

***RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)
WITHIN THE NEWCOMER COMMUNITY:
A NEEDS ASSESSMENT***

FINAL REPORT

*Prepared on behalf of the Saskatchewan Association of
Immigrant Settlement and Integration Agencies (SAISIA)*

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August, 2003

Acknowledgements

Recognition of Prior Learning within the Newcomer Community: A Needs Assessment was initiated by the Saskatchewan Association of Immigrant Settlement & Integration Agencies (SAISIA) in partnership with Saskatchewan Learning. SAISIA gratefully acknowledges the financial assistance and support from Saskatchewan Learning, as well as the support from the immigrant/refugee community for their invaluable contribution to this research project. We also wish to extend our gratitude to the following representatives of community organizations and partners who shared in the implementation and development of this project

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Refugees and immigrants in Saskatchewan currently receive or access services through the Saskatchewan Association of Immigrant Settlement and Integration Agencies (SAISIA).

Members of SAISIA are:

- * The Regina Open Door Society Inc. (RODS): Provides accessible settlement, community, education and employment programming and services to an annual average of 2,000 refugee and immigrant clients. RODS has been in operation for twenty-six years.
- * The Saskatoon Open Door Society Inc. (SODS): Provides integrated support services that include: English as a Second Language (ESL); employment and career counselling; cultural orientation and adjustment programs; multicultural daycare; and referrals to community resources. In operation for twenty years, SODS provides services to an annual average of 2,000 clients.
- * The Moose Jaw Multicultural Council (MJMC): A refugee and immigrant-serving agency for twelve years providing direct and indirect support for clients in the community and surrounding areas. MJMC provides direct settlement services, a volunteer support program, English as a Second Language, on-site child care for students, employment preparation and cross cultural educational programs.
- * The Prince Albert Multicultural Council (PAMC): Works with the community and various community organizations to acknowledge, recognize, respect and accept the multicultural reality of Saskatchewan and Canada. The PAMC offers direct settlement services including English as a Second Language training to immigrants in Prince Albert and area.

In addition to language training, the greatest client demand continues to be for the employment and career counselling services that the settlement agencies provide. For recently arrived refugees and immigrants recognition of past learning has been the subject of considerable discussion. While the assessment and accreditation of foreign credentials and the obstacles posed by recognition from professional associations have been well documented, the potential needs of the above identified client group to utilize Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), has not been formally examined in Saskatchewan. Recognition of Prior Learning and the RPL components are defined as follows:

Recognition of Prior Learning

The Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a broad 'umbrella concept' that includes recognition practices undertaken in the fields of: qualification recognition (QR), credit transfer (CT), and prior learning assessment and recognition (PLAR). There are three commonly understood categories of prior learning, including:

- * Formal Learning - Learning which is structured and intentional, is achieved through credit-based programs/courses at accredited educational institutions (or recognized by a regulatory body / professional organization for certification).
- * Non-Formal Learning - Learning which is intentional, gained through participation in organized workplace-based training, non-credit courses and workshops but does not receive formal credit (e.g., certificate/diploma/degree).
- * Informal Learning - Learning which is the incidental learning resulting from life experience, workplace-based learning, volunteer activities, self-directed learning, hobbies, family, responsibilities, etc.

Qualification Recognition (QR)

Qualification Recognition (QR) practices involve the fair, credible, and standardized assessment of credentials to assist employers, educational institutions and professional regulatory bodies in making informed decisions. QR includes, but is not limited to international credential recognition.

Credit Transfer (CT)

Credit Transfer (CT) is defined as the process by which credit is granted towards a credential by one institution for programs or courses previously completed at a recognized institution. The granting of credit is based on the evaluation of equivalencies of subject matter.

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) is a systematic process that assesses and recognizes an individual's knowledge and skills regardless of where or how the learning was acquired. A PLAR process generally involves the assessment of experiential learning for a variety of purposes including: career development planning, promotion in the workplace, and obtaining educational credit or occupational certification with reference to the standards of the credential granting body. Experiential learning can be non-formal (e.g., workplace-based training, non-credit courses) or informal (e.g., learning resulting from life experience, workplace-based learning, hobbies, volunteer activities, family responsibilities, etc.)

Previous research revealed that three groups across Canada suffer the most serious problems in obtaining recognition of prior learning and experience. These groups include: immigrants, people with prior learning gained through work and training, and transferees between post-secondary learning institutions or, in the case of licensed professions, between provinces.

With this information, the Saskatchewan Association of Immigrant Settlement and Integration Agencies (SAISIA) initiated a research project to determine if there was a need for RPL within the Newcomer Community.

RODS, in partnership with SODS, MJMC and PAMC, received funding from Saskatchewan Learning through the JobStart/Future Skills Sector Partnerships Program, to undertake a needs assessment and gap analysis in order to identify and gather essential information and statistical data regarding immigrants and refugees in Saskatchewan for whom RPL/PLAR may be of benefit.

The overall objective of the project was to identify the need and substantiate the perceived obstacles surrounding RPL. This is the first step in facilitating the ongoing goal of increasing access to relevant employment opportunities for immigrants and refugees whose skills and prior learning are not fully recognized. With the data collected from this project, settlement agencies will be able to develop and administer employment services that provide their clients with purposeful employment opportunities based on their experience and skills. Project deliverables included:

- * Completion of a literature review of relevant material and related initiatives;
- * Development of a 'framework for engagement' outlining the process for gathering the required data from the study population;
- * Implementation of a process to access current agency files and data and conduct individual interviews to gather the necessary data;
- * Development of a database, input of data, data analysis;
- * Development of recommendations and strategies to begin a process of addressing the needs identified through the needs and gap analysis; and
- * Completion of a final report outlining the work completed and recommendations developed.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Project Coordination

A Project Coordinator/Consultant, Zoya Shmyr was contracted to complete the project deliverables and Barrington Research Group Inc. was sub-contracted as the Database Consultant.

Steering Committee

A RPL Steering Committee was established to oversee the project, provide input into the research process and ensure that project objectives were met.

Research Process

The Steering Committee determined that sixty client names, presently in SAISIA employment records, would be screened for eligibility and that these eligibility prerequisites would include:

- * Immigrants and refugees with at least primary education from outside Canada or who had a minimum of three years of work experience from outside Canada;
- * Immigrants/refugees with at least a Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) 3 language level.

An interview guide/schedule was developed and a pre-screening and random sample process of current SAISIA employment files, was implemented. Twenty-five phone interviews were conducted in Saskatoon, twenty-four phone interviews and one personal interview were conducted in Regina, and five phone interviews were conducted in each of the cities of Moose Jaw and Prince Albert.

KEY RESEARCH FINDINGS

About the Interviewees

The research population included male/female immigrants/refugees who were primarily twenty-six to forty-five years old. The majority of the interviewees had been in Saskatchewan for less than two years. Although immigration status was not determined as an interview prerequisite, a greater number of the interviewees were 'immigrants' and the percentage of immigrants to refugees surveyed reflected present Saskatchewan immigration trends. In addition, the research produced a cross-section of immigrants and refugees from varying source countries.

Education: Outside Canada

All sixty respondents had formal education from outside of Canada and the survey results indicated that seventy-seven percent of Newcomers had post-secondary education from an international country. Although academic themes were extremely varied, the primary areas of specialization were engineering and science.

Educational Documents Brought to Canada and Assessed

The majority of the interviewees brought some form of educational document with them to Canada. The survey indicated that twenty-five immigrants and refugees had their documents assessed to Canadian standards. All of these interviewees requested the assessment on their own behalf and these assessments were generally completed by the International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), the University of Regina and the University of Saskatchewan. The majority of the respondents received pre-assessment guidance during the assessment process, however post-assessment guidance was limited. In addition, most respondents indicated that the assessment was requested for entry into post-secondary education and after assessment, these immigrants/refugees applied for or entered, post-secondary institutions. The survey also showed that interviewees who brought post-secondary documents with them to Canada, did not bring primary or secondary school documents as they felt that these credentials were 'not necessary'.

Fifteen respondents reported that their degrees would have to be assessed by a professional licensing board for recognition and employment purposes and eight interviewees initiated this assessment. For one respondent, assessment resulted in full recognition of education obtained outside Canada and the granting of professional licensure to practice in Saskatchewan. For the other respondents, the results of assessments indicated that further education/exams as well as further experience in their professional field were required. Respondents indicated that the timeframe to complete the licensing procedure could range from zero to five years. During the assessment process, interviewees received both pre and post-assessment guidance.

Employment: Outside Canada

Ninety-two percent of all interviewees had paid employment from outside Canada and generally these immigrants and refugees worked within a primary occupation for an average of eight and two-thirds (8.6) years. Since the occupations correlated with their highest level of education, engineering and science were the primary occupational themes. Interviewees, who had second jobs outside Canada, indicated that these jobs were in the areas of office/cashier/sales.

Volunteer Work and Other Skills: Outside Canada

Although interviewees had an understanding of the role of a volunteer in Canada, they did not consider their non-paying work from outside Canada in the same context as a volunteer in Canada. After an explanation of the role of a volunteer, immigrants/refugees did indicate that they had non-paying jobs outside Canada, and these jobs were primarily in the areas of teacher/caregiver. Respondents also had difficulty identifying additional skills and abilities, obtained from outside Canada, not related to formal education. Many immigrants/refugees did not consider that skills learned on their own or outside an educational institution, could be measured or evaluated. After considerable discussion, interviewees indicated that they did have other skills/abilities and the primary skills themes reported were office duties, administration and computers.

Education: In Canada

Seventy-two percent of all interviewees have attended or are attending the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) Program and thirty percent of all interviewees indicated that they are, or have previously taken, additional English classes at various institutions. Those respondents who did not study English in Canada were generally immigrants with adequate to high English language abilities.

Other than English classes, sixty percent of all interviewees have, or are taking further education in Canada. Technical/trade courses, as well as high school upgrading/equivalency courses, were the most prevalent areas of study. Computers, science and math were the primary areas of specialization of respondents studying above a high school level. Interviewees stated that the main reason for obtaining additional education was the need to improve their skills in order to achieve acceptable employment in Canada. Interviewees not pursuing further education cited 'inadequate English' and 'presently working' as primary reasons for not returning to school.

The majority of the immigrants/refugees reported that they had attended an employment program that was primarily provided by the settlement agencies. Only fourteen (14) respondents indicated that there was a workplace component within the employment program. Upon completion of the workplace term, eight of the fourteen acquired employment, of which four are still employed in the same position.

Employment: In Canada

Interviewees indicated that the main barrier to employment in Canada was a lack of Canadian work experience. Although interviewees recognized that adequate English skills were also important, their immediate responses to employment barriers included: a lack of Canadian work experience, over-qualified for jobs, degree/training not recognized and inability to obtain interviews.

Considering that the majority of immigrants and refugees are new to Saskatchewan, the employment rate (43%) of all interviewees is admirable. However, respondents are presently working in entry-level jobs and in areas not related to their past education or experience. These interviewees reported that they are over-qualified for their present jobs. The majority of these respondents also indicated that they are actively looking for a job or a new job and are looking in areas that better reflect their past education and experience. The interviewees who are not presently looking for a job/new job, but plan to seek employment with the next year, reported that they will try and find entry-level jobs with good working conditions.

Volunteer Work: In Canada

The majority of the interviewees (68%) have worked on a volunteer basis in Canada. The major themes of these non-paying jobs were teaching, childcare, healthcare and helping other refugees.

Recognition of Prior Learning

Interviewees did not have any knowledge of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) or Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) and all indicated they have not previously heard of the process, methodologies or terms. After an explanation of the intent of RPL, a few interviewees indicated that they might benefit from RPL/PLAR, many interviewees could not differentiate between RPL and the professional accreditation/licensing processes and some interviewees could not grasp the intent of RPL or terminology used.

Although ninety-eight percent of all interviewees had resumes, the research showed that comprehensive documentation of prior learning/experiences was limited. Interviewees also indicated that although they had references from past employers, these references were primarily from Canadian employers of past/present entry-level jobs and interviewees had little, or no ability to obtain references from employers outside Canada. Documentation of past/present volunteer work or skills/abilities were almost non-existent. Also, interviewees did not have prior knowledge about portfolios.

The majority of interviewees felt they had skills that were being overlooked by employers, but they could not indicate if they had skills that were being overlooked by educational institutions. The results seem to indicate that many more immigrants/refugees have employment application experience as compared to assessment experience within educational institutions. As well, ninety-five percent of all interviewees were willing to undertake RPL processes within a workplace, whereas sixty percent were willing to demonstrate their knowledge and skills for credit in an educational institution.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The objective of the research project was to determine if newcomers to Saskatchewan would benefit from Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). The following recommendations were based on survey results and the recognized need for additional immigrant/refugee programming, information and assistance.

1. Need for RPL Education/Orientation

Newcomers to Saskatchewan require education and orientation on Recognition of Prior Learning and this information should be provided to them in a clear, concise manner with terminology edited to meet the comprehension level of the newcomer. Examples of *current* RPL practices, programs and costs among Saskatchewan educational institutes should be outlined so that immigrants and refugees do not conclude that all educational institutions, licensing boards and employers assess learning/experiences through RPL methods. In addition, a clear distinction must be made of the differences between RPL and professional accreditation/licensing processes. It is also necessary to develop RPL expertise within the settlement agencies so that RPL strategies can be incorporated into the services provided to clients. How RPL is ultimately viewed by newcomers or settlement agency staff will depend on the existing RPL success rates, the number of educational institutions using RPL, and the number of employers willing to look at RPL as a basis for future employment.

2. Need to Implement RPL Pilot Project in the Workplace

There is a need to implement RPL in the workplace. Not only did interviewees indicate the necessity for Canadian work experience, they also identified their need for employer contacts, for training in the workplace and a chance to prove their skills. Due to the high number of interviewees with international post-secondary degrees, it will be necessary to find employers within specialized areas. Employers will need to be involved in the training and assessment process and will also require some assurance that they will benefit from the experience.

3. Need to Enhance Intake/Documentation Procedures within Settlement Agencies

Since each of the settlement agencies have employment programs, or provide employment assistance to immigrants and refugees, it will be beneficial for SAISIA to develop a generic intake form that includes a checklist process for gathering all necessary information. The checklist should outline all appropriate informational material that will assist in the process of finding meaningful employment for SAISIA's clients. Along with current immigrant and refugee information, additional client materials should include: an outline of demonstrable skills, an inventory of skills/abilities, education, experience, skill gaps, profile stories and client needs. In order to enhance accessibility and maintenance of client files, it will be beneficial if employment information is stored in a computerized database. This will allow for an effective connection between refugee/immigrant clients and job opportunities and can also provide useful information for developing and implementing program interventions.

