

Post-Secondary and Career Information

There is a wide range of resources for youth who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing to support you at school, in career planning and at work. **To decide what schooling or training after high school is right for you, you may want to start by considering what job or career goals are important to you.**

Deciding what you want to 'be' is an overwhelming question for anyone. Career planning is an ongoing process which you'll probably revisit a number of times in your life.

1. Self-Assessment Tools: Know Yourself

To find a career that fits you, you need to know about yourself. Self-assessment - or identifying what's important to you - is the first step in making career decisions. There are self-assessment tools available online; several free options are described below. Self-assessment tools are quizzes or surveys that help you discover your interests, employability skills and personality type. They help you determine who you are, what you do best, what places and people give you energy, and what motivates you.

- The Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS) has several self-assessment tools available at <http://alis.alberta.ca/ec/cp/cpt/planning-tools.html> or <https://careerinsite.alberta.ca/careerinsite.aspx>
- The Government of Canada at <http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/>
- Province of Manitoba Career Development at <http://www.manitobacareerdevelopment.ca/CDI/>

2. Occupational Research: Exploring Options

Now that you have a better idea of what you like, your current skills and the things you value, gather information about occupations that match these traits. An occupation is a category of work that has many similar jobs within it. To work in a particular occupation, you need training, skills and knowledge.

This is what you should find out about occupations:

- what you might like about working in this area
- what day-to-day work might be like
- the type of work that suits you
- the training or education you'll need
- future job trends, opportunities and demands
- where to search for a specific job in related industries
- salaries and wages you'll likely earn
- what companies or industries are hiring
- what it's like to work for specific companies or industries

The *Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS) OCCInfo* has a world class website with in-depth information on hundreds of occupations available at <http://alis.alberta.ca/ec/cp/oi/RegionalOCCInfo.html> or <http://occinfo.alis.alberta.ca/occinfopreview>

The *Government of Canada's Job Bank* website also provides free occupational and career information such as job opportunities, educational requirements, main duties, wage rates and salaries, current employment trends, and outlooks. <http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/home-eng.do?lang=eng>

The ALIS OCCInfo and Job Bank uses the *National Occupational Classification (NOC) System*, which tells you about the types of jobs available and what is required to get a specific job. The NOC system also includes a **profile of hearing ratings** for different jobs, indicating the job's reliance on hearing/communication skills.

Why is this information important?: Profile of hearing ratings of a job or occupation

A profile of hearing rating (i.e., limited, verbal interaction or other sound discrimination) tells you about the levels of hearing ability or auditory discrimination (the ability to hear the difference between individual sounds of speech) involved in the work. The ratings for hearing factors do not mean that a person who is Deaf or Hard of Hearing can or can't do that job. However, you

may find the information useful so that you can think about workplace accommodations that you might need.

The Government of Canada Career Handbook includes information on physical activities for different careers. There are six main physical activities: vision, colour discrimination, hearing, body position, limb coordination and strength.

Learn what is involved in different jobs by volunteering, job shadowing, mentorships and work experience programs. These duties give you a chance to ask questions about the specific duties and responsibilities, and the type of work you would do if you chose this occupation.

-Adapted from [Canadian Hearing Society](#)

Additional Resources:

- ALIS Career Planning Step 2: Explore Options
<http://alis.alberta.ca/ep/eps/tips/tips/html?EK=147>
- Career Planner: Choosing an Occupation
<http://alis.alberta.ca/ep/careershop/showproduct.html?DisplayCode=PRO DUCT&EntityKey=2107>

3. Career Decision-Making

The next step is getting ready to choose a career. This involves:

- I. Gathering and organizing information.** You've explored your options – now it's time to gather and organize information for each one. Don't forget to talk to friends, family, colleagues and counsellors. You'll want as much information as possible, but don't forget that it is sometimes impossible to have all the information you will need.
- II. Evaluating each possible option.** List the positives and negatives of each career option. Which options match with your values, interests and skills? Are there any risks? Are you willing to take them? The Additional Resources listed below suggest tips and strategies for evaluation options.
- III. Choosing an option.** Select the option that will help you create the life you want to live, doing the work you will love.

