

CANADAVISA

Your Trusted Source on
Canadian Immigration.

Pursuing Permanent Residence through Express Entry

Olivia Cohen

Managing Attorney, Cohen Immigration Law

September 17, 2026



COHEN IMMIGRATION LAW
SINCE 1976

Pursuing Permanent Residence (PR)

How to get an invitation to apply (ITA) through the Express Entry system

STEP
01

Evaluate your
Eligibility

STEP
02

Enter **Express**
Entry pool

STEP
03

Compete with
Comprehensive
Ranking System
(CRS) Score

STEP
04

Receive **Invitation to**
Apply & submit PR
application

Three Key Questions

The Express Entry journey comes down to three questions

01

Am I eligible?

Meeting the minimum criteria to enter the Express Entry pool.

02

Am I competitive?

Evaluating how candidates get invited to apply for permanent residence.

03

How do I apply?

Navigating the required forms and documents.

Being Eligible for Express Entry

Federal permanent residence programs managed through Express Entry

Proposed: IRCC has proposed merging these three programs into a single federal high-skilled program. Not yet in force — today's rules still apply.

**The Canadian
Experience
Class (CEC)**

**The Federal Skilled
Worker Program
(FSWP)**

**The Federal Skilled
Trades Program
(FSTP)**

Skilled Work Experience

TEER	Definition
0	Management positions
1	Typically requires a university degree
2	Typically requires a 2–3 yr college diploma or 2–5 yr apprenticeship ; OR supervisory positions
3	Typically requires a college diploma or apprenticeship under 2 yrs , OR 6+ months' on-the-job training
4	Typically requires a high school diploma , or several weeks' on-the-job training
5	Typically requires only a short-term work demonstration

Express Entry
eligible

Skilled Occupations

TEER	Example Occupations
0	• Executive leadership (CEO, CFO, VP) • Application development manager • Branch manager (of a bank) • Sales manager
1	• Engineer • Secondary school teacher • Computer programmer • University professor
2	• Plumber • Manager of customer service associates • Early childhood educator • Medical radiation technologist
3	• Roofer • Truck driver

Express Entry Requirements

Minimum requirements for work experience, official language proficiency, and education

WORK

One year of skilled work experience

LANGUAGE

Test results from an approved testing provider showing language proficiency in English or French

EDUCATION

Educational Credential Assessment (ECA) for any foreign degree you want counted — required for FSWP eligibility, otherwise for CRS points

Educational Credential Assessments (ECAs)

WHY

Required for a **foreign degree** to count toward **FSWP eligibility** or your **CRS score**

WHO

Provided by government-approved organizations (e.g., **World Education Services**)

HOW LONG

Valid for **5 years**

Comprehensive Ranking System (CRS) Score

Your CRS score determines how competitive you are in the Express Entry pool

up to 600 points

Core Factors

Core / Human Capital

Age, work experience, language proficiency, education

Spouse Factors

Education, language proficiency, Canadian work experience, skill transferability

up to 600 points

Additional Factors

- **French proficiency:** up to 50 pts
- **Canadian postsecondary education:** up to 30 pts
- **Sibling in Canada (PR/citizen):** 15 pts
- **Provincial/territorial nomination:** 600 pts

Capped at 600 pts combined

Total

Up to 1,200 points

Proposed for late 2026–2027: IRCC is consulting on removing the French, sibling, Canadian-study and spouse bonus points and adding points for high-wage occupations. Not yet in force.

Increasing your CRS Score

Four key strategies to boost your CRS score

Strategy 1

Maximize your **language proficiency**

CLB 8 → 9 was worth +56 pts in our example

Strategy 3

Get **ECAs** for your foreign degrees

A bachelor's ECA adds up to +90 core pts, plus transferability

Strategy 2

Gain a **Canadian education**

+15 pts (1–2 yr credential) / +30 pts (3+ yrs)

Strategy 4

Gain **Canadian and foreign work experience**

Canadian: up to +80 core pts · Foreign: up to +50
via transferability

French remains a strong play even if the 50-point bonus is removed — French-language draws continue and have had the lowest cut-offs of any category open to a broad audience in 2026.

Example EE Candidate:

Today

Factor	Value
Age	25
Education	Bachelor's (Canadian)
Canadian work experience	1 year
Foreign work experience	1 year
English proficiency	CLB 8
CRS Score	444

Work experience and language are your biggest levers.

Even one additional CLB level can mean 30+ extra points.

