

PREPARED *for* SUCCESS 2022 - 2023

a study of Ontario college upgrading students
who enter full-time postsecondary programs



ABOUT ACADEMIC UPGRADING *in* ONTARIO'S PUBLIC COLLEGES

Every year, academic upgrading programs in Ontario's public colleges prepare thousands of adults for success in postsecondary education, in the workplace and apprenticeship. These programs have proven transformational in the professional and personal lives of adult learners.

In 2022-23, Ontario college upgrading programs served a total of 16,000 learners — plus an additional 1,960 in ACE Distance (e-learning).

ABOUT *this* STUDY

Since 2001, the Prepared *for* Success study has tracked the progress of Ontario college upgrading learners who enter full-time postsecondary programs after completing upgrading. Every year, this study has proven that these individuals are dedicated, well-prepared and successful.

And every year, this study shows that the majority of these learners achieve high marks, are committed to completing their education, reach their goals and rarely change programs.

2022-23 HIGHLIGHTS

- 2,656 learners enrolled in full-time postsecondary programs in Ontario's public colleges after completing their upgrading, representing almost \$6.5 million in tuition revenue*
- 82% passed
- 72% enrolled in semester 2 and only 5% changed programs
- Overall retention rate was 79%
- Practical Nursing was the most popular program, followed by Personal Support Worker
- average GPA was 3.2

NOT INCLUDED *in* THIS STUDY

- college upgrading graduates who enrolled in postsecondary programs at a different college from the one where they upgraded (*e.g.* completed upgrading at George Brown College, enrolled in full-time postsecondary program at Centennial College) — or who enrolled in university programs
- upgrading graduates who entered Continuing Education or other part-time programs
- learners who registered with with [ACE Distance](#) to complete their college upgrading (1,960 in 2022-23)

Together, these could represent significantly more than 2,000 additional upgrading graduates who enrolled in full-time postsecondary programs but couldn't be tracked/included in this report.

**Plus operating grant funding. Calculated at an average \$2,400 tuition per student. Source: www.ontariocolleges.ca/colleges/paying-for-college*

“I’ve always had a passion for medicine.

But it wasn’t until I got pregnant and had my twins prematurely that I considered going into the nursing field.

When I finally made my decision to apply to postsecondary, it seemed like everything was against me.

I needed 4 course credits even to be considered for the RPN program.

I was working full time in the community during the pandemic and was a single mom to twin toddlers.

I had no idea how I was going to manage it all.

Starting my courses was overwhelming in the beginning; but the support from the Academic Upgrading professors at Fleming was incredible.

I finally felt like I had someone in my corner, fighting *with* me.

There were many speed bumps along the way and my timeline changed quite a few times.

But there was one constant – the support and encouragement from my professors.

I have now started the RPN program at Fleming.

I have never felt pride in myself the way that I do right now.

I know my fight isn’t over; but I also know I’m not fighting alone.

Thank you to the Work and Academic Upgrading department at Fleming — and especially Lea Roque for fighting with me every step of the way.

I will be forever grateful to you.”



TOTAL UPGRADING GRADUATE ENROLMENT *in* FULL-TIME ONTARIO COLLEGE POSTSECONDARY PROGRAMS

2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
3,750	4,444	3,579	3,692	2,734	3,054	2,656

(not including college upgrading graduates who enrolled in postsecondary programs at a different college from the one where they upgraded, enrolled in university programs, entered Continuing Education or other part-time programs or completed their college upgrading programs online with [ACE Distance](#))

PREPARED *for* SUCCESS STORY



NADINE: PREPARED *for* NURSING

« Je suis **NADINE**. J'ai suivi les cours de sciences avec La Formation de Base de l'Ontario (FBO) au Collège La Cité pour intégrer le programme de soins infirmiers auxiliaires à Hawkesbury.

