levels of in-school training and all hours on the job). The Exam Preparation Guide references LBS on page 10 and lists LBS as a special support as apprentices prepare for their certification exams.

—<https://www.skilledtradesontario.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/exam-preparation-guide-ver5-sto-june-17-2022-eng.pdf> (retrieved October 13, 2022)

SECOND, the Minister's mandate letter for STO, issued on April 29, 2022, outlines the operational priorities for 2022-2023 as well as requirements for the organization to build towards medium and longer-term priorities.

—<https://www.skilledtradesontario.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/exam-preparation-guide-ver5-sto-june-17-2022-eng.pdf> (retrieved October 13, 2022)

It includes the following requirement:

“to support promotion of skilled trades and apprenticeship, commence work with partners, such as Employment Ontario service providers, to identify pathways to apprenticeship.”

—<https://www.skilledtradesontario.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/sto-mandate-letter.pdf>

(retrieved October 13, 2022)

3 E | SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS

Subject matter experts were engaged to discuss the role that LBS can play in supporting current and potential apprentices. They provided valuable insights and suggestions as follows.

3 E.1 | COLLEGE SECTOR EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

The College Sector Employment Services (CSES) committee represents college-based providers of Employment Ontario career and employment services. The CSES Executive Director was asked to identify opportunities for, challenges to and limitations of apprenticeship, from her perspective, and responded as follows.

1. *Traditional ES providers are currently experiencing low demand for services due to current labour market conditions and low unemployment rates. Many vacant positions, particularly in service sector occupations, remain unfilled, while higher-level jobs still appeal to job seekers.*

2. SSM referrals to ES service providers consist primarily of clients with limited skills and who are furthest from the labour market. These referrals do not lend themselves to the apprenticeship pathway as clients do not likely meet academic thresholds or requirements for an apprenticeship and they also do not have an attachment to the labour market.
3. With the tight labour market, employers may be reluctant or unable to support the apprenticeship pathway as they don't want to invest in an apprenticeship only to lose any employee to another employer, or they cannot afford the apprentice's absence during in-school training.
4. If Ontario Works (OW) staff and SSM staff are unfamiliar with apprenticeship or have limited knowledge about apprenticeship requirements and pre-apprenticeship opportunities, there may be an opportunity to provide additional information to these sources of referrals.

3 E.2 | COLLEGES ONTARIO

Colleges Ontario is the association representing the province's 24 public colleges. The association promotes the colleges' pivotal role in strengthening the economy by producing graduates with the professional qualifications and expertise to succeed in rewarding careers. Colleges Ontario champions policy measures to strengthen the quality of programs available to students and implements provincewide marketing and communications campaigns to promote the full range of programs offered to students. Colleges Ontario also supports its operating committees and college members.

CO Research and Innovation staff highlighted several opportunities, identified by the colleges, to support apprenticeship.

1. Work with partners to **help change the impression of trades as "low skilled"** or a last resort. **Shift to using "profession"** when describing the trades.
2. The Ontario College Certificate apprenticeship project presents new opportunities.
3. There is an opportunity for colleges to **remove barriers to the skilled trades** for immigrants and international students.
4. There are opportunities to **improve college linkages to unions and union training centres**.
5. Colleges will **continue to champion the trades/apprenticeship training**.

It was also noted that the name 'LBS' – Literacy and Basic Skills – may not be attractive to potential or current apprentices.

3 E.3 | COLLEGE HEADS OF APPRENTICESHIP (HAT)

The Heads of Apprenticeship is a committee comprised of representatives from each of Ontario's 24 public colleges. Each HAT member is responsible for the delivery of apprenticeship training and related programs at their own college. The two co-chairs of HAT provided the following perspectives regarding the opportunities, challenges and limitations of LBS support for apprentices:

1. Academic **assessment prior to registration as an apprentice** is ideal and preferred.
2. Compulsory trades require a higher level of math and physics than previously. **Up-front investment in this upgrading** would likely result in higher retention rates.
3. The reality is that apprentices are already working full-time in the trade, average age of 28, out of school for some time, working full-time and taking part-time classes, or working full-time and away for block release training (allowing **little or no time for upgrading**, even if necessary). Note: also stated by LBS providers.
4. **Cross-placement and referral to LBS/apprenticeship resources** on college web pages are useful.
5. **College apprenticeship programs must accept all apprentices who are sent to in-school training by their employers** — regardless of the employer criteria used to select and hire the apprentice — whereas unions select apprentices, often requiring higher education levels, prior to the signing of the RTA and in-school training.
6. College apprenticeship programs are unlikely to refer apprentices to ES since apprentices are already working and colleges would not want to encourage apprentices to change jobs, thereby alienating employers.
7. **Less than 50% of apprentices complete their apprenticeship.** There are many reasons for this including **lack of employment, finances, and lack of academic preparedness.**
8. Skilled Trades Ontario will not change much to address systemic challenges.

