

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Academic Year:	2026-2027
Credential:	Ontario College Diploma
Program Delivery:	Full-Time
Duration:	2 Years
Length:	4 Semesters
Program Code(s):	A003 - Timmins Campus (PC) A015 - Distance (CK)

DESCRIPTION

Upon graduation, students will be equipped to thrive as part of a multidisciplinary team that works with infants and children up to 12 years old. You will have the opportunity to nurture learning and imagination to help these children to transition successfully to the school system. In a dynamic group learning environment, you'll explore how to best support a child's growth with creative strategies that leverage their natural stages of development.

The Children's ECE Play Lab provides students with the opportunity to design, set up, monitor and make improvements to an early year learning environment. Partnerships with local early learning centres will provide our students with the unique opportunity to work closely with young children in a controlled environment.

All students must meet the [Year 1 Placement Permit Requirements](#) in order to be registered for the two (2) fall and two (2) winter semester courses that have an ECE Play Lab component or corequisite. Students who do not meet this requirement may be withdrawn from these courses after Day 10 of the semester.

Early Childhood Education – Distance Delivery (A015)

Our Distance Early Childhood Education Program is offered fully online. The ECE distance program is synchronous, meaning, classes are scheduled at a specific day and time with an expectation of online attendance. It is important to note that some classes (i.e. Preparation for Placement, Fieldwork Placement, and Seminar) have mandatory attendance and participation requirements. A working camera and microphone are required as they allow students to participate and engage with classmates and the course material.

Though students in the Distance program will not have access to the ECE Play Lab at the Timmins Campus, they will be required to complete all ECE Lab components within their community. All Distance students must meet the [Year 1 Placement Permit Requirements](#) in order to be registered for the two (2) fall and two (2) winter semester courses that have an ECE Play Lab component or corequisite. Students who do not meet this requirement may be withdrawn from these courses after Day 10 of the semester.

Distance students can do their placements in the city/town of their choice, but placements are done in-person at an approved childcare agency or kindergarten classroom. Placements are generally completed in the last semester of the program.

The Timmins Campus and Distance Early Childhood Education programs are vigorous. For this reason, part-time pathways are available. Please contact the program coordinator to discuss this option.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Once registered with the Professional College of Early Childhood Educators, graduates may find employment in childcare centers, nursery schools, agencies or recreational programs, college lab settings, Early ON Centers, family resource centers, early literacy programs and Full Day early learning programs in kindergarten classrooms across the province.

VOCATIONAL LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Create learning contexts to enable, build and maintain caring, responsive relationships in partnerships with children, families, and communities that value and respect social, cultural and linguistic diversity including Indigenous peoples' worldviews and Francophone identity.
2. Co-create, facilitate and reflect upon inquiry and play-based early years and childcare programs and pedagogical approaches to support children's learning, holistic development and well-being following children's capabilities, interests, ideas and experiences.
3. Co-design and maintain inclusive early learning environments to value and support equitable, accessible and meaningful learning opportunities for all children, their families and communities in a range of early years and childcare settings.
4. Collaborate with children, families, colleagues, agencies and community partners to create, maintain, evaluate and promote safe and healthy early learning environments to support independence, reasonable risk-taking and healthy development and well-being.
5. Use observation strategies to identify children's strengths and challenges and to ascertain when children and families might benefit from additional support or community resources.
6. Use professional communication in interactions with children, families, colleagues, employers, the regulatory body, government authorities and children's service agencies to meet legal and ethical standards of the early years sector.
7. Act in accordance with relevant legislation, regulations, College of Early Childhood Educators Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice, agency policies and procedures and principles of evidence-informed practice and reflect upon their impact on one's own role in early years and childcare settings.
8. Identify, report and document when a child is in a situation of perceived risk for, or actual neglect or abuse, in accordance with legislation, the College of Early Childhood Educators Coded of Ethics and Standards of Practice, policies and procedures.
9. Create and engage in partnerships with families, communities, colleagues, interdisciplinary professionals, authorities and child service agencies to advocate for quality early years and childcare programs and services.
10. Engage in reflective practice and continuous professional learning in accordance with principles of lifelong learning, evidence-informed practices in the early years sector and requirements of the College of Early Childhood Educators.