IV. Beginning to create your action plan. Consider different ways to get to your goal. It is a good idea to plan more than one path to your goal. This becomes your backup plan.

-Adapted from [Manitoba Career Development](#)

You may want to consider consulting with a career counsellor if you find yourself struggling with any of these steps. Career counselling is accessible in many ways:

- High schools, colleges and universities often provide career counselling services for students. Colleges sometimes provide career counselling services or courses for the community. Check with your guidance counsellor.
- Private and non-profit employment agencies often provide career counselling services for a fee.
- Check the Resources section of this toolkit for more information. Some agencies focus on people who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing.
- The Career Development Association of Alberta (CDAA) lists a directory of career and employment services near you.
- Federal and provincial employment departments often fund career counselling services. There is usually no fee for eligible participants. To inquire about the availability of career counselling services near you, contact the nearest employment services centre.
- Service Canada Provincial/Territorial Employment Services and Training Assistance
- Alberta Human Services Employment and Career Resources
 - Offers employment, training and career services at Alberta Works Centres located throughout the province.

Additional Resources:

- ALIS Career Planning Step 3: Getting Ready
<http://alis.alberta.ca/ep/eps/tips/tips.html?EK=148>
- Career Planner: Choosing an Occupation
<http://alis.alberta.ca/ep/careershop/showproduct.html?DisplayCode=PRO DUCT&EntityKey=2107>

4. Setting Goals

Now that you have identified your career path, identify the steps you need to take to get there. Consider these four strategies:

I. Define your goal.

Make your goal a specific statement, such as “enter a college accounting program by next fall” or for the next two months, search for work in computer sales.” Define exactly what you want to do and when.

II. Plan backwards from your goal to where you are.

One of the best ways to move forward is to plan backwards. Can you accomplish your goal today? If not, why not? What do you have to do first? Is there something you have to do before that? Keep thinking backwards in this way until you arrive at tasks you could do today.

For example, if your goal is to take a two-year accounting program, could you start today? No, you have to be accepted to the program. Could you be accepted today? No, you have to apply first. Could you apply today? No, you have to decide which post-secondary institutions to apply to. Could you decide today? No, you have to do some research first - and so on.

III. Manage challenges.

Look over the list of things you will have to do to reach your goal. Can you think of any challenges you might face? For example, do you have money concerns or family responsibilities that demand you time and energy? Think of steps you can take to increase your confidence, improve your skills and keep yourself motivated. Could you, for example, try out a program by taking an evening or online class before you sign up for the whole program?

Additional Resources:

- ALIS Handling Challenges: Changing What You Can Change
<http://alis.alberta.ca/ep/eps/tips/tips.html?EK=12445>
- ALIS Handling Challenges: Dealing with Things You Can't Change
<http://alis.alberta.ca/ep/eps/tips/tips.html?EK=12446>

5. Put your plan into action.

By this stage, you probably have several lists of things to do and a plan for managing potential challenges. Now you need to bring them all together into one overall plan. List tasks in the order in which you must complete them and set deadlines for each task. Successful career planners keep themselves moving forward towards their goals using a variety of methods. Try these suggestions:

- Mark tasks on a monthly calendar, noting important dates such as application deadlines.
- Cross off tasks as you complete them.
- Ask a friend to check your progress regularly – you’re more likely to get things done if you know you’ll be asked about it!
- Reward yourself for completing major tasks. A reward can be inexpensive, like giving yourself some guilt-free time for an activity you really enjoy.