Example

Sarah

After 2 Years

Factor	Value
Age	27
Education	Bachelor's (Canadian)
Canadian work experience	3 years (+2)
Foreign work experience	1 year
English proficiency	CLB 9 (+1 level)
CRS Score	548 (+104 points)

Every 2026 CEC draw has cut off above 500.

At 444, Sarah falls short today; at 548 she clears every draw this year.

Provincial Nominee Programs

Enhanced PNP streams integrate with the Express Entry system

STEP
01

Receive nomination from a
province or territory

STEP
02

+600 CRS points added to
your score

STEP
03

Virtually guarantees an
invitation to apply

Express Entry-aligned streams in nearly every province and territory — each sets its own eligibility criteria, and streams open and close through the year

Category-Based Draws

IRCC targets candidates meeting specific criteria tied to Canada's priorities

French language draws

Requires French proficiency at NCLC 7+

Draws

Occupation-based draws

Requires **1 year** of work in a qualifying occupation (past 3 years)

WORK IN CANADA OR ABROAD

- Healthcare & social services
- STEM
- Trades
- Education
- Transport

CANADIAN WORK EXPERIENCE

- Physicians
- Senior managers
- Researchers

OTHER

- Skilled military recruits (CAF job offer)

Your occupation must match specific **NOC codes designated by IRCC** for that category.

Guided Submission

We do the thinking. You do the data entry.

Do-It-Yourself

\$0

- ✓ Information from government websites
- ✓ Information from forums
- ✓ Help from friends

Guided Submission

\$495

\$99/month for 5 months

- ✓ Expert Review
- ✓ Application Co-Pilot
- ✓ Unlimited Support

Full Representation

\$2,000+

- ✓ Hands-Off
- ✓ Representation
- ✓ Legal Defense

Check Your Eligibility Today

Take Your Free Eligibility Assessment

Benefit

- See your estimated CRS score
- Discover programs & provincial nominations you qualify for
- Get a clear picture of your next steps



Scan to Start!



Get to Know CELPIP

CELPIP

Proficiency with Purpose. For Study, for Work, for Canada!





AGENDA

- How Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) levels relate to CELPIP scores and how CLB levels are commonly used by organizations, including federal and provincial immigration programs, as one factor in assessing language proficiency.
- What a CLB 9 result looks like in everyday communication, and what CELPIP's four components measure.
- How to prepare efficiently using free CELPIP resources and practice tests, and how to read your score report.
- How long a language result stays valid for immigration purposes, and when to book your test.

CELPIP[®]

GENERAL

Accepted for permanent residency, express entry, PGWP, provincial nominee programs and DHA visa purposes. The total test time is approximately **3 hours** and is completed in **one sitting**.

International test fees may vary.

CAD **\$299**
+ tax

■ Listening

Listen to passages
and answer
questions

46–55 minutes

■ Reading

Read passages
and answer
questions

43–56 minutes

■ Writing

Respond to
questions with
written answers

53 minutes

■ Speaking

Reply to on-screen
prompts verbally

15 minutes

CELPIP[®]

GENERAL LS

Accepted for Canadian citizenship applications. The total test time is approximately **1 hour and 10 minutes** and is completed in **one sitting**. Only available in Canada.

CAD **\$199**
+ tax

■ Listening

Listen to passages
and answer
questions

46–55 minutes

■ Speaking

Reply to on-screen
prompts verbally

15 minutes



Centre des niveaux de
compétence linguistique
canadiens

Centre for
Canadian Language
Benchmarks

CELP^{IP}

CLB = Functional Communication Readiness

National standard with **12 levels** across **4 skills**

Grouped into:

- Basic (**CLB 1–4**)
- Intermediate (**CLB 5–8**)
- Advanced (**CLB 9–12**)

Measures what someone can do, not just what they know

Used across immigration, employment, and education



Why CLB Alignment Matters

- One Standard Across Canada
- Converts different tests into a single scale
- Used by immigration, employers, licensing, and regulatory bodies
- Enables consistent interpretation of skills
- Supports mobility across sectors
- CLB creates a common language that everyone—from employers to regulators—can trust.