Certain trades, such as electrician and motive power, are often referenced as trades that have become increasingly complex due to technology and, therefore, require higher levels of math. In the words of a HAT representative, "**Math is the deal-breaker for many apprentices.**"

3 E.4 | MLITSD

An Employment and Training Consultant provided an overview of recent updates:

1. *The mandate of STO and its goal of being the one customer-facing organization for employers and apprentices were explained. STO has a portal for apprentices and a separate portal for employers. Applications forms, grants, exam information are or will soon be available on the respective portals, supporting digital-first client services. The primary focus is compulsory trades.*
2. *The Ministry will continue to administer annual seat purchases plans and contracts with TDAs.*
3. *The new Building Ontario Skilled Trades Act (BOSTA) replaces previous legislation including the TQAA for construction trades.*
4. *The Ministry has allocated funds for promotion of skilled trades, including trades fairs across the province.*
5. *Union-delivered apprenticeship training appears to be on the rise.*
6. *Pre-apprenticeship funding will continue. Community agencies, partnering with colleges and unions, have been successful in obtaining more projects.*

4. KEY ISSUES

ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS

- The concerns about the academic preparedness of potential and current apprentices are researched and documented. This may be one factor contributing to the ~50% apprenticeship completion rate in Ontario.
- Apprentices are already fully engaged in training, work and personal commitments making it very difficult for them to focus on upgrading their literacy, numeracy and science skills, which would be voluntary and in addition to everything else they are doing.
- Some apprentices feel that academic upgrading after being signed as an apprentice is “having to go backwards.”

COMMUNICATION & LINKAGES WITH EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

- Skilled Trades Ontario has a mandate to work with EO service providers to help increase interest and enrolment in apprenticeship.
- There are opportunities to better inform external stakeholders about LBS and apprenticeship, as well as opportunities to promote the skilled trades as postsecondary level careers.
- College LBS programs in SSM regions indicate that ES referrals to LBS have been negatively impacted since the new system was implemented.
- Most college LBS programs do not receive referrals from non-college TDAs.

OTHER ISSUES IDENTIFIED BY COLLEGE LBS/AU PROGRAMS

- Increased funding from the Ministry is necessary for outreach and promotion. Some college LBS programs cite a lack of resources as a challenge in their desire to establish better linkages with other EO stakeholders, including apprenticeship, both internally and in the community.
- Expansion of pre-apprenticeship, skilled trades and math refresher workshops is needed.
- College LBS programs serve learners who identify the Apprenticeship goal path, which is ~10% or ~1800 learners annually. This data is misleading, as it captures both apprenticeship and skills-training bound LBS learners and does not capture learners who upgrade their skills in LBS in order to enter apprenticeship via a postsecondary program (or through related employment with a potential apprenticeship employer).
- College LBS program support for registered apprentices during their in-school training at college is mixed. Some college apprenticeship programs refer apprentices to college LBS programs, but not all, often reflecting the level of engagement between the two program areas.

5. OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES & LIMITATIONS

This report provides information that may assist College LBS/Academic Upgrading and other LBS providers to develop additional support for learners on (or considering) the Apprenticeship goal path. It highlights the facts about apprenticeship and the EO programs (Employment Services and Literacy and Basic Skills), the role Ontario's public colleges play in the delivery of these programs and recent research on apprenticeship. This report includes comments and insights from College LBS service providers and other collaborators with first-hand experience serving apprentices, clients and learners.

This section also identifies limitations that LBS programs cannot address under current circumstances.

OPPORTUNITIES (may also be challenges)

- **Integrate academic assessments** into the screening process for potential apprentices and for registered apprentices prior to in-school training. This would identify skills gaps much earlier and would give individuals time to upgrade their skills.
- **Re-establish internal college EO program connections.** College LBS/AU programs may initiate and renew connections with Apprenticeship and Employment Services program staff. Actions such as ensuring EO programs are cross referenced on college EO program web pages are suggested.
- LBS programs may continue to offer and promote **virtual classes** to meet the needs of working apprentices.
- The CSCAU could connect with Skilled Trades Ontario to help **inform STO staff** about LBS, related issues and supports for apprentices.
- LBS providers can continue to **promote and support pre-apprenticeship programs.**
- LBS providers may **establish linkages to non-college TDAs**, promoting literacy and math resources and courses for apprentices.
- **Inform and educate service providers** who may not be as familiar with LBS and the supports for potential apprentices. Staff from Ontario Works and the SSMs may need more information about LBS, apprenticeship, pre-apprenticeship and other routes to apprenticeship.

- Bolster the profile of apprenticeship by **promoting skilled trades** as a postsecondary option leading to a recognized professional career.

