

Skills for Success Curriculum Resource Cover Page

Organization

College Sector Committee for Adult Upgrading (CSC)

Resource Title and Description (for Supporting Underrepresented Groups theme)

Supporting Military Members in Transition from Service to School: A Resource Guide for Literacy and Basic Skills/Academic Upgrading Educators

This guide will assist staff in a college academic upgrading environment to support current or previous Military members by first building their own (staff) knowledge and second, knowing the resources available to them and their clients/learners.

OALCF Alignment

Competency	Task Group	Level
Competency A -Find and Use Information	A1. Read continuous text	3
Competency A -Find and Use Information	A2. Interpret documents	2
Competency B - Communicate Ideas and Information	B2. Write continuous text	2
Competency B - Communicate Ideas and Information	B3. Complete and create documents	2
Competency E - Manage Learning	N/A	3

Goal Paths (check all that apply)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employment | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postsecondary |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Apprenticeship | <input type="checkbox"/> Independence |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Secondary School Credit | |

Embedded Skills for Success (check all that apply)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adaptability | <input type="checkbox"/> Numeracy |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Collaboration | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Problem Solving |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communication | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reading |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creativity and innovation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Writing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Digital | |

Notes:

Since this is a resource for educators, the OALCF does not apply in the same way as they do for learners. However, it should be noted that the use of talking circles is appropriate for learners at all OALCF levels.

The opinions expressed in this document are the opinions of the College Sector Committee for Adult Upgrading. The Government of Ontario and its agencies are in no way bound by any recommendations contained in this document.

Supporting Military Members From Service to School

A Guide for Academic Upgrading and Literacy and Basic Skills Staff



Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	5
Identity Exploration: Who Is the Military Learner?	6
Career Exploration During Military to Civilian Transition.....	8
Canadian Forces Ranks	9
Finding Canadian Resources	10
Experience into Opportunity: Finding the College Fit.....	10
Transition Timeline	10
Timeline for Exit.....	10
Medical Release Timeline.....	11
My Transition Guide: CAFTG	13
PLAR and Advanced Standing—Academic Advising for a Military Member	14
Colleges with Military Specific Programming Services	16
Military Connected Campus.....	20
Ontario Military Bases and the Colleges Near Them	20
Advocating for Success: How You Can Help.....	24
Supporting the Educational Planning.....	24
Letters of Diagnosis Request.....	24
Practical Knowledge.....	26
Key Language/Terms	26
Related Research and Studies	27
Resource List for Educators	29
References	35

Acknowledgements

Jessica Boldt, General Elective Coordinator, Algonquin College, Co-Author
Laura Julien, Co-op Officer, Algonquin College, Co-Author
Melanie Burton-Vardy, Academic Upgrading Program Coordinator, Co-Author
Lee Anne Johnston, Senior Instructional Designer, Contributor
Laura Hanek, Graphic Recorder and Illustrator, Swoop Media

Sincere appreciation to those who reviewed our document for clarity, accuracy, and usefulness of information:

Jane Wouda, Practitioner, Training and Learning Center of Renfrew County (LBS)
Janna Koopman, Employment Services Coordinator, Petawawa Military Family Resource Center
Shannon Sevigny, Counsellor, Algonquin College
Anonymous, CAF Veteran

A note on featured institutions:

This resource was created alongside two other resources that are aimed at individuals transitioning out of the Military. With that initial focus in mind, we selected examples from colleges that are located near Ontario Military Bases. Therefore, within this resource, those colleges were often the ones drawn upon for examples. Priority was also given to college webpages that easily displayed a visual of the learning we were trying to display when choosing screenshots. Given the short timeline of creation, Algonquin College resources are prominently featured based on writers' familiarity. No college was intentionally given privileged featuring, nor was any compensation involved in any college being included.

Supporting Military Members From Service to School

A Guide for Academic Upgrading and Literacy and Basic Skills Educators

Welcome to this guide for Literacy and Basic Skills/Academic Upgrading (LBS/AU) staff who are supporting learners transitioning from Military service, especially those Military personnel considering and preparing for college postsecondary studies after their Military service. As a writing team, we found this time was confusing and came with a large learning curve for Military members as well as those of us in colleges trying to support them. So, we created a resource for our learners and this guide to support you in your LBS/AU program delivery. During our writing experience, we focused on what would most help LBS/AU staff working in a college environment, but we expect parts of this guide will also be useful to staff in community-based or school board LBS programs, in Employment Services, and in college recruitment and admissions teams across the province.

Identity Exploration: Who Is the Military Learner?

Within the LBS/AU world, we serve learners from a range of backgrounds and with varying needs on a regular basis. Our Military learners are no different; they come to us with a unique set of needs and a timeline different than most.

Common characteristics include:

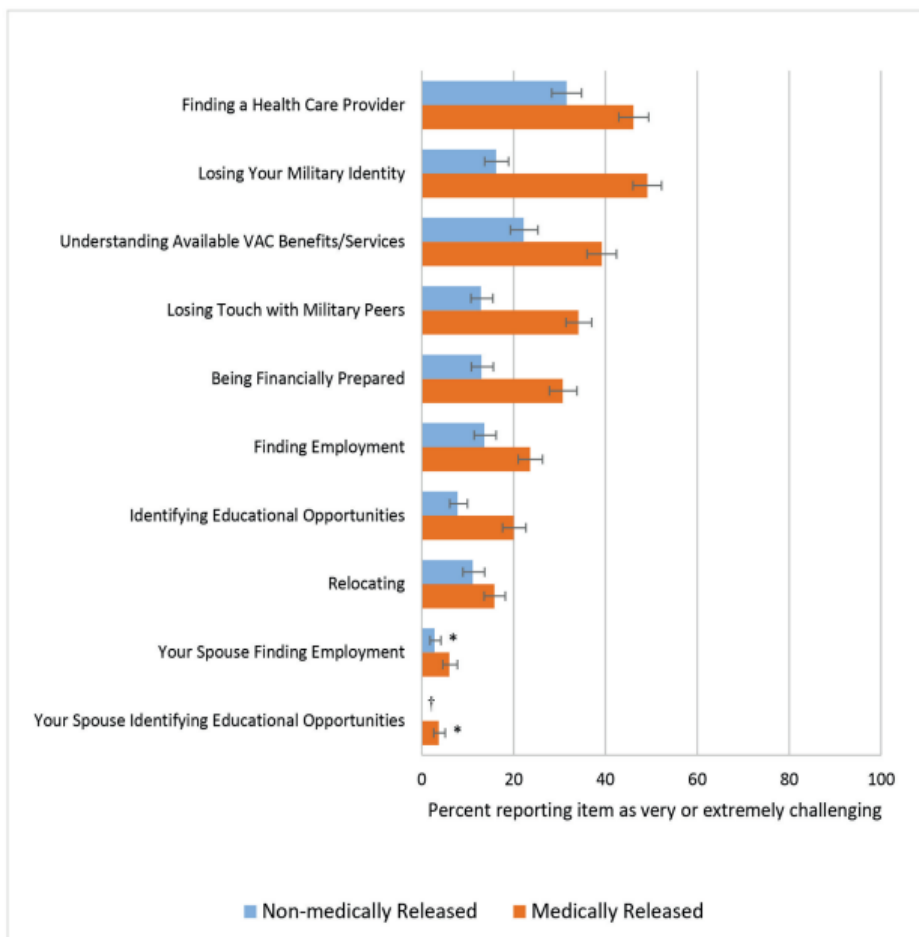
- Education level ranges from grade 10 to university.
- The majority of skills courses in the Military were heavily tactile or visual learning based.
- Priorities will include managing family life like other adult learners, but those transitioning out must also make career and housing decisions in short succession.
- Many who are currently reaching out to upgrade may not have enjoyed school originally and may have used the Military as a pathway to gain a career in an alternate way.
- The identity shift they are working through is significant and will take time and exploration which may feel stressful within the decision-making timelines they are working with during their transition.