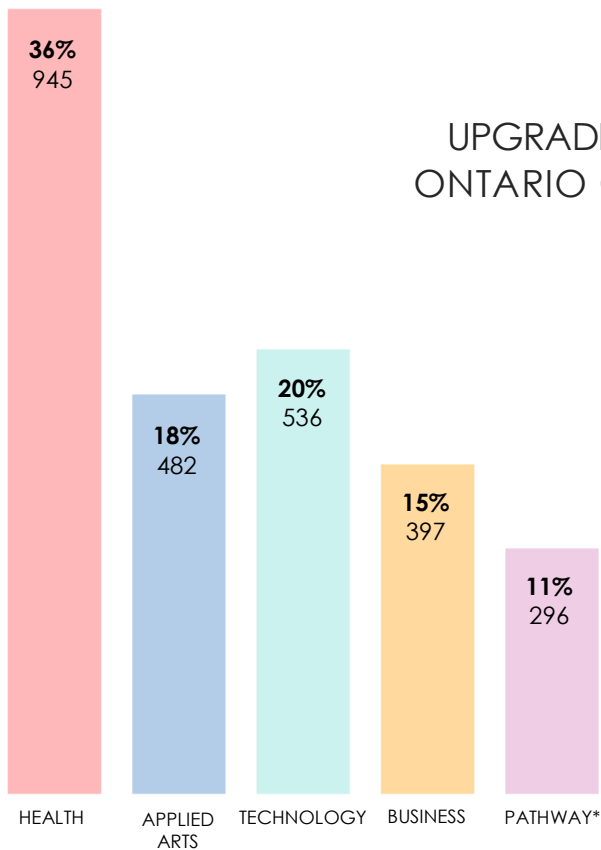
FBO m'a permis de suivre mes cours en ligne en raison de la distance du campus. J'ai pu étudier à mon propre rythme, sans pression, en conciliant mes études et mon travail.

Grâce à FBO, j'ai acquis de nouvelles compétences qui seront utiles pour mes objectifs professionnels futurs.

Je tiens à remercier le personnel de FBO pour sa disponibilité et son soutien constant. Les encouragements m'ont aidée à surmonter les difficultés rencontrées pendant les cours, et on m'a poussée à ne jamais abandonner.

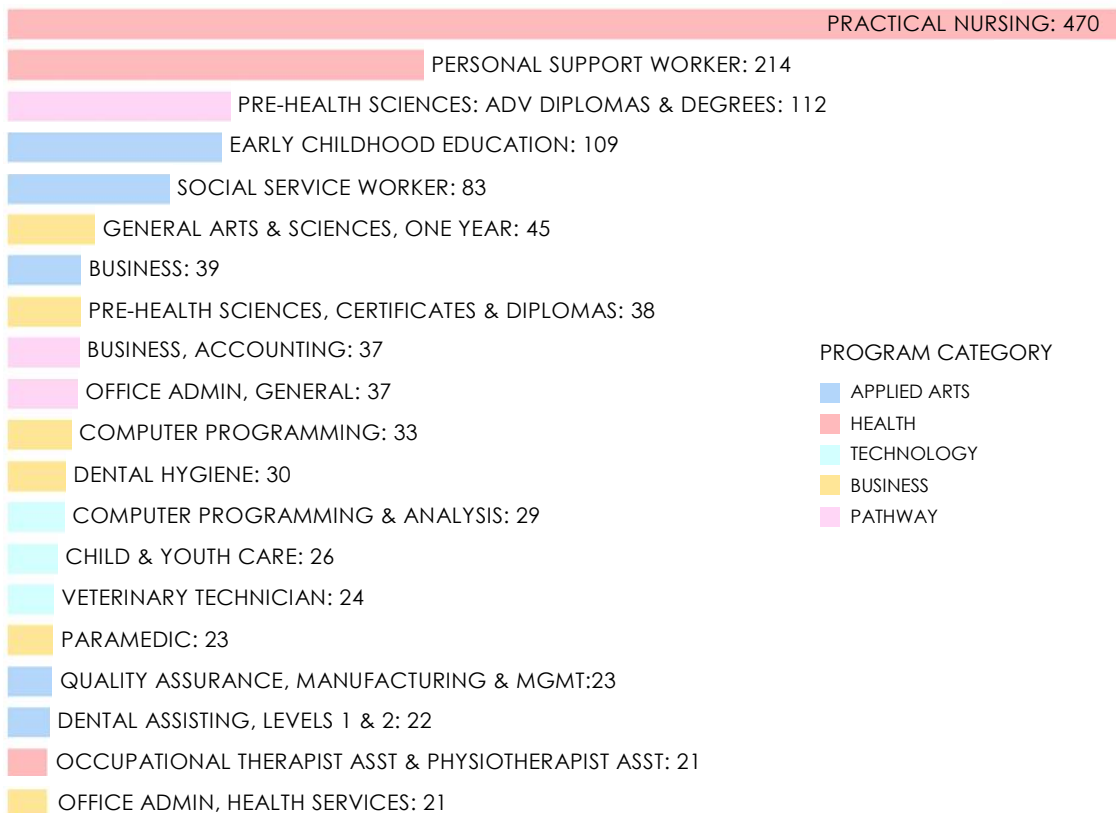
Je recommande à quiconque de s'inscrire avec FBO, car on ne se retrouve jamais seul. »