Example — the annual Premier's Awards:

The Premier's Awards for outstanding college graduates honour the important social and economic contribution that graduates make to Ontario and throughout the world. The awards were launched in 1992 and are administered by Colleges Ontario, the advocacy voice for the province's 24 colleges.

Many of Ontario's greatest contributors have a solid foundation in post-secondary education. The awards highlight some of these great builders, thinkers and leaders who have graduated from Ontario's colleges and contributed in significant ways to the country's economic prosperity and success.

*Presented annually, the Premier's Awards recognize graduates in the following seven categories – **Apprenticeship**, Business, Community Services, Creative Arts and Design, Health Sciences, Recent Graduate and Technology.*

—<https://www.co-awards.org/en/about> (retrieved December 14, 2022)

CHALLENGES (may also be opportunities)

- Apprentices have no **time for academic upgrading** in LBS programs or elsewhere. They work full time, attend in-school training and have personal commitments. Taking upgrading courses may be seen as a step backwards. Other issues may also affect apprentices such as opioid use in the construction trades, which is currently being researched by the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum.
- Employment Services Transformation and the move to the new SSM model is focused on clients with more barriers to employment who are less likely to have apprenticeship as a goal.
- Assessment of apprentices' literacy and numeracy skills prior to them signing an apprenticeship RTA is desirable, and preferred, but not widely available. **Early assessment and addressing academic gaps** prior to the commencement of an apprenticeship may lead to higher completion and certification rates.
- Improve **perceptions of apprenticeship** and skilled trades.
- Raise **awareness of math proficiency required** for success in the skilled trades.
- Modernize the **apprenticeship curriculum** to match current and future technologies.

LIMITATIONS

- Upgrading literacy and numeracy skills in an LBS program takes time, whether the learner is taking in-person or online courses. Generally, **LBS is not a quick fix**, depending on the learner's skills.
- **Assessment of an apprentice's literacy/numeracy skills is not required** by most employers/sponsors prior to signing a Registered Training Agreement, though this is often identified as a critical step in supporting apprentices.
- Apprentices may already have postsecondary credentials or courses, which makes it even more **difficult to engage them** in upgrading if they need it.
- The current Apprenticeship goal path definition and data in LBS do not accurately reflect LBS learner activity leading to an apprenticeship. The AGP data includes both learners who are apprenticeship and skills training bound. Learners on other routes or goal paths to apprenticeship (including postsecondary, secondary school credit and employment) are not identified in the data. In other words, the **CaMS data does not provide a true picture** of the number of LBS learners whose ultimate goal is to be hired as an apprentice.

FINAL THOUGHTS

These opportunities, challenges and limitations highlight the few actions that are currently within the scope of LBS programs and program delivery — and the significant issues which are not.

Establishing linkages with internal and external stakeholders, ensuring a variety of LBS learning options and improving information about LBS and its support for apprenticeship and skilled trades careers is achievable.

Many of the challenges and limitations identified above are beyond the scope and control of LBS; however, **LBS providers have insights and experiences which could inform and influence changes to provide better outcomes** for those on the apprenticeship journey.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A | LITERATURE & WEB REFERENCES

APPENDIX B | SURVEY OF COLLEGE LBS PROVIDERS

APPENDIX A

LITERATURE & WEBSITE REFERENCES

LITERATURE

Chatoor, K. & Brumwell, S. (2020) *Diving into the Trades: An In-depth Look at 10 Apprenticeship Programs in Ontario*. Toronto: Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario

Clark, B., & Jurmain, M. (2014). *Evaluating Essential Skills for Ontario's Tradespeople (ESOT) Project*. Toronto: Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario

Refling, E., & Dion, N. (2015). *Apprenticeship in Ontario: An Exploratory Analysis*. Toronto: Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario

Stewart, G. (2009). *Apprenticeship Training in Ontario: Literature Review and Options for Further Research*. Toronto: Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario

WEBSITES

GENERAL

Canadian Apprenticeship Forum: www.caf-fca.org

Colleges Ontario: www.collegesontario.org

College Sector Committee for Adult Upgrading: www.cscacu.com

Employment Ontario: www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/eopg/

Government of Canada: www.canada.ca

Government of Ontario: www.ontario.ca

Ministry of Colleges and Universities: www.ontario.ca/page/ministry-colleges-universities

Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development: www.labour.gov.on.ca