What CLB Levels Mean in Real Social, Work and Educational Environments

- CLB 5–6 → routine workplace
- 7–8 → effective participation in most workplace situations
- CLB 9+ → fluent communication in complex, high-pressure social, workplace and academic contexts
- CLB 9 is a major threshold for social, professional and academic readiness
- Higher CLB = greater independence and influence



What do different CLB levels signal about readiness for communication-heavy environments and long-term employability

Official language proficiency is **one of the strongest predictors of immigrants' economic success in Canada**

Test-based measures of official language proficiency are a stronger predictor of immigrants' post-landing earnings than self-reported measures

For example, **Express Entry** immigrants with first official language proficiency of **CLB 6** tend to earn **8% more** than those with **CLB 4-5**

More significant increases in earnings are associated with official language skills at **CLB 7** and above

CLB 6 falls within the mid-range of the language requirements of the existing program requirements and is associated with the point at which increases in earnings can be observed

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/36-28-0001/2023001/article/00002-eng.htm>



What do different CLB levels signal about readiness for communication-heavy environments and long-term employability

Strong correlation between earnings and test-based language measures

Reading tends to have stronger predictive power

Language skills **as important as pre-immigration Canadian work experience** and **more important than the educational level and age at immigration in predicting the initial earnings** of principal applicants admitted under the EE system



SCORE ALIGNMENTS

Test Level Descriptor	CELP Level	CLB Level
Expert proficiency in high-stakes social, educational, or workplace contexts	12	12
Advanced proficiency in high-stakes social, educational, or workplace contexts	11	11
Highly effective proficiency in some high-stakes social, educational, or workplace contexts	10	10
Effective proficiency in some high-stakes social, educational, or workplace contexts	9	9
Good proficiency in more demanding social, educational, or workplace contexts	8	8
Adequate proficiency in somewhat demanding social, educational, or workplace contexts	7	7
Developing proficiency in everyday social, educational, or workplace contexts	6	6
Acquiring proficiency in everyday social, educational, or workplace contexts	5	5
Adequate proficiency for daily life activities	4	4
Some proficiency in limited contexts	3	3
Limited ability in contexts related to immediate needs	2	1, 2
Insufficient information to assess	1	/
Insufficient information to assess	0	/
Not Administered: test taker did not receive this test component	NA	/

SCORE ALIGNMENTS

Test Level Descriptor	CELP Level	CLB Level
Expert proficiency in high-stakes social, educational, or workplace contexts	12	12
Advanced proficiency in high-stakes social, educational, or workplace contexts	11	11
Highly effective proficiency in some high-stakes social, educational, or workplace contexts	10	10
Effective proficiency in some high-stakes social, educational, or workplace contexts	9	9
Good proficiency in more demanding social, educational, or workplace contexts	8	8
Adequate proficiency in somewhat demanding social, educational, or workplace contexts	7	7
Developing proficiency everyday social, educational, or workplace contexts	6	6
Acquiring proficiency in everyday social, educational, or workplace contexts	5	5
Adequate proficiency for daily life activities	4	4
Some proficiency in limited contexts	3	3
Limited ability in contexts related to immediate needs	2	1, 2
Insufficient information to assess	1	/
Insufficient information to assess	0	/
Not Administered: test taker did not receive this test component	NA	/

Preparation Materials

FREE

CELPIP Score Comparison Chart

Learn what we look for at each CELPIP Level, review sample questions and responses, and study our analysis of why those scores were given.

Speaking Scores	Writing Scores
+ Level 12	
+ Level 11	
+ Level 10	
+ Level 9	
+ Level 8	
+ Level 7	
+ Level 6	
+ Level 5	
+ Level 4	
+ Level 3	
+ Level 0-2 (M)	

CELPIP Score Comparison Chart

- Detailed **level descriptors** for each CELPIP Level for **Speaking** and **Writing**
- Level descriptors also available as a PDF download
- Multiple **sample responses** for two tasks for each level
- In-depth **analysis** for each sample response



Test Prep Ecosystem

CELP^{IP} Path to Success

To help you prepare for your CELP^{IP} test, we recommend this learning path that includes over 15 hours of free webinars, as well as 2 free practice tests. We also offer a variety of other free resources, as well as study materials for purchase on our online store. See pages 10-11 of this Guidebook to learn more about our prep options. For more information about our learning path, visit celpip.co/prepare-for-celpip/prep-overview.