UPGRADING GRADUATE ENROLMENT *in* FULL-TIME ONTARIO COLLEGE POSTSECONDARY PROGRAMS *by* PROGRAM CATEGORY



*PATHWAY OR “FOUNDATIONS” programs are typically 2-semester Ontario College Certificate programs. Students explore a general area of study, e.g. Applied Arts, Health, Technology or Business to discover specific interests and prepare for a more specialized diploma or degree program.

TOP 20 PROGRAMS *by* ENROLMENT



PREPARED *for* SUCCESS STORY

“I first contacted Fanshawe College in Woodstock to obtain my grade 12 equivalency for employment purposes. I had been putting this off for years because of my busy personal life and lack of discipline.

I had tried to get my grade 12 in the past, but was unsuccessful many times. Then I walked into the Fanshawe College Campus on Metcalfe Street for an adult education class.

I was 30 years old. This is when everything changed in my life for the better and things started looking up!

I was welcomed into a learning environment with an abundance of resources and extensive knowledge in the subjects I would need to study.

The flexibility and positive learning environment that they provided was exactly what I needed.

I am happy to say that I passed all my subjects!

I went on to join the Better Jobs Ontario program through Employment Ontario. Fanshawe, Woodstock then referred me to the AZ program at Fanshawe, London and helped me apply and get registered.

I went on to take the AZ truck driver training at Fanshawe College and got my AZ license.

The upgrading program was a huge help to me when trying to achieve my end goal of being a truck driver.

I am so proud of my accomplishments!”

I can’t thank the friendly, knowledgeable, and wonderful staff enough for their time and efforts in assisting with my academic upgrading. It was an amazing and fruitful experience for me.