-Adapted from [Career Planning Step 4: Take Action](#)

Important Resources to Consult when Career or Transition Planning:

- Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS) CAREERinsite
<http://careerinsite.alberta.ca/careerinsite.aspx>
 - Allows you to create an online profile to work through the steps (described above) of the career planning process. You can also access a Career Advisor through phone or email. Advisors can help you find information on career planning, occupations, educational options and funding, job search and more.
- This is Your Life: A Career and Education Planning Guide from ALIS
<http://alis.alberta.ca/ep/careershop/showproduct.html?DisplayCode=PRODUCT&EntityKey=7943>
 - This workbook is designed to be used by and with youth in Grades 9-12 and beyond. The Guide introduces students to the principles of career and education planning and various authorized Alberta resources by helping students work through the planning process.

- Manitoba Career Development
<http://www.manitobacareerdevelopment.ca/CDI/index.html>
 - Includes access to A Guide to Planning Your Career. A manual filled with valuable information and activities (including a decision-making chart) to help you through the career process. A copy is also available from the Alberta Hands & Voices Lending library.

- Persons with Disabilities: Career Learning and Work from ALIS
<http://alis.alberta.ca?EC/CP/cpt/disabledpersons.html>
 - Has important information about:
 - Disclosure: deciding **what to say about your hearing loss to employers**, school administrators and others.
 - Accommodations: Identifying changes you may need at school or work, such as flexible hours of work or study.
 - Assistive services and technology: find out about programs, services and technology to help you succeed.

- Transition Planning for Adulthood, Supporting Success for Children with Hearing Loss <http://successforkidswithhearingloss.com/transition>

Exploring Education and Training Options

If you've decided to pursue education or training to reach your goals – what program should you take and where should you take it? Your choices include private or public schools, career training or distance learning. You could also choose to study full- or part-time depending on your situation.

- Consult with *ALIS's Exploring Schools and Programs* website for information on educational programs and schools within and outside Alberta: <http://alis.alberta.ca/ec/ep/esp/alberta.html>
- *ALIS's OCCinfo Occupations and Education Programs* website provides information on educational and training programs available throughout western Canada: <https://occinfo.alis.alberta.ca/occinfopreview/>

Some schools may offer continuing education, co-operative programs, pre-employment training and university transfers. For current information about

programs and school requirements or policies, check the school calendar, visit their website or contact the school directly.

Some things to think about when choosing a school: course content, programs that are available, prerequisites needed, size and location of the school, cost, distance from home, housing, sports, student life, scholarships and financial assistance.

Additional Resources:

- Choosing a School, Services for Youth, Government of Canada
<http://www.youth.gc.ca/eng/topics/education/school.shtml>
 - This resource explains the different types of schools and suggests some tips for choosing the school that's right for you.

- Time to Choose a Post-Secondary Education Program, ALIS
<http://alis.alberta.ca/pdf/cshop/timetochoose.pdf>
 - This comprehensive guide helps students choose between full-time or part-time studies, evaluate various programs and assess the institutions that offer them. This publication offers application and contact information for all post-secondary institutions funded by or offering degree programs approved by the Government of Alberta. A copy is also available from the Alberta Hands & Voices Lending Library.

Education Financing: Funding Your Program

There are two major steps for paying for post-secondary education: figuring out what school will cost and planning how to pay for it.

1. Figure out what school will cost.

Figuring out how much your education will cost can help you plan how to pay for it. How much school costs depends on:

- The location of your school (physical location or virtual)
- What kind of school and program you'll be attending
- How long it takes you to complete the program
- Living expenses while you're there

Resources to figure out what school will cost:

- ALIS has developed a tip sheet, Money Matters: Spending Plan for Students that includes a spending plan worksheet. <http://alis.alberta.ca/ep/eps/tips/tips.html?EK=202>
- CanLearn has a budget estimator, an education cost calculator and an online budget planner. <http://www.canlearn.ca/eng/index.shtml>
- The Financial Consumer Agency of Canada has a section of their website dedicated to paying for post-secondary education, including a student budget worksheet. <http://www.fcac-acfc.gc.ca/Eng/forConsumers/lifeEvents/payingPostSecEd/Pages/Budgetfo-Unbudget.aspx>

2. Plan how to pay for it.

Most people use a combination of resources to pay for school, including savings and earnings, scholarships and bursaries, loans and grants. Resources to explore your funding options:

- ALIS has several [tip sheets](#) available to help you learn how to finance your education:

- For persons with disabilities, part-time, on-the-job training with not-for-profit or private sector employers is available for Albertans receiving Assured Income for Severely Handicapped (AISH) benefits and persons with disabilities seeking employment. To find out more, visit [AISH](#), talk to your AISH worker, or call the Income Support Contact Centre at 780-644-5135 in Edmonton or 1-866-644-5135 toll-free in other Alberta locations.