Red Seal: www.red-seal.ca

Skilled Trades Ontario: www.skilledtradesontario.ca

Statistics Canada: www.150.statcan.gc.ca

COLLEGE WEBSITES

Algonquin College: www.algonquincollege.com

College Boreal: www.collegeboreal.ca

Canadore College: www.canadorecollege.ca

Cambrian College: www.cambriancollege.ca

Centennial College: www.centennialcollege.ca

Conestoga College: www.conestogac.on.ca

Confederation College: www.confederationcollege.ca

Durham College: www.durhamcollege.ca

Fanshawe College: www.fanshawec.ca

George Brown College: www.georgebrown.ca

Georgian College: www.georgiancollege.ca

Humber College: www.humber.ca

La Cite: www.collegelacite.ca

Lambton College: www.lambtoncollege.ca

Loyalist College: www.loyalistcollege.ca

Mohawk College: www.mohawkcollege.ca

Niagara College: www.niagaracollege.ca

Northern College: www.northerncollege.ca

St. Clair College: www.stclaircollege.ca

St. Lawrence College: www.stlawrencecollege.ca

Sault College: www.saultcollege.ca

Seneca College: www.senecacollege.ca

Sheridan College: www.sheridancollege.ca

APPENDIX B

EO / COLLEGE CONNECTIONS SURVEY

All 24 colleges were invited to complete the survey, indicating that all responses would be published in aggregate only, with any identifiers removed.

Responses were received from 19 college LBS sites.

Questions 1, 2 and 3, which asked respondents to identify their college and contact information, are not included in this appendix.

QUESTION 4 | A

NUMBER OF APPRENTICESHIP GOAL PATH LEARNERS AS REPORTED IN 2020/21

QUESTION 4 | B

COMPARISON TO PRE-PANDEMIC NUMBERS

QUESTION 4 | C

POSTSECONDARY PROGRAMS FIRST

(19 responses)

- 4 | A How many LBS/AU learners were included in the Apprenticeship goal path for this site(s), as reported for 2021-2022 in CaMS? +
- 4 | B How does this compare to the number of learners on the Apprenticeship goal path pre-pandemic?

# App Goal Path learners in 2020/21		Pre-pandemic numbers	
Less than 10	11	Much less	3
10-20	2	Same	12
20-30	1	More	4
30-40	1		
More than 40	4		

- 4 | C Some potential apprentices may be on the Postsecondary goal path because they wish to take a trade-related certificate or diploma program, prior to seeking an apprenticeship. Based on general observations, how common do you think this route is for your learners?

Not Common	Somewhat Common	Very Common	Unsure
7	6	4	2

QUESTION 5

SUPPORT FOR POTENTIAL APPRENTICES

(19 responses)

- 5 | A What have you been able to do in LBS/AU in recent years to support potential apprentices? (multiple responses permissible)

Integrating with pre-apprenticeship programs	Curriculum development or adaptation	We haven't done anything specific to support potential apprentices
8 responses	10 responses	10 responses

- 5 | B Describe any other supports that have been put in place.

3 responses

Other supports		
Partnership with Ontario Masonry Training Centre with math support being provided May – July 2019 to learners in Stonemason Pre-apprenticeship program which was held at another college	Supporting ECE Pre-apprenticeship program with training for ACE certificate	Staff member sat on newly- created local Apprenticeship Network committee with other service providers/ organizations in the community to support apprenticeship initiatives

QUESTION 6

ARE YOU SEEING ANY RESULTS FROM ANY/ALL OF THESE EFFORTS? PLEASE DESCRIBE.

(19 responses: 14 comments and 5 no comment)

- A:** We are seeing great results with the Training Division now offering more Pre-Apprenticeship Programs. The Timmins Site specifically has had great success with students who have been taking either a refresher program or an ACE program through the Pre-Apprenticeship route. The pandemic did not affect these numbers as the Training Division was able to offer the programs on-line for all the theory."

QUESTION 6

ARE YOU SEEING ANY RESULTS FROM ANY/ALL OF THESE EFFORTS?

PLEASE DESCRIBE.

(continued)

A: Our first experience integrating with a pre-apprenticeship program at the college was in May 2021. We ran a three-week LBS training program specifically geared towards preparing 20 plumbing pre-apprenticeship students for their Plumbing Level 1 and a work placement. In May 2022, we ran three, three similar LBS training programs in conjunction with the college's School of Skilled Trades and our local Employment Services office. The three programs targeted underserved populations: Welding for Women (22 students), Plumbing for Newcomers (19 students), and Electrical for Indigenous (20 students). We are hopeful that this will become a reoccurring project.

A: *Yes. We have worked with a few students in the past (pre-pandemic), working through their needs while still maintaining the requirements of the ministry. We've had students branch off into an RV Mechanic School in BC after taking our course and passing their admissions testing, along with a student who went through for masonry. We've had a handful of students complete our 12C math course as well, gaining entrance into post-secondary apprentice programs.*

A: Curriculum development/adaptation - Math for Construction
- created based on feedback from sector
- no appreciable uptake to date

A: *We are seeing high retention rates and pathways to employment with very favourable outcomes for learners and feedback from employers.*

A: Yes, increased interest in the skilled trades.

A: *Yes. Although referrals and apprenticeship learners are minimal, learners are experiencing success when engaging with AU as part of their apprenticeship journey. The individualized content, resources, and support learners receive from dedicated faculty contributes to the success learners experience.*

A: Some of the work has produced positive results for 'some' of the learners. The most recent pre-apprenticeship support was dealing with a wide range of learner capabilities without the time available to provide a more customized approach. Some good results and some good learning for future offerings.

