



SOUTHERN ONTARIO COLLEGIATE

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A Guide for Parents and Students

**Preparing for full time studies in
Canada**

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Introduction

Welcome to Southern Ontario Collegiate.

This guide contains information and resources to provide you with a clear view of the school's ethos and resources.

It's important to understand the time and commitment required for a student to attain Ontario's Secondary School Graduation Diploma, so we've outlined the academic credits, participatory activities, additional achievement levels and other requirements. This includes mandatory inoculations and health coverage, as well as university application processes for the next steps of the student's academic journey.

In most instances, students stay in small, carefully selected family-style residences. Everything you need to know to plan for this stay is detailed below.

Information about Hamilton to help you become familiar with the city are found on our website; and copies of every form / document required by the school and documentation required by the Ministry of Education are found in the SOC orientation booklet.

Southern Ontario Collegiate is an educational institution dedicated to further learning, educational enquiry and personal and scholastic development. We are founded on the principles of mutual respect for the rights of others and provision of an environment that supports intellectual growth.

Our goal is to prepare motivated young men and women of all races, creeds and nationalities for studies leading to further education and employment, and Southern Ontario College fosters the development of the qualities students will need to reach these objectives: honour, courage, integrity, tolerance and dignity.

Application Processes

Application processes and time frames for study permits and temporary resident visas differ depending on your country of origin. Please consult the website of the Canadian High Commission responsible for your country for the most up to date information.

It is important that all the information you submit must be complete, accurate and up to date. If not, the application may be rejected by the consulate, and the process must begin again.

The application process may take some time. We strongly advise you to submit your application at least 6 – 10 weeks

Please note that study permits, visas and passports can be renewed can all in Canada. Further details are available

before your planned departure.

Renewing your study permit

Before Southern Ontario College can process a study permit renewal, you must provide:

1. Southern Ontario Collegiate's letter of acceptance
2. Passport identification page with photograph
3. Digital photograph
4. Custodianship declaration forms for minors (if applicable)
5. Receipt of results of applicable medicals or proof of medical exams
6. Application fee of CAD \$250.00.

Documentation required to renew visa (within Canada)

Please note that visas may take several months for approval. This information should be provided as early as possible.

In order to apply for a temporary resident visa to study in Canada, you must provide.

1. Southern Ontario Collegiate's letter of acceptance and enrolment
2. Passport identification
3. Digital photograph
4. Custodianship declaration forms for minors (if applicable)
5. Receipt of results of applicable medicals or proof of medical exams
7. Study permit
8. Academic transcripts and results of any completed exams
9. Visa application form and application fee of CAD \$250.00
10. BANK STATEMENT ONLY (with a minimum balance of CAD \$1,000.00)

University or College Applications (OUAC)

Students will apply for admission to universities or colleges in the autumn/winter of their final year at SOC.

Southern Ontario Collegiate provides guidance and support for students in applying for scholarships.

Academic Structure and Calendar

Southern Ontario Collegiate offers a range of Ontario secondary school courses, Grades 9 – 12. In addition we offer a range of the Ministry of Education’s ESL courses for those who need this support.

The school has three semesters; specific dates for the year can be found on the school’s website www.mysoc.ca School holidays as well as government holidays and other important dates can also be found on the website.

Requirements for the Ontario Secondary School Diploma

Studies at Southern Ontario Collegiate comply with the policies and requirements set out in the *Ontario Secondary Schools, Grades 9-12: Program and Diploma Requirements, 1999* and / or *Education Policy and Program Updates to April 20, 2010*.

The Ministry of Education’s policies require both a specific number of credits as well as completion of specific subjects.

The table on the next page identifies the minimum requirements for the Ontario Secondary School Diploma. Students must consider course selection that these requirements as well as the demands and prerequisites of specific university programs.

Some courses completed at a previous secondary school may be counted as equivalents towards these credits. No credits can be accorded without full transcripts.

Calendar

Southern Ontario Collegiate offers three semesters. Each course in a semester is composed of one hundred and ten hours of study.