Below is more information on where to find **scholarships, bursaries and grants** for Canadian individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (*please note: this list is not exhaustive*):

- [AG Bell College Scholarship Program](#)
- [Voice of Albertans with Disabilities \(VAD\)](#)
- [Calgary Foundation](#) – not specific for Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals.
- [Campbell McLaurin Foundation for Hearing Deficiencies Scholarship](#)
- Canadian Association of Educators for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. (This is a nomination from a Teacher of the Deaf that is written for a Deaf or Hard of Hearing student.)
- [Canadian Hard of Hearing Association](#) scholarship program
- Deaf & Hear Alberta [Tom Pinder Education Scholarship](#)
- [DisabilityAwards.ca](#)- you can register to search through an extensive database of scholarships, bursaries and grants for which you are specifically eligible. **An excellent place to start searching.**
- Mattinson Scholarship Program for Students with Disabilities
- [NEADS](#) - National Directory of Financial Assistance Programs for Post-Secondary Students with Disabilities posted by the National Educational Association of Disabled Students
- [Opportunities Fund for Persons with Disabilities](#), Service Canada
- Ray Alward Memorial Bursary (University of Calgary)
- [Scholarships from Cochlear Ltd.](#) for cochlear implant and BAHA recipients
- [VOICE for hearing impaired children scholarships list](#)

Additional Resources to Get You Prepared:

- ALIS's Checklist for Going Back to School
<http://alis.alberta.ca/ep/eps/tips/tips.html?EK=125>
 - A checklist to help you on the road to school – from choosing a career goal to starting your program.
- ALIS's Information for Persons with Disabilities
<http://alis.alberta.ca/js/ws/jsr/disabledpersons.html>
- CanLearn:
<http://www.canlearn.ca/eng/index.shtml>
 - CanLearn is an online post-secondary education resource that provides Canadians with the information and services they need to decide what and where to study and how to cover the costs.
- Comprehensive Financial Planning for Education, University of the Fraser Valley
<http://www.ufv.ca/fineaid/comprehensive-financial-planning-for-education/>
 - This free online course provides "hands on" opportunities to explore financial planning through a series of learner-oriented modules. You are encouraged to use these materials to help you in making sound educational decisions.
- Financial Consumer Agency of Canada, Government of Canada
<http://www.fcac-acfc.gc.ca/Eng/forConsumers/lifeEvents/payingPostSecEd/Pages/home-accueil.aspx>
 - Has a portion of their website dedicated to consumers (parents and students) with material on how to pay for post-secondary education, including tax information.
- Pepnet 2
<http://www.pepnet.org/>
 - Pepnet 2's (pn2) mission is to increase the education, career, and lifetime choices available to individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing. The resource library contains a variety of free resources, including current strategies and evidence-based practices designed to improve post-secondary outcomes for individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing, including those with co-occurring disabilities.
- Student Aid Alberta

<http://studentaid.alberta.ca/>

<http://studentaid.alberta.ca/applying-for-funding/students-with-permanent-disabilities/>

- Explains what grants are available for students with permanent disabilities and how to apply.

Your Right to Accommodation Needs

Colleges/universities are responsible for taking steps to provide accommodation needs of students. Both the student with a disability and the postsecondary institution have rights and responsibilities in the accommodation process. The most effective accommodation measures are a result of cooperation and clear communication between these parties.