PROGRAM COURSES

The following reflects the planned course sequence for full-time offerings of the program. Programs at Northern College are delivered using a variety of instruction modes. Courses may be offered in the classroom or lab, entirely online, or in a hybrid mode which combines classroom sessions with virtual learning activities.

Semester 1		Hours
CM1323	Professional Communications	42
EC1004	Lab 1	56
EC1083	Child Development	42
EC1103	Observation, Documentation & Interpretation	42
EC1123	Foundations in ECE	42
EC1133	Responsive Relationships	42
EC1143	Play-Based Environments	42
Semester 2		
CM2303	Communications in the Workplace	42
EC1073	Outdoor and Nature Play	42
EC2004	Lab 2	56
EC2093	Creative Curriculum Design	42
EC2103	Preparation for Placement	42
EC3083	Professional Practice	42
EC3093	Pedagogy of Curriculum	42
Semester 3		
EC2033	Working with Diversity	42
EC3023	Health, Safety and Nutrition	42
EC3073	Inclusive Practice	42
EL1041	General Education Elective	42
EL1042	General Education Elective	42
GN1443	Indigenous Culture and Awareness	42
Semester 4		
EC4003	ECE Fieldwork Placement	572
EC4061	ECE Fieldwork Seminar	28

PROGRAM PROGRESSION

The following reflects the planned progression for full-time offerings of the program.

Fall Intake

Sem 1: Fall 2026
Sem 2: Winter 2027
Sem 3: Fall 2027
Sem 4: Winter 2028

Winter Intake

Sem 1: Winter 2027
Sem 2: Fall 2027
Sem 3: Winter 2028
Sem 4: Summer 2028

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD)
- Grade 12 English (C, U) (Minimum 60% GPA required) or equivalent
- Computer proficiency in Microsoft Office (word processing, spreadsheets), web search engines and e-mail systems.

Academic prerequisites for this program may be obtained free of charge through [Academic Upgrading](#).

Applicants who do not have a high school diploma or equivalent and will have reached the age of 19 years on or before the start of the program must undergo academic testing and may be required to complete [Prior Learning Assessment & Recognition \(PLAR\)](#) process to demonstrate equivalency of admission requirements prior to admission into a program.

For more details, please contact the Admissions Office at 705-235-7222 or admissions@northern.on.ca.

Additional Requirements for International Students

In addition to the admission requirements, international students must have proof of [English Proficiency](#) and meet the requirements below.

1. Proof of Senior High School Diploma/Certificate
2. English Proficiency (we will require one of the following):
 - IELTS Academic International English Language Testing System: minimum overall score of 6.0 must be achieved with no individual band score under 5.5
 - TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language): Computer-based overall minimum score of 79
 - PTE (Pearson Test of English) Academic – Graduate Diploma: 58+
 - Duolingo: 105+
3. CO-OP Work Permit is mandatory for this program to participate in unpaid program placements.

If your country of citizenship has English as its official language, we may accept alternate proof of English Proficiency. All educational documents must be submitted in English and will be dependent on the country of citizenship. For more information, please contact admissions@northern.on.ca.

PROGRAM SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS & ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

A passing grade of 60% is required for all Community Services program courses and 50% for General Education Electives.

Refer to the program page for [Placement Requirements](#) documentation.

Work Integrated Learning Opportunities

This program requires a field work component.

While the intent is for placements to be arranged in the student's own community, when this is not possible, alternate communities will need to be considered.

Students are responsible for travel costs to and from fieldwork placement sites, parking costs, etc.

A dress code is in effect during all lab practice sessions, Preparation for Placement course, and during the program's fieldwork component.

All course work must be successfully completed prior to fieldwork placements.

Articulation / Transfer Agreements

A number of articulation agreements have been negotiated with universities and other institutions across Canada, North America and internationally. These agreements are assessed, revised and updated on a regular basis. Please contact the program coordinator for specific details if you are interested in pursuing such an option. Additional information can be found at [Articulation Agreements](#).