Fall Semester - Usually begins in mid-August, typically ends early December

Winter Semester – Begins in early January and typically ends in May

Timetables for both fall and winter semesters are organized in four periods per day as well as a lunch break.

Summer Semester – Typically takes place in June and July.

The summer semester has three intensive periods of instruction, as well as a lunch break.

Credit Requirements for the OSSD (Ontario Secondary School Diploma)

Credits Required	Specific Notes / Limitations	
18 compulsory credits:		
	4 credits in English (1 per grade)*	*a maximum of 3 credits of English as a second language (ESL) or English Literacy Development (ELD) may count towards this but the 4 th credit must be a compulsory Grade 12 English course
	1 credit in French as a second language	
	3 credits in mathematics (at least 1 in Grade 11 or 12)	
	2 credits in science	
	1 credit in Canadian history	
	1 credit in Canadian geography	
	1 credit in the arts	
	1 credit in health and physical education	
	.5 credit in civics	
	.5 credit in career studies	
Plus 1 credit from EACH of the following groups		
Group 1	additional credit in English or French as a second language** or a native language OR	**In groups 1, 2, and 3, a maximum of 2 credits in French as a second language can count as compulsory credits, one from group 1 and one from either group 2 or 3.
	Social sciences and humanities OR	
	Canadian studies OR	
	Guidance and career education	
Group 2	Additional credit in health and physical education, OR	
	the arts OR	
	Business studies OR	
	French as a second language**	
Group 3	Additional credit in science (Grade 11 or 12) OR	
	Technological education OR	
	French as a second language** OR	
	Computer studies	
An additional 12 optional credits from available courses		
Additional Mandatory Requirements		
40 hours of community involvement activities		
Complete Individual Pathways Plan		
Ontario's Provincial Literary Program / OSSLT	If successful completion of the Ontario Literacy Secondary School Test (OSSLT) is not attained, the OLC40 course is available.	

Evaluation and Reporting Policies

Southern Ontario Collegiate uses the Provincial Report Card, Grades 9 – 12 for mid-term and final reporting; it records achievement and comments on weaknesses and strengths, a percentage mark and attendance.

An Ontario Student Transcript is maintained for each student, recording students' academic achievements

Access to Student Progress

Upon their arrival at SOC, students are registered into the Maplewood Student Information System. Parents are issued an access code which allows you to monitor attendance and marks when posted.

Support for English Language Learners

Southern Ontario Collegiate has an excellent ESL department to support English language learners. The Ministry of Education's ESL courses provide an excellent foundation for further study, supporting access to other courses.

We provide support to assist access to curriculum and learning materials as well as supporting improved daily communication for life inside and beyond school.

The ESL department works with teachers and administrators to develop strategies to support instruction, learning and facilitate success. Instructors can also provide accommodations such as extra time, oral interviews, demonstrations, and illustrations to support learning and assessment.

In addition, SOC has an in-house tutor to support ESL learners and to help put all needed learning accommodations into place.

Achievement Levels

Achievement levels will be recorded as a percentage grade based on curriculum expectations as well as achievement levels outlined in secondary curriculum policy documents.

Level 4 **80 - 100%**

High to outstanding level of achievement; above the provincial standard

Level 3 **70 – 79%**

High level of achievement, working at the provincial standard

Level 2 **60 – 69%**

Moderate level of achievement, below but approaching the provincial standard

Level 1 **50 – 59%**

Passable level of achievement, below the provincial standard

Below 50%

Insufficient achievement of curriculum expectations; a credit will not be received for this course

Guidance, Education and Career Planning Support

Student success is important to us. Teachers work closely with students to monitor learning and advise students. Southern Ontario Collegiate's tutor is available to students during the school day. Their role facilitates, improves and enhances learning for all students; the tutor works in conjunction with teachers to maximize communication and support student success.

Guidance and Education and Career Planning Support

Many students arrive at Southern Ontario Collegiate with definite career goals in place. Their motivation and ambition are the first building blocks in their journey to success. Soon after their arrival at the school, a counsellor meets with the student to discuss their achievements, goals and ambitions, and further education and career directions.