Responsibilities of the Student Seeking Accommodation

1. Plan Before You Ask for Accommodation.

- a. Review the institution's policy for accommodating students with disabilities.
- b. At the earliest point possible, decide whether to disclose that you have a disability that requires accommodation.
- c. Think about the kind of accommodation you require.
- d. Develop a set of options for accommodating your specific disability. This may include examples of accommodations that you or others have used or attempted in the past.
- e. Have research and resources available to help put the accommodation in place.
- f. Be prepared to support your request for accommodation with reasonable evidence, for example, written information from your doctor or audiologist.
- g. Keep a written record of the efforts that you make to receive accommodation.

2. Make your request.

- a. Make an appointment to discuss your accommodation requirements with the disability service provider or person designated by the institution to coordinate accommodation of students with disabilities.
- b. Do not wait until the last minute to make a request. Ensure that an accommodation request is made at the earliest reasonable opportunity.
- c. Always put your request in writing if your accommodation requirements are extensive.
- d. Give the disability service provider as much lead time as possible to arrange the accommodation as it often takes several months to arrange accommodation. Keep in mind that the more complicated the accommodation, the more advanced notice should be provided.
- e. Request a second appointment, and put your request in writing if you were unsuccessful in setting up your accommodation through your initial appointment.
- f. Be sure to include sufficient medical information to support your request for accommodation.
- g. If you are still unsuccessful, see the institution's human rights advisor or student ombudsperson to find out what on campus options exist to help you resolve the matter. You can also contact the Alberta Human Rights Commission to inquire about making a complaint under the Alberta Human Rights (AHR) Act. You must make a complaint within one year after the date that the alleged discrimination took place.

3. Develop an accommodation plan.

- a. Seek the assistance of the disability service provider.
- b. Be aware that you may need to disclose confidential information about your disability to those people who arrange accommodation. Disclosure may be essential for the accommodation to be arranged. However, only in rare cases will the disclosure of a diagnosis be required for accommodation purposes.
- c. Remember that there is no duty to provide instant or perfect accommodation.
- d. Put the accommodation plan in writing.
- e. Follow the accommodation plan.
- f. Inform the service provider as soon as possible if the accommodation plan needs to be modified.

4. Review and revise the accommodation plan.

- a. Review the accommodation plan with the disability service provider to monitor its success. Do this every couple of weeks for the first month, and then once per term. Revise the plan if necessary.
 - b. Tell the disability service provider if your need for accommodation ends.
- For more information about the responsibilities of post-secondary institutions, frequently asked questions about the duty to accommodate students with disabilities and examples of accommodations in the post-secondary educational environment, see the document [Duty to Accommodate Students with Disabilities in Post-Secondary Institutions](#) by the Alberta Human Rights Commission. A copy is also available from the Alberta Hands & Voices Lending Library.
http://www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca/publications/bulletins_sheets_booklets/bulletins/duty_to_accommodate_students.asp
- The Canadian Hearing Society also has several online resources available for Deaf and Hard of Hearing youth on accommodations, including a detailed section on exams or test-taking.
<http://www.chs.ca/resources-youth-hearing-loss>

Finding Employment

There are a number of ways to identify employers who are interested in hiring qualified candidates who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing. Most job opportunities are never advertised. Leads on identifying potential employers include:

- ALIS career events
<http://alis.alberta.ca/js/ws/cs/careerevents.html>
- Canada's best diversity employers
<http://www.canadastop100.com/diversity/>
- Canada's top employers for young people
http://www.canadastop100.com/young_people/
- Employment Equity Programs for federally regulated employers or service providers including:
 - federal departments, agencies and Crown corporations
 - chartered banks
 - airlines
 - television and radio stations
 - interprovincial communications and telephone companies
 - buses and railways that travel between provinces
 - First Nations
 - other federally regulated industries, such as certain mining operations
- Private-sector employers that promote diversity (identify them on websites)
- Job postings indicating interest in recruiting persons with disabilities
- Networking with agencies working with Deaf or Hard of Hearing job seekers
- Networking with career centres at colleges and universities