An added identity layer to consider is the reason they are transitioning out of the Military. If they are leaving voluntarily, they will likely have had a lot more time to process and consider next steps, options and to make plans. Those who are exiting for medical

reasons still have a timeline of at least a year while paperwork is being processed, but the abrupt change of plans they had set for themselves can still leave them feeling untethered.

Figure 1 below from the research study, [Correlates of perceived military to civilian transition challenges among Canadian Armed Forces and Veterans](#) (Lee et al., 2020), presents a visual understanding of the main concerns of those in the process of transitioning out, and specifically accounts for those who found these tasks to be very or extremely challenging. You can see that “Finding Employment” and “Identifying Educational Opportunities” are found to be very or extremely challenging for around 30-40% of those transitioning out when combining both those Medically and Non-Medically released. Our intent is to provide service providers such as yourselves with the tools and understanding to make this transition easier.

Figure 1 Perceived post-military transition challenges by release type.



* Use with caution; coefficient of variation 16.6–33.3

† Too unreliable to report

(Lee et al., 2020, p. 3)

Career Exploration During Military to Civilian Transition

In our discussions with the local Military Family Resource Center (MFRC) Employment Services (ES), we learned transitioning members who access these provincially funded services are often faced with high levels of uncertainty about the future. The decision about what to do for the rest of their life can feel like a high pressure and urgent selection. In the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF), pathways for promotions and salary expectations are clearly laid out but in the world of civilian work, these expectations are not so clear. Transitioning members are often seeking civilian employment that offers similar job duties and salary range within the same geographical location where they are already located, but the local labour market often is unable to meet these expectations. We also learned that in general, transitioning members who do want to pursue postsecondary education have less flexibility to relocate to attend school.

There are a variety of vocational supports and programs available to transitioning members, both through the Canadian Armed Forces and Veterans Affairs Canada, as well as provincial employment programs that are funded for all residents of Ontario. Navigating these different supports and programs can often feel overwhelming but there are several support persons in a variety of roles to assist with every step of the process. Below is a chart highlighting some of the **first points of contact** for a transitioning member, with additional practitioner resources to assist you included at the end of this guide.

Table 1: First Points of Contact for Military Members

Title	Abbreviation & Links	Role
Commanding Officer	CO	The first point of contact for a transitioning member. Annex A in the My Transition Guide breaks down the duties and responsibilities of a CO relating to transition.
Canadian Armed Forces Transition Centre	CAF TC To find your closest TC, click here	TCs are integrated, one-stop centres that offer professional, personalized, and standardized transition services to all CAF members, Veterans, and their families.
Personnel Selection Officers	PSO To find your local PSO, click here .	Services include promoting welfare throughout Military career and to assist in transition to civilian life. To find out more about PSO's, click here .

Second Career Assistance Network	SCAN Second Career Assistance Network - Canada.ca	SCAN seminars are offered either in person or online and provide a broad range of information on major transition topics, including medically releasing members.
Veteran's Affairs Canada: My VAC account	VA, My VAC https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/e_services What is My VAC Account?	My VAC account is a secure and simple way to access benefits and services from Veteran's Affairs Canada.
Military Family Resource Centres	MFRC https://cfmws.ca/ To find a local MFRC, click the link above and choose "Select Your Community"	MFRC's are essentially the "hub" of the Military community. They are located on all bases and wings across the country and offer support to Military members and their families by connecting them with a wide range of relevant programs and services.

Canadian Forces Ranks

Ranks in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) indicate a person's position in the organization. A thorough breakdown of ranks in the Canadian Navy, Army, and Air Force is available online to help you understand this complicated hierarchical structure. The Canadian Government breaks down Ranks and Appointments here:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/defence/caf/military-identity-system/rank-appointment-insignia.html>

When supporting a transitioning member, it is important to understand rank and appointment, as it can provide some clues to the identity, experience, and education of a member. Rank reflects a level of ability, capability, experience, and knowledge. In addition to ranks, members are further categorized between Commissioned Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers/Members of the CAF. We will explore this topic further in [Academic Advising](#) for a Military Member.

"It is important to understand the special relationship that exists between officers and non-commissioned members. Although, officers are higher in the rank structure than non-commissioned members, experienced non-commissioned members play a vital role in the development and training of young officers, and often act as advisors and disciplinarians" (Government of Canada, 2021).

What is a Non-Commissioned Member? A non-commissioned member (NCM) is any person, other than an officer, who is enrolled in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF). NCM are soldiers, sailors, and aviators. They are the skilled experts whose hands-on experience and trade specialties are required to conduct all CAF operations domestically and abroad. As they gain leadership experience and go up in rank, they become part of the command team.

Finding Canadian Resources

When searching for relevant and local resources, using some of the search terms below will help to ensure you are locating Canadian resources.

Common search terms we have had success with include:

CAF	Canadian Armed Forces
DND	Department of National Defence
CM/NCM	Commissioned Member/Non-Commissioned Member

More information can be found in the [Key Language and Terms](#) section.

Experience into Opportunity: Finding the College Fit

Transition Timeline

Members who are in the process of exiting will each have a timeline unique to them based on their needs, but it still follows the general structure outlined below. What is important for you as a practitioner to consider is the abrupt change in lifestyle and time management that comes alongside the transition process. Within the Military, members were fully supported with most of their time-based decisions, and they have deeply practiced specific routines that may not fit the same in the civilian world. They will be choosing their own clothing, cooking more at home, making considerations for travel time, and choosing how to fill their own day. Depending on the length of time in service and their lifestyle (family or single as an example) their level of personal practice with these skills may vary greatly. The *Student Guide* resource provides directions to the student to ease this experience, but you may notice a particular level of stress in their final month in service when the highest number of appointments happen.

