

**DOUGLAS**

**DOUGLAS COLLEGE  
TRAINING GROUP**



**Essential Skills Practitioner Training  
(ESPT) Certificate Program Guide**



Photo: Martin Dee

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# WELCOME TO THE ESSENTIAL SKILLS PRACTITIONER TRAINING (ESPT) CERTIFICATE PROGRAM GUIDE

Why should you complete the ESPT Certificate Program?

## DEVELOP INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS

Are you an **employer, HR professional** or a **workplace trainer**? The ESPT Certificate Program will give you the tools you need to develop innovative, efficient and relevant training programs for your staff.

## HELP LEARNERS ADAPT TO NEW INFORMATION AND CONTEXTS

As an **educator, teacher or facilitator**, you know that many learners struggle to adapt to new information or to integrate knowledge from different sources. The ESPT Certificate Program will show you how to assess your learners' skill gaps and how to develop targeted curriculum to help your learners develop the skills they need for success in work, learning and life.

## IDENTIFY THE PATH TO SUCCESS

As an **employment counsellor** or **career practitioner**, your goal is to help your clients identify the skills they need to reach their occupational goals. The ESPT Certificate Program will give you the tools you need to help you identify and assess your clients' skills. You will also learn how to help your clients develop the skills they need to remain competitive in today's labour market.

***Help your learners' gain the skills they need to succeed!***

## Douglas College Motto

*“Do what you love. Be good at it.”*

## Core Purpose

*“We inspire our students to do what they love and be good at it, providing educational experiences that challenge, enlighten, and open doors to lives of passion and purpose.”*

## Vision

*Douglas College is recognized as providing the most inspiring and relevant undergraduate educational experience in B.C., filling a niche between universities and colleges by combining the academic foundations of a university with the employer-ready skills of a college.*

## Douglas College Values

These guiding principles shape the Douglas College learning community and govern our decision-making.

We believe:

- ⚙ that students are our primary focus.
- ⚙ in fostering a dynamic, accessible and supportive teaching and learning environment that prizes excellence and innovation. We value creative and critical thinking and the will to challenge and be challenged.
- ⚙ in honoring the contribution and worth of all individuals. We welcome diversity with its rich complexity and believe that all voices need to be heard.
- ⚙ that it is our duty to be thoughtful and caring stewards of the personal, physical and fiscal resources entrusted to us. We practice social, environmental and community responsibility.
- ⚙ that intellectual growth and exploration inspire well-rounded, responsible and contributing citizens. We invite everyone into the excitement and curiosity of learning.
- ⚙ in the power of dreams and in the power of education to make them come true.

# DO what you love.

# Be good at it.

## ESSENTIAL SKILLS AT THE TRAINING GROUP

Essential Skills are the skills needed for work, learning and life. They provide the foundation for learning all other skills and enable people to evolve with their jobs and adapt to workplace change.

Through extensive research, Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) and other national and international agencies have identified and validated nine Essential Skills. These skills are used in nearly every occupation and throughout daily life in different ways and at different levels of complexity.

The Essential Skills Practitioner Certificate Program provides training for people working in the fields of education, career development, employment counseling, workplace training and human resources. Participants will develop the competencies, knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to work effectively to assess and enhance the Essential Skills of the diverse client populations they serve.

In 2000, The Training Group participated in a WWESTNET (Western Workplace Essential Skills Training Network) conference where Statistics Canada presented findings from the 1994 International Adult Literacy Survey revealing that over 40% of Canadians lacked the Essential Skills needed for work and learning. In 2003, a second survey of over 23,000 working age Canadians reconfirmed this percentage. A subsequent survey, the 2013 Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC), suggests that there continues to be a significant number of Canadians that lack the literacy skills they need for success in school, at work or in everyday life.

In order to address skill deficits using researched Essential Skills-identified constructs and methodologies, it quickly became evident that information from the extensive and valid body of research needed to be shared and translated into practical applications. In an effort to address this issue, the Training Group developed a series of workshops designed to assist practitioners to integrate ESDC's Essential Skills into their work.