Paid Preparation Materials

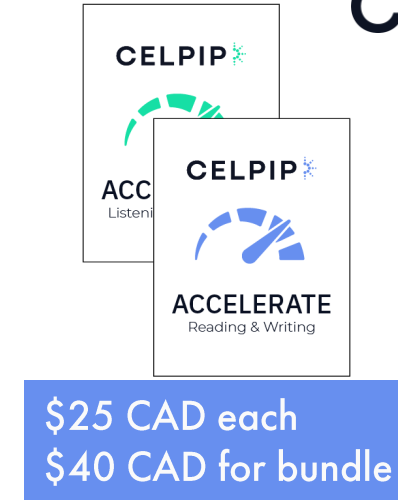
ONLINE



CELPIP Practice Tests

- 13 sets (2 tests each)
- Sample Speaking and Writing responses
- Instant results for the Listening and Reading Tests
- Writing and Speaking performance standards

CELPIP



CELPIP Accelerate

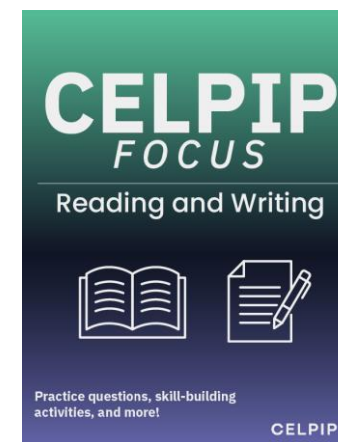
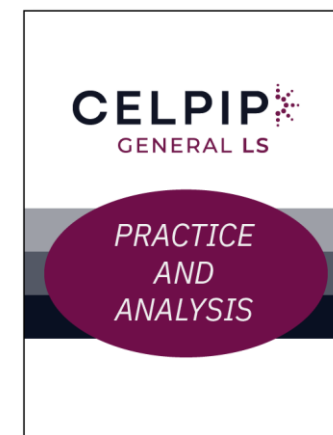
- Self-directed online course
- 30+ instructional videos
- Interactive quizzes and PDF downloads
- Speaking and Writing sample response analysis
- 2 Listening and 2 Reading practice tests

CELPiP 



ACCELERATE
Reading & Writing

- Visit www.celpip.ca/prepare-for-celpip/study-materials**



FREE

FOR WEBINAR
ATTENDEES

CICFebOZyEqA4L



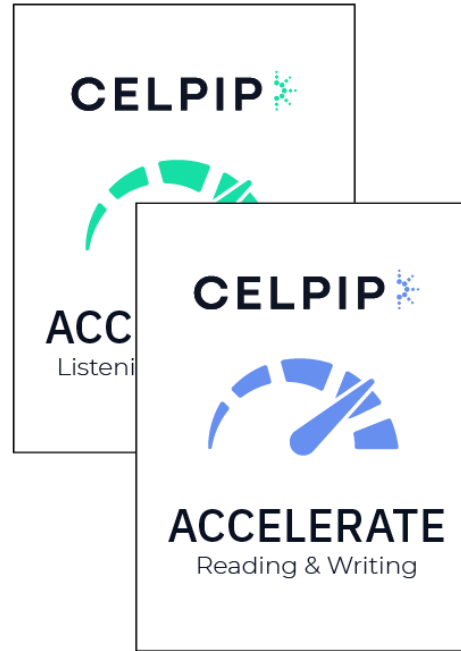
CELPIP **Accelerate Listening & Speaking** (\$25 value)

- Self-directed learning program
- 30+ instructional videos in each version
- Numerous interactive quizzes and PDF downloads
- Analysis of sample responses
- 1 complete practice test for each skill

FREE

FOR WEBINAR
ATTENDEES

CICFebOZyEqA4L



- Create a free account at www.celpip.ca/sign-up
- (Already have an account? Sign in at www.celpip.ca/sign-in)
- Visit www.celpip.ca/store
- Find the product “CELPiP Accelerate Bundle (**Listening & Speaking**)”
- Add the product to your cart
- At the checkout, please enter **CICFebOZyEqA4L** in the voucher/discount code field



You Got This! We Got You!

Email: info@celpip.ca

Phone: +1 778.327.6854

Toll Free (within North America):
+1 800.958.5186

FAQs: <https://www.celpip.ca/take-celpip/faqs/>



World Education Services

Understanding International Credential Evaluation

Presenters



Abhinav Jana

Associate Director, Digital & Partner Marketing



Founded in 1974, WES is a non-profit social enterprise that supports the educational, economic, and social inclusion of immigrants, refugees, and international students. From evaluating academic credentials to shaping policy, designing programs, and providing philanthropic funding, we partner with a diverse set of organizations, leaders, and networks to uplift individuals and drive systems change.





Our Vision

Everyone is able to put their education, experience, and skills to work **anywhere** in the world.



Our Mission

We help people **learn, work, and thrive** in new places. We help society **recognize the value** of people's education and experience.