Timeline for Exit

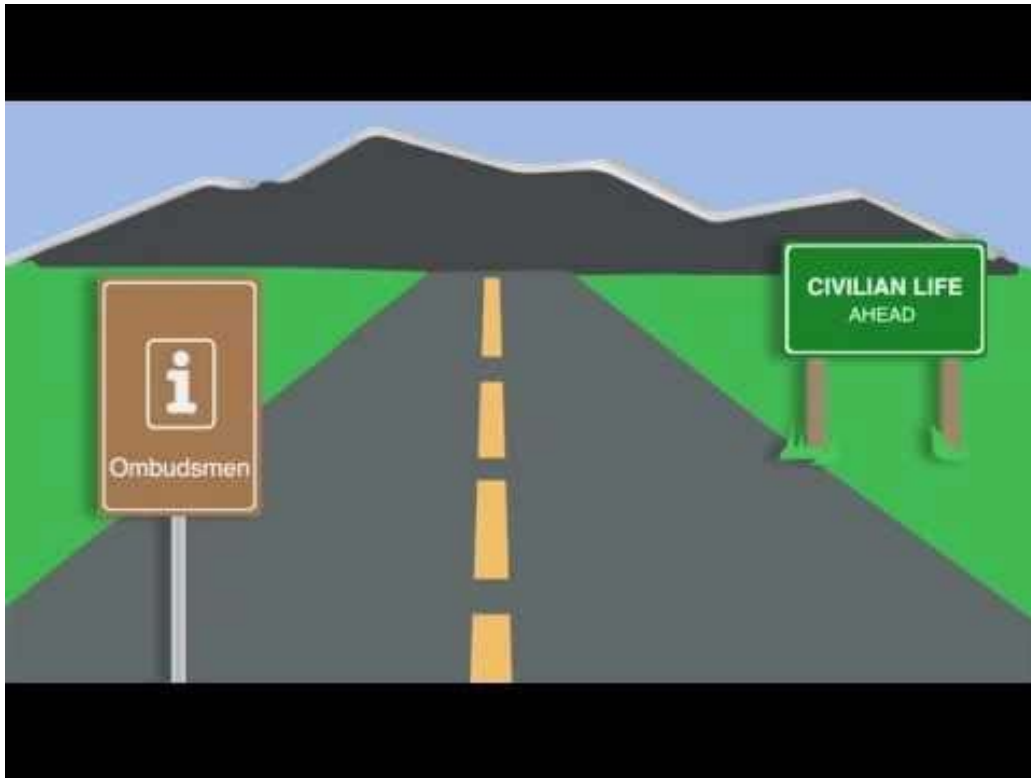
The transition out of the Military can look different for students depending on if they are voluntary releasing or medically releasing.

Medical Release Timeline

The National Defence Ombudsman provides the video below as a starting point.

Making the Transition to Civilian Life

(Click [here](#) or the image below to play | 2 minutes)



(National Defence and Canadian Forces Ombudsman, 2015).

An expanded chart like the one below is included in the student module and includes recommendations of what exploration opportunities a student can take advantage of, depending on the stage they are in.

	Phase	Timeline
ONE	After you are injured/ill but before the Director of Military Careers Administration makes the decision that you will be medically released.	This phase usually takes a minimum of six months and averages two years.
TWO	The time period between the medical release decision and your release date.	This phase varies depending on individual circumstances and can last between six months and three years.
THREE	This is the post-release period that for some is an adjustment period.	This phase begins at the time of your release and can continue for a few years after.

Adapted from: National Defence and Canadian Forces Ombudsman (2015).

For a more in-depth chart and frequently asked questions related to medical release, visit this resource: <https://www.canada.ca/en/ombudsman-national-defence-forces/education-information/caf-members/career/release-transition-civilian/phases-medical-release.html>.

Military to Civilian Transition Period

“The transition period” is a period of six months prior to release date issued by the Director of Military Careers and Administration (DMCA). The DMCA will also issue an advisory message, disclosure package, and release message at that time.

The purpose of the six-month **Transition Period** is to allow serving members to continue normal Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) duties alongside preliminary administration, training, and accessing programs and service in preparation for transition. The final month prior to release is a **Protected Period** also known as a decompression period, a mandated 30 calendar days immediately preceding the release date. During this Transition Period, a serving member may be able to access programs and support to assist in their post-release career decisions.

The graphic below shows the six-month transition period and a 30-day protected period. This figure shows the information about notification of intent to release, when a serving member needs to develop their personalized transition plan, and recommended tasks to complete during the 6-month period and the transition protection period.

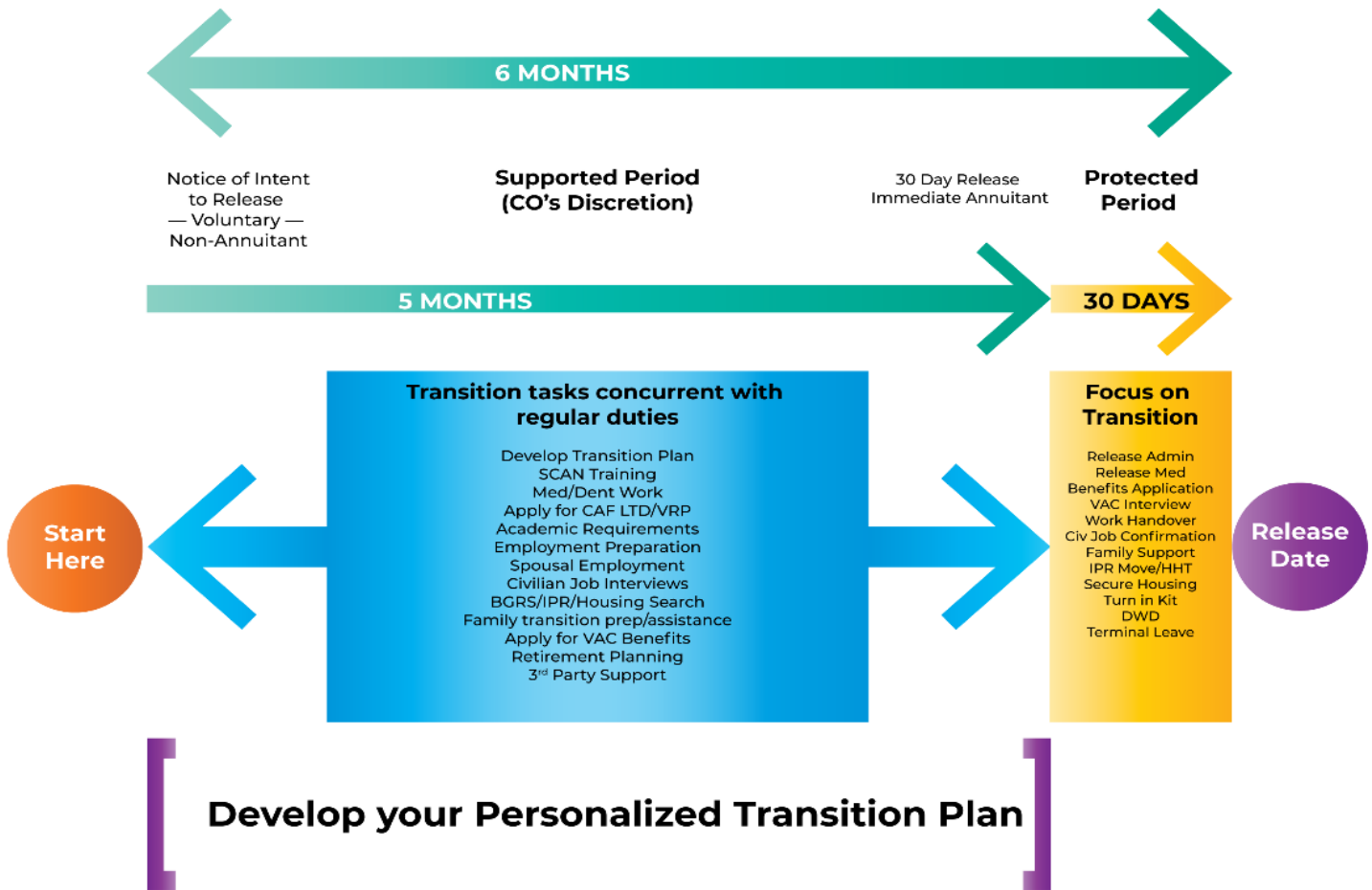


Figure 2 Recommended period of transition (Veterans Affairs Canada, n.d.)

My Transition Guide: CAFTG

The Canadian Armed Forces Transition Group (CAFTG) was created in December 2018 and nine regional Transition Units (TU) replaced the existing Joint Personnel Service Units (JPSU). Locally, 32 Transition Centres (TC) replaced the Integrated Personnel Support Centre (IPSC). These newly formed Transition Centres (TC) provide support to enable seamless transition and enhanced well-being with special attention to ill and injured personnel.