A: *Not sure of direct connections but our number has increased so it may be a result of this work*

A: It has been successful. We use the EARAT to evaluate in combination with our existing materials to support these learners.

A: *Students have the option to choose from a variety of writing exercises and topics that support trades and other career pathways.*

QUESTION 6

ARE YOU SEEING ANY RESULTS FROM ANY/ALL OF THESE EFFORTS?

Please describe.

(continued)

A: At the campuses where there is a lot of trades programming, there are very close between apprenticeship and upgrading. Where this isn't the case, the expertise isn't necessarily there for faculty and staff to coach students well. We need to revisit this as we renew our in-person programming.

A: *Not since 2019. The program has not been offered during the pandemic*

A: Since the spring of 2019 this offering has not been done.

QUESTION 7

HAS YOUR LBS/AU PROGRAM SUPPORTED REGISTERED APPRENTICES ATTENDING YOUR COLLEGE?

- If yes, please describe.
- If no, what barriers have you experienced?

YES

A: Yes, in a limited fashion. A couple of campuses have tried to provide structured upgrading support to registered apprentices; however, despite encouragement from the Trades faculty, the students did not engage. It's unclear what the cause of this was.

A: *Previous work included boot camp style approach to year 1s and integrated support. In summary....nothing has been perfect, but similar to above, good results for some learners.*

A: Yes, our Windsor campus completed a project with registered apprentices supporting them with their in-schooling learning/ training.

A: Yes, about 1% of our total learners (15) have been registered apprentices. Most of these are seeking additional training or certifications.

A: Yes, we provide math support workshops to student in the electrical and plumbing programs.

A: *Most applicants aren't registered apprentices. We have registered some journeymen.*

QUESTION 7

HAS YOUR LBS/AU PROGRAM SUPPORTED REGISTERED APPRENTICES ATTENDING YOUR COLLEGE?

- If yes, please describe.
- If no, what barriers have you experienced? *(continued)*

NO

A: No. Our pre and apprenticeship programs have developed a Math course of their own similar to LBS/AU. This is provided when students are at risk resulting in limited referrals. Perception of students having to 'go backwards.' Not enough collaboration to work on scheduling offer courses

A: *No, but we haven't investigated this as an option of supporting current apprentices*

A: No, we no longer support registered apprentices attending our college. In 2016, 2017, 2018 we used to be provided with a list of registered apprentices who we contacted to determine if they would be interested in upgrading their literacy and numeracy skills. As participation was not mandatory, no one ever took us up on the offer.

A: *No. Barriers include:*

-Apprentice's time and commitment level. Apprentices may not be inclined to commit to upgrading when they are engaged in work and training in their field. They may not see the benefit to participation.

-Lack of communication/collaboration among internal college departments.

A: Little/no support of registered apprentices. We have been invited by APPR program officer to attend orientation for all levels of electrician, carpenter, plumber. Prior to pandemic this was a regular info session provided regarding AU.

Barriers (not limited to referrals from college program):

- apprentices are often working long hours – too tired to be able to access supports, often parent advocate.
- Limited time to engage with AU due to demands of trades class; may change now that we can offer online training supports
- Cost for apprentices to do block training (may limit the number of available referral candidates)

A: *No, as any registered apprentice are working full-time so they are referred to our Distance Education ACE on-line.*

A: We used to - not currently

A: *We do not generally have students interested in an apprenticeship. However, if we did, we would absolutely support them in any way we can.*

A: We used to - not currently

A: Need additional resources to dedicate to making a stronger connection with our Apprenticeship Department

A: *We prepare students for apprentice programs with College Prep courses.*

A: Our College has only one apprenticeship program

QUESTION 8

WHAT PREVENTS YOU FROM DOING MORE IN LBS/AU TO SUPPORT POTENTIAL AND/OR CURRENT APPRENTICES?

(19 responses with multiple comments)

RESPONDENTS WHO DID NOT IDENTIFY BARRIERS

- A:** Nothing is preventing us. We have the tools to support these potential learners.
- A:** *Nothing - currently apprentices use in-house/Faculty support, not within the LBS area*
- A:** Nothing prevents us from it. We are available to all students at any time to help them. We just haven't had any current apprentices asking for assistance. Our welders take our program before entering into an apprenticeship. We do support our welding students.
- A:** *Nothing prevents us from supporting apprentices. Have seen low/no interest from apprentices.*

RESPONDENTS WHO IDENTIFIED LACK OF RESOURCES

- A:** Limited marketing funding
- A:** *Additional funding*
- A:** Funding
- A:** *Time and resources*
- A:** Lack of people resources to properly market AU services to other departments. Helping these departments to understand the benefits to both the learner and the host school (i.e., program retention, success post-education).

