

## **Educational Assistant/Community Support and Educational Assistant/Community Support, Indigenous Focus Program Application Package**

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Applications to the Educational Assistant/Community Support and Educational Assistant/Community Support, Indigenous Focus (ECS) program are accepted year round; however, prospective students are encouraged to complete the admission requirements as soon as possible as acceptance into the program is assessed by the completion date of these requirements.

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### **Academic Admission Requirements**

Prospective students must meet the following academic requirement:

1. Minimum C+ in Provincial English 12. This requirement can also be met through NIC ENG 060, ENG 096, ENG 098, ESL 090, or equivalent, or successful English Placement.

Official transcripts must be submitted to provide proof of academic requirements. Transcripts are only considered official when they bear the seal and signature of the institution or agency from which they were sent. Post secondary transcripts must be in a sealed envelope from the sending institution.

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### **Other Admission Requirements**

In addition to fulfilling the academic admission requirement listed above, a prospective student must submit the following:

1. Application for Admission to NIC (available online at [www.nic.bc.ca](http://www.nic.bc.ca))
2. Applicant Questionnaire (in this package)
3. Professional Reference Form (in this package)
4. Resume outlining all employment, volunteer and educational experience.

**Note:** *Volunteer/work reference forms may be submitted with the student's admission package ONLY if they are in a sealed envelope with the Referee's signature across the seal. Otherwise, the Referee must submit the form directly to the address below.*

### **Mail the completed forms directly to:**

At present, NIC delivers the Educational Assistant/Community Support program at the Comox Valley campus and the Educational Assistant/Community Support, Indigenous Focus program at the Port Alberni campus. Please submit completed admission requirements to:

Admissions  
**Comox Valley Campus**  
North Island College  
2300 Ryan Road  
Courtenay BC V9N 8N6

**Note:** *It is the student's responsibility to be certain that all components of the application are complete. **Incomplete applications will not be considered.** Students are encouraged to complete the admission requirements as soon as possible as acceptance into the program is assessed by the completion date of these requirements.*

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### Other Program Requirements

Once the student has been accepted to the program, the student will be required to:

1. Attend a group information session. This mandatory session, usually held in May, is designed to assist students in making an informed decision about pursuing a career in this field. The admissions department will send you an invitation with details regarding the date and time of the information session.
  2. Hold a current Standard First Aid certificate with CPR Level C, or equivalent. A photocopy of these certificates must be provided on the first day of class. It is the responsibility of the student to maintain certification throughout the program. Check with your local registration office for available courses. The cost will be incurred by the student and is currently estimated at \$145.
  3. Complete the Non-Violent Crisis Intervention Workshop. A photocopy of the participation certificate must be submitted. This course is normally offered to all ECS students during the academic year, prior to practice placements. The cost will be incurred by the student and is currently estimated at \$60 but may be subject to change.
  4. Students will be required to maintain and submit a record of yearly immunizations prior to practicum. If students object to being immunized, they must fill out the "Immunization Declination" form and return to Human Services faculty. If an "outbreak" occurs and students are not immunized, they may have to be removed from practice. Certain agencies may also restrict students from entry if they are not immunized. Wherever possible, faculty will try to place students in an alternate setting, but this may not be possible. If this occurs, students may have to wait until the next calendar year when the same practicum course is reoffered.
  5. Students will be required to sign a "program expectations agreement" which includes areas such as confidentiality, attendance, submitting timely assignments, handling conflict and appropriate professional and ethical conduct. The Human Services department follows a "progressive discipline model" when difficulties with students occur. This signed agreement may be used by faculty to facilitate student success through adherence to college policies and procedures.
  6. Complete a Solicitor General Consent for Criminal Record Search form. This form will be sent to you from the admissions office once you are offered a seat in the program.  
**\*DO NOT SUBMIT A RCMP CRIMINAL RECORD CHECK.\***
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**ECS Applicant Questionnaire**

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The purpose of this questionnaire is to help you make an informed decision as to whether or not the ECS Program is the program for you, and whether or not this is the optimal time for you to take the program. Please complete your student information below and consider the following questions very carefully and provide responses in the space provided.

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**Personal Information**

*Please notify the College if there is a change in any of the information provided herein.*

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Former Surname: \_\_\_\_\_ Birthdate: (yy/mm/dd) \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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Emergency Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Education**

Are you sending us a transcript from another institution?  Yes  No

Name of institution: \_\_\_\_\_

**Indicate the campus to which you have applied:**  Comox Valley or  Port Alberni

**Indicate program area of interest:**

*Educational Assistant/Community Support Certificate* – Graduates work with adults and children who are challenged by physical, cognitive and psychiatric disabilities. Assistance may be provided individually or in groups in several areas including education, employment and personal life skills. Note: This program is only offered at the Comox Valley campus.