Transition Centres are closely connected with key partners including Transition Advisors and Service Coordinators, Veterans Affairs Canada Service Agents and Family Liaison Officers. You can search for a Transition Centre using this helpful online tool: [Locate your closest Transition Centre | Canadian Armed Forces \(CAF\) Transition Group | Digital Transition Centre \(canada.ca\)](#).

The Canadian Armed Forces Transition Group (CAFTG) has published a resource guide, most recently updated in 2020, to assist transitioning members and their families to navigate the full transition process. This guide is an incredibly valuable resource to transitioning members and their families, as well as service providers who provide support before, during, and after transition. The guide makes it clear that transition is a process of change and provides information about expectations, timelines, resources, and planning for success.

As of April 1, 2019, all transitioning members will follow an initial transition process, working with the Unit Commanding Officer (CO) and should receive a copy of the CAF, “My Transition Guide—Transitioning from Military to Civilian Life”. You can access an online PDF version of the guide [here](#).

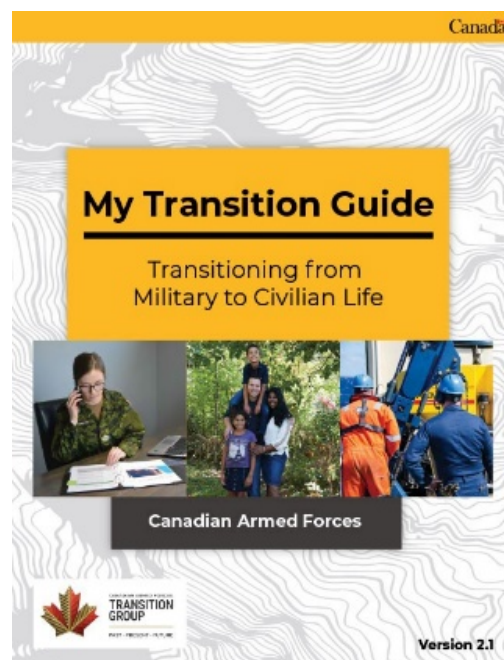


Figure 3 My Transition Guide
(Canadian Armed Forces Transition Group, 2020)

“The Transition Guide is built on the foundation of these ‘domains of well-being’; its purpose is to get transitioning members and their families thinking about these domains, assessing where they are currently at in their lives across this spectrum, and enabling them to build a transition plan for success....to ensure that transitioning members and their families have all the material they need at their fingertips.”—Colonel Kevin Cameron, Director Transition Services and Policy (Canadian Military Family Magazine, 2021).

PLAR and Advanced Standing—Academic Advising for a Military Member

What is PLAR? PLAR (Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition) allows students to receive course credits for non-academic life experience such as employment, community work, independent study, on-the-job training, volunteering, or travel and leisure. Students transitioning out of the Military are excellent PLAR candidates, particularly [Non-Commissioned Members](#) whose experience typically comes more from on-the-job training than formal postsecondary education. The PLAR process involves a formal assessment, with the students’ results appearing on their transcript using the same grading scheme as the course (e.g., A to F letter grade; Pass/Fail).

To begin the PLAR process, advise students to connect with PLAR Coordinator, Academic Advisor, Program Coordinator, or Success Specialist at your college, as applicable (Academic Development, 2020).

Please note that confirmation of a student's eligibility to PLAR a course does not guarantee that the student will be successful in obtaining the credit; it merely confirms that there are reasonable grounds for the student to challenge the course. Their experience will need to be validated by completing an assessment (e.g., portfolio, exam, or reviewing their Member's Personnel Record Resume (MPRR)) to validate experience (Academic Development, 2020).

Is there a PLAR application deadline? It will vary depending on the postsecondary institution, but students are strongly encouraged to initiate the PLAR process within the first three weeks of the semester. Applying later in the semester may pose a risk to students' ability to progress as expected in their program of study, as PLAR submissions may not be graded in time for the student to receive credit for the course (Algonquin College, 2019).

For more information about PLAR at a specific postsecondary institution, refer to the chart below '[Colleges with Military specific programming services](#)'.

Credit Transfer/Advanced Standing

Applicants can apply for an exemption from individual courses in their program or from a general elective if they have previously taken a postsecondary course with similar learning outcomes. This is also known as applying for a credit transfer.

To apply, students will typically need:

- Detailed course syllabuses (brief course descriptions are not sufficient) for the basis course(s).
- An official postsecondary transcript from the basis institution.
- Payment for each external exemption request (this is dependent on specific college policy).

Adapted from: Algonquin College (n.d.)

In relation to Military Members, this process will be more often applicable to [Officers](#) who have completed postsecondary schooling prior to Military entry or during their service.

Colleges with Military Specific Programming Services

The table below lists programs and services to support Military members at Ontario's public colleges (current as of March 2023).

Table 2: Colleges and Military Specific Programming/Services

College Name	Name of Program/Service (if Applicable)	Details/Related Documents
<p><u>Algonquin College</u></p>	<p><u>Military Arts and Science</u> Is an online Ontario College Program.</p> <p><u>General Arts and Science Defence and Security</u> Is a one-year Ontario College Certificate program.</p> <p><u>Non-Commissioned Member Subsidized Education Plan</u> Is a subsidized education plan for Non-Commissioned Members (NCMs) which pays for all student education and training costs while they are attending school and guarantees a job upon graduation.</p> <p><u>Military Families Fund – Sens Foundation Bursary</u> The Military Families Fund supports students in full-time diploma programs at all three Algonquin College campuses. Special consideration will be given to Military or family members who are attending Algonquin College and demonstrate financial need.</p> <p><u>Project Hero</u> Provides free tuition to the children of Canadian military members who are killed in active service.</p>	<p><u>Credit for Military Training</u> – this page contains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>How to Gain Credit Recognition</u> • <u>Frequently Asked Questions and Answers</u> • Academic Credit Recognition Application Form (BMQ) – <u>Application Form</u>
<p><u>Canadore College</u></p>	<p><u>Military Members and Their Families - Free Application to Canadore College</u> Support is available to current Military members or former Military members and their family members. Canadore College</p>	<p>Contact Canadore College's Pathway Officer for more information.</p>

College Name	Name of Program/Service (if Applicable)	Details/Related Documents
	<p>assists with everything from application to transferring credits and assessing work experience. Once program eligibility requirements are met and Admissions receives proof of Military association such as Military ID for the associated family member(s), students will then be able to complete the internal application free of charge. Students will also be able to apply for credit transfers free of charge.</p>	<p>Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) Student Guide</p> <p>Transfer & Pathway Guide</p> <p>Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy</p>
<p>Durham College</p>	<p>*</p>	<p>Prior learning assessment and recognition (PLAR)</p> <p>PLAR Policy</p> <p>PLAR FAQs</p>
<p>Fleming College</p>	<p>*</p>	<p>Skills on Demand - Work and Academic Upgrading</p> <p>Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)</p>
<p>Georgian College</p>	<p>Military-connected College Georgian College is a Military-Connected College that is committed to providing Military-connected learners (including those currently serving, veterans and their family members) with support during their college education, coupled with funding, academic, social, and mental health supports to thrive and succeed.</p>	<p>Credit for Prior Learning</p> <p>PLAR Policy</p>
<p>La Cité</p>	<p>General Arts and Sciences Program - One Year La Cité offers a General Arts & Science program exclusively for non-commissioned members, current or retired. The program has fifteen courses. However, people who have completed the</p>	<p>To register, candidates are asked to contact the College by email at formationcontinue@collegelacite.ca</p>