Top Countries of Education

Europe* 12%

Top 5 sending countries:

United Kingdom, Ukraine, France, Spain, Ireland

Middle East* 2%

Top 5 sending countries:

Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, Israel, Iran

Asia* 52%

Top 5 sending countries:

India, Philippines, China, Pakistan, Bangladesh

Americas* 9%

Top 5 sending countries:

United States, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Mexico

Africa* 24%

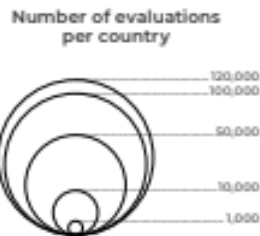
Top 5 sending countries:

Nigeria, Cameroon, Ghana, Algeria, Morocco

Oceania* 1%

Top 5 sending countries:

Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Tonga, Papua New Guinea



* Note: Percentages have been rounded.

Enabling Global Talent: Applicant Profile

CANADA

337,551*
Applicants

Evaluation Purpose**



60% of these applicants lived in Canada

Highest Education Level



UNITED STATES

136,089*
Applicants

Evaluation Purpose**



45% of these applicants lived in the U.S.

Highest Education Level



* 2,117 completed in other countries.
** Percentages have been rounded.



Distinct Majors*

In 2024, WES evaluated credentials associated with **35,318** distinct majors. These majors can be grouped into these fields of study.

* These majors were categorized into fields of study based on categories established by the Institute of International Education.

What is a credential evaluation?

A credential evaluation is a comparison of one's academic accomplishments to standards in the Canada or U.S. This report helps institutions like schools, employers, licensing boards, or immigration authorities better understand an individual's educational background.

A report from WES:

- Identifies and describes the academic study
- Verifies that the institution is a legitimate teaching authority
- May include a grade point average (GPA) equivalency
- Confirms the authenticity of the academic documents

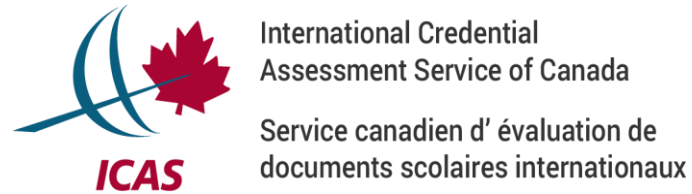


Utility of a Credential Evaluation

A WES credential evaluation is widely accepted across industries



WES is a member of the Alliance of Credential Evaluation Services of Canada



Options for WES Credential Evaluations

Document-by-Document (DxD)

- Based on authenticated documents
- Identifies and describes each credential—such as a degree or diploma—that an applicant submits to WES
- Provides the equivalent credential in terms of Canadian education
- Is appropriate for immigration and employment purposes, and for entering a college or university program as a first-year student
- Starting at \$133 CAD

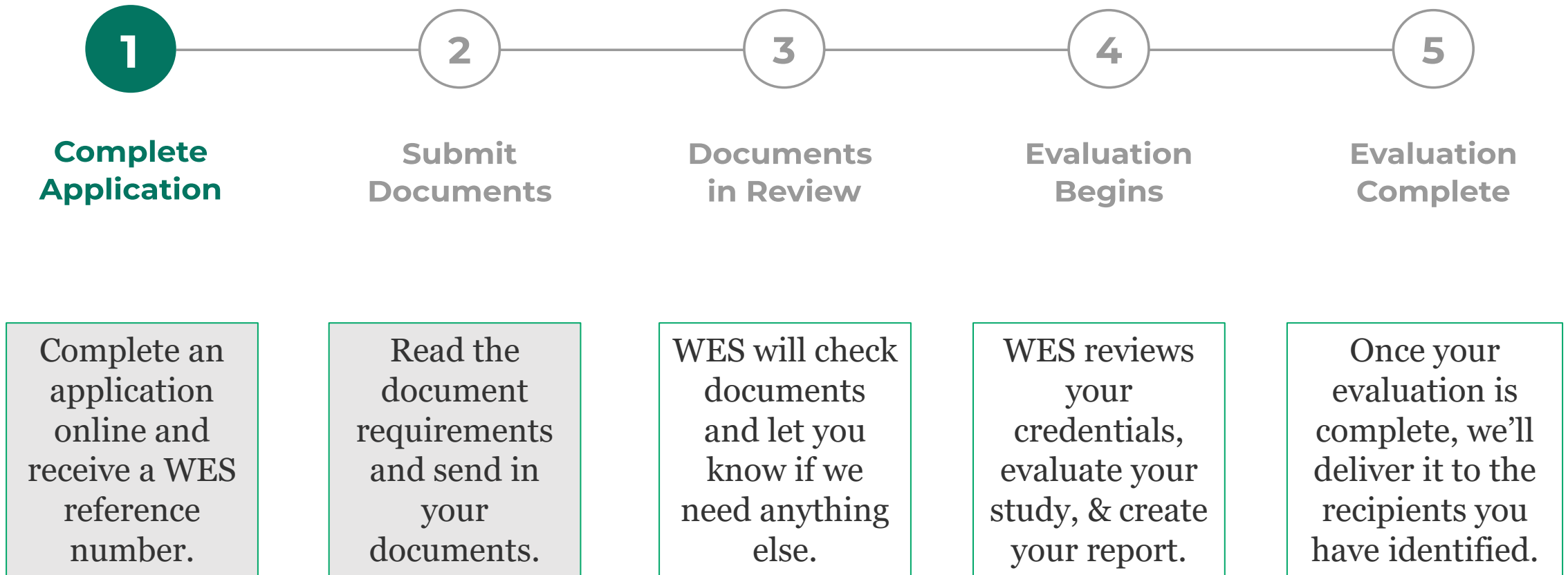
Course-by-Course (CxC)