Each student develops an independent education plan, in conjunction with the province's mandatory career studies course and the school's counsellors. The student's Individual Pathways Plan is a requirement for graduation.

We have a very strong education / career development outreach program. Over the school year, Southern Ontario Collegiate hosts Canada's top universities. These university recruitment officers provide tailored information/presentation sessions and question and answer opportunities to the school's students. Students get up to date, personalized information on each university's specialized programs, bursaries and scholarships and career opportunities. We also take students to university / college fairs and expositions.

University and College Applications

Southern Ontario Collegiate provides specialized expertise to facilitate students as they make decisions about university and program selection.

University Application Support

Southern Ontario Collegiate ensures that each student develops a clear, structured education pathways plan. To assist students we:

- ✓ Facilitate contacts with universities
- ✓ Host visits from universities and distribute new information, and brochures
- ✓ Research 'best fit' programs for students
- ✓ Submit applications to universities/colleges outside Ontario
- ✓ Help students complete the Ontario University Application Centre's Form 101
- ✓ Collect and submit application fees for universities/colleges
- ✓ Facilitate / communicate around interviews or further data required
- ✓ Help to arrange any visas, medicals, proficiency tests, transcripts and letters of reference that may be required

Our Guidance Team gives 100% to student success, preparing young people for the next stage of their academic journey.

Residence / Homestay

It's important that students and families know that students are part of a safe, supportive community in Canada. Southern Ontario Collegiate provides small family-style residences for students.

Staff at Southern Ontario Collegiate and the residence / home stay hosts are always ready to support and assist students. If you have any questions at all, just ask us.

What you need to know:

- **Meals**
SOC provides breakfast and lunch during the school week. Dinner is at your residence. During holidays and weekends breakfast, lunch and dinner are at your residence.
- **Personal**
Provide your own toiletries (soap, shampoo, toothpaste, lotion). Clean the bathroom after you use it.
Each family/residence has rules about quiet time after/before certain hours. Check yours.
- **Chores and Laundry:** Keep your living space and bathroom clean and tidy. Check with your host re: laundry.
- **Curfew and Security:** You should be in your residence no later than 11:00 pm. Be sure to lock the door whenever you leave. Keep your key with you; you're responsible for costs of replacement keys or lock changes.
- **Common Sense, Courtesy and Safety:** Be considerate and polite to all. Turn off / unplug electrical appliances / computers / lights when not in use. Basic internet is provided; enhanced internet service is your responsibility; telephone service is your responsibility. Overnight guests are not permitted. Check with your hosts regarding policy on visitors. This is your home while you're at SOC – respect it and all who live there.

What should I bring to Canada?

Your home stay will be well equipped with linens: pillows, sheets, towels, blankets, so no need to bring those.

You will need:

Toiletries: soap, shampoo, toothpaste, lotions.

To feel more at home you may want to bring a few photos or pictures and/or one or two books that are special to you.

If you take regular medications, please bring a copy of your prescription(s) with you.

Electronics: mobile phone, laptop or electronic notebook

Clothing: Canada has four enjoyable seasons. Winter in Hamilton can be cold. If you don't have cold weather clothing at home, you will need:

- a winter coat
- mittens, gloves, wool socks
- a warm hat and scarf
- wool socks
- waterproof winter boots
- warm clothing (sweaters, pullovers, long-sleeved shirts, warm trousers)

For autumn and spring, you'll need a mid/lightweight waterproof coat or jacket

Please do not bring: Extra furniture, candles, stereo or cooking equipment, pets.

Health Information

Health coverage is vital for all visitors to Canada. Once they arrive in Canada, students at Southern Ontario Collegiate are enrolled in **Tugo's** International Student Insurance Coverage program, and provided with information on coverage, limitations and how to make a claim.

SOC helps students find medical care and provides the information they need to maintain good health.

Encouraging Healthy Habits

Families are asked to join SOC in encouraging students to eat healthy foods, exercise, get sufficient rest and stay alert to any changes in their health. Their wellbeing is an important part of their successful academic journey.