College Name	Name of Program/Service (if Applicable)	Details/Related Documents
	<p>Basic Military Qualification–BMQ program and who have two years of experience in the Canadian Armed Forces are credited with 9 courses. Therefore, they must pass only the following six courses offered online by La Cité:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • French writing: grammar and text comprehension • Introduction to Excel • Introduction to Power Point • Introduction to Word • Government of Canada • English II <p>It is possible to start the program at any time. Graduates of this program will be awarded the General Arts and Sciences Program diploma (1 year).</p> <p>For graduates interested in enrolling in other College programs, certain course equivalences may also be recognized.</p>	<p>Prior learning assessment and recognition (PLAR)</p>
<p><u>Loyalist College</u></p>	<p><u>A Military-Connected Campus</u></p> <p>As a Military-Connected Campus, Loyalist College provides specialized academic and social programming to support Military-connected students’ success, including community networking opportunities, recognition for co-curricular training, and leadership development. Programs and services will be developed with an understanding of the distinct set of life experiences which service members, Veterans, and their families possess.</p> <p><u>Helmets to Hardhats</u></p> <p>Military-Connected Student in Trades Pilot Project (MCSTPP) initiative aims to explore the development of a learning-to-employment pathway for Military-</p>	<p>Prior Learning and Assessment</p> <p>Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)</p> <p>Student’s Guide</p> <p>Portfolio Assembly Guidelines</p>

College Name	Name of Program/Service (if Applicable)	Details/Related Documents
	connected students entering the construction industry in Ontario.	
Mohawk College	*	Prior Learning Assessment & Recognition Prior Learning Assessment & Recognition (PLAR) Policy
St. Lawrence	*	Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition

*Denotes that there was no specific information available on their website.

Colleges with an interest in increasing service to Military members should consider their credit transfer and PLAR systems to be inclusive of Military experience. As noted in the [Academic Advising](#) section, the needs will be different for an Officer vs. a Non-Commissioned Member (NCM). Within the PLAR system, work will need to be done to recognize the experience of the Military member and to match that experience to college level courses. The credit transfer system is usually a smoother process and follows common college practice, however the barrier of French-first schooling and transcripts at the postsecondary level, even within Canada, should be considered by the college institution wanting to better serve Military members.

If you are providing service to those with French language transcripts, consider:

- College admissions staff should feel confident assessing common pre-requisite courses in both official languages.
- Students requesting course outlines for PLAR, or credit transfer purposes should be guided to request them in the language of the institution they are applying to.
- Program Coordinators and Chairs should be aware of this barrier and provide additional time, resources, and support to the student to assist in the process.

Military Connected Campus

The Military Connected Campus (MCC) is a designation held by a few Ontario Colleges. This article shares the intention behind the original MCC originally piloted by Fanshawe College in 2020: <https://globalnews.ca/news/7451471/fanshawe-college-military-connected-campus/>.



Georgian College and Loyalist College have followed suit and as you see in the table above, have explained their MCC status on their website. The image below shows the interconnected support at an MCC. For more information, visit Release Point Education who have helped colleges with this framework: <https://releasepointeducation.ca/>

*The MCC is planning to expand, as noted in this article:

<https://educationnewscanada.com/article/education/level/university/1/1006422/b-launch-of-the-canadian-military-veteran-and-family-connected-campus-consortium.html>

Ontario Military Bases and the Colleges Near Them

Part of understanding the transition to postsecondary is understanding the language used by institutions when talking about their support services. Below is a chart indicating the major Ontario Bases, the colleges (public or private) that are geographically near them, and the wording that college uses for their Accessibility Services and Indigenous Services.

Table 3: Ontario’s Military Bases and Colleges in Proximity

Base	College/ University	Name of Accessibility Office	Name of Accommodation Documentation	Name of Indigenous Support
Canadian Forces Station Leitrim (Ottawa)	Collège La Cité	*	*	Indigenous Student Centre and visiting Elders
	Algonquin College	Student Support Services & Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL) Contact: Disabilities Counsellor	Letter of Accommodation (LOA)	Mamidosewin Centre and Indigenous Counsellor
CFB Borden (Barrie)	Fleming College	Counselling & Accessible Education Services Contact: Accessibility Counsellor	Letter of Accommodation	Fleming Indigenous Student Services and Elders
	Georgian College	Accessibility Services Contact: Accessibility Advisors	Letter of Accommodation	Indigenous Resource Centre, visiting Elders, Peer Mentors, and Student Counsellors/ Advisors
CFB Kingston (Kingston)	St. Lawrence	Student Wellness & Accessibility Services Contact: Counsellor/ Accessibility Advisor	Accommodation Letter	Indigenous Centre, Student Advisor, Knowledge Keeper, and Counsellor

Base	College/ University	Name of Accessibility Office	Name of Accommodation Documentation	Name of Indigenous Support
CFB North Bay (North Bay)	Canadore College	Student Success Services Contact: Accessible Learning Services	Accommodations Student Success Profile (SSP)	First Peoples' Centre (FPC) – Elders, Cultural Advisors, and Canadore Aboriginal Students Association
	CTS Canadian Career College	*	*	*
	Native Education & Training College	*	*	*
CFB Trenton (Belleville)	Durham College	Access & Support Centre (ACS) Contact: Accessibility Coach	Access Plan	*
	Loyalist College	Student Success & AccessAbility Centre Contact: AccessAbility Service Team		Indigenous Resource Centre
Garrison Petawawa-4 th Canadian Division Support Base (Petawawa)	Algonquin College-Pembroke Campus	Student Support Services & Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL) Contact: Disabilities Counsellor	Letter of Accommodation (LOA)	Elder and Kampus Kokum
Off-site Work	Mohawk College	Accessible Learning Services	Accommodation Letter	Indigenous Student Services

Base	College/ University	Name of Accessibility Office	Name of Accommodation Documentation	Name of Indigenous Support
Location (Hamilton)		Contact: Accessibility Counsellor		

*Indicates information not available on the website at the time of publishing.

As you can see in the visual below, Ontario hosts a high number of Military learners:

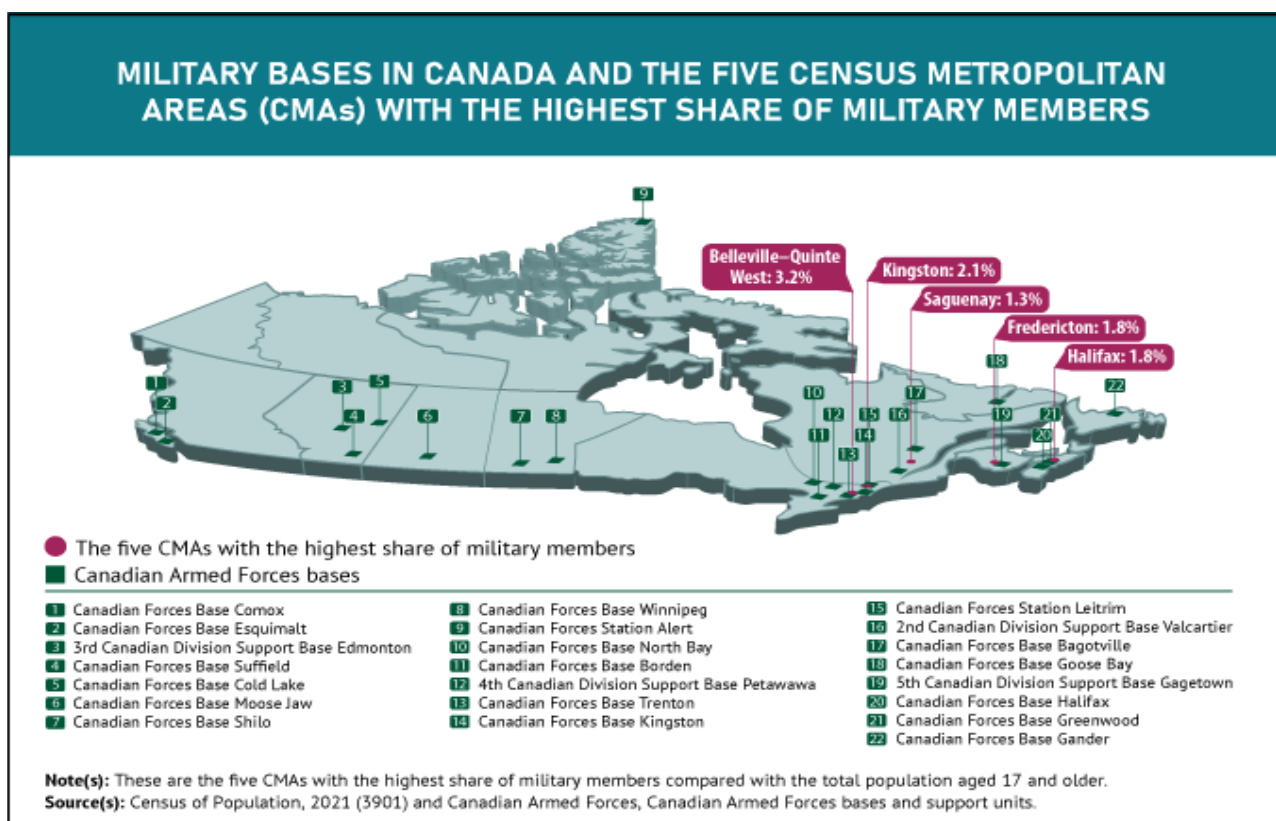


Figure 5 Military bases in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2022)

Advocating for Success: How You Can Help

Supporting the Educational Planning

If the student is applying for funding through Veterans Affairs, **Education and Training Benefit**, they will need to submit their education plan through their My VAC account. This education plan is very specific. It requests a semester-by-semester plan of start and end dates, number of courses and costs. This is straight forward if the student desires a full-time program that is clearly outlined on the college website of choice. However, if you notice a need or desire for part-time studies, an alternative plan may need to be requested from the Program Coordinator of the student's desired program.

If the student would like to (or needs to) pursue part-time studies, they should confirm the approval with the Education and Training Benefit Unit or clarify any questions by sending a message through their My VAC account. Veterans Affairs strongly prefers the My VAC account for the security and confidentiality it provides. Alternatively, if the student wants your support with the conversation, you could call the toll-free number at 1-866-522-2122 together on speaker or review other contact options here:

<https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/contact>.

If the students is working with the **Rehabilitation Services** through VAC, they may have limitations on their education allowances similar to the limitations for Employment Insurance benefits. A Case Manager should give the "all clear" for a student to pursue Academic Upgrading (AU) while they are in the Rehabilitation part of the program. Note that for academic planning purposes, they will not be able to access the Education and Training Benefit that would allow the pursual of postsecondary education until they are finished their Rehabilitation cycle and deemed ready for the next step: postsecondary or employment. Again, the student should confirm through the messaging option on their My VAC account, and/or you can support the conversation with the contacts above.

Letters of Diagnosis Request

Often within the Military, any possible diagnosis was suppressed in order to maintain job status and full range of duties. Building rapport with your client is necessary to facilitate a conversation around the need for additional support. If your client is struggling to understand what their needs are and would like help with getting them recognized, psychometric testing is an option that can be pursued.

Below is a template for requesting a psychometric assessment that can be adapted to fit the needs of your student. Bolded sections may need to be adjusted to match your student, and of course all wording is flexible. It is crucial to note that this letter must be focused on issues that the student feels may stem from their work in the Military.

Students then use their My VAC Account to submit their letter. Although there is no guarantee, it supports the students' need for additional assessment and if begun while in AU, there is increased likelihood it can be ready for when they begin their postsecondary journey.

Secondarily, a Military transitioning student can still apply for OSAP and identify as a student with a suspected disability to access funding to pursue assessment testing. The difficulty with this is mainly timing, as students do not receive that funding until near the beginning of the school year and then they still have to get on the list for testing.

Example Letter:

[Date]

To whom it may concern:

*Re: Assessment Recommendation for **Student***

Student #: _____

***Student Name** has been connected to the Academic Upgrading program for _____, working towards a goal of **postsecondary readiness**.*

*During **her/his/their** time here, **she/he/they** has been exploring **her/his/their** strengths and difficulties as a learner and is noticing patterns of difficulties that are holding **her/him/them** back from **her/his/their** learning potential.*

***Her/his/their** professors concur with the difficulties they are expressing and feel that there would be benefit for **her/him/them** to receive in-class accommodations to support **her/his/their** learning. **She/he/they are/is** a diligent student with strong marks for whom certain aspects of learning prove difficult.*

*With this feedback in mind, as **her Academic Advisor**, I have recommended to **student name she/he/they** seek out a professional assessment of **her/his/their** learning abilities in the form of psychometric assessment or the like.*

*It is our hope that Veterans Affairs can support this recommendation as I truly feel **she/he/they** have great opportunities for future schooling accomplishments ahead of **her/him/them**, if the right supports are put in place.*

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

[Name, title and contact Information]

Practical Knowledge

Key Language/Terms

The Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) uses abbreviations and acronyms to save time and space in communications, but it can be hard to decipher for civilians. We have included a sampling of commonly used acronyms we have found during the creation of this resource, but this is not an exhaustive list. The CAF [My Transition Guide](#) offers a more detailed [Glossary of Acronyms](#) and you can download the full official National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces Manual of Abbreviations [here](#).

Table 4: Canadian Armed Forces – Common Acronyms

Abbreviation/ Acronym	
CAF	Canadian Armed Forces
CAF TG/TU/TC	Canadian Armed Forces Transition Group/Unit/Centre. Transition Centres will be one of the main sources of initial support for transitioning members.
CO	Commanding Officer is an Officer in command of a base or unit. In civilian terms, it would be the equivalent of a boss or a supervisor.
MEL	Medical Employment Limitation, provided to the Military Member as part of their exit process.
DMCA	Director of Military Careers and Administration
CAF LTD	Canadian Armed Forces Long Term Disability plan
MPPRR	Member's Personnel Record Resume is a detailed record of Canadian Armed Forces training, education, and confirmation of experience.
VAC	Veterans Affairs Canada
VRP	Vocational Rehabilitation Program

Related Research and Studies

Although the following reports are not specific to transition to higher education, they are inclusive of it. The abstracts have been included, but you can click in the hyperlinked title to read the full study.