- Based on authenticated documents
- Includes all features in a DxD report
- Also includes a detailed analysis of each course listed on the transcript
 - Includes semester credits and grades converted and a calculated GPA
- A CxC evaluation report usually meets the requirements of licensing boards and higher education graduate programs.
- Starting at \$242 CAD

Educational Credential Assessment (ECA)

- Based on authenticated documents
- Verifies your education background for Canadian immigration purposes.
- This report Highlights the equivalency of your credentials in terms of Canadian education.
- Starting at \$264 CAD

The WES Credential Evaluation Process



Submitting Documents to WES

WES will review applicants' credentials only after receiving all the required documents. The applicant will be responsible for uploading some of the documents and arranging for their institution(s) to submit the rest.



Documents applicants can submit:

- Copies of Diplomas, Degree Certificates
- English translations of any documents not issued in English, such as:
 - Academic Transcripts
 - Degree Certificates
 - Professional Certificates



Applicants must arrange:

- Documents to be sent by the issuing institution(s)/authorities to submit:
 - Official Transcripts
 - These documents need to be sent directly to WES by the appropriate issuing authority either by mail or through digital transmission

WES Services and Fees

Within each of the CxC and DxD evaluation services, applicants have a choice between the International Credential Advantage Package (ICAP) or the Basic report.

ICAP **Recommended!**

Course-by-Course C\$284 | Document-by-Document C\$175

Features

Verified transcripts stored and sent to institutions

Evaluation of official documents

List of all courses completed at the post-secondary level

Canadian semester credit and grade equivalent for each course

Canadian grade point average (GPA) on 4.0 scale

Designates the level (upper or lower) of each undergraduate course

BASIC

Course-by-Course C\$242 | Document-by-Document C\$133

Features

Verified transcripts stored and sent to institutions

Evaluation of official documents

List of all courses completed at the post-secondary level

Canadian semester credit and grade equivalent for each course

Canadian grade point average (GPA) on 4.0 scale

Designates the level (upper or lower) of each undergraduate course

Upgrade Your IRCC ECA to a WES Standard Evaluation Report



Step 1

Go to My Account



Step 2

Upgrade ECA to meet the requirements for:

- Professional Licensing Bodies
- Academic Institutions
- Employers



Step 3

Upgrade to DxD or CxC



Step 4

Select the recipient

WES Services and Fees

Services	Fees
Upgrade ECA to DxD	C\$58
Upgrade ECA to CxC	C\$115
Upgrade Standard DxD to CxC	C\$115

WES Gateway Program



Eliminating Barriers

Challenge

How can displaced individuals who have only partial or non-verifiable academic documents prove their qualifications?

Solution

Validate and assess the education of individuals displaced by political unrest, conflict, and natural disasters even when verifiable documents are not available.

WES Gateway Program



Afghanistan



Eritrea



Iraq



Palestine



Sudan



Syria



Türkiye



Ukraine



Venezuela

Goal

Support the **educational and career advancement** of refugees and other forcibly displaced individuals who **lack proof** of their academic credentials

The WES Advantage

- Trusted, accurate, and reliable service
- Expert staff, network, and resources
- Lifetime value and competitively priced.
- Excellent customer and client services
- Embracing technology; fast and secure report delivery
- Social Impact Programs





Thank you!

Sign up for more info here:

