

# Alberta Credential Framework (ACF) – At a Glance

## Purpose

To foster post-secondary system coherence by naming and defining Alberta credentials in a comprehensive structure.

## Background

A post-secondary credential framework across the province supports a high-quality college and university sector. A clearly defined structure of recognized credentials makes qualifications transparent for learners and enables flexibility and transferability between educational and occupational fields. The ACF's scope is ministry-approved post-secondary credentials and journeyman certificates within Alberta.

## Key Considerations

The ACF facilitates learner pathways, promotes educational quality and credential recognition, and fosters system coordination and accountability. The framework is a compilation of the Canadian Degree Qualifications Framework integrated with other Alberta government endorsed post-secondary credentials.

Each credential is described using two main organizational categories: credential descriptors and credential standards. For degree level credentials, descriptors are drawn from the Canadian Degree Qualifications Framework.

The Alberta Credentials Framework enhances, reduces, and combines credentials in several ways:

- Post-basic certificates and diplomas, as well as applied degrees, are “retired” and replaced by other credentials.
- Several credentials have been renamed to clarify their level of study.
- Three types of certificates and university certificates have been harmonized and consolidated into one credential.
- A separate section has been created for apprenticeship credentials, and these have had credits assigned to them.

The Alberta Credentials Framework identifies 13 post-secondary credentials under the *Post-secondary Learning Act (PSLA)* and 3 credentials under the *Skilled Trades and Apprenticeship Education Act (STAEA)*.

## Alberta Credential Framework (by level of study)

### UNDERGRADUATE CREDENTIALS (PSLA)

Credential Name	Typical Duration	Standard Credits
Certificate	1 year or less	12-32
Post-Diploma Certificate	1 year or less	18-30
Post-Baccalaureate Certificate	8-15 months	24-36
Diploma	2-3 years	60-80
Bachelor's Degree	3-4 years	90-120

### GRADUATE CREDENTIALS (PSLA)

Credential Name	Typical Duration	Standard Credits
Graduate Certificate	Up to 1 year (2-3 semesters)	12-36 (minimum 12)
Graduate Diploma	1-2 years	Minimum 18
Master's Degree	1-3 years (2-6 semesters)	Variable
Post-Master's Certificate	1 year or less	Minimum 12
Post-Master's Diploma	1-2 years	Minimum 18
Doctoral Degree	3-6 years	Variable
Post-Doctoral Certificate	1 year or less	Minimum 12
Post-Doctoral Diploma	1.5 years or less	Variable

### APPRENTICESHIP CREDENTIALS (STAEA)

Credential Name	Typical Duration	Standard Credits
Certificate	2-3 years	30-59
Diploma	3-4 years	60-80
Advanced Diploma	4 years	Over 80