[Correlates of perceived Military to civilian transition challenges among Canadian Armed Forces Veterans](#) (Lee, Jennifer E.C., Dursun, Sanela, Skomorovsky, Alla, Thompson, James M., 2020)

Abstract: Analyses of the Canadian Armed Forces Transition and Well-Being Survey (CAFTWS) were conducted to identify the most prominent challenges faced by Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) Veterans during their military to civilian transition, and to assess the importance of various characteristics, including release category and health status, as risk factors for experiencing such challenges. Methods: Prevalence estimates and logistic regression analyses were computed on data from the CAFTWS, which was administered in 2017 to 1,414 Regular Force Veterans released from the CAF in the previous year. Results: Two of seven perceived transition challenges had the strongest associations with difficult post-military adjustment: the loss of military identity (adjusted odds ratio [AOR] = 5.4) and financial preparedness (AOR = 2.3). In adjusted regression analyses, Veterans who had non-commissioned rank, who had primarily served in the army, had 10–19 years of service, had a medical release, and had poor physical or mental health, were more likely to report loss of military identity. Veterans who had junior non-commissioned rank, a medical release, and poor physical or mental health were more likely to report challenges with financial preparedness. Furthermore, we observed significant interaction effects between Veterans' release type and their health status. Discussion: This study extends prior research to inform ongoing efforts to support the well-being of CAF members adjusting to post-service life. Findings emphasize the importance of preparing transitioning service members and civilian communities for the social identity challenges they may encounter. Findings also support the value of programs and services that help prepare transitioning service members with managing finances, finding education and employment, relocating, finding health care providers, and understanding benefits and services.

[Veterans' Identities and Well-being in Transition to Civilian Life – A Resource for Policy Analysts, Program Designers, Service Providers and Researchers](#) (Thompson JM, Lockhart W, Roach MB, Atuel H, Bélanger S, Black T, Castro CA, Cox D, Cooper A, de Boer C, Dentry S, Hamner K, Shields D, Truusa, TT. Veterans' Identities and Well-being in Transition to Civilian Life—A Resource for Policy Analysts, Program Designers, Service Providers and Researchers. Report of the Veterans' Identities Research Theme Working Group, Canadian Institute for Military and Veteran Health Research Forum 2016. Charlottetown PE: Research Directorate, Veterans Affairs Canada. Research Directorate Technical Report. 01 June 2017.)

Abstract: Transition from military life to civilian life is challenging for all military personnel to some degree. Although most do well, the changes are quite difficult for some. In the wake of the Second World War, researchers began to understand the importance of “identity” in transitioning successfully to civilian life from military service. Since then, researchers have been working hard to understand what happens to serving members’ sense of who and what they are and how they relate to society after they leave the military. The goal of their work is to support the well-being of Veterans (former military members) and their families.

[Transitioning from Military to Civilian Life: Examining the Final Step in a Military Career](#) (Blackburn, D., 2016, Canadian Military Journal, Vol. 16, No. 4)

Abstract: Despite the amount of identity research which has been conducted over the past century, few studies looked at Veteran identity. Because identity challenges can explain the distress people feel during major life transitions, Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) engaged in research to understand military identity to order to inform Departmental programs and supports for Veterans and families as they move from military to civilian life.

[Examining the Profiles and Pathways of Military Veterans in Ontario](#) (Algonquin College of Applied Arts and Technology, Loyalist College of Applied Arts and Technology)

Abstract: In April 2018, the Canadian government released the Education and Training Benefit aimed at helping veterans achieve their education and career goals after they have transitioned out of active service. This benefit means that veterans could be eligible for up to \$80,000 in funding to further their education journey or start a new educational journey. Postsecondary institutions can expect to see a significant increase in their veteran student population who access this funding, but to date, little is known about this population. There is very little information about the characteristics of these learners, what pathways they are currently seeking and what barriers they might be facing when accessing transfer pathways. This project intended to involve a comparative analysis to see how institutions in Ontario can better support this population who are seeking transfer pathways, either directly from their military training or between postsecondary institutions.

Resource List for Educators

Below is a list of organizations that may be helpful in supporting the needs of Military members who are transitioning into further education and/or into the civilian workforce.

Table 5: Resource Organizations for Educators Support Military Members

Tool	Description	Link to Website
Canadian Armed Forces Vocational Rehabilitation Program (CAF VRP)	A needs-based program that is only available to medically releasing members.	https://cfmws.ca/insurance-finance/insurance/disability-insurance/vocational-rehabilitation-program
Coding for Veterans	Coding for Veterans provides retraining and reskilling for careers in software development and cyber security.	https://www.codingforveterans.com/
Eastern Workforce Innovation Board (EWIB)	The EWIB Labour Market Information (LMI) Help Desk is an on-demand LMI service to answer questions pertaining to local labour market inquiries. EWIB also offers a Job Board and a Job Map, localized to the counties of Frontenac, Leeds and Grenville, and Loyalist Township. This board also presents Career Videos, which allow you to explore industries and career pathways within the Eastern Ontario workforce. It includes the Agriculture, Construction, Manufacturing and Marine industries.	https://www.workforcedev.ca/LMI Help Desk – Eastern Workforce Innovation Board (workforcedev.ca) Career Videos – Eastern Workforce Innovation Board (workforcedev.ca)
Edge Factor	Edge Factor’s smart platform and story-driven tools inspire people to explore, prepare and connect on their career journey. Videos and toolkits related to different careers, industries, skills, and education are all available on the site.	https://edgefactor.com/ontario https://edgefactor.com/renfrewlanarkON
Equivalency Tool	The (CAFTG) has developed an online tool that assists in translating Military occupations into the equivalent civilian	MNET - MOSID/NOC Equivalency Tool (forces.gc.ca)

Tool	Description	Link to Website
	<p>occupation. The Military Occupational Structure Identification Code (MOSID)/National Occupational Code (NOC) Equivalency Tool (MNET). It is both a “Military to Civilian” and “Civilian to Military” job translator.</p>	
<p>Family Liaison Officer (FLO)</p>	<p>The FLO is a social worker who provides support to the families of ill/injured CAF members and can also provide support during the transition from Military to civilian life.</p>	<p>The FLO is accessible through your local MF</p>
<p>Helmets to Hardhats</p>	<p>A non-profit program that provides opportunities in the unionized construction industry for serving, transitioning and former Military members.</p>	<p>https://www.helmetstohardhats.ca/en/military.htm</p>
<p>My Skills and Education Translator (MySET)</p>	<p>The aim of MySET is to assist CAF members in career transition by providing a centralized resource that can be used to identify which Post-Secondary Institutions (PSI) recognize prior learning (RPL) for Military skills and education. It provides credit/recognition for Military training and experience.</p>	<p>YSET – My Skills & Education Translator</p>
<p>My Transition Guide</p>	<p>Published by CAFTG, the aim of the transition guide is to assist transitioning members and their families understand transition and support planning for life after service.</p>	<p>My Transition Guide - Canada.ca</p>
<p>Seamless Transition Roadmap</p>	<p>This roadmap highlights the many actions of Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) and the Department of National Defence (DND) to improve the transition experience for serving members, Veterans, and their families.</p>	<p>CAF-VAC Roadmap - Veterans Affairs Canada</p>

