

Pre-Employment VS Traditional Apprenticeship

Pre-Employment

Most technical institutions such as SIAST, offer a one or two year pre-employment certificate course in most trades. Students enrolled in these courses attend school from 8:00 to 4:00 Monday to Friday from September to April. Students spend half of their day learning theory work such as math and communications. The other half of their day is spent working in the shop or lab. The end of the pre-employment course often includes a one week work placement at a local shop or lab. This work placement often leads to a full time job. Employers are likely to hire a pre-employment graduate because they have learned the necessary skills to become a valuable entry level employee. After students have completed their pre-employment course, they work for a period of two years. The pre-employment course counts as the first and second year technical training of a traditional apprenticeship. A disadvantage of the pre-employment course is the cost of tuition.

Traditional Apprenticeship

Another choice for a successful career in trades is the traditional apprenticeship experience. A person wanting to start a career in trades through the traditional apprenticeship route must first find a job in the trade they want to work in. After the employer decides they are a valuable employee, the worker is signed up (indentured) as an apprentice. The apprentice then works under a Journeyman to learn the skills of the trade. After the apprentice has worked the correct number of hours, they are called by the Apprenticeship Board to attend technical training. The apprentice attends technical training at an institution such as SIAST for a period of 6 to 8 weeks. After the student completes the technical training, they return to their workplace for another period of practical training. This cycle of technical training and on the job training continues for a period of 3 to 4 years depending on the chosen trade. In the last year of technical training, the apprentice writes the Interprovincial Journeyman exam. An advantage of this apprenticeship choice is that students earn a wage while they are learning new skills.