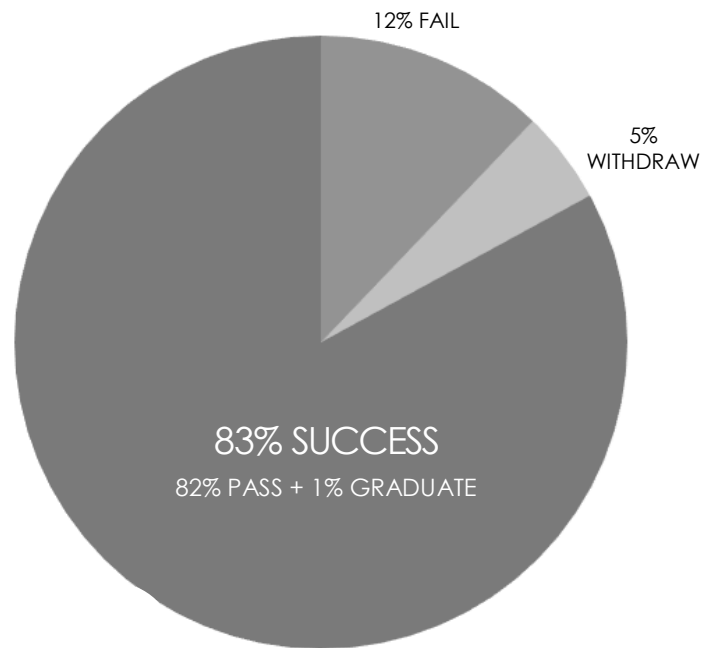


NATE: PREPARED *for* EMPLOYMENT

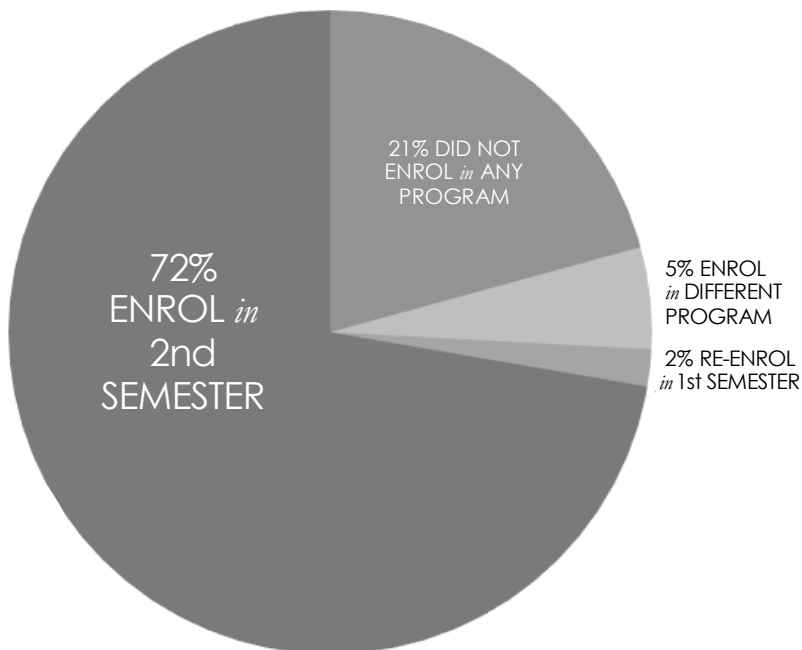
SUCCESS *after* FIRST SEMESTER

College upgrading graduates consistently prove that they are well-prepared for success in their college postsecondary programs.

In 2022-23, they achieved an 83% success rate in their first postsecondary semester and only 5% withdrew.



RETENTION *after* FIRST SEMESTER



OVERALL RETENTION RATE 79%

College upgrading graduates are committed to completing their post-secondary education and make the right program choices, evidenced by the high rate of enrolment in a second semester and the low rate of program change after their first semester.

In 2022-23, 72% enrolled in the second semester of their postsecondary programs and only 5% changed programs.

PREPARED *for* SUCCESS STORY



RYAN: PREPARED *for* PARAMEDIC

RYAN struggled to find his path.

Since leaving high school, he considered several career paths but, until last year, never found his true calling.

His passion, he discovered, was the paramedic field.

But he quickly learned that to pursue his passion, he would need to earn the science prerequisites of the program before he could apply.

Ryan had a hard time with science in high school and opted not to take grade 11 or 12 science — not realizing how it might hold him back later.

He contacted an Academic Advisor at Algonquin College for advice on how he could earn the requirements he needed for the Paramedic program and was quickly directed to Academic Upgrading.

Within a week, Ryan was enrolled in upgrading.

And within two semesters, Ryan not only received the science credits for both Chemistry and Biology — he aced both courses.