Parents are encouraged to keep lines of communication with students strong by emailing, texting, and telephoning students regularly. Even the most independent young people may feel homesick when living away.

Vaccinations

The Ontario Ministry of Education requires that all students have up to date vaccinations. Students should endeavour to have all vaccinations in place before they travel, however students can receive vaccinations once they are here. (Please note that most insurance programs do not cover the cost of vaccinations.)

The Ministry alerts schools and students who do not have up to date vaccinations of any shortfalls, and the school facilitates this process, providing transportation and supervision as needed.

Students who do not update their vaccinations will be suspended from attending school by the Ministry until full compliance is met.

These vaccinations are mandatory for all students in Ontario

Diphtheria*

Tetanus *

Pertussis*

Poliomyelitis*

Measles*

Mumps*

Rubella

Meningococcal conjugate-C

Meningococcal conjugate-ACYW

Varicella (chicken pox) only for students who haven't had chicken pox

*multiple doses required

A copy of the full vaccination form is available.

Expectations and Behaviour

School Uniform

- All students are expected to be in full uniform when they're in school.

Attendance and Punctuality

- Regular attendance is a significant part of success. If students are ill, they should inform the school immediately.
- Please be on time for all classes.
- Be respectful to teachers and students in class.

Textbooks

- Texts and course packs are provided for student use for each course and must be returned in good condition at the end of the course. Students will be charged with the cost of replacing lost or damaged books.

Assignments and Homework

- Students are responsible for completing and submitting all assignments, assessments and homework on time. Teachers are available to discuss questions and concerns.
- Students are expected to bring a notebook/pen/pencil to each class. Electronic notebooks are acceptable; taking photographs is not.
- Students will need a scientific calculator for some courses.
- We recommend that students have a laptop or electronic notebook for writing assignments.

Plagiarism and Cheating

What is plagiarism? Submitting work that isn't yours – whether it's previously written by another student, or copied from another source (book, internet) without identifying the source. Academic dishonesty (copying or allowing others to copy notes, answers or other information for tests, exams or assignments) is unacceptable. Cheating and plagiarism will have severe consequences.

Mail

- Students can pick up mail in the office daily during the school week.

Code of Conduct

It's important that families and students become fully aware of Southern Ontario Collegiate's Code of Conduct which ensures a safe, secure and fair environment. The Code of Conduct ensures a mutual understanding of

A complete copy of the school's Code of Conduct, rights and responsibilities, policies, principles can be found in the students' orientation package.

expectations, rights, responsibilities and consequences.

Orientation to Southern Ontario Collegiate and the City of Hamilton

For many students, attending Southern Ontario Collegiate may be the first time they have lived away from home. From the moment they are met at the airport by school staff, we strive to help them adjust to a new city, a new country and a new learning environment. It is important to us that they have all the information and support they need to be happy, productive and successful here.

Hamilton is a growing city; midway between Toronto and Niagara Falls, it's ideally situated for airports, highways and public transportation. It has excellent health care facilities, and is home to McMaster University, Mohawk College and a campus of Brock University. Many other educational institutions are nearby.

SOC's campus is at the heart of Hamilton's revitalized James Street neighbourhood, close to the central library, the Waterfront Park, right beside McMaster's new residence, and near to a wide range of cafes and shopping. Public transportation is readily accessible to all parts of the city. Our orientation program is designed to give students all the information they need as students, a guide to what

Code of Conduct

Students, teachers and administrative staff are all responsible for understanding and meeting the expectations of Southern Ontario Collegiate's Code of Conduct.

As responsible individuals, students organize their own behaviour and associations, and are subject to federal, provincial and municipal laws. SOC's internal rules and regulations are in place to support and maintain the safety and integrity of all students and staff.

The Code of Conduct reflects community standards and laws and explicitly identifies expectations and policies around:

- Discrimination
- Sexual harassment
- Alcohol abuse
- Illegal drugs
- Firearms
- Smoking
- Fire Safety
- Use of emergency equipment

Hamilton offers, and an opportunity to get to know fellow students and school staff through special social events.