4. Need to Provide Additional Information to Immigrants

**Enhance Web Site Information*

Prior to arrival to Canada, it is necessary to assure that potential immigrant applicants are aware of the need to acquire and bring all documents relating to prior learning and experience. In addition, information outlining the employment and accreditation reality as well as current services available should be provided to potential immigrants prior to, and upon, arrival in Saskatchewan. Enhanced web site information can assist with the dissemination of this information.

**Develop Central Location*

To alleviate frustration and provide accurate information to all immigrants and refugees, it is recommended that a 'central location' be established in order to provide accurate information on, and assistance with, assessment, accreditation and licensing procedures. The staff at this 'central location' can act as liaisons with newcomers and the educational/licensing/employer communities.

5. Need for Additional Financial Support

Since meaningful employment is the ultimate goal of all newcomers, it is necessary to allocate adequate finances to improve and enhance settlement and employment programs. The above recommendations can only be implemented if mechanisms are established to support these programs.

NEXT STEPS

The RPL Steering Committee agreed that the following actions shall be undertaken to implement the recommendations of this Report.

The RPL Steering Committee will work in partnership with the Saskatchewan Association of Immigrant Settlement and Integration Agencies (SAISIA) and other stakeholders, to develop strategies for the implementation of the recommendations of this Report. In this respect, the RPL Steering Committee and SAISIA *shall*:

1. Develop and implement a communication strategy to ensure communication of the results of the study is distributed to all key stakeholders;
2. Identify capacity within the sector to implement the recommendations of the Report and mechanisms for addressing identified gaps;
3. Identify mechanisms for the delivery of orientation services to immigrants and refugees on RPL and accreditation processes in Saskatchewan and for the development of appropriate orientation materials as needed. Under a grant from the Department of Government Relations and Aboriginal Affairs (GRAA), SAISIA has already begun work on identifying gaps in orientation services to newcomers. This work can serve as a first step toward addressing immigrants and refugees need for better information and orientation on RPL and accreditation processes in the province;
4. Identify mechanisms to develop and implement an RPL Pilot Project in the Workplace;
5. Identify mechanisms to develop and implement enhanced intake assessment and referral processes in the sector. Under the grant from GRAA, SAISIA is developing a standardized intake assessment and referral process for immigrant settlement agencies in the province; and
6. Identify mechanisms to enhance information available to potential immigrants and refugees abroad and in Saskatchewan, on RPL and accreditation processes in province.

FINAL REPORT

INTRODUCTION

Refugees and immigrants in Saskatchewan currently receive or access services through the Saskatchewan Association of Immigrant Settlement and Integration Agencies (SAISIA).

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The overall objective of the project was to identify the need and substantiate the perceived obstacles surrounding RPL. This is the first step in facilitating the ongoing goal of increasing access to relevant employment opportunities for immigrants and refugees whose skills and prior learning are not fully recognized. With the data collected from this project, settlement agencies will be able to develop and administer employment services that provide their clients with purposeful employment opportunities based on their experience and skills. Project deliverables included:

- * Completion of a literature review of relevant material and related initiatives;
- * Development of a 'framework for engagement' outlining the process for gathering the required data from the study population;
- * Implementation of a process to access current agency files and data and conduct individual interviews to gather the necessary data;
- * Development of a database, input of data, data analysis;
- * Development of recommendations and strategies to begin a process of addressing the needs identified through the needs and gap analysis; and
- * Completion of a final report outlining the work completed and recommendations developed.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Project Coordination

A Project Coordinator/Consultant, Zoya Shmyr, was contracted to complete the project deliverables and Barrington Research Group Inc. was sub-contracted as the Database Consultant.

Steering Committee

A Steering Committee for the Recognition of Prior Learning research project was organized to oversee the project, provide input into the research process and to ensure that project objectives were met. This Committee included members of the Saskatchewan Association of Immigrant Settlement and Integration Agencies (SAISIA) and representatives from their community partners. Representatives from post-secondary education, labour, health, government and immigration volunteered their time and expertise to assist with the successful implementation and completion of the research project.

Research Process

Population and Eligibility

It was determined that telephone interviews would be conducted with immigrants and refugees, whose names appeared in the active SAISIA employment files. Eligible interviewees included:

- * Immigrants and refugees with at least primary education from outside Canada or who had a minimum of three years of work experience from outside Canada;
- * Immigrants/refugees with at least a Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) 3 language level. (See Appendix B)

Eligibility was not based on percentage of immigrants and refugees from any specific source country, or within any identified immigration category, or interviewees number of years in Canada. An interview guide/schedule (See Appendix C) and a pre-screening and random sample process of current SAISIA employment files, was implemented.

Interview Samples

It was decided that sixty immigrant/refugee clients were to be interviewed. Interviewees were selected from random sample lists of eligible clients from each of the four settlement agencies: RODS, SODS, MJMC and PAMC. Thirty interviews were to be conducted in South Saskatchewan (Regina and Moose Jaw) and thirty interviews were to be conducted in North Saskatchewan (Saskatoon and Prince Albert). Twenty-five interviews were to be obtained from each of the cities of Regina and Saskatoon and five interviews were to be obtained from each of the cities of Moose Jaw and Prince Albert.

Pre-Screening and Random Sample Process

The active employment client files, at three of the settlement agencies, were pre-screened and ineligible client names were removed. This was followed by the selection of a random sample of the remaining client names. Due to database problems, an alternate system of screening and sampling was completed in Saskatoon. In this case, a random sample was selected, client eligibility was checked, and ineligible client names were removed from the sample. A second random sample was completed as required.

Interviews

Although telephone interviews were initiated during weekday and weekend daytime and evening hours, a best day or time was never apparent. Inability to contact interviewees due to work, school or no response, was a major challenge. Fifty-nine telephone interviews and one personal interview were completed within an average time of forty-five minutes per interview. This timeframe was dependent upon knowledge of the project as well as the English language and comprehension ability of the respondent.

Interviews	Regina	Moose Jaw	Prince Albert	Saskatoon	Total
Total Sample #	33	6	7	50	96
Wrong # / No Listing / Moved	-2			-8	-10
Not home / Could not contact	-4	-1	-2	-11	-18
Did not qualify				-3	-3
Would not participate				-1	-1
On Holiday / Out of City	-1			-2	-3
Not required / not initiated	-1				-1
Total Interviews Completed	25	5	5	25	60

The Data Entry and Analysis Process

The completed interview schedules were sent to Barrington Research Group for data entry and analysis. Quantitative data and short answers (i.e., typically specifications for 'other' responses) were entered into SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) Version 11.0. for analysis. Prior to data analysis, the dataset was examined for accuracy of data entry by running frequencies. The minimum and maximum values, means and standard deviations were then inspected for plausibility. When entries outside the possible range were detected, the original interview schedule was consulted and data corrections made as appropriate. The 'other' responses were grouped and sorted by common themes/topics and then given quantitative codes. All frequencies were then rerun. Qualitative data from longer answers (typically the 'comments' sections) were coded into themes and emergent codes were discussed with the Project Consultant and adjusted/clarified as necessary. Valid % were presented and interpreted in all tables.

Note: '**n**' represents the number of times a question was checked and '**valid %**' is the percentage of interviewees responding to the question.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

About the Interviewees

Gender and Age

Fifty-two percent of respondents were male and forty-eight percent were female with the majority of the interviewees in the twenty-six to forty-five year old age bracket.

Gender of Interviewee	<i>n</i>	Valid %
Male	31	51.7
Female	29	48.3
Total	60	100.0

Note: 60 valid cases

Age of Interviewee	<i>n</i>	Valid %
26 to 35 years old	26	44.1
36 to 45 years old	23	39
46 to 55 years old	5	8.5
18 to 25 years old	4	6.8
56 to 65 years old	1	1.7
Total	59	100.0

Note: 59 valid cases, 1 no response

Immigration Status

Sixty-three percent of respondents came to Canada within the 'immigrant' category and thirty-five percent came as refugees. One foreign worker was interviewed. Although immigration status was not determined as an interview prerequisite, the interview outcome did reflect current Saskatchewan immigration trends.

Immigration Status	<i>n</i>	Valid %
Immigrant	38	63.3
Government/private sponsored Refugee	21	35
Other - Foreign Worker	1	1.7
Total	60	100.0

Note: 60 valid cases

Country of Birth

The percentage of respondents from China, coincided with the past (and current) 'independent' immigration levels to Saskatchewan, from this source country. The number of respondents from Afghanistan and Sudan reflect a past influx of government/private sponsored refugees from these two countries. Generally, the random sample produced an excellent cross-section of immigrants and refugees from varying source countries.

Country of Birth	<i>n</i>	Valid %
China	7	11.7
Afghanistan	6	10
Sudan	6	10
Iran	4	6.7
Philippines	4	6.7
El Salvador	3	5
India	3	5
Iraq	3	5
Croatia	3	5
Eritrea	2	3.3
Nigeria	2	3.3
Pakistan	2	3.3
Bangladesh	1	1.7
Bosnia	1	1.7

Country of Birth	<i>n</i>	Valid %
Columbia	1	1.7
Egypt	1	1.7
Ethiopia	1	1.7
Kenya	1	1.7
Korea	1	1.7
Libya	1	1.7
Mexico	1	1.7
Nicaragua	1	1.7
Russia	1	1.7
Somalia	1	1.7
Sri Lanka	1	1.7
Ukraine	1	1.7
Yugoslavia	1	1.7
Total	60	100.0

Note: 60 valid cases

Number of Years in Saskatchewan (Canada)

The present employment files of the settlement agencies include clients who have recently immigrated to Canada as well as those who have been in Saskatchewan for many years. However, the majority of interviewees were recent arrivals with fifty-two percent of these individuals coming to Saskatchewan in the past two years. The average number of years/months in Saskatchewan of all respondents was three years, two months. (Eighteen percent of all respondents came to Saskatchewan from other provinces. These interviewees spent an average of three and one-half (3.5) months in another province before moving to Saskatchewan)

Interviewees to Saskatchewan / Canada	<i>n</i>	valid %
# of Interviewees to Saskatchewan: From Outside Canada	49	81.7
# of Interviewees to Saskatchewan: From Other Provinces in Canada	11	18.3
Total	60	100

Note: 60 valid cases

Years to Saskatchewan (By group)	<i>n</i>	Valid %	Average Years to Sask
1 year or less	16	26.7	.7
1.1 to 2 years	15	25	1.7
2.1 to 3 years	9	15	2.9
3.1 to 5 years	13	21.7	4.2
5.1 to 10 years	5	8.3	8.4
10.1 to 15 years	1	1.7	15
15.1 years or more	1	1.7	17
Total	60	100.0	

Note: 60 valid cases

Mean (Years) to Saskatchewan
3.19

Mean (Years) to Canada
3.6

Education: Outside Canada

Highest Level of Education

All sixty respondents received formal education from outside of Canada and the results of the survey indicated that an average of fourteen and one-third (14.39) years of formal study was achieved. The majority of the interviewees (58%) had undergraduate or graduate degrees from an international country. For the most part, the respondents received their highest level of education from their country of birth.

Highest Level of Education	n	Valid %
Graduated from college or university (undergraduate)	25	41.7
Graduated from high school (Grade 12 equivalent)	8	13.3
Completed Master's degree	6	10
Some college or university (undergraduate)	6	10
Some high school (or equivalent)	6	10
Some technical (trade) school or apprenticeship program	3	5
Completed Ph.D.	2	3.3
Some Master's degree	2	3.3
Graduated from technical (trade) school apprenticeship program	2	3.3
Total	60	100.0

Note: 60 valid cases

Mean (years) of Study	Standard Deviation
14.39	3.568

Major Areas of Study/Specialization

Of the fifty-seven respondents who indicated a major area of academic study, engineering and science were the primary areas of specialization. Nine (15%) of the interviewees had engineering degrees from an international country and of these civil/mechanical majors were the most common.

Areas of Specialization	Examples (as per interviewee comments)	n	%
Engineering/Science	Bachelor of Civil/Mechanical Engineering/Ph.D. Science	14	24.6
High school	Finished high school/grade 11	10	17.5
Economics/Commerce/Law	Bachelor of Economics/Master's in Criminal Law	9	15.8
Education	Bachelor of History Education/teachers training instruction	6	10.5
Medicine/Health	Licensed midwife/Pharmacy/Bachelor of Medicine	5	8.7
Administration	Secretarial college/Diploma of Public Administration	4	7.0
Agriculture	Diploma in Agriculture/Master's of Geology	3	5.3
Trades	Courses in Machine Shop	3	5.3
Other	Languages/Marine college officer / Bachelor of Arts / Diploma in Journalism	3	5.3

Note: 57 valid cases, 3 no response (no major area of study-under grade 11)

English Language Acquisition

Eighty percent of all interviewees had some form of English training from outside Canada. Of these, ninety-two percent studied English in a school or institution for an average of nine and one-third (9.3) years. Since English acquisition is an important factor in one's ability to immigrate to Canada, the number of interviewees with English education from outside Canada was not surprising.

Educational Documents Brought to Canada

Interviewees with Documents

Type of Document Brought to Canada

Eighty percent of all interviewees brought some form of educational documentation to Canada. The remaining interviewees were primarily refugees, who could not access their documents before leaving their home country.

Of the forty-eight interviewees who brought some type of educational documentation to Canada, thirty-five percent brought primary school documents and sixty-seven percent brought secondary school documents. Therefore, sixty-five percent of respondents, did not bring primary school documents and thirty-three percent did not bring secondary school documents. The primary reason given for not bringing these documents to Canada, was 'not necessary'. Interviewees indicated that since they brought university/college documents with them to Canada, it was 'understood' that they had successfully completed primary and secondary school. Thus documents to prove completion of primary/secondary school, were not considered necessary.

A few respondents indicated that, although they brought to Canada some type of educational documentation, they were unable to bring all technical/trade/university/college documents. Reasons given were varied but included, 'lost certificates' and 'left the country quickly'.

Documents Brought to Canada	<i>n</i>	Valid %
Yes	48	80.0
No	12	20.0
Total	60	100.0

Note: 60 valid cases

Educational Documents Brought to Canada	<i>n</i>	Yes	Valid %	No	Valid%
Primary school documents	48	17	35.4	31	64.6
Secondary school documents	48	32	66.7	16	33.3
Technical, trade or apprenticeship	7	5	71.4	2	28.6
University/college documents	36	33	91.7	3	8.3
Other	8	5	62.5	3	37.5

Note: 48 valid cases

Ability to Access Educational Documents

Of those interviewees who did not bring primary school documents to Canada, over seventy percent indicated that they could not access these documents. Although the reasons were varied, the primary comment remained 'not necessary'. Of those interviewees who did not bring secondary school documents to Canada, approximately fifty percent indicated that they could obtain these documents. The majority of the remaining interviewees indicated that it would be 'too difficult' to obtain the documents. Eight interviewees indicated that they did not bring technical/trade/university/college documents to Canada. The majority of these respondents reported that they 'hadn't tried/too difficult' to obtain the documents.