RESPONDENTS WHO IDENTIFIED CIRCUMSTANCES

- A:** *Registered apprentices' willingness to participate and see our support as a value-added service. They are not willing to take on any extra work in addition to their apprenticeship training.*
- A:** Having enough registered apprentices in our geographic area to work with.
- A:** *We have considered offering a "Pathways to Apprenticeship" workshop to interested participants but we find that most of our learners have goal paths of employment or postsecondary*
- A:** Voluntary participation - offering apprentices 'pre' support tends to be very low participation rates however, offering integrated training for year 1s results in not enough time available as we are trying to cram our support in with level 1 curriculum.
- A:** *Almost all apprentices who are currently working, already have their grade 12. If they do not have their Grade 12 and are working towards being an apprentice, they will do their schooling at night or on the weekends when we are closed. Therefore, they would be referred to Distance Education for on-line learning.*
- A:** Lack of apprenticeship programs at our college. Difficulty faced by newcomers who are interested in apprenticeship but cannot find employers to supervise.

QUESTION 8

WHAT PREVENTS YOU FROM DOING MORE IN LBS/AU TO SUPPORT POTENTIAL AND/OR CURRENT APPRENTICES? *(continued)*

RESPONDENTS WHO IDENTIFIED LACK OF LINKAGES

- A:** *Our college's pre and apprenticeship programs have developed a Math course of their own similar to LBS/AU. This is provided when students are at risk.*
- A:** - Communication/integration between AU and college trades instructors and students (disconnect).
- Clear understanding of processes and resources available to apprentices – knowing the best referrals/pathway for candidates to ensure they can get what they need
- Assessments: considered a barrier by some
- A:** *Our Construction Dept. and the Apprenticeship system is very rigid; we've attempted for 10 years to do more, but their schedules are inflexible (can't support learners before they officially register, tough to support them when they're mid-stream) & Lack of engagement/collaboration with other college departments who primarily support apprentices (operating in a silo).*
- A:** College Prep instructors encourage all career paths, including apprenticeships and trades

QUESTION 9

DO YOU RECEIVE REFERRALS TO LBS/AU FROM APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS AT YOUR COLLEGE?

- If yes, please describe. What are the challenges, if any, in the referral process?
- If no, what are the barriers preventing referrals? Please describe. *(18 responses)*

YES

- A:** Yes – We support math and communications pre-apprenticeship training.
- A:** *Yes, when they are running them. The last one offered at our campus was in 2018*
- A:** Yes, from the Pathways to Trades program.
- A:** *Yes, we do receive referrals from our Northern Training Division*
- A:** Only when the ECE Pre-apprenticeship program is offered.
- A:** *Referral to LBS for potential learner to apply to the powerline program and electrical techniques. We need more apprentices in our geographic area*
- A:** We have received referrals from our recruiting department for apprentice programs at our tri-campus college.
- A:** *Great linkages and referral processes in place but challenges with timing again. For example, if an apprentice is deemed in need of our support, sometimes it's 'too late' or mid-stream in the program.*

QUESTION 9

DO YOU RECEIVE REFERRALS TO LBS/AU FROM APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS AT YOUR COLLEGE?

- If yes, please describe. What are the challenges, if any, in the referral process?
- If no, what are the barriers preventing referrals? Please describe. *(continued)*

MAYBE

A: We don't usually get individual referrals from apprenticeship programs, likely because we haven't hit on the right process to identify and refer candidates, and because there are other, better-known supports that target postsecondary students (e.g. tutors, drop-in supports). However, we do occasionally have discussions with apprenticeship programs about supporting whole classes, with outcomes described above.

A: *Very few. Have had interest in AU support but no referrals received from trades program faculty to date. Students are made aware of LBS supports but no established/intentional connection made. (Note: Fleming LBS is in the process of improving processes to engage with trades faculty to support students – e.g., use of assessments and/or referrals for students who are struggling)*

NO

A: No - In the past - Perception of students having to 'go backward.' Not enough collaboration or turnaround time to provide courses. Apprenticeship Chairs looking outside college for opportunities via Ministry offers and extra money.

A: *Have not received referrals from our college's apprenticeship programs. Possible lack of communication with the apprenticeship department; apprentices not seeking LBS support, or not realizing that they can register for LBS and continue their apprenticeship in-class training at the same time.*

A: We receive no referrals in from our apprenticeship programs. Once there in the program they don't want to take on additional training and if they require support the college would likely refer them to our Student Academic Learning Services.

A: No

A: No. Similar to above. Lack of engagement/collaboration.

A: *No. I feel that we need to re-connect with these programs to build a relationship that will result in students being referred to us when needed.*

A: No - I'm not aware of any specific barriers.