Tool	Description	Link to Website
Second Career Assistance Network (SCAN)	SCAN seminars are offered either in person or online and provide a broad range of information on major transition topics, including medically releasing members.	Second Career Assistance Network - Canada.ca
Shaping Purpose Veterans Edition	Shaping Purpose is a program that can help identify core gifts, passions, and values. This clarity can help with the transition to civilian life. Anyone who is in the process of being released from the CAF or released in the last 3 years can participate in a free session!	https://shapingpurpose.com/veterans/
Skill Plan	'How do your skills Measure Up?' provides instructors and learners with an easy-to-use web-based resource to test, practice and explore three of the Essential Skills needed in all types of occupations: reading text, document use, and numeracy. Printing is recommended for this valuable tool that will allow you to assess existing skill sets. The tool contains sections to test your work-related skills, practice, and explore careers. There are also printable workbooks that focus on specific occupations in the Construction, Tourism and Trucking industries.	http://www.skillplan.ca/measure-up/
Soldier 2 Leader	Veteran to Soldier Mentorship Program, helping transitioning soldiers be paired with a Veteran who desires to be in the career they are established in.	http://www.sol2lead.ca/about-us/
Soldier On	Soldier On is a CAF program that supports ill and injured members and Veterans using sport and physical	Home - Soldier On

Tool	Description	Link to Website
	recreation activities in supporting an active lifestyle.	
The Labour Market Group of Renfrew & Lanark	The Job Demand Report highlights monthly data regarding job postings including regional stats, top industries, and salary ranges across both Renfrew and Lanark counties. The Job Search Report is also updated monthly with data about current job seekers. In the Sector Library section, you can drill down based on industry, including current job postings and regional companies tagged in these industries (i.e. Manufacturing). This may be a good resource for networking and contacting potential employers for students, fairs, workshops, etc.	https://jobs.labourmarketgroup.ca/job-demand-report/ https://jobs.labourmarketgroup.ca/job-search-report/ https://jobs.labourmarketgroup.ca/sector-library/
The Veteran Family Program	The Veteran Family program offers trained coordinators who can help develop a family care plan and identify resources available for medically releasing members and their families.	https://www.veterans.gc.ca/en/g/family-caregiver/education-and-jobs/veteran-family-program https://cfmws.ca/support-services/releasing/veteran-family-program
Transition Resource Directory	The Transition Guide breaks down six Domains of Well-being: Purpose, Finances, Health, Life Skills, Social Interaction and Housing/Physical Environment. This directory further breaks down available support in each of these areas.	Access a transition resource directory Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) Transition Group Digital Transition Centre (canada.ca)
True Patriot Love	True Patriot Love is Canada's foundation for the Military community. The Local Community Fund provides grants ranging from \$5,000-\$50,000 to enhance service/program delivery, capacity building and systems change	https://truepatriotlove.com/ https://truepatriotlove.com/granting-and-programs/true-patriot-love-local-community-fund/

Tool	Description	Link to Website
	that directly support and enhance the lives of serving members, Veterans, and their families. This includes camps for Military children and programs that support Veteran transition and employment.	
VAC Rehabilitation Services & Vocational Assistance Programs	A series of short videos highlighting some of the rehabilitation and vocational programs and services available through VAC.	Services and Benefits videos - Veterans Affairs Canada
VAC Education & Training Benefit (ETB)	The ETB provides financial support to veterans who were honorably released and meet the “length of service” requirement to pursue education or training after service.	Education and Training Benefit (ETB) - Veterans Affairs Canada PDF Overview of the Program ETB Applicant Guide PDF Fact Sheet for Institutions
Veteran Family Journal	The Veteran Family Journal is a tool designed to assist medically releasing CAF members and their families.	https://cfmws.ca/support-services/releasing/veteran-family-journal
Veterans Transition Network	The Veterans Transition Network is a Canadian charity delivering mental health services to Veterans across the country. Services include a 5-day Transition Skills Course, Transition Program, and Veteran-to-Veteran peer support.	https://vtncanada.org/
With You With Me	This program offers online self-paced assessments, industry accredited	https://withyouwithme.com/individuals/veteran-program/

Tool	Description	Link to Website
Veteran Program	training and connection to hiring employers.	
Workforce Planning Ontario (WPO)	WPO is made up of a network of 26 Planning Boards covering the province of Ontario. These boards gather local intelligence about the supply and demand of labour and coordinate community responses to labour market needs. You can access all 26 local boards from this site, and we have included a few examples below of the services and tools you might find with your local board. It's a fantastic way to access local employment intelligence and find community resources relevant to training and employment.	https://www.workforceplanningontario.ca/en/
Wounded Warriors Canada (WWC)	WWC offers individual, couple, spouse, and family mental health services. Programs include Trauma Resiliency Program (TRP), Couples Overcoming PTSD Everyday (COPE), Surviving Spouses Program and Warrior Kids Camp.	https://woundedwarriors.ca/for-warriors/

References

- Academic Development. (2020). Program coordinator's overview of the PLAR process [PDF]. Algonquin College. <https://www.algonquincollege.com/plar/files/2020/09/Program-Coordinators-Overview-of-PLAR-2020-21.pdf>
- Algonquin College. (2019). *PLAR FAQ for faculty* [PDF]. <https://www.algonquincollege.com/plar/files/2019/12/PLAR-Info-for-Orientation-Faculty.pdf>
- Algonquin College. (2019). *PLAR FAQ for Faculty* [PDF]. <https://www.algonquincollege.com/plar/files/2019/12/PLAR-Info-for-Orientation-Faculty.pdf>
- Algonquin College. (n.d.). Course Exemptions and Credit Transfers. <https://www.algonquincollege.com/ro/course-exemptions-credit-transfers/>
- Canadian Armed Forces Transition Group. (2020). *My transition guide—Transitioning from military to civilian life* [PDF]. <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/dnd-mdn/documents/reports/transition-materials/guides/my-transition-guide.pdf>
- Canadian Military Family Magazine. (2021, October 30). My transition guide—Transitioning from military to civilian life. <https://www.cmfmag.ca/my-transition-guide-transitioning-from-military-to-civilian-life/>
- Government of Canada. (2021). *Canadian armed forces 101*. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/reports-publications/transition-materials/defence-101/2020/03/defence-101/caf-101.html>
- Lee, J. E. C., Dursuna, S., Skomorovskya, A. & Thompson, J. M. (2020). Correlates of perceived military to civilian transition challenges among Canadian Armed Forces Veterans. *Journal of Military, Veteran and Family Health*. <https://doi10.3138/jmvfh-2019-0025>
- Loyalist College. (2023). *Military connected campus*. [Image]. <https://loyalistcollege.com/military-connected-campus/mcc-faqs/>
- National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces. (2022). *The three phases of medical release*. Government of Canada. <https://www.canada.ca/en/ombudsman-national-defence-forces/education-information/caf-members/career/release-transition-civilian/phases-medical-release.html>
- National Defence and Canadian Forces Ombudsman. (2015, November 20). *Making the transition to civilian life* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ySZYy_imZU&t=8s

Statistics Canada. (2022). *On guard for thee: serving in the Canadian armed forces* [Image]. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/220713/dq220713c-eng.htm>

Statistics Canada. (2022, July 13). *Map 2: Belleville–Quinte West and Kingston have the largest share of military personnel among Canada's census metropolitan areas* [Image]. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/220713/mc-c002-eng.htm>

The Military Lifestyle. (Host). (2019, October 22). The transition out of the military [Audio podcast transcript]. In *The Military Lifestyle Podcast*. MFRC Esquimalt. <https://esquimaltmfrc.com/the-transition-out-of-the-military/>

Veterans Affairs Canada. (2022). *Your new mission*. Government of Canada. <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/art-hub/your-new-mission>

Weilke, B. (2019, November 26). *Most Canadians who switch careers are happier for it, survey finds*. CBC News <https://www.cbc.ca/news/business/canadian-career-change-1.5370391>