Ryan gives thanks to his exceptional professors for assisting him in his success.

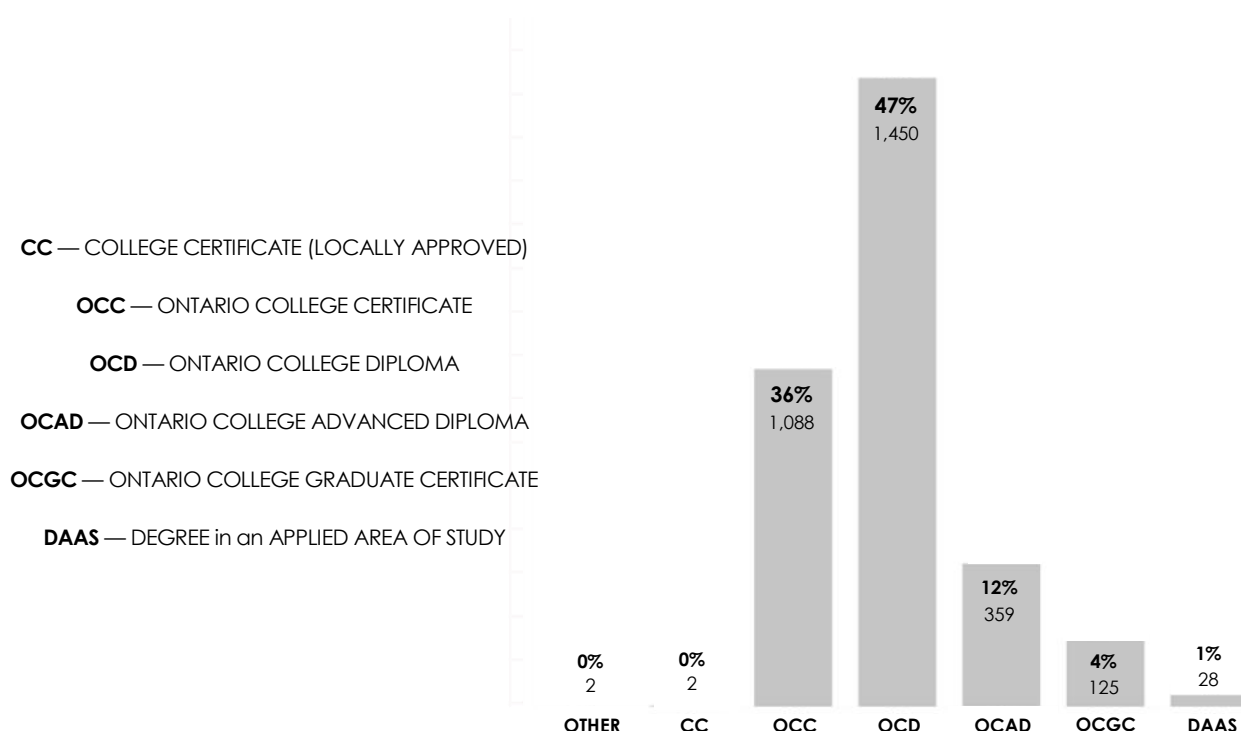
“I realized that I was a lot better at science than I previously thought,” says Ryan.

“This boosted my confidence and gave me the credits that I needed to apply for the Paramedic program.

I would recommend Academic Upgrading to anyone who needs to improve their grades or is missing credits for their desired program.

I promise you won’t be disappointed!”

UPGRADING GRAD CREDENTIAL GOALS *in* FULL-TIME POSTSEC PROGRAMS



PREPARED *for* SUCCESS STORY

After 17 years away from education, **LEAH**, mother of six, found the courage to try again.

“Growing up, school was not my thing,” she says. “It started with failing a few classes and eventually led to dropping out of high school.

The PSWs that took care of my grandmother inspired me. This was something that I knew I would love to do with my life. But I needed the prerequisites to get into the PSW program, so I enrolled in Academic Upgrading.