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

- 15 Program Courses
- 2 Communications Courses
- 3 General Education Elective Courses

Graduation Eligibility

To graduate from this program, a student must attain a minimum of 60% or a letter grade of CR (Credit) in each Program and Communication Course and 50% in General Education Elective courses in each semester unless otherwise stated on the course outline. Students should consult departmental policies and manuals for additional details and exceptions.

Graduation Window

Students unable to adhere to the program duration of two years (as stated above) may take a maximum of four years to complete their credential. After this time, students must be re-admitted into the program and follow the curriculum in place at the time of re-admission.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For questions about being admitted into the program, please contact Northern College Admissions at admissions@northern.on.ca or by phone at 705-235-3211 ext. 7222. For questions about the content of the program, contact the Program Coordinator.

Erin Holmes, Program Coordinator
Tel: 705-235-3211 ext. 2156
Email: holmese@northern.on.ca

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Semester 1

CM1323 Professional Communications

In this course, students will learn essential skills for success in college and the workplace. This course focuses on developing and strengthening oral and written communication skills, and critical thinking ability. During this course, students will engage in a variety of forms of communication with a focus on upholding the principles of academic integrity. Students will develop the skills necessary to create discipline-specific documents, practice business etiquette and professionalism, and apply critical thinking strategies to practical scenarios. Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to plan and draft concise, coherent and well-organized writing assignments that are tailored to specific audiences and purposes.

EC1004 Lab 1

The Early Childhood Education Play Lab offers students a hands-on learning experience within an engaging early learning environment, bridging the gap between theory and practice. Throughout this course, students will interact directly with children, applying play-based learning principles to observe, engage with, and assess developmental needs. They will design and implement exploratory activities based on children's interests, enhancing their ability to support critical thinking, problem-solving, and meaningful engagement. The Play Lab enables students to develop professional skills in planning, observation, and responsive teaching strategies, effectively preparing them for real-world early childhood settings. Through partnerships within the community, students will gain practical experience in creating enriching learning environments while building their confidence and competence as future Early Childhood Educators.

EC1083 Child Development

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the developmental stages of childhood. Students will take a brief look at prenatal development in order to determine the possible impact this may have on later development. The remainder of the course will be to study the developmental stages from birth to young adolescence. Both theoretical and applications are employed to study social, emotional, cognitive and physical development of infants, toddlers, preschool children and middle childhood and young adolescents.

EC1103 Observation, Documentation & Interpretation

This course presents basic techniques of observation and documentation. This includes pedagogical documentation, as well as recording and interpreting the different skills and behaviours of young children (birth to 12 years old) and using this information to then integrate children's individual profiles. The information collected will be used for educational guidance following developmentally appropriate practices in a diversity of early childhood settings.

EC1123 Foundations in ECE

This course provides a foundation for the field of early childhood education with an emphasis on pedagogy and quality childcare. Students examine influences, theories of curriculum, and the Child Care and Early Years Act. The roles of an early childhood educator, employment opportunities, early childhood services, professional organizations and regulatory bodies are also part of this introductory course.

EC1133 Responsive Relationships

This course examines the critical role of responsive relationships in early childhood education, emphasizing the importance of strong connections between educators, children, families, and communities. Students will explore strategies for fostering secure attachments, promoting social-emotional development, and creating inclusive, relationship-centered learning environments. The course will also highlight the significance of family and community engagement, culturally responsive practices, and effective communication techniques. Through research, case studies, and practical applications, students will develop skills to build meaningful partnerships that support young children's growth, well-being, and lifelong learning.

EC1143 Play-Based Environments

This course explores the principles of designing and organizing developmentally appropriate environments for infants, toddlers, and preschool-aged children. Students will examine best practices for selecting and arranging materials, furniture, and learning centers to support holistic development. Topics include safety and accessibility, sensory-rich experiences, play-based learning, and strategies for creating inclusive and culturally responsive classroom settings. Emphasis will be placed on how intentional design and material selection influence child engagement, exploration, and early learning outcomes.

