

# Experiential Learning

## SPECIALIST HIGH SKILLS MAJOR

### What is the Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM)?

The SHSM is a ministry approved program that allows students to focus their learning on a specific economic sector while meeting the requirements for their OSSD. SHSM allows students to customize their secondary school experience to suit their interests and talents, while preparing them for a successful post-secondary transition.

## COOPERATIVE EDUCATION

### What is Cooperative Education?

Cooperative Education is a Ministry of Education approved program that allows students to earn secondary school credits while completing a work placement. The 2 Course options are: Creating Opportunities through Co-op (DCO 30) or Cooperative Education to a related Course.

### What benefits does the Cooperative Education program offer students?

- The opportunity to try out different career options in a field of interest and earn academic credits at the same time.
- Use knowledge and skills developed in the classroom in the workplace.
- Make meaningful connections with employers in the community and earn valuable work experience for a resume.
- Gain a greater understanding of themselves and the opportunities available as they grow to understand how they can shape their future

## ONTARIO YOUTH APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

### What is the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP)?

OYAP is a specialized program that will provide secondary school students the opportunity to train and learn trade competencies as an apprentice while still enrolled in secondary school. OYAP students have an opportunity to become registered apprentices and work towards a Certificate of Qualification in a skilled profession while earning their Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD). Students must be 15 years old and have completed 14 credits.

### What is an Apprenticeship?

Apprenticeship is a hands-on training program for people who want to work in a skilled trade and enjoy learning by doing. Apprenticeship training allows you to learn the skills while working with qualified trades people while getting paid. Training standards are followed to ensure the apprentice becomes skilled in that trade. Average time to complete an apprenticeship can vary from 3- 6 years depending on the trade.

### Why become a SHSM Student?

SHSM students are given more opportunities to earn industry recognized certifications, participate in reach ahead activities and cooperative education centred around their goals and interests. Students will achieve the SHSM designation on their diploma with a RED Seal and receive a special transcript listing certifications and training programs to which they have been exposed.

## DUAL CREDITS

### What are Dual Credits?

Dual credit programs are ministry-approved programs that allow students, while they are still in secondary school, to take college or apprenticeship courses that count towards both the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) and a postsecondary certificate, diploma, degree or a Certificate of Apprenticeship.

## OTHER FORMS OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Schools are being supported to provide opportunities for students to engage in hands-on, real-world learning, also known as Experiential Learning. This authentic learning approach provides opportunities for students to:

- participate in learning experiences connected to a community or industry.
- reflect on those experiences to derive meaning; and then
- apply their learning to influence their decisions and actions in various aspects of their lives, including education and career/life plans.

The experience can involve local, national, or global communities and:

- being physically present (an on-site experience);
- being present using digital tools and technologies (a virtual experience); or
- a combination of the two (a blended experience).

When children and youth are fully engaged in community-connected experiences, they develop:

- a deeper understanding of expectations from the Ontario curriculum and the Kindergarten Program; and
- the skills, knowledge, and work habits to be competent, confident, and effective education and career/life planners.