The Training Group has been offering Essential Skills education since 2005. In addition to Essential Skills courses for practitioners, the Training Group offers a number of programs for unemployed individuals, low-skilled workers and college students to address their skill shortages by applying Essential Skills constructs and methodologies. Essential Skills courses are continuously reviewed and updated in order to provide students with current information on best practices and to incorporate recent developments in the area of Essential Skills.

To learn more about the Training Group and our work in the field of Essential Skills, please visit our page on the Douglas College website at:

<https://www.douglascollege.ca/programs-courses/training-group/essential-skills>

## **ENTRANCE AND COMPLETION REQUIREMENTS**

All Essential Skills Practitioner Certificate (ESPT) courses are open to the general public.

In order to qualify for completion of the Essential Skills Practitioner (ESPT) Certificate Program applicants will be required to demonstrate they meet the following criteria:

1. are currently working in any of the following fields: career development, employment counselling, rehabilitation, education, workplace training, human resources or a related field for a minimum of one year OR
2. hold a college or university diploma or degree in a related field OR
3. have one year of paid or volunteer work in an occupationally related training field
4. successful completion of all 6 ESKL courses

### **How to Apply for the ESPT Certificate**

The final course of the program, the Essential Skills Work Experience Study course includes the completion process. Applicants will be required to submit a copy of their:

- a. resume detailing work experience, professional credentials and relevant education
- b. one letter of reference from an employer (paid or volunteer) commenting on the applicant's suitability as an Essential Skills Practitioner

Upon successful completion of the ESKL 2400 Work Experience Study, students will receive a graduation application. Certificates will be processed and distributed at graduation or sent via mail by the Registrar's Office.

## ESPT CERTIFICATE PROGRAM COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Essential Skills courses are designed to help educators, workplace trainers, human resource professionals and career practitioners understand and integrate Essential Skills into their work.

### Course Formats

**Online:** All courses are offered online with each course being offered a minimum of once per year. To view Essential Skills program information, please go to:

<https://www.douglascollege.ca/programs-courses/training-group/essential-skills/practitioner-training-certificate/course-outline-dates>

**Customized Face-to-Face (F2F) or Hybrid:** Face-to-face or hybrid courses can be arranged for student groups where a fully online program may not be suitable. To find out about these options or to request a quote, please contact us at 604-777-6152 or by e-mailing [essentialskills@douglascollege.ca](mailto:essentialskills@douglascollege.ca).

### Grading

All courses are designed to combine a balance of theoretical and interactive learning approaches. All courses, with the exception of the Essential Skills Work Experience Study, are marked on a “complete/incomplete” basis and letter grades do not apply. Students demonstrate their understanding of the concepts taught through assignments, discussions, and participation.

## Online Course Descriptions

### **ESKL 1001            Introduction to Essential Skills            3 weeks**

This 3 week online course introduces participants to the basics of Essential Skills and includes 2 webinars. Participants learn what the Essential Skills are, where they come from, why they are important, how they are used and what tools and resources are available. Students can expect to spend 3-4 hours per week on coursework.

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- define the nine Essential Skills
- discuss the origins and value of Essential Skills
- effectively utilize Essential Skills Occupational profiles
- recognize Essential Skills assessments
- describe a number of Essential Skills tools and resources
- describe how the knowledge of Essential Skills can be applied

**Pre- Requisite:** None

**Note:** This course is a pre-requisite for all other Essential Skills courses.  
The course number for on-site delivery is ESKL 1000.

### **ESKL 2301            ES Methodology and Task Analysis            6 weeks**

This 6 week online course introduces participants to the methodology used in the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) and ESDC's Essential Skills with an emphasis placed upon understanding and interpreting complexity scales, deconstructing tasks to identify required Essential Skills and complexity levels, and the application of task analysis. There are 3 webinars in this course. Students can expect to spend 5-8 hours per week on coursework.

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- describe how adult literacy surveys have re-defined the concept of literacy
- explain how the IALS (International Adult Literacy Survey) and PIAAC (Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies) frameworks underpin Essential Skills methodology
- conduct an Essential Skills-based task analysis
- apply the ESDC Essential Skills scales to task analyses
- assist learners to analyze the complexity of Essential Skills required to perform job tasks by applying the appropriate rating scale
- identify the skills needed to apply ES methodologies in practical applications

**Pre-Requisite:** ESKL 1001 or ESKL 1000 Introduction to Essential Skills

**Note:** This course is a pre-requisite for ESKL 1301 Bridging the Gap: Enhancing Essential Skills. The course number for on-site delivery is ESKL 2300.

### **ESKL 1104 ES Assessments, Interpretation and Application 4 weeks**

This four week course will provide participants with practical knowledge about Essential Skills assessments and their application. Through the exploration of formal, informal and self-assessments, participants will gain an understanding of IRT (Item Response Theory) and how it applies to Essential Skills assessments. Participants will also be introduced to assessment report writing and learn about debriefing techniques. There are 2 webinars in this course. Students can expect to spend 3-5 hours per week on coursework.

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- describe the three types of Essential Skills assessments – formal, informal and self-assessments
- interpret test results and IRT scores
- prepare assessment reports
- perform effective assessment debriefs
- employ effective practices to help learners understand Essential Skills assessments and their value
- relate assessment results to occupational or training goals

**Pre-Requisite:** ESKL 1001 or ESKL 1000 Introduction to Essential Skills

**Note:** The course number for on-site delivery is ESKL 1100.

### **ESKL 1201 Creating an Essential Skills Portfolio 3 weeks**

This three week course presents a three step process to help learners identify, understand and describe their Essential Skills. Using a hands-on approach, course participants will explore how to help learners create a personal Essential Skills portfolio and how to assist learners to connect their existing Essential Skills to the world of work, learning and life. There is 1 webinar for this course. Students can expect to spend 3-4 hours per week on coursework.

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- demonstrate how to prepare an Essential Skills portfolio
- assist learners to understand their Essential Skill levels
- help learners to identify evidence to validate learner skill levels
- use a variety of methods to help learners understand skill requirements needed for occupational success
- assess the applications and benefits of an Essential Skills portfolio for Essential Skills practitioners (teachers, educators, career counsellors, HR professionals)

**Pre-Requisite:** ESKL 1001 or ESKL 1000 Introduction to Essential Skills

**Note:** The course number for on-site delivery is ESKL 1200.

## **ESKL 1301 Bridging the Gap: Enhancing Essential Skills 6 weeks**

This 6 week online course is designed to assist instructors with developing and delivering learning plans to address Essential Skills gaps by identifying learner needs, developing learning plans, and exploring Essential Skills tools and resources. There are 3 webinars for this course. Students can expect to spend 4-6 hours per week on coursework.

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- conduct a needs analysis using an Essential Skills approach to identify skill areas to target with learner(s)
- develop group or individual learning plans
- integrate Essential Skills methodology into lesson planning
- use existing Essential Skills materials
- adapt existing Essential Skills materials
- develop Essential Skills activities

**Pre-Requisites:** ESKL 1001 or ESKL 1000 Introduction to Essential Skills & ESKL 2301 or ESKL 2300 ES Methodology and Task Analysis

## **Essential Skills Work Experience Study 12 weeks**

ESKL 2400 is the final requirement for students wishing to complete the Essential Skills Practitioner (ESPT) Certificate Program. This independent study module requires learners to demonstrate their acquired knowledge for a minimum of 30 hours in the workplace (paid or volunteer). Learners are asked to complete a written assignment to guide them through a process to document their relevant experiences. On average, the written assignment takes 5-10 hours to complete. Successful completion is based on two factors:

1. Submission of ESKL 2400 assignment documenting practical applications of Essential Skills concepts and attitudes
2. Submission of documentation as outlined in the Entrance / Completion requirements as noted on page 6 of this guide.