The heart of orientation –What do you need to know?

The team at Southern Ontario Collegiate makes sure that each student is prepared for the new school year in Canada.

✓ **Residence**

Students are met at the airport, taken to their residence or homestay and introduced. Small family-style residences ensure comfort and support; while there are general rules and expectations to all school residences, this first week gives students an opportunity to get to know their hosts and fellow students and to become familiar with their responsibilities. Details on residence life are found on page 8.

✓ **Health and health coverage**

Students are registered for health coverage as soon as they arrive at school. Their insurance card, claim forms and instructions usually arrive with 10 – 14 days. Those whose vaccinations are incomplete or out of date are provided with clear information on which vaccinations are needed. (Vaccination costs are not covered by most health insurance.) Students also receive information and directions for local clinics and physicians should they be needed.

✓ **Telephone and Internet**

Students will need a mobile phone and a laptop or electronic notebook. There are a number of telephone and internet services available in Ontario. We recommend you discuss costs and expectations around these expenses before departure, as some usage is expensive. School staff will assist in registration with a service provider if needed. Residences provide **basic** internet services, as does the school.

✓ **Banking**

Southern Ontario Collegiate ensures that a staff member assists students (and families if needed) in establishing a bank account(s) at a reliable nearby bank to facilitate transfers, savings and expenditures. We recommend you have an open conversation before departure about your expectations around student spending.

✓ **Maplewood Systems**

Students are registered in the Maplewood Student Information System during their first week at the school. Parents are issued an access code usually within 10-14 days. This enables parents to monitor attendance and marks when posted.

Getting to know the city

✓ **Transportation**

Students receive their first monthly bus pass, usable on all HSR (Hamilton Street Railway) vehicles. In addition, students learn where to find and how to use HSR timetables, maps and are able to use technology to plan travel between residence, school and other important destinations. Other transport options are identified.

✓ **Safety and Security**

Southern Ontario Collegiate arranges for representatives from the Hamilton Police Force Community Service Department to visit the school. Students benefit from this up to date information on community laws and expectations and how to protect themselves from theft and unnecessary risk. This positive interaction sets the stage for students' understanding and knowledge of their community.

✓ **Hamilton Public Library**

Located at the heart of the city, Southern Ontario Collegiate, is two minutes' walk from the Central branch of Hamilton Public Library, which offers a full range of learning and research resources, printing, and study facilities for student use. Library staff provide small group tours specifically designed for SOC students to ensure they are aware of its wide range resources and opportunities; school staff support the library membership process. HPL also offers special programs and opportunities for ESL learners.

Life at SOC

✓ **Uniforms**

Students receive their uniforms in the first week of the semester. They're expected to wear uniform throughout the school day.

✓ **Credits achieved and required**

School counsellors explain the diploma requirements with each student so that they fully understand the school and Ministry's expectations. Counsellors use student transcripts to identify potential transferrable credits

✓ **Individual Pathways Plan**

Counsellors and teachers help students develop their IPP which identifies their strengths, areas for development, skills and interests, education and career goals, their expectations and alternatives. Completing an IPP is a mandatory requirement for graduation.

Southern Ontario Collegiate – a key stage in your academic journey

Southern Ontario Collegiate offers young people opportunities that may not be found elsewhere: excellent teaching staff, strong counsellors, effective administration. Its small class size means that learners benefit from individual attention and an approach that reflects their learning needs and styles.

The Southern Ontario Collegiate team provides personal attention to students' achievements, education and career plans and support with university selection and application. Tutors and counsellors are on hand to support academic and practical needs and monitor progress. Our many years of building relationships with university and college leaders provides access to university recruitment and admission personnel.

Small family-style residences provide students with a safe and secure environment.

Hamilton is one of Ontario's centres for growth and development, and Southern Ontario Collegiate is at its heart. We look forward to answering your questions, and to helping build the next stage of your journey.

Attachments