*Educational Assistant/Community Support, Indigenous Focus Certificate* – This program has been designed specifically to meet the unique needs and expectations of First Nations communities and the educational demands of support workers. Graduates often work as resource aides in the areas of Aboriginal culture and curricular content in the classroom. Note: This program is only offered at the Port Alberni campus.

**ECS Applicant Questionnaire (page 2)**

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1. The ECS program will be an intense experience for our students. You will be required to attend class approximately 15-18 hours a week. There is a considerable amount of pre-reading and several assignments which must be done outside of class time. Our students estimate that there is an additional 3-5 hours per night of homework, as well as several hours on weekends.

a) Comment on your ability to provide a stable living **environment** and a satisfactory place in which to study. (For example, renovating, building a house, getting married or moving are activities that will be difficult to manage in conjunction with this challenging program.)

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b) Consider your **family responsibilities** carefully (number and ages of children, special needs of family members, relationship with partner). Discuss how you will manage daycare, a child's illness, housekeeping, etc. Remember that you may be working as much as a 45 hour week.

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c) How will you be able to arrange **transportation** to and from classes, and practice placement sites? Many practice placements may not be in your home community and you may have to commute. In addition, many practice placements will require that you provide your own transportation to and from various activities.

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**ECS Applicant Questionnaire (page 3)**

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d) Will you be able to **financially support** yourself and your family, if applicable, and cover the costs of the program? Present tuition costs are *approximately* \$3700 per year, the estimated cost for textbooks is \$1400, plus there will be other miscellaneous costs such as the Non-Violent Crisis Intervention Workshop, first aid, school supplies, student fees and transportation costs. For information about applying for student loans, contact the financial aid advisor at the campus to which you have applied.

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e) Practice placements frequently require that students be willing to do **evening and/or weekend shifts**. Placements may not be in your home community and you may have to commute. Are you prepared to fulfill these practice requirements if they are necessary?

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f) Some students find the pace of the ECS program very taxing due to a lack of **academic preparedness**. Proficiency with computers and associated technology is an expectation for students who are entering this field. Students will be required to use the North Island College "LEARN" system in order to access their course guides, take part in discussion boards and receive important notices from instructors. Please indicate your computer skill level and access to a computer. Also comment on other steps you have taken to prepare yourself for the computer technology expectations in the program.

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2. Human services work may not be the appropriate choice for every applicant. For some individuals, **personally held values or beliefs may be in opposition** to those expected in this line of work. For others, present life situations or the need to work through past experiences may mean that this is not the best time to enter the program. Students who have recently experienced stressful changes or crisis situations in their lives (e.g. changes in relationship or begun a journey along the path to sobriety) often experience significant challenges in the ECS program. It is recommended that you apply for this program at a point in your life where you are experiencing stability. Please consider the following carefully and provide responses in the space provided.



**ECS Applicant Questionnaire (page 5)**

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If yes, what measures/supports do you have in place to manage these restrictions or limitations? Are there supports or services you will be requesting from the college?

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d) **Constructive feedback and evaluation.** Although most of us state that we welcome constructive feedback and evaluation, it is common to experience discomfort and defensiveness when receiving it. The ECS program involves many assignments that require self-awareness and self-reflection. Please consider your past experiences with feedback and evaluation, and your level of sensitivity to it. Please comment on your willingness to receive constructive feedback and use it to improve your skills and performance.

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e) **Confidentiality.** It is our intent to provide a safe environment for students to share their personal growth experiences while in the ECS program; therefore you will be expected to keep all personal information shared in the classroom and in the practicum setting confidential. Will you be able to commit to this?

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- f) **Values.** Certain strongly held beliefs and attributes are necessary in the human services field. These include respecting confidentiality, a belief in people’s right to self-determination, and a non-judgmental attitude of respect and acceptance including racial, ethnic and cultural diversity, sexual preference, family grouping, and special needs. It is also important that you respect the importance of anti-oppressive, feminist practice. You may find that you hold beliefs that are opposed to these values. Use the space below to discuss the topic of values.

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- 3. **Career Planning.** The job market in the human services field fluctuates. A worker needs to be flexible and willing to start in any number of possible positions. Sometimes volunteer work is a good way to “get one’s foot in the door”. Many entry level positions are part-time and require shift work. For some types of human service work, a certificate is only *one step* towards your goal. It is important to have more than one plan of action regarding your career goals. Please give your career goals some serious thought and do some research as to their feasibility. Discuss your plans and your research below.

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**Having read and commented on the above with care and attention, your signature will reflect your understanding of the above information and its implication.**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## ECS Professional Reference Information Sheet

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The ECS program has a strong social justice base, and therefore, the type of experience that best assesses a student's aptitude for this field is that which involves work with people facing barriers in society, such as the marginalized or disadvantaged. You should be aware that there are work experience environments for other disciplines that can be confused with those that are most suitable to human service work. For example, child care centres are more suited as work experience towards Early Childhood Education. Volunteer work in hospitals or institutionalized health care facilities may be more suited for Nursing or Care Aide programs.