Educational Documents Assessed to Canadian Standards

Of those respondents who brought educational documents to Canada, fifty-two percent had some form of assessment completed on these educational documents and forty-eight percent did not have assessments initiated. The majority of the interviewees who did not have their educational documents assessed to Canadian standards, cited 'not necessary as yet' as a primary reason. The secondary reason for no assessment was the respondent's 'lack of knowledge' of assessment and the assessment process. Three interviewees took their educational documents directly to a professional licensing board as these individuals felt that any other assessment would be irrelevant.

Documents Assessed to Canadian Standards	n	Valid %
Yes	25	52.1
No	23	47.9
Total	48	100.0

Note: 48 valid cases (12 respondents did not bring documents)

Reasons For Not Having Documents Assessed (as per interviewee's comments)	n	Valid %
Not Necessary yet	8	36.4
Did not know	3	13.7
Did not think it was necessary	1	4.5
Sent degree to Professional license board	1	4.5
I knew that no one would accept my workbook	1	4.5
Not formal assessment, only for volunteer work	1	4.5
Only talked to Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST) about my experiences	1	4.5
Ph.D. is from USA	1	4.5
Took to professional board first	1	4.5
Could not afford accreditation cost	1	4.5
A counsellor said I need Gr. 12. before entering Mechanic course, so no assessment done	1	4.5
Assessment done by professional licensing board	1	4.5
Still studying English and upgrading	1	4.5

Note: 22 valid cases, 1 no response

Assessment Initiated/Completed

Of those respondents that had educational documents assessed to Canadian standards, all indicated that they requested the assessment on their own behalf.

Type of Assessment

Forty percent of those respondents who had their educational documents assessed to Canadian standards, requested this assessment for admission into a post-secondary educational institution. Twenty-four percent requested the assessment for general employment purposes.

Type of Assessment Completed	n	Valid %
Assessment for admission into post-secondary institution	10	40.0
Basic assessment for general employment	6	24.0
Description of post-secondary course work (courses completed/credits earned)	3	12.0
Other: Assessment for high school entry/standing, Translations, Scholarships	6	24.0
Total	25	100

Note: 25 valid cases

Pre-Assessment Guidance

The settlement agencies were the main providers of assistance to the sixty-four percent of respondents who received pre-assessment guidance. Assistance with the application process, financial aid and mailing process were the main types of guidance provided. Those individuals not receiving pre-assessment guidance, indicated that they initiated the assessment process on their own, with the use of the internet, and in some cases from an international country.

Pre-Assessment Guidance	n	Valid %
Yes	16	64.0
No	9	36.0
Total	25	100.0

Note: 25 valid cases

Guidance Provided By	n	Valid %
RODS	7	43.8
University of Saskatchewan	3	18.8
SODS	3	18.8
SIAS	1	6.3
PAMC	1	6.3
High school counselor	1	6.3

Note: 16 valid cases

Kind of Assistance Provided (as per interviewee's response)	n
Assistance with completing application/financial aid	4
Assistance with translation	4
Assistance with sending documents	3
Other : Interview, exam, looked at	4

Note: 15 valid cases, 1 no response

Assessment Institution

Of those respondents who had their documents assessed to Canadian standards, the International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS) in Edmonton, Alberta, assessed forty-four percent of these documents and the University of Regina (UofR.)/University of Saskatchewan (UofS.), assessed thirty-six percent. In some cases, interviewees had two assessments completed at different agencies/institutions.

Assessment Institution	n	Valid %
IQAS	11	44.0
University of Regina / University of Saskatchewan	9	36.0
SIAS	3	12.0
Other : See below	6	24.0

Note: 25 valid cases

Examples of Other (from above)	n	Valid %
Board of Education	1	1.7
I think they went to Ottawa	1	1.7
Research Council	1	1.7
Regina Learning	1	1.7
Saskatchewan Municipal Affairs	1	1.7
Social Services	1	1.7

Official Outcome of Assessment

Sixty-three percent of interviewees who received an assessment outcome, indicated that their degrees were fully recognized by the assessment institution.

Outcome of Assessment	n	Valid %
1. Full recognition of degree/training/education to Canadian standards	15	62.5
2. Partial recognition of degree/training/education to Canadian standards	3	12.5
3. Degree/training/education could not be assessed	3	12.5
4. No recognition of degree/training/education	2	8.3
Chose both 2 and 3	1	4.2
Total	24	100.0

Note: 24 valid cases; 1 assessment not completed as yet

Assessment Comments	Examples (as per interviewee's response)	n
Full recognition of courses/courses comparable to Canadian courses	Complete recognition of degree/Entry into Masters program allowed/Equal to Canadian Bachelor degree/Received Boiler Certificate	11
Require more schooling	I required an English and math test which I passed/ Was told I would have to do high school again / University gave 1 year degree credit	6
Require documentation	No recognition because course outline and marks not available. Was told high school certificate not enough for Canada. Degree couldn't be assessed without transcripts.	4
Courses not/only partially recognized	University accepted my degree for entrance into graduate studies/Only two years of university credited	2
Conditional scholarship	Conditional scholarship-If any other student is eligible then they get the scholarship	2

Note: 24 valid cases, 1 assessment not completed as yet

Post-Assessment Guidance

Of those respondents who received assessment outcomes, six individuals (25%) received post-assessment guidance. Guidance was generally based on the outcome of the assessment and the need for future educational decisions.

Decisions After Assessment Outcome

Since forty percent of respondents had their degree assessed to Canadian standards for entrance into a post-secondary institution and the majority of these degrees were recognized for this entry, these respondents acted accordingly and entered/applied for post-secondary education. For the remaining respondents, the value of the assessment outcome varied.

Decisions After Assessment	Examples (as per interviewee's response)	n
Entered/applied for Schooling	Applied to 3 universities for entrance/Accepted at university/Entered Masters program.	12
Received/applied for job	I am now trying to apply for a teaching position/Studied, "Special Care Aid" and am employed	4
Did not help	So far assessment has not helped me/Assessment did not help as employer doesn't care	3
Did not enter due to circumstances	Did not enter yet because I am not landed/I wanted to enter university, but could not afford it, postponed	3

Note: 22 valid cases, 2 no response & 1 assessment not completed as yet

Professional Licensing Board Assessment

Fifteen respondents indicated that their degrees would have to be assessed by a professional licensing board for recognition and employment purposes. Eight of the fifteen sent their documents to a professional licensing board for this assessment. Of those that did not initiate the assessment procedure, the reasons varied. Primarily, the licensing board told these respondents that equivalency and licensing is a difficult process and would require several exams and several years of experience. In other cases, the respondents did not have all necessary documents and could not obtain documents/transcripts.

Documents Assessed by a Professional Licensing Board	<i>n</i>	Valid %
Yes	8	53.3
No	7	46.7
Total	15	100.0

Note: 15 valid cases

Assessment Initiated/Completed

Pre-Assessment Guidance

Pre-Assessment guidance was provided to four of the eight individuals who initiated the assessment process. This guidance was provided by the licensing board and settlement agencies and included assistance with the application process, fees for the application process and an outline of the rules.

Licensing Board

Although the research indicated that nine interviewees had engineering degrees from an international country, only three of these nine initiated the licensing assessment process. The remaining six did not initiate the process for reasons listed above.

Name of Professional Licensing Board (as per interviewee's response)	<i>n</i>
Association for Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Saskatchewan (APEGS)	3
Canadian Veterinarian Medical Association	1
An examining board for Pharmaceutical License in Toronto	1
Saskatchewan Learning	1
Saskatchewan Applied Science Technologists and Technicians (SASTT)	1
Transport Canada	1

Note: 8 valid cases

Official Outcome of Assessment

Of the eight respondents who sent their documents to a professional licensing board, only one received full recognition and a license was provided. The other respondents required further education/exams as well as further experience in their professional field.

Respondents indicated that the timeframe to complete the licensing procedure could range from zero to five years with a mean average of two and three-quarter (2.75) years.

Outcome of Assessment	n	Valid %
Degree fully recognized and license provided	1	12.5
Degree partly recognized: further education/exam required	4	50
Degree partly recognized: further experience required	1	12.5
Degree partly recognized: further education and experience required	2	25

Note: 8 valid cases

Assessment Comments (as per interviewee's response)	n
Accepted experience but required to write 2 exams and to have work experience in area	1
Approval given to write licensing exam	1
Before I have to take three exams to be licensed. Now they might waive exam if I send documents to Council of Professional Engineers.	1
Degree matches Canadian, but 3 exams required after further assessment, they might accept degree as is. Will know in June if I can be Engineer in training	1
Equal to "Professional A" certificate	1
Must go to Vancouver with all original certificates and decide if a license would be recognized after an interview and exam	1
Require work experience for 2 years	1
Required 3 tests: 1.evaluation test (assess basic knowledge) 2.Qualification tests (assess professional knowledge) 3.English fluency tests	1

Note: 8 valid cases

Number of Years to Complete Licensing Procedure	n	Valid %
5 Years	1	14.3
4 Years	1	14.3
3 Years	1	14.3
2 Years	2	28.6
6 months	1	14.3
None	1	14.3
Total	7	100.0

Note: 7 valid cases

Mean (years)	Standard Deviation
2.75	1.605

Post-Assessment Guidance

Seventy-five percent of respondents received post-assessment guidance. The assistance was provided by the respective professional licensing boards and generally outlined the future steps required in the licensing process.

Employment: Outside Canada

Primary Occupation: Outside Canada

Fifty-five immigrants/refugees had paid employment from outside Canada and worked within a primary occupation for an average of eight and two-thirds (8.6) years. Of these, thirty-seven (67%) interviewees worked in occupations related to their highest level of education. Since the occupations of these thirty-seven respondents correlated with their highest level of education, engineering and science remained the primary occupational/educational themes. (It should also be noted that twenty-seven of the fifty-five respondents used the English language while working outside of Canada.)

Employment Outside Canada	n	Valid %
Yes	55	91.7
No	5	8.3
Total	60	100.0

Note: 60 valid cases

Relationship Between Job and Education	n	Valid %
Primary occupation was related to highest level of education	37	67.3
Primary occupation was not related to highest level of education	7	12.7
Not applicable (high school education)	11	20.0
Total	55	100.0

Note: 55 valid cases

Type of Primary Job Outside Canada	Examples (as per interviewee's response)	n
Engineer/Science/Health	Civil Engineer, Project Manager / Pharmacist / Assistant Research Professor in Chemistry / Visiting scholar to university / Post Doctorate Research	13
Office (Secretary /Management/Sales)	Office assistant and typist / Supervisor of Community Center / Administrator in General Hospital / Salesperson	12
Teaching/Childcare	Private Tutor, Marketing firm / 3rd Grade Teacher / Child Daycare	11
Factory/Trades	Worked in factory / Other Industry / Machine Shop, Production of Plastic/ Mechanic	8
Business owner	Owned business, selling arts and crafts, tourism locations / Fashion designer, own business	5
Other	Handwriting Analyst , Worked in Criminal Laboratory / Lawyer / Personnel Department	6

Note: 55 valid cases

Other Paid Employment: Outside Canada

Eighteen respondents indicated that they had secondary jobs outside Canada and the primary themes of these occupations were office/cashier/sales.

Volunteer Work: Outside Canada

The majority of the interviewees had difficulty responding to the question of volunteer work outside of Canada. Although they had an understanding of the role of a volunteer in Canada, the interviewees did not consider their non-paying work outside Canada in the same context as volunteer work in Canada. However, after explanation and discussion, seventy-eight percent of the interviewees indicated that they did have non-paying jobs outside Canada. The major volunteer theme was teacher/caregiver.

Volunteer Work Outside Canada	<i>n</i>	Valid %
Yes	47	78.3
No	13	21.7
Total	60	100.0

Note: 60 valid cases

Type of Volunteer Work	Examples (as per interviewee's response)	<i>n</i>
Teacher/Caregiver	Tutor / Babysitter / Helped with Elderly / Assisting and tutoring friends, Rotary Club / Child care assistant	25
General Assistance (Cooking/Cleaning/Donations)	Cooking / Helping in church, cleaning and helping children / Helping people, cleaning	7
Community development	Helped in community and gave guidance to people, helped medical doctors / Social Community Work / Helped son/friends with education	6
Refugee Assistance	Helped refugees, translation and legal support	5
Other	Helped with brothers business / Library assistant / United Nation volunteer, organizing youth activities / Wrote books and poems and sent to magazines	4

Note: 47 valid cases

Other Skills and Abilities: Obtained Outside Canada

When asked to identify skills and abilities, not related to formal education/training, interviewees had great difficulty responding to the question. A common belief among interviewees was that skills had to be obtained in a formal fashion and within accredited institutions. Many did not consider that skills learned on their own or outside of educational settings, were skills that could be measured or evaluated. Again, probing was necessary for interviewees to respond to the question. The major skill themes were skills related to office, administration or computers.

Skills/Abilities Obtained Outside Canada	Examples (as per interviewee's response)	<i>n</i>
Office/Administration /Computers	Computer skills / Administration/Business skills / Purchasing skills / Can do almost anything/Fast learner/Eager	28
Domestic/Childcare	Can work with children and seniors / Cooking / Sewing / Child care skills	13
Management/Organization/ Customer Service	Good Math / Customer service skills / Sales skills / Management, crafts skills	11
Trades	Carpentry skills / Construction, math skills	4
Social Sciences	Enjoy history, geography, carpentry skills / Quick learner, humanities is a great interest, strength in sociology, psychology	2
None	None / Nothing	2

Note: 60 valid cases

Education: In Canada

English Language Training

Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) Program (See Appendix B)

Seventy-two percent of all interviewees have attended or are attending the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) Program. Of these, thirteen are presently in class and twenty-eight have completed LINC or are no longer in LINC classes. Two respondents took English classes under former English/employment programs. Of those respondents who have taken LINC, the most prominent entry level was LINC 3 and the most prominent exit level was LINC 5. Of those respondents who are taking LINC classes, the most prominent entry level was LINC 2. Seventeen interviewees did not take LINC classes as the majority were immigrants/refugees with a high English language level. (Please note that one interviewee exited LINC at Level 1, but at the time of the interview, had excellent communication skills.)

Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada	n	Valid %
Yes	43	71.7
No	17	28.3
Total	60	100.0

Note: 60 valid cases

Attended/Attending LINC Classes	n	Valid %
Have taken	28	68.3
Am taking	13	31.7
Total	41	100.0

Note: 41 valid cases; 2 cases under previous system

Have Taken LINC						Are Taking LINC					
Entry Level	n	Valid %	Exit Level	n	Valid %	Entry Level	n	Valid %	Present Level	n	Valid %
LINC 1	8	28.6	LINC 1	1	3.6	LINC 1	4	30.8	LINC 1	0	0
LINC 2	5	17.9	LINC 2	0	0	LINC 2	5	38.5	LINC 2	0	0
LINC 3	11	39.3	LINC 3	10	35.7	LINC 3	4	30.8	LINC 3	5	38.4
LINC 4	2	7.1	LINC 4	6	21.4	LINC 4	0	0	LINC 4	5	38.4
LINC 5	2	7.1	LINC 5	11	39.3	LINC 5	0	0	LINC 5	3	23.1
Total	28	100.0	Total	28	100.0	Total	13	100.0	Total	13	100.0

Note: 41 valid cases, 2 cases under previous system

Alternate English Classes

Other than LINC instruction, eighteen interviewees (30%), indicated that they are, or have previously taken, English at various institutions. Generally, the highest language level achieved was ESL 040 at University of Regina and Grade 12.

Classes in English	n	Valid %
University of Regina or University of Saskatchewan	7	38.9
Saskatchewan Institution of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST)	6	33.3
Other colleges or universities in Canada	2	11.1
General Educational Development (GED)	2	11.1
High School	1	5.6
Total	18	100.0

Note: 18 valid cases

Other Formal Education

Other than English classes, sixty percent of all interviewees have, or are taking further education in Canada. Technical/trade courses, as well as high school upgrading/equivalency, were the most prevalent areas of study.

Other Education	<i>n</i>	Valid %
Yes	36	60.0
No	24	40.0
Total	60	100

Note: 60 valid cases

Highest Level of Education Obtained in Canada	<i>n</i>	Valid %
Some technical (trade) school or apprenticeship program	9	25.0
Some high school	6	16.7
Some college or university (or currently in an undergraduate program)	6	16.7
Graduated from technical (trade) school or apprenticeship program	1	2.8
Graduated from college or university (undergraduate)	1	2.8
Some Master's degree (or currently in a Master's program)	1	2.8
Other: Studying for license, computers, first aid, Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) classes	12	33.3

Note: 36 valid cases

Areas of Specialization

Of those respondents who were/are obtaining further education and who were/are taking courses above a high school level, the major areas of specialization were computers, science and math.

Specialization Areas	Examples (as per interviewee's response)	<i>n</i>
Computers/Science/Math	Computer science / Science, math, physics / Classes in AutoCAD	13
Healthcare	Practical Nursing Class / Special Care Aid certificate	4
Early Childhood Education/Teaching	Teachers Assistants Course / Early Childhood Education classes	3
Trades	Parts Management classes / Profession cooking class / Sewing skills / Travel agent course /	4
Business Training	Entrepreneur training for one year / I have to study on my own for license tests as there are no classes offered in Regina / Pre-administration	3
Arts	Masters of Arts (Geography)	1
Other	General Educational Development (GED) / In my education we did everything in a non-computerized manner and now I need computer knowledge	2

Note: 30 valid cases

Reasons For Obtaining Further Education

Interviewees stated that the main reason for obtaining additional education was the need to improve their skills in order to achieve acceptable employment.

Reasons for Obtaining Further Education	Examples (as per interviewee's response)	n
Required further skills	I had no computer skills from my country, and I needed computer skills / My work is professional and I require training to be familiar with Canadian business / I wanted to improve my English and I needed more education to get a job in Canada	15
Desired employment/ A better job	I believe I can do much more than I am doing, I want a career / Without Gr. 12, I have to work for less money so we need Gr. 12 / Hope to get a job or better job	11
Employment difficulties in Canada	Canada accepts locally educated people more than immigrants and that is why I went back to school / I thought that I could build a career with these classes, but it never happened / I was thinking of becoming a nurse, but I had to wait 2 - 3 years before becoming a full-time student.	5
Future goals	I need grade 12 and then I want to go to University for Bachelor of Arts / I want to go to University eventually / When I was a child, I decided to be something. Because of the war I didn't finish education and I had to work. I want to finish and go further in education	3

Note: 34 valid cases, 2 no response

Reasons For Not Obtaining Further Education

Those interviewees, who have not pursued further education in Saskatchewan, provided several responses to this question. The primary reason given was 'inadequate English language ability' followed by 'presently working'. Those respondents who indicated that they are presently working, also felt that they had very little time or money to pursue further education. Although many of these interviewees wanted to take further education in order to improve their employment situation, the respondents indicated that this option was not available to them.

Reasons For Not Obtaining Further Education	n	Valid %
Do not know English well enough to pursue further education/training	15	60.0
Working	10	40.0
Couldn't pay for classes	6	24.0
Currently on waiting list	4	16.0
Raising children	4	16.0
Didn't have financial support to go (no government funding)	2	16.0
Courses/classes were full	1	4
Someone else in household was attending classes	1	4
Too busy with other things (generally, not specifically referring to work or children)	1	4
Did not apply	1	4
Do not know how to find out about further education/training (schools, programs etc.)	1	4
Other : Waiting for transcripts/Too old/Foreign worker	7	28.0

Note: 24 valid cases

Employment Programs

Fifty-seven percent of all immigrants and refugees reported that they have attended an employment or work placement program. The Settlement Agencies were the major providers of these programs.

Have Taken Employment/Work Placement Program	<i>n</i>	Valid %
Yes	34	56.7
No	26	43.3
Total	60	100.0

Note: 60 valid cases

Name of Institution / Program	<i>n</i>
RODS	10
SODS	7
MJMC	5
Bridging Program	3
SIAST	2
Immigrant Women of Saskatoon	1
PAMC employment program	1
RODS, Canada-Saskatchewan (CANSASK) Career and Employment Center	1
Saskatchewan Intercultural Association	1
Saskatoon Immigrant and Refugee Program	1
SIAST / Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA)	1
Social Services Workshop	1

Note: 34 valid cases

Workplace Training

Of the thirty-four respondents who attended an employment program, fourteen immigrants/refugees (41%) reported that there was a work placement component within the employment program. The length of the work placement varied from two to thirteen weeks. Eight of the fourteen respondents indicated that they received a job after the work term and the remaining six reported that the training was not intended to lead to a job or no job was available. Fifty percent of those who received a job after the work term, are currently in this position today.

Workplace Training	<i>n</i>	Valid %
No	20	58.8
Yes	14	41.2
Total	34	100.0

Note: 34 valid cases

Received A Job After Training	<i>n</i>	Valid %
Yes	8	57.1
No	6	42.9
Total	14	100.0

Note: 14 valid cases

Type of Job Received After Training	<i>n</i>
Accounts payable clerk	1
Computer science and geology	1
Daycare Worker	1
Laundry worker	1
Office assistant	1
Part-time job, sales and warehouse work	1
Information center	1
Plastic Business	1

Note: 8 valid cases

Currently In Same Job	<i>n</i>	Valid %
No	4	50.0
Yes	4	50.0
Total	8	100.0

Note: 8 valid cases

Reason For Leaving Job	<i>n</i>
I got sick and had to leave work	1
Lay off because business was down	1
Started my own business	1
Term contract	1

Note: 4 valid cases

Employment: In Canada

Barriers to Employment

Eighty-six percent of all interviewees had or are having difficulty finding employment or satisfactory employment in Canada. The main barrier to employment reported was a lack of Canadian work experience. Although interviewees recognized that adequate English skills were also important, their immediate responses were work experience, over-qualified for jobs, degree/training is not recognized and inability to obtain interviews.

Difficulty Finding Employment	<i>n</i>	Valid %
Yes	51	85.5
No	7	11.7
Have not tried	2	3.3
Total	60	100.0

Note: 60 valid cases

Barriers to Employment	<i>n</i>	Valid %
Do not have Canadian work experience	36	70.6
Do not speak English	28	54.9
Over-qualified for jobs that I apply for	19	37.3
My degree/training is not recognized for employment	16	31.4
Cannot find the job I want	10	19.6
I haven't been able to obtain my license in Saskatchewan (or Canada)	6	11.8
Do not know job specific English (trade-related terminology)	5	9.8
Racism/discrimination on the part of employers	4	7.8
Do not have computer skills	4	7.8
Can't afford to take training/school	4	7.8
Do not know how to look for a job in Saskatchewan	2	3.9
Age (too old; too young)	1	2.0
No childcare available (can't afford)	1	2.0
Other: Listed below	24	47.1

Note: 51 valid cases, 9 no response

Other Reasons	Examples (as per interviewee's response)	<i>n</i>
Could not get interviews/Not given a chance	Did not receive any interviews, I applied for various jobs / Sent resumes everywhere and could not get job or interviews / Some companies not supportive of immigrants and won't provide adequate training	12
Low job opportunity	Jobs are hard to find, I need more skills / Lack of jobs, most jobs are cleaning / Not many jobs available in my main field	8
Not knowing the right people	Didn't have connection with educational institutions and boards, didn't know the right people / Its not what you know, its who you know, I am new to Regina and I don't know anyone / You have to know someone in Canada	3
Other	People who came from outside Canada are often the smartest people in their country, employers do not understand this.	1

Looking for a Job

At Present

For an average of seven months, fifty-eight percent of all interviewees have been actively looking for a job or a new job. Respondents indicated that they are looking for jobs related to their education/experience or a job that is better than what they have at present. Those interviewees who are not looking for a job at present are currently working, attending school, or have family commitments.

Presently Looking for a Job	<i>n</i>	Valid %
Yes	35	58.3
No	25	41.7
Total	60	100.0

Note: 60 valid cases

Type of Job	Examples (as per interviewee's response)	<i>n</i>
Administration/ Banking/Computers	Any kind of clerk, accounting / Admin assistant/ computers, office support, bank, customer service, teller, sales person	9
Trades/Labour/ Cleaning	Anything, cleaning, grinding machinery, janitor / Housekeeping as I don't know what else I can do / Machine Operator, or Machinist	8
Engineering/Science	Civil Engineering / Engineering / Boiler / Geometrical drawing and AutoCAD / Research / Science	7
Other Professional	Travel Agency / Veterinary Medicine / Pharmacy	3
Teaching/Child care	Daycare / Teaching job	2
A job related to degree	Something related to degree / Trying to find a job related to past/present education if not, I will try to find anything	2
Other	Anything related to arts, crafts or labour / Bakery, cooking / Restaurant or Store, short term job, then school / Wal-Mart, Superstore, City Hall, Cashier, stock	3

Note: 34 valid cases, 1 no response

In the Future

Of those interviewees who indicated that they are not presently looking for a job or new job, forty-eight percent reported that they would be looking for a job/new job within the next year. The type of job that these individuals will be looking for was not necessarily in the area of their education or experience. Interviewees who indicated that they will not be looking for a job or new job in the next year, will be attending school or will stay at their present job.

Looking for a Job Within the Next Year	<i>n</i>	Valid %
Yes	12	48.0
No	11	44.0
Don't Know	2	8.0
Total	25	100.0

Note: 25 valid cases

Type of Job	Examples (as per interviewee's response)	<i>n</i>
Foods	Banquets or cooking / Either food technology or marketing	2
Business/ Administration	Accounts payable, bank, working with numbers, cleaning (hospital) / I enjoy math, I would like something in business administration	2
Teaching/Childcare	Early Childhood Education (ECE), daycare worker / Teaching / Daycare	2
Trades	Mechanic job, or mechanic assistant / Would like to find a job in a bigger steel company in Canada	2
Anything	Anything, need money / Anything, perhaps in a senior center	2
Sales	Salesperson	1
Other	Hope to get professional license and move to Vancouver to work in my profession	1

Note: 12 valid cases

Skills Necessary To Obtain a Job

Forty-seven interviewees reported that they are or will be looking for a job or a new job. Of these, eighty-one percent said that they presently have the skills and knowledge to obtain the job that they want. When asked what was/is preventing them from getting the job they want, the respondents indicated the same themes as previously listed under Barriers to Employment (Canadian work experience / certificates / over-qualified / no contacts). The remaining interviewees did not believe they presently had the skills necessary to find the job that they want. Better English and computer skills were identified as a need prior to employment.

Presently Employed

Forty-three percent of all interviewees are presently employed in full-time, part-time, a combination of full/part-time or several part-time jobs. The average work week for these interviewees is thirty-eight and one-quarter (38.25) hours.

Presently Employed	n	Valid %
No	34	56.7
Yes	26	43.3
Total	60	100.0

Note: 60 valid cases

Full or Part-time Jobs	n	Valid %
Full-time: More than 30 hrs/wk	15	57.7
Part-time: Less than 30 hrs/wk	14	56.0
Several Part-time jobs	2	8.0

Note: 26 valid cases

Mean (hours/week)	Standard Deviation
38.25	11.560

Type of Job

The majority of respondents do not presently work in areas related to past education or experience and sixty-nine percent reported that they are over-qualified for their present job.

Present Type of Full/Part-time Job	n
Cleaning	4
Day care worker/substitute teacher	4
Cleaning/Dishwasher	3
Clerical Assistant/Secretary	2
Sales	2
Construction/Carpentry	2
AutoCAD	1
Carpentry	1
Dealer	1
Electronic Design	1

Hog Technician	1
Information Center (Scanning)	1
Meat packer	1
Resident Attendant	1
Security	1
Shift Coordinator - Steel shop, caster and yard	1
Warehouse worker	1
Machine Shop	1
Restaurant	1
Nursing Assistant	1
Some private work	1

Note: 26 valid cases

Reasons for Feeling Overqualified With Present Jobs	Examples (as per interviewee's response)	n
Have degree/education	Definitely because I can not fully use my degree, highly, grossly under-utilized / I have a degree but I never had enough English so this job was okay for now / I have a Masters Degree but this keeps me going for now	8
Believes they are able to contribute more in current job	I feel I can do more than what I am doing as I am only helping the teacher / Right now I am considered a technologist only, but it would be good to be recognized as an Engineer	4
Over-qualified with no degree/education	I don't necessary like my dishwashing job, but I have no other skills. I need to work hard and make money / I feel I have skills to do something better	2
Other	A little over-qualified but technology keeps changing so I keep learning / Job is easy and I have worked at this kind of job for a long time / This job is just because I don't have anything else	4

Note: 18 valid cases

Finding Current Job

Of those interviewees currently employed, seventy-seven percent indicated that they did not have difficulty finding their current job. However, the majority of these immigrants/refugees work in entry-level positions, are underemployed and also received assistance locating their current job. Assistance was mainly provided by employment counselors and friends ('word- of- mouth').

