Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada | Immigration, Réfugiés et Citoyenneté Canada
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Archived: June 2, 2025 12:36:02 PM
From: [redacted] Représentants [redacted]
Sent: Thu, 20 Mar 2025 18:41:31
To:
Cc: Immigration Representatives / Représentants immigration (IRCC)
Subject: TR: Level of study definition - REP-2025-0634 - Due 21-03-2025
Importance: Normal
Sensitivity: None

Good day,

[redacted] **Immigration Representatives Mailbox**

Please note that this mailbox is intended for general guidance and does not provide responses to case-specific inquiries but have provided the following information as guidance.. If you have case specific questions about a file, you are encouraged to submit the IRCC Web form.

Please see our response to your question:

QUESTION
I would like ask for clarity regarding how IRCC defines "**level of study**" for the purpose of satisfying the following PAL exemption: *"You've entered Canada and… You're applying for a study permit extension at the same DLI and **level of study** as your current study permit."*

In the Canada Gazette posted on January 18, 2025 it is stated:

"level of study"
is categorized as follows:

a. a. *primary and secondary education,*
b. b. *post-secondary education (including vocational and technical training, and undergraduate programs), and*
c. c. *graduate education or above. (niveau d'études)*

However, in the application to extend a study permit the applicant must select their "level of study" from the following list with 17 different categories:

1. 1. Primary School
2. 2. Secondary School
3. 3. PTC/TCST/DVS/AVS
4. 4. CEGEP - Pre-university
5. 5. CEGEP – Technical
6. 6. College – Certificate
7. 7. College – Diploma
8. 8. College - Applied degree
9. 9. University - Bachelor's Deg.
10. 10. University - Master's Deg.
11. 11. University – Doctorate
12. 12. University - Other Studies
13. 13. ESL/FSL
14. 14. ESL/FSL and College
15. 15. ESL/FSL and University
16. 16. Other Studies

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17. 17. Not Applicable

s.19(1)

At our institute it is common to ladder credentials in the same field of study, such as from certificate to diploma or diploma to bachelor's degree. The information in the Canada Gazette would indicate that a PAL would NOT be required for these cases (unless moving on to graduate education). However, the list of levels of study in the study permit application form appears to separate levels by specific credentials even within the College categories. We would appreciate clarity on how IRCC defines level of study for this specific context so that we can better assess which of our continuing students progressing into a new program would require a PAL or not.

RESPONSE

According to recent ministerial instructions, IRCC categorizes levels of study into three groups:

1. 1. Primary and secondary education
2. 2. Post-secondary education (including vocational and technical training, certificates, diplomas, advanced diplomas, and undergraduate programs)
3. 3. Graduate education or above

Certificates, diplomas, and advanced diplomas (e.g., bachelor's degrees) all fall under post-secondary education. Students changing programs within the same level at the same Designated Learning Institution (DLI) do not need a new Provincial Attestation Letter (PAL) or territorial attestation letter (TAL). They can continue their studies at their DLI with their current study permit, provided they meet the permit conditions. However, if they need to extend their study permit, they must submit a new PAL/TAL.

A PAL/TAL is required if a student moves to a different level of study, such as from post-secondary to graduate education.

For more information, please visit our website:

Study permit: Get the right documents Provincial attestation letter or territorial attestation letter - Canada.ca

Changing your school or program - Canada.ca - "If you're moving in between post-secondary levels at the same DLI"

Ministerial Instructions

We trust that this information will assist you.

[redacted]

The Immigration Representatives Mailbox

[redacted]

Sent: [redacted] 21, 2025 3:37 PM

To: Immigration Representatives [redacted] Représentants immigration (IRCC) [redacted]

Subject: Level of study definition

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Cheers,