I enjoyed Academic Upgrading being offered at Northern College. As an older student, I felt comfortable. Thanks to Academic Upgrading, I got the courses I needed to be accepted into the PSW program. My long-term goal is to finish PSW and begin working in long-term care.

I would recommend Academic Upgrading to anyone needing to get credits or upgrade their current marks.”



LEAH: PREPARED *for* PSW

PREPARED *for* SUCCESS STORY

JADE suffered a brain injury while at work. She met the challenges of this injury with a drive to move forward and, in the process, discover a new path.

Against pressure to pursue other fast-paced programs, Jade advocated for her own future.

She knew that she wanted to be working in a capacity that connected her to her indigenous heritage and culture.

Upgrading at Cambrian College allowed her to feel more confident about returning to school and get acquainted with campus resources.

After upgrading, Jade enrolled in the Social Service Worker – Indigenous Specialization program and became an elected member of the college's Indigenous Student Circle.

She says there are still good and bad days in relation to her injury. But she has found balance between managing her studies and her personal wellness.

Looking to the future, Jade says she'd like to specialize in mental health for youth and use her skills in the community.



JADE: PREPARED *for* INDIGENOUS SOCIAL SERVICE

“I remember thinking, how am I going to go back to school after 10 years, in a new country?

I was terrified but decided to take a leap of faith. I enrolled in Academic Upgrading at Humber College and it was the best decision that I made.

With the knowledge gained, I graduated and continued within the Humber community where I obtained a diploma in Community and Justice Services. I then continued to Guelph Humber to gain my degree in Bachelor of Applied Science — Justice Studies.

I am currently Master of Education — Teaching and Learning.

I have also come full circle. I am now a Humber employee, working closely with the very Academic Upgrading program that helped me to start my academic journey.

Just taking that first step could open a world of possibilities you could never dream of.”



CONCLUSION

Because college upgrading learners prepare for college at college, as college students with college professors, they are uniquely well-prepared for success in full-time college programs.

With an average GPA of 3.2 after the first semester, an average success rate of 83% and a high rate of re-enrolment in a second semester, Ontario college academic upgrading graduates who enter full-time college programs have proven again in 2022-23 that they are consistently high-achieving, low-attrition contributors to the Ontario public college system.

These are high-performing and career-focussed learners, poised to become highly-skilled workers and contribute significantly to Ontario’s economy.

Investing in these programs is investing in Ontario’s future.

“Our integrated services and skills training are making a difference in Ontario’s job market, ensuring job seekers of all ages, backgrounds and abilities can connect with opportunities, join the workforce and help build a stronger Ontario for all of us.”

—David Piccini, Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development

ABOUT PREPARED *for* SUCCESS *and the* CSC

PREPARED *for* SUCCESS is a publication of the College Sector Committee for Adult Upgrading (CSC), an incorporated, not-for-profit support organization representing academic upgrading programs and staff in Ontario's 24 public colleges. It has been published annually since 2001.

The academic upgrading programs in 23 of 24 Ontario public colleges were able to provide complete data sets for this 2022-2023 report. The CSC thanks all the dedicated managers and support staff who helped to collect and analyze this data.

The CSC provides leadership, representation, support, advocacy and resources to Ontario's public colleges in their delivery of outstanding academic upgrading programs and services to adults, including the Academic and Career Entrance (ACE) program. Colleges offer academic upgrading programs on campus at 80+ sites across the province and through ACE Distance (e-learning).

ACE 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 can offer.

Ontario residents 18 and over can enrol for free if they meet the eligibility requirements.

While the goal of most ACE students is postsecondary, many take ACE courses to move directly into employment and apprenticeship training.

ACE courses and the ACE certificate are recognized:

- as grade 12 equivalent by Ontario's public colleges for application to certificate and diploma programs;
- by a growing number employers across the province; and
- for registration as an apprentice.