Problems Finding Current Job	n	Valid %
No	20	76.9
Yes	6	23.1
Total	26	100.0

Note: 26 valid cases

Examples of Problems Incurred (as per interviewee's response)	n
Assessment was difficult, had to prove myself in workplace, a lot of competition	1
Communication skills is a problem	1
Even with this security job, I had problems because I am so over-qualified for these jobs.	1
Hard to find jobs for refugees and immigrants	1
I spent four months looking for a job, and I did not have a license	1
Took 1 year to get a cleaning job	1

Note: 6 valid cases

Found Current Job Through:	n	Valid %
Employment counselor	6	23.1
Word-of-mouth	6	23.1
Newspaper advertisement	4	15.4
Started as work placement	4	15.4
Started as volunteer	3	11.5
Internet	1	3.8
Job posting (in window/board)	1	3.8
Other: Went directly to employer/ Sent resumes/Kept applying/ Agency from home country/Offered to be volunteer	7	26.9

Note: 26 valid cases

Past Employment in Saskatchewan (Canada)

Although only forty-three percent of immigrants/refugees are presently working, fifty-seven percent of interviewees previously worked in Saskatchewan. Of the eleven respondents, who came to Saskatchewan from other provinces, all had full or part-time jobs while residing in these provinces. All interviewees, who had past employment in Saskatchewan or Canada, indicated that these jobs were in similar employment settings as listed above. Interviewees, who previously worked in Saskatchewan (Canada), and who are not working at present, indicated that they are now attending school or had been recently laid off from a temporary job.

Reasons: Not Presently Working	Examples (as per interviewee's response)	n
Attending school	Going to school / Just completed Bachelor degree / I worked night shift and it became impossible to go to school, take care of children and work	7
Temporary work/ Laid off	Lay-off of jobs I can't find new one / Student Assistant job only temporary / Non-profit organization / Employer did not budget to continue work / Just finished and might be called back	5
Maternity leave/ Family commitments	Child care issues, and I will be going back to school in August / Family commitments and volunteer work / Maternity leave	4
Moving/ Quit	I quit because employer had me doing the same work and other new people got more to do. I could do more too. / I quit. I was a teacher for 24 years and I am not used to physically demanding jobs. I am also older. / Because we are moving	4
Other	My entrepreneur business was not making money, I lost too much money and I had to close stores / Pre-school, small private school and there were not enough students. I left country and when I returned I put my name on list for daycare substitute	2

Note: 22 valid cases

Volunteer Work: In Canada

The majority of the interviewees (68%) have worked on a volunteer basis in Canada. The major themes of these non-paying jobs include: teaching, childcare, healthcare, and helping refugees.

Volunteer Work In Canada	n	Valid %
Yes	41	68.3
No	19	31.7
Total	60	100.0

Note: 60 valid cases

Type of Volunteer Work	Examples (as per interviewee's response)	n
Teaching/Childcare / Health Care	Teacher Assistant, worked with ESL newcomers / Working as babysitter, and nursing home assistant / Helping at children's school	18
Help with refugees/ Translation	Translations / Volunteer for gardening program / Helped refugees with translation, doctor appointments, and shopping / Willing to help with translation	13
Office work	Work placement, Data Entry / Church, childcare worker, crafts / Clerical assistant, daycare worker, bakery / Secretary, Babysitting	6
Labour / Paint / Clean	Cleaning, taking newcomers to offices, hospitals / Helped my neighbour to paint, cut grass / Cleaned yard for neighbours, cleaned neighbours house	2
Other	Assisted with drivers testing / Assisted new immigrants / Bingo Worker, helped in church / Cultural Relations / Attended police conference / I was first a volunteer in the job that I have at present	4

Note: 41 valid cases

Recognition of Prior Learning

When asked if interviewees had any knowledge of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) or Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR), all indicated that they had not previously heard of these programs, methodologies or terms. After an explanation of the intent of RPL or PLAR, some interviewees agreed that they might benefit from RPL/PLAR. A few interviewees could not differentiate between RPL and the present accreditation/assessment process and several interviewees could not grasp the terminology or intent of RPL.

Knowledge of RPL or PLAR	n	Valid %
No	60	100.0
Total	60	100.0

Note: 60 valid cases

Documentation of Past Learning/Experience

Ninety-seven percent of all interviewees have a resume that includes an outline of previous education/employment experience. Although seventy-eight percent of immigrants/refugees indicated that they had written job descriptions of previous employment experience, their understanding of 'full job descriptions' was vague. In addition, the majority of interviewees indicated that they had references from previous employers, but that these references were primarily from Canadian employers of entry-level jobs. Interviewees indicated that they had little, or no ability to obtain references from employers outside Canada. Other documentation, such as an outline of previous volunteer work, skills and abilities were limited and interviewees made no reference or had no knowledge of 'a portfolio'.

Documents Possessed by Interviewee	n	Valid %
Resume	58	96.7
Written job descriptions from previous employment experience	47	78.3
References from previous employment experience	42	70.0
References from previous volunteer work	16	26.7
Outlines and duties of previous volunteer work	6	10
Documentation of additional skills/abilities/hobbies (portfolio)	2	3.3
None of the above	1	1.7

Note: 60 valid cases

Assessment of Past Skills, Abilities or Knowledge

The majority of the interviewees reported that their skills, abilities and work habits had been assessed by past employers in and out of Canada. However, the assessment was usually verbal and informal and no written documentation was provided.

Skills Assessed By:	n	Valid %
Formal employer	36	69.2
Work placement employer	8	15.4
Friend	5	9.6
Teacher	4	7.7
Other: Volunteer	3	5.8

Note: 52 valid cases

Assessment Outcome	Examples (as per interviewee's response)	n
Quick learner / Hard Worker	Good worker, punctual, quick learner / Hard worker, very nice person, understand rules, punctual, patient / Very good work, can work without supervision, quick learner, easy going	31
Good Skills (keep looking /working in area of expertise)	Employer said I was great and wanted me to get a job in teaching area / Excellent knowledge and information. Advised me to go and try and find a higher level job in my area / Principal encouraged me to have my degree in teaching assessed. He felt I was a good and competent teacher	11
Keep improving /need to improve English	Employment counselors helped me with resume and interview skills. She said to keep improving my English and keep looking for a job / Very good worker, hard worker, intelligent, they said English language is a problem, good math skills, not enough time to train student / Very respectful, English is improving, hard worker	4
Other	Informal, excellent / Good cook, customer service / A lot of compliments but no additional money	3

Note: 49 valid cases, 3 no response

Skills Not Considered By Employers

Fifty-seven percent of all interviewees believed that they possess skills that are not being considered by employers. The primary theme of these overlooked skills was past education/experience. Thirty-five percent of all interviewees indicated that they do not know if employers recognize their skills because these immigrants/refugees have not received responses to job applications nor have they had an interview. A few interviewees believed that they require better English and further education before being considered by employers.

Possess Skills Not Considered By Employers	n	Valid %
Yes	34	56.7
No	5	8.3
Not Applicable/ Don't Know/ Didn't understand	21	35.0
Total	60	100.0

Note: 60 valid cases

Skills Not Considered By Employers	Examples (as per interviewee's response)	n
Have experience/ Education/ Can't find job	Ph.D. but no jobs available or over-qualified / Hard worker and fast learner, past education and experience is not being considered / Experience and education, transportation planner	15
Need experience/ education/ English	Had the skill to obtain a cooking job but required my license / I don't think my English was good enough / Never heard from employers, I think because I need my license	6
Have experience with children/ Teaching	Daycare skills and I have an Education degree / Have all education and experience to be a teacher in Canada / Teaching skills and educational degree	5
No interest/ Not being considered by employers	I am not sure. If I knew, then getting a job would be easy for me / I applied at mechanic shop and I asked to volunteer. They never phoned me back. No one wants to look at or hear about my skills / Some jobs I applied for, I never received interviews, do not know why	5
Have engineering experience	Degree and experience in engineering / I cannot get an engineering job because of credentials. I think that I have the skills for a computer job / I believe I have all skills necessary in electronic field	3
Other	Also, when you are working in Canada it depends if someone likes you or not. If not liked your life is miserable.	1

Note: 34 valid cases

Skills Not Considered By Educational Institutions

The majority (62%) of interviewees do not know if they possess skills and abilities that are not being considered by educational institutions. These respondents indicated that they have not discussed their skills with an educational institution. Since thirty-five of all immigrants/refugees did not bring educational documents to Canada, or did not have documents assessed, the outcome of the question is not surprising. In addition, several interviewees had difficulty answering the question. Of those that have discussed skills with an educational institution, the common theme and outcome was 'degree/training not recognized'. In these cases, interviewees had to repeat classes or start the process again.

Possess Skills Not Considered By Educational Institutions	n	Valid %
Yes	18	30.0
No	5	8.3
Not Applicable / Don't know	37	61.7
Total	60	100.0

Note: 60 valid cases

Skills Not Considered by Educational Institutions	Examples (as per interviewee's response)	n
Current degree/ education not recognized	I have a degree and additional education but the university does not recognize my education / I have Engineering Diploma and I showed it at the university. They asked if I wanted evaluation for credit or I must start again. I thought it was best to start again / SIAST did not recognize my education. University gave 1 year	7
Classes not offered/ on waiting list	Classes not offered in Regina / Two years waiting time for license is too long / University does not have Civil Engineering Department	3
Require more education	I was denied entrance into a welding course because I didn't have Gr. 10 documents from country / My experience was evaluated and I was told I still needed additional classes, perhaps there is a better way to get certificate / Went to talk to counsellor in mechanics but I was told cannot enter without Gr. 12	3
Can't get funding	The only courses available are in BC and I have to be a resident of BC for 1 year to get a loan / I have all abilities to go to school but I cannot get funding because I am on Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP)	2
Other	I believe I had enough English without Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) / Wanted to do Masters in States, but was told I need license first, very competitive to get one and they took more qualified people	2

Note: 17 valid cases, 1 no response

Willingness to Demonstrate Skills and Abilities

Within an Educational Institution

When asked of their willingness to demonstrate skills and abilities within an educational institution, only forty-four immigrants/refugees responded to the question. Thirty-six individuals indicated willingness and eight gave negative responses. The sixteen immigrants/refugees who did not respond to the question, were not aware of how an institution could assist them or they did not understand the question. Twenty-three of the thirty-six respondents, indicated that they would be willing to pay a small fee for an educational assessment.

Willingness to Demonstrate Skills Within an Educational Institution	<i>n</i>	Valid %
Yes	36	81.8
No	8	18.2
Total	44	100.0

Note: 44 valid cases, 16 no response

Reason For Not Willing to Demonstrate Skills	<i>n</i>
Not necessary (working/school)	3
I just wanted to talk to an Engineering Association	1
My engineering degree is 20 years old	1
Not permanent resident (not landed)	1
Not yet	1

Note: 8 valid cases

Willingness to Pay For This Service	<i>n</i>	Valid %
Yes	23	100.0
Total	23	100.0

Note: 23 valid cases, 13 no response

Interviewee's Comments On Fees For Assessment	<i>n</i>
Has to be a small fee	9
Depends on cost	1
I have spent money already	1
Had to pay deposits	1
I have to pay for tests and license and would have to pay for this as well	1
Yes, if it was something I needed	1
Not too much	1
Did not understand question	1

Note: 16 valid cases

Within A Workplace

Fifty-four interviewees indicated that they would be willing to demonstrate their skills in a workplace environment. Although the workplace goal varied, administration/ computers/accounting were the major workplace themes. Of those interviewees who did not want to demonstrate their skills, the reason provided was 'not necessary'.

Willingness to Demonstrate Skills in the Workplace	<i>n</i>	Valid %
Yes	54	94.7
No	3	5.3
Total	57	100.0

Note: 57 valid cases, 3 no response

Workplace Goal	Examples (as per interviewee's response)	n
Administration/ Computers/ Accounting	Accounting, bookkeeping, clerical / Clerical Assistant / Library / Office, bank, anywhere to work with numbers / Something to do with AutoCAD	16
Teaching/ Childcare/ Health	Daycare, Early Childhood Education (ECE), teaching assistant / Daycare or teacher assistant / Day care environment	9
Engineering/ Science	I want to be a lecturer at university in microbiology / I would like to demonstrate skills in an Engineering Firm. Would also like to encourage all immigrants so that they don't give up / I would really like a job in the naval area, nautical engineering / Transportation planner / AutoCAD	12
Trades/ Cleaning	Machinist / Janitorial work in school / Big steel company / Auto body	6
Foods	Any job as a professional cook / Food technology or marketing / Banquets / Cooking / Restaurant	4
Other	Anything for now until I can start my business / Anything in sales, houses, cars, clothes / I am not sure of my future employment goal, I am happy / My dream would be to be a hairdresser, but I would try anything / Something a little easier than housekeeping / Travel	8

Note: 54 valid cases

Additional Interviewee Comments

When asked if interviewees had any additional comments regarding past learning or obtaining a job in Saskatchewan, all but one interviewee responded. The comments received were thoughtful and creative and included all aspects of living and working in Saskatchewan.

Theme	Examples (as per interviewee's response)	n
Require education/ Experience/ Help	Industry requirements might be difficult and I can do any job but I might need a little training. / Training is important (work place training). / We also need a school to help us learn terms (new terms). / I believe most immigrants need to work. They need training to look for work and training for the work. / Immigrants have no jobs and if Governments can help them find jobs or training, this would help. / Perhaps we can be tested in a different manner than Canadians, lower entrance scores, some European countries do this for their immigrants/refugees.	71
No opportunities for Jobs/ Education/ Help/ Funding	I have heard that in Regina there is not a good opportunity to get a good job for those of us who have high education/skills. / I don't have money and I need to work. / A lot of immigrants and refugees have higher education from their countries and it is difficult to find some kind of job. / I can't afford to go to school so I try and work and study. / I have sent my application to a few locations, but no answer. I want to work in Saskatchewan but I can't find any opportunity.	61
Not familiar with Canadian Culture/ Need to improve - English	But my first language is not English / This is a different culture/environment and we are not familiar with the Canadian system. / First I need more English. / English is the biggest problem. LINC is not enough for me. Studying in LINC is different than going into the public. Maybe more opportunity for more English (terminology and Canadian culture) is necessary.	37
Living in Canada has been difficult (trying to remain positive)	New immigrants to Saskatchewan have some difficulty because the employment system is not like the educational system. / We must stay positive and if you have dreams, you must move forward and try. / I am frustrated and depressed because we thought things might be easier in Canada. / The most difficult thing was that the government would always warn me that I could only work in one field or else I would have to leave Canada. This was stressful.	20
Education / Experience not being considered	I don't understand what we have to do to be accepted and respected for what we know. / My husband has had difficulty having his degree recognized in Canada. / University gave me credit for one year,	16
Are able to work / Improve skills if given a chance	I think we can be useful if we are allowed to work. English language will improve if given a chance in the workplace. / Maybe an employer will test or interview you, or give you a chance. / Please give us a chance to prove our skills in the work place so that we can learn. / All we need to do is prove our skills.	15
Need Government (programs) to assess/recognize education/ experience	It is necessary to have programs to help immigrants/refugees, who have degrees, get some assistance with recognition of these degrees. Such as programs to look at degree and talk about knowledge and experience. / SIAST also told me that IQAS could assess my degree. / If there was a 'central place' where someone could check our degrees and tell institutions/employers what exactly we have. Then Canadian employers, institutions and licensing boards would understand the degree. Then each of us would not have to go through the whole process ourselves.	12
Require connections	It is not what you know, it is who you know. / In Canada, it should not be who you know but what you know. / Maybe I need to know someone or have connections	7
Discrimination	I feel a lot of discrimination in this Canadian culture. / Employers prefer young Canadians to older immigrants.	3
Canadians scared about losing own job	People (employers) in Saskatchewan do not want to train others for fear of losing their own jobs / However, people in sectors are also protecting their jobs and do not want to necessarily train us.	2

Note: 59 valid cases, 1 no response

RECOMMENDATIONS

The objective of the research project was to determine if newcomers to Saskatchewan would benefit from Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). The results of the needs assessment indicated that immediate intervention and/or assistance must be given to Saskatchewan's immigrants and refugees so that they can realize their potential, and so that Saskatchewan can benefit from their potential. A sense of futility, rejection and frustration existed among these very intelligent and highly competent newcomers and the necessity for assistance is paramount.