A: *No, needs to be more of an area of focus as we come out from the pandemic to make more connections with this area of our college*

QUESTION 10

DO YOU RECEIVE REFERRALS TO LBS/AU FROM NON-COLLEGE APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING PROVIDERS E.G. UNIONS OR PRIVATE TRAINERS?

- If yes, please describe. What are the challenges, if any, in the referral process?
- If no, what are the barriers preventing referrals? Please describe.

(15 responses)

YES (5 responses)

- A:** Yes, Ontario Masonry Training Centre – connections since COVID are limited, timely offerings (mostly in spring)
- A:** Yes, receive some from community partners (and WoM) regarding candidates for union entrance – AMSA2 (math assessment) + PLAR = letter for union
- A:** Yes, from Liuna union
- A:** Yes, in the past. Making time/people resources to connect with these organizations and letting them know about our services
- A:** We have on occasion but they tend to refer to agencies closer (Humber College, for example, is far closer to large training centres)

MAYBE (3 responses)

- A:** Many community resources refer individuals to College Prep
- A:** Very seldom
- A:** Not very often as we are open Mon – Fri 8-4 when apprentices are generally working.

NO (7 responses)

- A:** No, not at this time. Barriers – distance/location, relationship with non-college apprenticeship providers
- A:** No, I don't know what the specific barriers would be. I feel that the companies in the community may not know about us and what we can offer.
- A:** No. I am unsure what the barriers would be; however, we could potentially target these locations with additional marketing.
- A:** No. We do not have relationships in AU with unions or other private organizations.
- A:** No. Not many in our area.
- A:** Dedicated efforts to promote programming to local unions with little or no return
- A:** No. This may be because there are none/few trade unions in our area; closest is Sudbury. And no private trainers.

QUESTION 11 | A

DO YOU RECEIVE REFERRALS FROM EMPLOYMENT SERVICES (COLLEGE OR NON-COLLEGE ES PROVIDERS) FOR POTENTIAL APPRENTICES?

- If yes, please describe. What are the challenges, if any, in the referral process?
- If no, what are the barriers preventing referrals? Please describe.

(20 responses)

YES (9 responses)

A: Yes

A: Yes, from MTML

A: Yes, but once I speak to the apprentice and find out their hours. I will refer them to Distance Education for on-line learning.

A: **Yes**, for College Employment Services and **No**, for non-college provider, barriers are lack of learners available, location of our training centre.

A: Yes, we do received referrals from our Employment Center, when applicable. If we have a course that will assist/benefit one of their clients, they are referred to us.

A: Yes, on occasion, but infrequently.

A: Yes, no real issues.

A: These referrals would be few. With my ES hat on, I would say that the reason is identified above: only those who need the academic credential to be hired by an employer are interested in upgrading.

A: Yes, although numbers are low. The situation of an individual coming into ES and finding out they need LBS support and are proactive enough to seek the training prior to an apprenticeship is very unique

NO (11 responses)

A: No. I feel we need to re-connect with these service providers to re-build our relationships to increase our referrals, both in and out.

A: This has not happened for many years

A: Not in LBS

A: No

A: No. Barriers include:

-Networking among departments, regular conversations and opportunities to understand each other's roles.

-Invite community partners/agencies, e.g., unions to NC

A: Although in May we worked alongside our ES office the learners do not show in CaMS as referrals. As ES assessed and filled out the learners PRF they came through in CaMS as informal word of mouth/media referral.

QUESTION 11 | A

DO YOU RECEIVE REFERRALS FROM EMPLOYMENT SERVICES (COLLEGE OR NON-COLLEGE ES PROVIDERS) FOR POTENTIAL APPRENTICES?

- If yes, please describe. What are the challenges, if any, in the referral process?
- If no, what are the barriers preventing referrals? Please describe.

(continued)

NO (11 responses)

A: No.

A: Usually provide referral to ES to facilitate connections to employers: placement and registration support

A: *Currently we do not.*

A: No, there seems to be a lack of interest from apprentices and a lack of communication with the ministry apprenticeship folks. This is hopefully going to lessen once our department initiates increased communication directly with our college apprenticeship department.

A: *NO - Lack of established referrals, focused meetings allowing for knowledge sharing and partnership exploration. At this time, local LBS network not focused on Apprenticeship.*

QUESTION 11 | B

IF ES PROVIDERS IN YOUR AREA ARE IN ONE OF THE THREE SSM PROTOTYPE REGIONS, HAS THAT HAD AN EFFECT ON REFERRALS FROM ES TO LBS/AU (FOR ANY CLIENTS, NOT JUST HOSE SEEKING AN APPRENTICESHIP)? PLEASE DESCRIBE.

(6 responses)

A: In SSM region. Referrals have been negatively impacted. Seeing some improvement in late 2021-22 and into current fiscal.