**Pre-Requisites:** ESKL 1000 or 1001, 2300 or 2301, 1100 or 1104, 1200 or 1201, & 1300 or 1301

*“I am looking forward to this final course. I have been applying the information I have learned to all kinds of pieces of my job. Great course!”*

Quote taken from course feedback form

## COURSES AND FEES

### Online Fees for Scheduled Courses

Online course fees include access to our online learning platform, printable PDF files, webinars and discussion forums. Some materials and references are from online publications which are free and accessible to all.

Course	Custom Delivery Cost	Online Per Student Costs	Materials for F2F delivery
<b>ESKL 1000 &amp; ESKL 1001</b> Introduction to Essential Skills (2 days F2F, 3 weeks online)	\$3,560	\$445 pp	\$65 pp
<b>ESKL 2300 &amp; ESKL 2301</b> ES Methodology and Task Analysis	\$6,450	\$645 pp	\$65 pp
<b>ESKL 1200 &amp; ESKL 1201</b> Creating an ES Portfolio (2 days F2F, 3 weeks online)	\$3,560	\$445 pp	\$45 pp
<b>ESKL 1100 &amp; ESKL 1104</b> ES Assessments, Interpretation and Application (3 days F2F, 4 weeks online)	\$4,880	\$545 pp	\$65 pp
<b>ESKL 1300 &amp; ESKL 1301</b> Bridging the Gap (5 days F2F, 6 weeks online)	\$6,450	\$645 pp	\$65 pp
<b>ESKL 2400</b> Work Experience		\$265 pp	n/a
<b>ES Coaching</b>		\$95 per hour	

*(Course fee's effective September 2019)*

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Course Cancellations

Early registration is recommended for all courses as class sizes are limited. Classes may be cancelled if there is insufficient enrolment.

### Refund policy:

Refunds are issued at 100% less a \$15 administration fee ONLY if the withdrawal is at least 10 working days (2 weeks) prior to the course start date.

Please request refunds via telephone (604-527-5472) or in person through Continuing Education Registration.

Full refunds will be issued if the College cancels a course.

### Course Exemptions / PLAR

If you have taken equivalent courses you may apply for an exemption. Courses must be equivalent in terms of learning outcomes. Requests must be submitted to the program coordinator with a course syllabus.

If you have related experience, you may apply for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR). Through the PLAR process you have the opportunity to receive credit for what you already know and can do. We will assess your skills and knowledge against the learning outcomes of the specific ESPT course(s) you wish to challenge using the PLAR process.

### ESPT Program Transferability

CARP, the Canadian Association of Rehabilitation Professionals, has approved Introduction to Essential Skills course for continuing education towards the CARP designation.

### Graduation

Douglas College invites students completing certificate programs to attend the Douglas College graduation ceremonies which take place in February or June pending application. Check the Douglas College website for application dates and deadlines. Your official certificate is either presented at graduation or mailed to you from the Registrar's Office.

## FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions)

Q: What if I want to take only one course – can I do this?

A: Yes, as long as you have the pre-requisite for that course you will be allowed to register in any ESPT course you desire.

Q: Do I have to follow any specific order when taking the ESPT courses?

A: You may take the courses in any order as long as you have the required pre-requisite for the course you are taking.

Q: How do I register for a course?

A: You can register in-person, over the telephone or online at <http://www.douglascollege.ca>.

Q: Can I get a tax receipt for my tuition?

A: Yes, you will access your T2202A tax receipt online at the Douglas College website using your student number (available after February of the following year).

Q: How do I get my Douglas College student number?

A: This will be noted on the receipt mailed out to you after you register in a course.

Q: What documentation will I need to provide to apply for a course exemption?

A: Preferably a transcript from an educational institution, however a letter may be accepted at the discretion of the program coordinator. This is done at the time you register in another ESPT program course.

Q: Will I receive a course completion certificate for completing each separate ESPT program course?

A: Yes, this will be issued by the Training Group Department of Douglas College.

Q: Who do I contact if I have more questions about the ESPT Certificate Program?

A: Contact us at [essentialskills@douglascollege.ca](mailto:essentialskills@douglascollege.ca) or call (604) 777-6152.