The results of the survey were significant and showed that although seventy-seven percent of all interviewees achieved some form of post-secondary education from an international country, only a handful of immigrants/refugees are presently employed in a related area of past education and experience. The remaining interviewees are generally underemployed and over-qualified for the jobs they have at present. Although these individuals are looking for better employment, the survey indicated that they have moved away from trying to obtain employment in areas of past expertise, and are generally looking for other entry-level jobs with better working conditions.

On the surface, one can look at the results of the survey and conclude that educational institutions and professional licensing boards must develop improved mechanisms to assess immigrants/refugees prior learning and experiences. However, the survey results also showed that although many newcomers took additional formal Canadian education and received Canadian degrees, these individuals did not have greater success finding employment within their new area of specialization. These immigrants and refugees invested time and money on Canadian re-education and upgrading and yet, their employment success was limited. Therefore, assessment, re-education, or accreditation alone, might not produce a higher level of employment success. Newcomers indicated that their major barrier to employment was a lack of Canadian work experience. They believed that if given assistance with work place training or a chance to prove themselves in the workplace, these immigrants and refugees would meet with employment success.

The following recommendations are based on the results of the research project and the need for additional immigrant/refugee programming, information and assistance.

1. Need for RPL Education/Orientation

Key Finding:

The research findings indicated that immigrants/refugees had no knowledge or understanding of RPL or PLAR. Not only was the terminology difficult for interviewees to comprehend, but respondents had difficulty with the concept of Recognition of Prior Learning. For some, RPL was nothing more than present assessment policies and for others, RPL was yet another long step in their journey towards satisfactory employment.

Although thirty-six interviewees indicated that they would be willing to have their skills assessed, through interviews or examination of documents by an educational institution, they were hesitant and skeptical of this process. Some interviewees did not clearly understand the question and others seemed to fear possible exams/interviews. However, when asked of their willingness to prove their skills in the workplace, fifty-four interviewees responded positively and enthusiastically.

The term 'portfolio' was never acknowledged by interviewees. Although the majority of the interviewees had resumes, it was difficult to determine the detail of these resumes or if supporting documentation was included. Comprehensive job descriptions did not seem to be available to interviewees and documentation of prior learning, volunteer work, or additional skills was limited.

Recommendation:

Newcomers to Saskatchewan require education and orientation on Recognition of Prior Learning and this information should be provided to them in a clear, concise manner with terminology edited to meet the comprehension level of the Newcomer. Examples of *current* RPL practices, programs and costs among Saskatchewan educational institutions, should be outlined so that immigrants and refugees do not conclude that all educational institutions, licensing boards and employers assess learning/experiences through RPL methods. (See RPL Referral Guide at: [http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/P/rpl/docs/RPL Referral Guide 24 04 03.pdf](http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/P/rpl/docs/RPL%20Referral%20Guide%2024%2004%2003.pdf)) In addition, a clear distinction must be made of the differences between RPL and professional licensing/accreditation processes. It is also necessary to develop RPL expertise within the settlement agencies so that RPL strategies can be incorporated into the services provided to clients. How RPL is ultimately viewed by newcomers or settlement agency staff will depend on the existing RPL success rates, the number of educational institutions using RPL, and the number of employers willing to look at RPL as a basis for future employment.

2. Need to Implement RPL Pilot Project in the Workplace

Key Finding:

In order to achieve satisfactory employment, the majority of the interviewees indicated that they required Canadian work experience, employer contacts, and an opportunity to prove their skills in the workplace. Respondents also expressed frustration over their inability to receive job interviews and they felt, if given assistance, they would meet with better employment success.

Recommendation:

There is an immediate need to implement RPL in the workplace and to ensure that RPL workplace objectives are clearly outlined to immigrants/refugees as well as employers. Due to the high percentage of interviewees with international post-secondary education degrees, it will be necessary to find employers within specialized areas. Employers will need to be involved in the training and assessment process and will also require some assurance that they will benefit from the experience.

3. Need to Enhance Intake/Documentation Procedures within Settlement Agencies

Key Finding:

When the RPL research project was first discussed, it was thought that all necessary immigrant and refugee information could be retrieved from the existing employment records at each of the settlement agencies. However, it was soon determined that the information contained in the employment records was not comprehensive enough to meet the objectives of the project and to complete the detailed interview schedule. It was also determined that each of the settlement agencies had their own approach to gathering employment intake information.

Recommendation:

Since each of the settlement agencies have employment programs, or provide employment assistance to immigrants and refugees, it will be beneficial for SAISIA to develop a generic intake form that includes a checklist process for gathering all necessary information. The checklist should outline all appropriate informational material that will assist in the process of finding meaningful employment for SAISIA'S clients. Along with current immigrant and refugee information, additional client material should include an outline of demonstrable skills, an inventory of skills/abilities, education, experience, skill gaps, profile stories and client needs. In addition, and in order to enhance accessibility and maintenance of client files, it will be beneficial if employment information was stored in a computerized database. This will allow for an effective connection between refugee/immigrant clients and job opportunities, and can also provide useful information for developing and implementing program interventions.

4. Need to Provide Additional Information to Immigrants

* *Enhance Web Site Information*

Key Findings:

The research survey indicated that very few immigrants realized the importance of bringing all of their educational/employment documents to Canada. Holders of post-secondary education degrees felt that primary school documents and at times, secondary school documents were not necessary because post-secondary documents superceded other documents. Many of these immigrants did not also realize the significance of obtaining job descriptions and job references from previous international employers.

In addition, and upon arrival to Canada, many immigrants were unaware of the difficulty of obtaining employment within their realm of expertise. These newcomers indicated that the accreditation procedures were costly, time consuming, somewhat unproductive, and the chance of employment within their area of specialization was minimal. Also, immigrants without family or other contacts in Saskatchewan were unaware of current services available to them.

Recommendation:

Prior to arrival to Canada, it is necessary to assure that potential immigrant applicants are aware of the need to acquire and bring all documents relating to prior learning and experience. In addition, information outlining the challenges encountered in seeking employment and accreditation, as well as present services available should be provided to potential immigrants prior to, and upon, arrival in Saskatchewan. Enhanced Provincial and Federal Immigration web site information can assist with the dissemination of this information.

* *Develop Central Location*

Key Finding:

Interviewees indicated their frustration with the present assessment and accreditation procedures and their inability to obtain accurate information. To alleviate frustration and provide accurate information, one interviewee gave this recommendation: "It would be ideal if there was a central location where all immigrants and refugees could go to obtain all accurate information on, and assistance with, assessment, accreditation and licensing procedures." The intent of the comment was that staff at this 'central location' could act as liaisons with educational and licensing communities, could provide adequate and updated information to the immigrant/refugee as well as to the educational/licensing institutions.

Recommendation:

The development of a central location will improve communication between educational institutions, licensing boards, employers and settlement agencies. It will also provide enhanced and more focused assistance to immigrants and refugees, and can ultimately produce staff with updated knowledge in assessment, accreditation and licensing procedures.

5. Need for Additional Financial Support

Recommendation:

Since meaningful employment is the ultimate goal of all newcomers, it is necessary to allocate adequate finances to improve and enhance settlement and employment programs. The above recommendations can only be implemented if mechanisms for financial program support are established.

NEXT STEPS

The RPL Steering Committee agreed that the following actions shall be undertaken to implement the recommendations of this Report.

The RPL Steering Committee will work in partnership with the Saskatchewan Association of Immigrant Settlement and Integration Agencies (SAISIA) and other stakeholders, to develop strategies for the implementation of the recommendations of this Report. In this respect, the RPL Steering Committee and SAISIA *shall*:

1. Develop and implement a communication strategy to ensure communication of the results of the study is distributed to all key stakeholders;
2. Identify capacity within the sector to implement the recommendations of the Report and mechanisms for addressing identified gaps;
3. Identify mechanisms for the delivery of orientation services to immigrants and refugees on RPL and accreditation processes in Saskatchewan and for the development of appropriate orientation materials as needed. Under a grant from the Department of Government Relations and Aboriginal Affairs (GRAA), SAISIA has already begun to work on identifying gaps in orientation services to newcomers. This work can serve as a first step toward addressing immigrants and refugees need for better information and orientation on RPL and accreditation processes in the province;
4. Identify mechanisms to develop and implement an RPL Pilot Project in the Workplace;
5. Identify mechanisms to develop and implement enhanced intake assessment and referral processes in the sector. Under the grant from GRAA, SAISIA is developing a standardized intake assessment and referral process for immigrant settlement agencies in the province; and
6. Identify mechanisms to enhance information available to potential immigrants and refugees abroad and in Saskatchewan, on RPL and accreditation processes in the province.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) within the Newcomer Community: A Needs Assessment

LITERATURE REVIEW

**Report: Seminar on Recognition of Refugee Qualifications
November 15-16, 1999, Council of Europe Headquarters, Strasbourg, France
Research and Report by: Rosalie Phillips
Manager, International Credential Evaluation Service**

The report was based on a seminar that was held in France and hosted by the Council of Europe. Author of the report is an international credential expert of British Columbia's International Credential Evaluation Service (ICES)--Rosalie Phillips. Ms. Phillips attended the Seminar under the auspices of the Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials (CICIC) and Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC). The seminar and ultimate report discussed the need to find alternate methods for recognition of refugee qualifications.

- Recognition of barriers faced by refugees was identified by the Danish Refugee Council and included:
 - * Lack of provisions for various areas of assessment and recognition
 - * Lack of procedures to deal with insufficient documentation
 - * Lack of financial support and bridging to mainstream education and training

- Lisbon Recognition Convention provided that requests for recognition should be assessed in a fair manner and within a reasonable time and that recognition can only be refused if the qualification is substantially different from that of the host country. (The onus is placed on the evaluating party to demonstrate where substantial differences lie) The European Network of National Information Centres on Academic Mobility and Recognition (the ENIC Network), oversees, promotes and facilitates evaluating procedures.
(Comparable body in Canada is the Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials-CICIC.)

- Alternate Evaluation Methodologies
 - * Interviews
 - * Special competence examinations
 - * Sworn statements
 - * Prior learning assessments
 - * Provisional recognition or admission

- Alternate Types of Supporting Evidence
 - * Certificates of professional status
 - * Teachers' statements about the education completed by the individual
 - * Printed lists of admitted registered, or graduated students
 - * Student identification cards
 - * Statements from employers
 - * Course calendars and program syllabi

(Many of the above methodologies and supporting evidence procedures are already in place in Canada).

- Vehicles of Evidence
 - * Non-governmental Organizations
 - * National Information Centres
 - * Web resources

(Canadian evaluators are encouraged to seek out alternate sources of information)

- Expeditious Evaluation
 - * It was proposed that refugees should have access to the result of their qualification assessment within four months of applying for recognition.
(Canadian evaluators are encouraged to do the same)

- Financial Considerations
 - * Reduce or eliminate the fees charged to refugees for the evaluation of their credentials. (Canadian solution might be a partnership with the banking industry for loans or bursaries. Ideally all government-recognized refugees should be funded for translation and evaluation.)
- Clear Assessment Procedures
 - * Evaluation procedural information should be in "relevant language". Translated information for large groups of 'like' speaking refugees would be helpful. (Same recommendation for Canadian evaluators)
- Information Sharing
 - * Evaluators should find ways to share information about methodologies and refugee qualifications.
 - * Internationally accessible web site on refugee qualifications would be helpful.
 - * Meetings between evaluating agencies. (Many of these suggestions are in place in Canada)

Halifax Declaration for the Recognition of Prior Learning 2001
Joint National Conference for Prior Learning Assessment and Qualification Recognition
October 28-31, 2001, Halifax Nova Scotia

- Participants of the Joint National Conference confirmed the following principles and actions:
 - * The recognition of prior learning is fundamental to a lifelong learning culture.
 - * All learning should be recognized or considered for recognition by educational, professional and work organizations.
 - * Canadians, including immigrants to Canada should have the right to have their prior learning assessed and recognized.
- In order for these principles to be realized, the following actions are necessary:
 - * Dedicated funding for the recognition of prior learning must be provided.
 - * National standards and criteria for practice must be developed and maintained in order to ensure high quality PLAR/QR services and programs and the widespread recognition of their outcomes.
 - * National leadership must be identified and supported
 - * The Federal government must provide leadership and support in order to develop and sustain these important initiatives.

**Recognition of Prior Learning In Saskatchewan: Communities in Practice
Saskatchewan Labour Force Development Board (SLFDB)
Updated March 15, 2002**

Background of Saskatchewan Labour Force Development Board (SLFDB)

- * facilitate relationship building
 - * encourage dialogue and consensus; and
 - * support the continuing development of collaborative approaches that will build capacity for the long-term delivery of RPL services in Saskatchewan.
- Need for RPL in Saskatchewan
 - * We need to assist workers in transition in identifying their prior learning in order to facilitate skill transference to sectors experiencing skills shortages.
 - * We need to increase the participation of Aboriginal people in the workforce.
 - * We need to do a better job of recognizing the qualification of immigrants so that they can participate to their fullest potential in the workforce.
 - * We need to assist marginalized people in making connections to the workforce.
 - * We need to continue to build capacity for RPL with the post-secondary education system so that workforce training needs can be expediently addressed.
 - * We need to continue to work with industry to explore how RPL can be incorporated into various human resource practices such as workforce recruitment, development, retention, and succession planning.
 - * We need to continue to raise awareness of the benefits of recognizing prior learning and its potential to help Saskatchewan address its labour shortage situation.
 - Objectives:
 - To work towards the practice of Recognition of Prior Learning in Saskatchewan using a targeted, sector-based approach.
 - * Objective 1: Awareness Towards Action
 - * Objective 2: Leadership Towards Policy
 - * Objective 3: Targeted Capacity-Building
 - * Objective 4: Resource Development
 - Activities and a plan of action in support of the Objectives were provided along with the roles and responsibilities of SLFDB and Post Secondary Education and Skills Training and a RPL budget.