Semester 2**CM2303 Communications in the Workplace**

In this course, students will develop professional communication skills required for success in the workplace. Students will continue to develop and strengthen their oral and written communication skills and critical thinking abilities. During this course, students will use various modes of communication to complete assignments designed to meet program and professional expectations. Students will utilize a variety of technologies for the purpose of creating a professional presence in a digital environment. Students will develop the necessary skills to create polished workplace documents such as letters, resumes, cover letters and reports tailored to specific audiences. Students will learn to conduct themselves with professionalism in both workplace interviews and job searches. Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to create clear, concise and coherent workplace and employment documents that are error-free and designed for specific audiences and purposes.

EC1073 Outdoor and Nature Play

For children, playing is learning. There is no better space for kids to learn than outdoors, and there is no better play resource than nature. Children can be taught in their early years to play outdoors. Children reap great benefits as they grow a connection and appreciation of the natural environment. In the structured, busy and technologically-advanced world they live in, the role of outdoor play that is experienced as children is being forgotten. This course will nurture the educator's awareness for the importance of nature play as any activity that gets children active or thinking actively outdoors, with the end goal of building skills and ability to play without the need for parental or adult control. This can be in any setting, so long as it's outdoors. It supports children being left to their own devices while caregivers supervise from a distance. Adults can also actively participate in nature play, however, through child-led play activities. Nature plays significantly improves all aspects of child development – physical, cognitive, social and emotional. Playing outdoors grows resilience, self-confidence, initiative, creativity and more. It encourages the joy of movement; it nurtures wild imaginations, experimentation, friendships, social connections and behaviour.

EC2004 Lab 2

The Early Childhood Education Play Lab 2 offers students a hands-on learning experience within an engaging early learning environment, bridging the gap between theory and practice. Building on the foundational experiences of Lab 1, this course provides students with deeper, more autonomous engagement. Students continue to apply play-based learning principles while taking on increased responsibility in planning, implementing, and reflecting on exploratory learning experiences. Lab 2 strengthens students' professional competencies and reinforces their readiness to enter the field as confident, capable Early Childhood Educators.

EC2093 Creative Curriculum Design

This interactive, application-based workshop is designed for early childhood education students to develop, test, and refine engaging activities for young children. Participants will explore play-based learning strategies, storytelling, music, movement, and other hands-on approaches to designing age-appropriate, inclusive, and meaningful activities that foster curiosity and exploration. Through hands-on projects, students will create a portfolio of activities that encourage creativity, critical thinking, and social-emotional development in early learners. By the end of the course, participants will have practical tools and confidence to implement engaging activities in diverse early childhood settings.

EC2103 Preparation for Placement

Students will develop an awareness of the importance of the integrative experience of fieldwork that assists with blending theory and practice. This course is meant to serve as an opportunity to facilitate the process of weaving together academic concepts and real experience in fieldwork placement. The Fieldwork Placement Manual will be reviewed; specific competencies and requirements for placement will be identified. The student will examine his/her role in relation to field placement expectations. Policies, processes, roles, responsibilities, and expectations relating to fieldwork placement will be discussed. This course will introduce the student to the concept of reflective practice and professional development. Self-assessment activities will be used as a means of helping the student to reflect on achievements and to examine the implications for further learning. This course will help the student clarify his/her expectations and prepare for a successful fieldwork placement experience.

EC3083 Professional Practice

This course will examine all aspects of professionalism as it relates to the field of early childhood education. This course will provide the student with a comprehensive understanding of the characteristics of an ECE professional including, behaviours, critical thinking skills, effective communication as well as professional ethics and advocacy. Students will be introduced to the importance of leadership and mentorship in their field.

EC3093 Pedagogy of Curriculum

This course introduces students to the foundational concepts of play and inquiry-based learning as central pedagogies in early childhood education. Emphasizing the educator's role in fostering meaningful learning, students will explore how children's development is supported through responsive environments, intentional use of materials, and observation-based planning. Key frameworks such as Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and the Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT) guide inclusive and developmentally appropriate practices. Students will study methods and techniques for planning, conducting, and evaluating a variety of learning activities that reflect diverse cultural perspectives and learning needs. The course integrates Indigenous ways of knowing, highlighting the importance of relationships, storytelling, connection to land, and community in shaping children's experiences. By the end of the course, students will be equipped to design

and implement holistic programs for children aged one to twelve, grounded in play-based, inquiry-driven pedagogy and supported by thoughtful, reflective practice.