A: *Yes - we received a lot more before the new system was implemented*

A: It is hard to say because the pandemic has affected referrals from outside agencies of all types

A: *There is only one site in our catchment that is in a SSM region. They have not seen a change in the referrals from ES (there were few before and there continue to be few :-))*

A: No, needs to be more of an area of focus as we come out from the pandemic to make more connections with this area of our college

A: *No effect. In fact, SSMs are not avid proponents of apprenticeship, and have not engaged or asked any questions about LBS/AU.*

QUESTION 11 | B

IF ES PROVIDERS IN YOUR AREA ARE IN ONE OF THE THREE SSM PROTOTYPE REGIONS, HAS THAT HAD AN EFFECT ON REFERRALS FROM ES TO LBS/AU (FOR ANY CLIENTS, NOT JUST THOSE SEEKING AN APPRENTICESHIP)? PLEASE DESCRIBE.

(6 responses)

- A:** In SSM region. Referrals have been negatively impacted. Seeing some improvement in late 2021-22 and into current fiscal.
- A:** Yes - we received a lot more before the new system was implemented
- A:** It is hard to say because the pandemic has affected referrals from outside agencies of all types
- A:** There is only one site in our catchment that is in a SSM region. They have not seen a change in the referrals from ES (there were few before and there continue to be few :-))
- A:** No, needs to be more of an area of focus as we come out from the pandemic to make more connections with this area of our college
- A:** No effect. In fact, SSMs are not avid proponents of apprenticeship, and have not engaged or asked any questions about LBS/AU.

QUESTION 12

OVERALL, WHAT WOULD MAKE IT EASIER FOR YOUR LBS/AU PROGRAM TO SUPPORT POTENTIAL AND/OR CURRENT APPRENTICES?

(20 responses)

- A:** Establishing solid connects with ES, Union, non-union College and Apprenticeship. Providing continuous offerings similar to the Math offered to Masonry. Money to market
- A:** Communication of the opportunity via apprenticeship ministry office, in order to increase interest in LBS training.
- A:** Funding for outreach and marketing to appropriate community connections.
- A:** Current apprentices – incentive or buy-in regarding the importance of LBS in apprenticeship
Collaborate with other college LBS providers to create a common LBS pre-apprenticeship pathways training to increase awareness of training opportunities available and encourage learners to engage in the training.
- A:** MLTSID making pre-apprenticeship LBS training a mandatory component of apprenticeship training

QUESTION 12

OVERALL, WHAT WOULD MAKE IT EASIER FOR YOUR LBS/AU PROGRAM TO SUPPORT POTENTIAL AND/OR CURRENT APPRENTICES?

(continued)

- A:** *I've been promoting a plan for years to Ministry and beyond....I believe mandatory ESOT (or similar) assessment for all incoming apprentices would identify individuals in need early and proactively rather than finding out during level 1 training.*
- A:** *As the Ministry still holds the responsibility for apprenticeship sign ups, that should be a main referral source as that's where most of the detailed discussions take place around apprentice*
- A:** *1. Formal educational requirements set out by the government.
2. Systematic academic testing of potential apprentices, whether or not they meet the minimum educational requirements.
3. Referrals from ministry offices (or whoever is doing the testing) to funded LBS sites.
4. Messaging to potential apprentices and employers about the importance of academic readiness for apprenticeship success.*
- A:** *We don't have the volume to be able to identify what we would need. To date we have been able to support those who have come our way.*
- A:** *Integrate LBS assessments into standard practice for college block training students. Encourage ES providers to engage LBS prior to placement OR during should skills gaps be identified by employer.*
- A:** *Collaborative process planning - to imagine complementary processes from the ground up, rather than trying to add a band aid to a leaky pipe.*
- A:** *Expand skilled trades workshop and math support workshops*
- A:** *More referrals*
- *May need more relevant materials and resources if a greater number of referrals were available.*
 - *Greater direction/support from ministry and provincial working groups*
- A:** *I believe that if a potential apprentice is already working 40 hours a week at his/her job, the last thing they will want is to come to a classroom to get their Grade 12. Working from home when their partners/children go to bed, would be best.*
- A:** *A reliable source of referrals that would justify a specialized Apprenticeship class*
- A:** *Educating the Faculty that trains apprentices on the value of LBS*
- A:** *We need more apprentices in our region and additional funding for our program.*
- A:** *Advertising so that students know we are here, connecting with programs within our college, and connecting with companies outside of the college so that they are aware of what we can offer.*

QUESTION 12

OVERALL, WHAT WOULD MAKE IT EASIER FOR YOUR LBS/AU PROGRAM TO SUPPORT POTENTIAL AND/OR CURRENT APPRENTICES?

(continued)

A: I believe we have the tools needed to support potential and/or current apprentices.
With more targeted marketing, we could support more learners with this goal path

A: *additional resources*
Curriculum development with a focus on the specific apprenticeships
(i.e. carpenter, pipefitter, electrician) to better support their specific needs