Immigrants Need Not Apply**Andrew Brouwer****Caledon Institute of Social Policy**

This report is the first in a series of Caledon/Maytree papers on immigrant access to professions and trades in Canada. The paper describes the difficulties facing immigrant professionals and tradespeople seeking employment in their field of expertise. It outlines the immigrant selection process, the social and economic costs of non-recognition of foreign qualifications, the barriers faced by immigrants seeking licensure in their occupations, and the roles of each of the stakeholders in the accreditation process.

- Immigrant Selection Process:
 - * The largest group of immigrants coming to Canada is in the 'independent' or 'skilled worker' category.
- Social and economic costs of non-recognition of foreign qualifications:
 - * Gaining recognition of foreign credentials is difficult and is largely due to the unfamiliarity of regulatory bodies, employers and academic institutions with foreign educational, training, technological and professional standards.
 - * According to the Price Waterhouse report, failure to recognize foreign academic credentials alone (not to mention foreign work experience) results in increased costs to the welfare system, losses to employers who cannot find skilled workers, unnecessary retraining for immigrants, and the loss of potential revenue from foreign-trained individuals.
- Barriers faced by immigrants seeking licensure in their occupations:
 - * Ethnic/race relations: (alienated, institutional discrimination)
 - * Human rights: (under-employed, reduced income)
 - * Mental Health: (desperation, lack of confidence, erosion of skills)
- Stakeholders:
 - * Federal government
 - * Provincial governments
 - * Occupational regulatory bodies
 - * Educational institutions
 - * Employers
 - * Unions
 - * Non-governmental organizations

Guide to Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition at SIAST
SIAST Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition Committee
SIAST, January 2000

- Principles of Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition
 - * Access
 - * Articulation
 - * Consistency
 - * Context
 - * Credibility
 - * Equivalent rigor
 - * Outcomes
 - * Relevance of assessed learning
 - * Transferability
 - * Valid and reliable process

- The Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition Process (at SIAST)
 - * Candidate Process for PLAR - Flow chart is presented to outline this process.
 - * Eligibility:
 - ^ PLAR available to any individual registered in a SIAST course program.
 - ^ Language proficiency will be stated in the SIAST Calendar.
 - ^ Pre-requisites to any courses within a program may need to be challenged.
 - * Application process is identified.
 - * Fees outlined: \$30 to initiate PLAR and \$150 (or course tuition fee) for assessment.
 - * Assessment procedure outlined.
 - * Recognition Procedure outlined.
 - * Scope of Application of Prior Learning Assessment
 - * Appeal Process

- Assessment Methods
 - * Product Validation and Assessment
 - * Challenge Exam/Final Exam
 - * Standardized Tests
 - * Performance Evaluations
 - * Interviews and Oral Exams
 - * Equivalency evaluations
 - * Portfolio and Person Documentation Files

- Benefits and Impact of Prior Learning Assessment
 - * Learners: Will require easy access to procedures, access to learning outcomes and assessment outcomes, support to match learning to outcomes, and funding.
 - * Counselors: Will receive training, act as first contacts, have a close relationship with facilitator, and will made adjustments to their work patterns.
 - * Program Heads and Instructors: Will require training, liaise with facilitators/counsellors, need to develop administrative mechanisms to include PLAR in the infrastructure.
 - * Registrars
 - * Senior Management

Brain Gain**The Economic Benefits of Recognizing Learning and Learning Credentials in Canada
The Conference Board of Canada
2001**

- Executive Summary
 - * The three groups that would gain most from learning and credential recognition would be: Immigrants, people with prior learning gained through work/training, and transferees between post-secondary learning institutions or, in the case of licensed professions, between provinces.
 - * Potential for Improvement: An improved system for recognizing the learning of immigrants and other Canadians would go a long way to genuinely offsetting the effects of the brain drain and creating a brain gain.
 - * Options for Action:
 - ^ For Existing Institutions
 - ^ For New Institutions
 - ^ Through Communication
 - ^ For Employers
 - * Securing Prosperity: Globalization, demographic change, competition among nations for skilled people, and the emergence of large scale knowledge-based industries have made it more important than ever for Canada to make the most of the knowledge and the skills of its people.

- The remainder of the report is a detailed analysis with accompanying statistics that supports the evidence summarized in the Executive Summary.
 - * The Big Picture
 - * Mechanisms for Recognizing Learning
 - * Amount of Unrecognized Learning
 - * Brain Gains to Canada from Improving Learning Recognition
 - * Conclusion and Call to Action

**Attracting and Keeping Skilled Immigrant Workers in High Tech - Lessons From Asian Computer Professionals
News Release
August 23, 2001**

This news release was based on a study completed by the Canadian Policy Research Network who provided an in-depth look at the motivations, attitudes, perceptions and intentions of Asian migrant knowledge workers living in Canada. The study, *Economic Migrants in a Global Market* was funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada and Human Resources Development Canada. This research found that immigrants were often unaware or misinformed about Canadian conditions, from immigration rules to taxes and standard of living. The research also indicated that Canadian companies successfully attract foreign workers, but they often stay only a couple of years before moving to the U.S. "Better policies are required if Canada is to be more than a mere transit point for IT workers on their way to the U.S."

The author of the study indicated that an overwhelming majority of Asian IT workers do not have any family ties in Canada. This is critical to whether they stay or go. Without family ties, the decision to go is more likely to be made on strictly economic grounds. Recommendations to develop retention strategies included:

- * Encouraging Asian IT workers to bring educated relatives from their homelands,
- * Higher compensation for work, lower taxes, more challenging work
- * Streamlining immigration precession rules and recognizing the credentials and work experience of immigrants

The Grass is Not Always Greener**Canada's Government Wants Skilled Immigrant Workers, but "Imported" Human Resources are Often Wasted, or Worse****Sarah R. Wang, MGV. Contributor****2003**

Ms. Wang outlines that, although the Canadian government wants immigrants with high educational attainment and occupational qualifications as a rich resource of human capital, studies have concluded that these 'imported' resources are not always properly used, and often end up being wasted.

- Great Expectations
 - * Immigrants have great expectations of Canada because they have heard that Canada is one of the best places for families and Canadian people are very nice. Although immigrants might have been told that some of this was hearsay, the immigrants feel that they have a great opportunity in Canada because they are educated, have professional achievements, have a wealth of knowledge and have money in the bank.
- Chilly Realities
 - * Example: Scientist from China turned down a job offer in US, in order to immigrate to Canada where he has since become a warehouse worker.
 - * Since 1986 the unemployment rate amongst immigrants has been rising significantly.
- Opening Government, Closing Labor Markets
 - * More skilled workers are being allowed to come to Canada and projections show that that more than 50% of the present immigrant category is comprised of skilled workers.
 - * Statistics show a dwindling middle class amongst all Canadians.
 - * Foreign professionals leave a middle class existence and for the most part enter into a low economic class. It is unclear to what extent the foreign professionals have played in the reduced Canadian middle class.
- The Four Walls and More
 - * Skilled immigrants have difficulty persuading employers to accept their credentials.
 - * Professional licenses may, at times, be out of reach for many new immigrants. This is due to expense, language problems, lack of time and the need to work.
 - * Immigrants found that English learned in home countries is not good enough for the Canadian workplace. Therefore they must find time for ESL or similar language classes.
 - * Without a license, one cannot obtain a professionally relevant job and thus cannot receive Canadian work experience. Licenses are required in medicine, law, engineering, teaching, financial planning, investment advising, mutual funds, real estate and accounting to name a few. Employers in unregulated industries also use lack of experience to turn down applicants.
- The "Experience" Requirement
 - * Work experience from international countries does not count in the eyes of Canadian employers.
 - * In order to educate potential immigrants, a provincial-federal task force prepared in-depth information kits on nine regulated professions, put them on the internet and sent them to consulates. However, this has not improved the situation and Canadian lawyers working with immigrants feel that the changes are only cosmetic.
 - * In addition to the barriers faced above, immigrants feel racial discrimination, particularly targeting new immigrants from developing countries.

Literature Review, The Grass is Not Always Greener - Continued

- "Interesting Accents" and "Unpronounceable Names"
 - * Job networking for newcomers does not always work. New immigrants face cultural racism when employers cannot pronounce their names.
 - * Recruiters who prefer to work with familiar things and people screen out immigrant applicants. Employers say that it is more cost-effective to hire Canadians and if a visible minority is required, this can be accomplished by turning to schools in Canada.

- Industry Runs Its Own Show
 - * Engineering Associations will not use the new Ontario assessment service but will continue to do its own evaluations.
 - * Accounting Association may use the provincial government's proposed assessment service if it is kept up to date.

- Breaking Through
 - * Canadian companies who are 'going global' may see increased need for foreign professionals. Also, companies are now targeting the consuming power of Canadian immigrants and there is increased hiring of people who speak the customer's language.
 - * New immigrants must be flexible when looking for a satisfying job in a new country.
 - * Some immigrants are being told to avoid high competitive job markets and obtain Canadian work experience in smaller (even remote) cities in Canada.
 - * Immigrants must grasp the Canadian style of communication and interpersonal skills.

- As Long as It Takes
 - * Immigrants are told to be flexible, fight, keep hope alive, and be patient. But the author concludes that "it would have been nice if someone had told them this before coming to Canada".

LINC LEVEL DESCRIPTIONS

Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC)

Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) is a federally sponsored program that provides basic English language training to newcomers in Saskatchewan. The objective of LINC is to facilitate the social, cultural and economic adaptation of adult refugees and immigrants into Canada so that they may become participating members of society as quickly as possible.

The Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) are used in LINC programs to establish the entry and exit language levels of newcomers. CLB are a descriptive scale of communicative proficiency in English as a Second Language expressed as 12 Benchmarks. A Canadian Language Benchmark is a description of a person's ability to use the English language to accomplish a set of tasks. Each Benchmark contains a global performance profile and describes four selected competencies in social interaction, instructions, suasion and information. Each Benchmark provides examples of communication tasks, the accomplishment of which may demonstrate the required standard of proficiency. Each Benchmark contains the following parts:

Global performance descriptors, which give a brief account of learner's general language ability in English as a Second Language as revealed in speaking, listening, reading or writing tasks at the Benchmark level.

Performance conditions, which are specific conditions that give us the purpose of communication setting/place, audience, topic, time constraints, length of task, assistance allowed, etc.

Competency outcomes and standards, which tell us what a person can do, examples of communication tasks and test, plus outcomes that the learner should demonstrate to achieve the Benchmark.

The Benchmarks are divided into the following 3 stages:

- * **Basic proficiency (Stage 1 - Benchmarks 1-4)** is the range of abilities required to communicate in common and predictable contexts and within the area of basic needs, common everyday activities, and familiar topics of immediate personal relevance.
- * **Intermediate proficiency (Stage II - Benchmarks 5-8)** allows a person to participate more fully in a wider variety of contexts. It is the range of abilities required to function independently in most familiar situations of daily social, educational and work-related life experience, and some less predictable contexts.
- * **Advanced proficiency (Stage III - Benchmarks 9-12)** is the range of abilities required to communicate effectively, appropriately, accurately and fluently in most contexts, topics and situations, from predictable to unfamiliar, and from general to professionally specific, in the most communicatively demanding contexts. Learners at this stage have a sense of purpose and audience when communicating (including distance, politeness and formality factors, appropriate register and style, volume/length of communication), accuracy and coherence of discourse, vocabulary range and precision.

LINC Description - Continued

CLB contains 12 Benchmarks for each of the four language skill areas - Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing. The following are the CLB entry and exit standards for each of the language levels from LINC 1 to LINC 5.

LINC 1	Entry Standards	Exit Standards
Speaking	Pre-CLBA 1	CLB 1
Listening	Pre-CLBA 1	CLB 1
Reading	Pre-CLBA 1	CLB 1
Writing	Pre-CLBA 1	CLB 1

LINC 2	Entry Standards	Exit Standards
Speaking	Pre-CLBA 2	CLB 2
Listening	Pre-CLBA 2	CLB 2
Reading	Pre-CLBA 2	CLB 2
Writing	Pre-CLBA 2	CLB 2

LINC 3	Entry Standards	Exit Standards
Speaking	Pre-CLBA 3,4	CLB 4
Listening	Pre-CLBA 3,4	CLB 4
Reading	Pre-CLBA 3	CLB 3
Writing	Pre-CLBA 3	CLB 3

LINC 4	Entry Standards	Exit Standards
Speaking	Pre-CLBA 5	CLB 5
Listening	Pre-CLBA 5	CLB 5
Reading	Pre-CLBA 4	CLB 4
Writing	Pre-CLBA 4	CLB 4

LINC 5	Entry Standards	Exit Standards
Speaking	Pre-CLBA 6,7	CLB 7
Listening	Pre-CLBA 6,7	CLB 7
Reading	Pre-CLBA 5,6	CLB 6
Writing	Pre-CLBA 5,6	CLB 6

A complete description of the Canadian Language Benchmarks is available on the Internet at: <http://spro.ocdsb.edu.on.ca/oprlac/contents/13.htm>

METHOD OF RESEARCH INFORMATION RECEIVED:

- Settlement Agency Employment Records..... 1
- Settlement Agency Employment Records and Phone Interview..... 2
- Phone Interview Only..... 3
- Other (Specify)_____ 4

FOLLOW-UP PHONE INTERVIEW:

If a follow-up phone interview is required, a verbal consent from the interviewee will be received.

I HAVE RECEIVED A VERBAL CONSENT FROM THE INTERVIEWEE AND HE/SHE HAS AGREED TO PROVIDE FURTHER INFORMATION FOR THE RPL RESEARCH PROJECT.

Interviewer Signature: _____

PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Gender: male..... 1 female..... 2

2. Age

- 18 to 25 years old?..... 1 56 to 65 years old?..... 5
- 26 to 35 years old?..... 2 66 to 75 years old?..... 6
- 36 to 45 years old?..... 3 76 years or older?..... 7
- 46 to 55 years old?..... 4

3. What was your country of birth? _____

4. How many years (and months) have you lived in Saskatchewan? _____ years _____ mos.

5. What was your immigration status when you came to Canada?

- A government-sponsored or privately-sponsored refugee? 1
- An immigrant?..... 2
- Other: _____ 3

EDUCATION OUTSIDE CANADA

6a. Did you have formal education outside Canada? (School, trades, training, programs)

No..... 1 → **[Go to 7a]**

Yes..... 2 → 6b

6b. What was the highest level of education that you completed?