The professional reference form should be filled out by the person in the organization/agency who is responsible for supervising your volunteer hours. A private individual, family member or colleague will not be accepted as a professional reference.

### Examples of work/volunteer positions that would satisfy the ECS program requirement include:

- Working with youth at risk (drop-in centres, community agencies, jails, etc.)
- Working with children or adults with special needs (group homes, community access programs)
- Working with individuals in poverty (soup kitchens, grass-roots community agencies)
- Working with women experiencing barriers in society (women's centres)
- Working with an agency that assists people to overcome addictions (Alano Club, Beacon Club)
- Working in agencies that assist families to function more effectively together (Family Services, John Howard Society)
- Working in mental health agencies
- Providing advice at crisis centres
- Working in school programs that assist students with developmental or behavioural disabilities
- Working with immigrant or multicultural populations (community based agencies)
- Assisting participants in Special Olympics events
- Working in recreational centres in programs involving youth or individuals with special needs
- Working with indigenous people (Friendship Centres or community agencies)
- Working in care facilities
- Assisting individuals through an employment program

### Examples of work/volunteer positions that do not satisfy the ECS program requirement include:

- Jobs centred on filing, photocopying, reception or administrative work
- Committee work that does not engage directly with agency clients
- Work that does not provide an opportunity for supervisory assessment
- Teaching Sunday School
- Private business (other than a counselling practice)
- Counselling, personal or professional growth courses
- Single camping event with a school or Scout group
- Participation in an employment program
- High school work experience programs
- Hairdressing
- Bartending

**Note:** If you have questions about whether a particular work/volunteer position will satisfy the admission requirement please contact the admission officer at your local campus prior to beginning your volunteer/work experience.

**ECS Professional Reference Form**

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**CONFIDENTIAL**

Letter of reference for applicant to the Educational Assistant/Community Support or Educational Assistant/Community Support, Indigenous Focus program at North Island College.

**Note:** *Volunteer/work reference forms may be submitted with the student's admission package ONLY if they are in a sealed envelope with the Referee's signature across the seal. Otherwise, the Referee must submit the form directly to the address below.*

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**To be completed by the applicant:**

Applicant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of person supplying reference: \_\_\_\_\_

North Island College may be verifying this reference prior to acceptance into the program. I give permission to North Island College to check the reference below.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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**To the person providing a professional reference:**

We would appreciate your taking the time to complete this reference to help us make an informed decision about the above named applicant's ability to undertake the Educational Assistant/Community Support or Educational Assistant/Community Support, Indigenous Focus program. With an Educational Assistant/Community Support certificate, graduates assist individuals who are challenged by behavioural, physical, mental or psychiatric disabilities. Common employment settings include the public school system, vocational day programs, residential facilities, and proprietary care. We would like a frank appraisal of the ability of the applicant to undertake this program.

The applicant's work/volunteer experience must involve *direct* interaction with participants in the agency's program, either one-on-one or in a group setting. These activities could include guiding or coaching individuals, listening to concerns, assisting with problem-solving and/or supportive assistance to accomplish specific goals or tasks.

A minimum of 20 hours of volunteering is required and must be completed within the last three years. If the volunteer work requires training, the *training* time is not applicable towards the 20 hour fulfillment.

This reference becomes a part of the student's personal information and can be requested under the *Freedom of Information/Protection of Privacy Act*. Your identity will be protected should such a request be made.

Please complete and sign the Referee Information section that follows.

**ECS Professional Reference Form (page 2)**

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**Note:** *The person providing a professional reference must be from outside the applicant's family and should be someone in a supervisory position who is able to offer independent judgment based on first-hand observation from work or volunteer experience.*

1. Relationship to applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Type of volunteer work or employment (specify activities person performed).  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

3. Dates of work or volunteer time for applicant.  
 Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ End Date: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Total number of hours worked/volunteered: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Volunteer or work references are based on the following criteria. Please assess the applicant's abilities, to the best of your knowledge, by placing a check mark in the most appropriate column below:

		Above average	Meets expectation	Needs work	Don't know
a)	Communicates easily with others (orally)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b)	Demonstrates mature judgment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c)	Able to work independently and perseveres with tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d)	Able to organize time and tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e)	Maintains confidentiality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f)	Is reliable (attendance, punctuality, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. Please comment on the applicant's strengths and areas for growth.  
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**ECS Professional Reference Form (page 3)**

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7. Please note briefly any other information you would like to add. We may contact you for verification.

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\_\_\_\_\_

8. Have you discussed this reference with the applicant?     Yes     No

9. Please complete and sign the Referee Information below.

**Referee Information:** *Must not be related to applicant.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail the completed form directly to:**

Admissions  
**Comox Valley Campus**  
North Island College  
2300 Ryan Road  
Courtenay BC V9N 8N6

**Note:** Reference letters may be submitted with the student's admission package ONLY if the reference letter is in a sealed envelope with the Referee's signature across the seal.