Semester 3

EC2033 Working with Diversity

Students will explore and examine the many layers of diversity that surround individuals and identifiable groups in society, and they will see how these many layers contribute to a rich, diverse Canadian cultural landscape. As part of this examination, students will have the opportunity to reflect on their personal attitudes, assumptions and views toward diverse population groups. As a brief introduction, students will begin developing their understanding of diversity by identifying, discussing, and defining core terminology like privilege, cultural competence, and cultural safety. Students will enhance their knowledge and understanding of diversity by looking at origins of differences among various population groups in Canada and by looking at society's attitudes associated with Canadian Regionalism, demographic trends, First Nations peoples, immigration, and various other established minority groups. Also, learners will become aware of government policies and influence on certain segments of Canadian society and its role in dealing with social inequalities. Finally, students will look at and reflect on the media's role in perpetuating stereotypes and swaying personal views of diversity in Canada.

EC3023 Health, Safety and Nutrition

This course provides an in-depth exploration of the essential role of health, nutrition, and safety in early childhood education. Students will examine fundamental nutrition principles that promote well-being and help prevent disease, with a focus on making informed food choices that support healthy growth and development. Key topics include the impact of diet on obesity and chronic diseases, as well as the major nutritional concerns facing Canadians across different life stages. Students will also explore dietary modifications required for diverse populations, including children with specific health needs. Emphasis will be placed on creating safe and supportive environments that foster lifelong healthy habits for children and families.

EC3073 Inclusive Practice

This course focuses on an inclusionary perspective to support students in examining attitudes, values and biases related to children with varied abilities, their families, and early learning environments. The course will include a focus on the historical perspectives and practices that have impacted and influenced Canadian legislation, models of disability, and current day approaches to support inclusion for children in a variety of early learning settings. This course provides students with comprehensive introduction to children and youth who display various categories of exceptionality to view them from a biopsychosocial perspective and view interventions from a social systems theory perspective. Students will acquire knowledge of the philosophies, practices, and policies that determine the care, education, and support of children and youth with varying needs in order to emphasize a child-first approach.

EL1041 General Education Elective

EL1042 General Education Elective

General Education Courses are selected online each semester by the student from a list provided and exposes students to a related area of study outside of their immediate academic discipline. Certain programs have predetermined electives.

GN1443 Indigenous Culture and Awareness

This general education course will provide students with an introduction to Canadian Indigenous Nations' history, sovereignty, land titles, cultural history and current critical issues. Topics addressed include the content of Indigenous rights, economic and social development, community and political processes, and business law and policies, justice & social services. Canadian Indigenous History and Relations is a general education course that has been incorporated into all programs at Northern College.

Semester 4**EC4003 ECE Fieldwork Placement**

Students will be placed in three different childcare centres or kindergarten classrooms over three five-week periods. These placements provide students with an opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge and gain practical experience in early childhood education. The placements will provide diverse opportunities for learning as well as personal growth. Students will be required to complete placement with varied age groups including Infant/Toddler, Preschool and Kindergarten/School-age children. Alternate placement agencies will be made available for placement opportunities on an individual basis with prior approval. Out-of-town placements may become necessary based on enrolment numbers and would be arranged individually by each student with the college providing final approval. The placement totals 572 hours.

EC4061 ECE Fieldwork Seminar

This course is a co-requisite of Fieldwork Placement. While on placement, students will attend seminars. This in-class experience provides the opportunity to critically analyze the experiences that are occurring in the field. Students begin to understand the delicate balance between what they have learned in the classroom (theory, skills) and the needs and requirements in the field. Self-care will be emphasized as students transition from the role of student to that of entry-level professional. The Fieldwork Seminar is 1 day per month (total of 28 hours).