- Primary school (Grade 8) or less1
- Some high school (or equivalent)2
- Graduated from high school (Grade 12 equivalent)3
- Some technical (trade) school or apprenticeship program.....4
- Graduated from technical (trade) school or apprenticeship program.....5
- Some college or university (undergraduate).....6
- Graduated from college or university (undergraduate)7
- Some Master's degree.....8
- Completed Master's degree.....9
- Some Ph.D.10
- Completed Ph.D.....11
- Other: _____12

6c. Number of years of formal education:_____

6d. From what country did you receive your highest level of education?_____

6e. What was your major area of study? (specialization/ skill area)

7a. Did you study or learn English outside Canada?

No..... 1 → **[Go to 8a]**

Yes..... 2 → 7b

7b. Did you study English in a school or institution (outside Canada)?

No..... 1 → **[Go to 8a]**

Yes..... 2 →Number of years of study_____ (Go to 8a)

8a. Did you bring to Canada (or able to obtain from outside Canada) your formal educational documents?

No..... 1 → [Go to 11a]

Yes..... 2 → 8b

8b. What type of formal educational documents did you bring to Canada?

Primary school documents yes no → Reason _____

Secondary school documents yes no → Reason _____

Technical, trade or apprentice yes no → Reason _____

University / college documents yes no → Reason _____

Other _____ yes no → Reason _____

8c. If you responded 'no' to any of 8b, would you be able to obtain any of these documents from your previous international school or college/university? (Respond to respective 'no' from 7b)

Primary school documents yes no → Reason _____

Secondary school documents yes no → Reason _____

Technical, trade or apprentice yes no → Reason _____

University / college documents yes no → Reason _____

Other _____ yes no → Reason _____

9a. Were your formal educational documents assessed to Canadian standards (*other than Professional Licensing board*)?

No..... 1 → Reason (**Probe cost/did not know**) _____

[Go to 10a]

Yes..... 2 → 9b

9b. Did someone ask you to have this assessment completed? If so, who asked?

I requested the assessment.....1

A Canadian educational institution.....2

An employer.....3

Professional licensing body.....4

An organization (specify) _____ 5

Other _____ 6

9c. What type of assessment was requested?

Basic assessment for general employment.....	1
Description of post-secondary course work assessment..... (courses completed / credits earned)	2
Assessment for admission into post-secondary institution.....	3
Other _____	4

9d. Did you receive pre-assessment guidance?

No..... 1 →9g
Yes..... 2 →9e

9e. Who provided guidance? _____

9f. What kind of guidance was provided?(Probe for application assistance/procedures)

9g. What institution or organization assessed your formal educational documents?

Provincially- Mandated Assessment Service	
International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS) - Edmonton.....	1
Other Provincially-Mandated Assessment Service..... (such as: International Credential Evaluation Service (ICES) - Burnaby, Academic Credentials Assessment Service (ACAS) - Winnipeg, World Education Services - Canada (WES) - Toronto)	2
Other Evaluation Service..... (such as: Academic Credentials Evaluation Service - Toronto, Comparative Education Service - Toronto, International Credential Assessment Service of Canada - Guelph)	3
University	
University of Regina or Saskatchewan.....	4
Other Canadian University.....	5
Colleges/Technical Institutions	
SIAST.....	6
Saskatchewan Regional College	7
Other Canadian Colleges.....	8
Other (Specify) _____	9

9h What was the outcome of the assessment

- Full recognition of degree/training/education to Canadian standards..... 1
- Partial recognition of degree/training/education to Canadian standards.....2
- No recognition of degree/training/education.....3
- Degree/training/education could not be assessed.....4
- Assessment Comments (if any)_____

9i. Was post-assessment guidance provided?

- No..... 1 →9k
- Yes..... 2 →9j

9j. What guidance was provided? (What was needed to meet the credential?)

9k How did the outcome of the assessment assist you? (**probe: received employment, entered post-secondary education, transferred credits, professional license**)

10a. Was your degree/training (formal educational documents) assessed by a professional licensing board in Saskatchewan?
(or Canada)

No..... 1 → Reason (**Probe for financial/did not know**)_____

[Go to 11a]

Yes..... 2 →10b

10b. Did you receive pre-assessment guidance?

- No..... 1 →10e
- Yes..... 2 →10c

10c. Who provided guidance?_____

10d. What kind of guidance was provided?(**Probe for applicat'n assistance/procedures**)

10e. What was the name of the professional licensing board?_____

10f. What was the outcome of the assessment?

- Degree fully recognized and license provided..... 1
- Degree partly recognized: further education required. 2
- Degree partly recognized: further experience required..... 3
- Degree partly recognized: further education and experience required..... 4
- No recognition of degree..... 5
- Other _____ 6

10g. Assessment Comments (if any) _____

10h. Was post-assessment guidance provided?

- No..... 1 →10j
- Yes..... 2 →10i

10i. What guidance was provided? (What was needed to meet credential?)

10j. What would be the approximate number years required for licensing procedure?

_____ years

EMPLOYMENT OUTSIDE CANADA

11a. Did you work (paying job) outside Canada (*must be paid employment, not volunteer work*)

- No..... 1 → [Go to 12a]
- Yes..... 2 → 11b.

11b. What was the relationship between your job and your education?

- Primary occupation related to highest level of education.....1
- Primary occupation not related to highest level of education.....2

11c. Primary Occupation was _____

11d. How many years did you work in your primary occupation? _____

11e. Did you have other paid jobs? **(If any, list below)**

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

11f. Did you have to use English for any jobs (*outside Canada*)?

No..... 1

Yes..... 2

12a. Did you have any non-paying jobs outside Canada? (volunteer work, assisting someone)

No..... 1 → **[Go to 13a]**

Yes..... 2 → 12b.

12b. What were these non-paying jobs?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

13a. What other skills and abilities do you have not related to formal education/training? **(Obtained outside Canada)**

EDUCATION IN CANADA

14a. Have you taken or are you presently taking LINC (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada) classes.

No..... 1 → **[Go to 15a]**

Yes..... 2 → **Circle one:** have taken **[Go to 14b]** am taking **[Go to 14c]**

14b. At what level did you enter LINC?

Circle: LINC 1 LINC 2 LINC 3 LINC 4 LINC 5

At what level did you complete LINC?

Circle: LINC 1 LINC 2 LINC 3 LINC 4 LINC 5

(Go to 15a)

14c. At what level did you enter LINC?

Circle: LINC 1 LINC 2 LINC 3 LINC 4 LINC 5

What is your present level?

Circle: LINC 1 LINC 2 LINC 3 LINC 4 LINC 5

15a. Other than for LINC classes, have you gone to school, or are you going to school for English classes?
(in Saskatchewan or Canada)

No..... 1 → **[Go to 16a]**

Yes..... 2 → 15b

15b. Are you currently taking or have you taken English Classes at:

- High School.....1
- SIAST (Adult Basic Education).....2
- University of Regina or Saskatchewan.....3
- Other Colleges or Universities in Canada.....4
- GED.....5
- Other _____ 6

15c. What is the highest level of English that you have obtained? _____

16a. Other than English classes, have you obtained (or are you obtaining) further education or training in Saskatchewan
(or Canada)?

No..... 1 → **[Go to 17a]**

Yes..... 2 → 16b

16b. What is the highest level of education that you completed in Saskatchewan? (or Canada)

- Some high school → **Circle one:** high school GED adult learning (SIAST)..... 1
- Graduated from high school → **Circle one:** high school GED adult learning (SIAST).. 2
- Some technical (trade) school or apprenticeship program..... 3
- Graduated from technical (trade) school or apprenticeship program..... 4
- Some college or university (or currently in an undergraduate program)..... 5
- Graduated from college or university (undergraduate)..... 6
- Some Master's degree (or currently in a Master's program)..... 7
- Completed Master's degree..... 8
- Some Ph.D. (or currently in a Ph.D. program).....9
- Completed Ph.D.10
- Other: _____ 11

16c. If you have more than high school education , what are (were) you studying in Canada? (area of specialization, skills learned)

16d. What are/were your reasons for going back to school in Canada? (to obtain professional license, to complete/enhance international credential , to change careers, first time student)

(Go to 18a)

17a. What are your reasons for not obtaining further education in Saskatchewan (Canada)

- Do not know English well enough to pursue further education/training..... 1
- Do not know how to find out about further education/training (schools, programs, etc.).. 2
- Do not know how to apply/register for programs/courses/classes..... 3
- Do not know how to get transcripts..... 4
- Do not know how to get a loan (includes student loans or bank loans)..... 5
- Courses/classes were full..... 6
- Currently on a waiting list..... 7
- Courses/classes were not available where I live..... 8
- Courses/classes were held at a bad time..... 9
- Thought courses/classes would be too difficult..... 10
- Too busy with other things (generally, not specifically referring to work or children)..... 11
- Working..... 12
- No childcare available..... 13
- No transportation..... 14
- Someone else in household was attending classes..... 15
- Didn't have financial support to go (no government funding)..... 16
- Couldn't pay for classes..... 17
- Did not apply..... 18

Other reasons: _____

18a. Have you attended an employment or work placement program?

No..... 1 → (Go to 19a)

Yes..... 2 → 18b.

18b. What is the name (and city) of Program: _____

18c. Was there a work placement component in the Program?

No..... 1 → (Go to 19a)

Yes..... 2 → 18d

18d. How many weeks did you have work place training? _____

18e. Did you receive a job after the training?

No..... 1 → 18f

18f. Why did you not receive a job after the work place training?

Training not intended to lead to work.....1

No job available.....2

Not enough skill/education to obtain a job.....3

Did not want this job.....4

Other _____ 5

Yes..... 2 → 18g

18g. What was/is the job? (*occupation*) _____

18h. Is this your current job?

yes no → Reason _____

EMPLOYMENT IN CANADA

19a. Have you had any problems finding a job in Canada?

No..... 1 →20a

Yes.....2 →19b

19b. What problems have you had finding a job?

- Do not speak English (very well).....1
- Do not know job-specific English (trade-related terminology).....2
- Do not know how to look for a job in Saskatchewan.....3
- Do not know how to write a resumé.....4
- Do not have computer skills.....5
- Have no education/ haven't finished Grade 12.....6
- Cannot find the job I want.....7
- Can't afford to take training/school.....8
- My degree/training is not recognized for employment.....9
- I haven't been able to obtain my license in Saskatchewan (or Canada)10
- Racism/discrimination on the part of employers.....11
- Age (too old; too young).....12
- No childcare available (can't afford).....13
- Dealing with trauma/distress.....14
- Do not have Canadian work experience.....15
- Over-qualified for jobs that I apply for.....16
- Other: _____

20a. Are you actively looking for a job at present?

No..... 1 → Reason _____ [Go to 20b]

20b. Will you be looking for a job (or a new job) within the next year?

No..... 1 → Explain: _____ [Go to 21a]

Yes.....2 → 20c.

20c. What kind of job will you be looking for? _____

_____ (Go to 20g)

Yes.....2 → 20e

20e. For how many months have you been looking for a job? _____ (# of months)

20f. What kind of job are you looking for? _____

21h. How did you learn about your current job(s)?

- Newspaper advertisement..... 1
- Internet..... 2
- Employment Counselor..... 3
- Job posting (in window/board)..... 4
- Started as work placement..... 5
- Started as volunteer..... 6
- Word-of-mouth..... 7
- Family business..... 8
- Self-employed..... 9

Other: _____

21i Did you have problems finding your current job(s)?

No.....1 → **[Go to 22a]**

Yes..... 2 → (Explain)_____

22a. Have you previously worked in Saskatchewan (*not current jobs*) ?

No..... 1 →22b]

22b. Did you ever work in Canada?

No.....1 → **[Go to 23a]**

Yes..... 2 →**(Go to 22d)**

Yes..... 2 → 22c.

22c. Did you also work in other cities in Canada? yes no

22d. Was the job(s) full-time (*30 hours or more per week*) or part-time (*less than 30 hours per week*)?

Full-time1 **(Go to 22e)**

Part-time2 **(Go to 22f)**

22e. What were these full-time jobs?

Job 1 _____ City _____

Job 2 _____ City _____

Job 3 _____ City _____

(Go to 22g)

22f. What were your part-time jobs?

Job 1 _____ City _____

Job 2 _____ City _____

Job 3 _____ City _____

22g. If you are presently not working, why are you no longer working? (temporary jobs, moved, etc)

23a. Did you have any non-paying jobs in Canada? (volunteer work, assisting someone)

No..... 1 → **[Go to 24a]**

Yes..... 2 → 23b.

23b. What are these non-paying jobs?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

24a. Do you have knowledge of Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) or Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)?

No.....1 → **[Go to 25a]**

Yes..... 2 → 24b

24b. How do you know about PLAR or RPL? _____

24c. Have you ever had your skills/abilities/experiences assessed through PLAR (RPL) advisors/institutions?

No.....1 → Why not? (**Probe for financial reasons**) _____

_____ **[Go to 25a]**

Yes..... 2 → 24d

24d. Name of advisor/institution: _____

24e. For what purpose (*courses*) _____

25a. Other than formal credentials from International or Canadian schools/institutions, do you have a:

- Resume..... 1
- Written job descriptions from previous employment experiences..... 2
- References from previous employment experiences..... 3
- Outline and duties of all volunteer work..... 4
- References from previous volunteer work..... 5
- Documentation of additional skills/abilities/hobbies (portfolio)..... 6
- None of above..... 7

26a. Other than English and International Credential assessment, have you ever had someone assess your skills, abilities or knowledge?

No.....1 → **[Go to 27a]**

Yes..... 2 → 26b

26b. Who assessed your skills, abilities or knowledge?

- Teacher.....1
- Formal employer.....2
- Work placement employer.....3
- Friend..... 4
- Other _____ 5

Assessment Outcome _____

27a. Do you believe that you possess skills, abilities and experiences that are not being considered by employers?

No.....1 → **(Go to 28a)**

Yes..... 2 → 27b

27b. What are these skills, abilities, experiences that employers do not recognize? **(Probe for credential and non-credential responses)**

28a. Do you believe that you possess skills, abilities and experiences that are not being considered by educational institutions?

No.....1 → (Go to 29a)

Yes..... 2 → 28b

28b. What are these skills, abilities, experiences that institutions do not recognize? (Probe for credential and non-credential responses)

29a. Would you be willing to demonstrate your skills and abilities within an educational institution?

No.....1 →Reason:_____

Yes..... 2 →29b

29b. Would you be willing to pay a fee for this assessment, test or interview?

No.....1 → Explain _____ (Go to 30a)

Yes..... 2 → Any Comments _____

30a., Would you be willing to prove your skills and abilities in a work place environment?

No.....1 →Reason:_____ (Go to 31a)

Yes..... 2→ 30b

30b. What kind of work place environment would meet your employment goal?

31a. Do you have any other comments regarding past learning and/or obtaining a job?

Thank you very much for taking the time to be interviewed. Your answers have been very helpful.

As you may remember, the purpose of this study is to determine if Newcomers to Canada would benefit from a process dedicated to assessing and recognizing learning, no matter how, or where, the learning is acquired.

(Recognition of Prior Learning)