



# Travel Program Endorsement System



For an evaluation form, please contact

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# Travel Program Endorsement System

## What is the Travel Program Endorsement System?



The Canadian Institute of Travel Counsellors (CITC) provides a system whereby *Travel Programs* offered at community colleges or private vocational schools across Canada may be recognized as “*endorsed*” by the Institute.

## Why A School Should Choose to Have Its Travel Program Endorsed

Gaining CITC Endorsement of a travel program is one of the ways an educational institution may attract student enrolment to its course of study.



CITC is the national association that certifies and designates travel professionals across Canada. Certification criteria are based on the nationally validated **occupational standards** for travel counselling.

Endorsement of a travel program indicates to perspective clients/students that the program is meeting or exceeding the minimum educational requirements for entering the travel industry as a travel counsellor.

CITC works in conjunction with the Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council (CTHRC) using the emerit™ brand, and Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) to ensure that the skills and knowledge represented in the standards meet the entry requirements for working as a travel counsellor in Canada.



### Criteria for Endorsement Includes the Following:

- Length of time the travel program has been offered
- How graduates are performing in the workplace
- Course curriculum
- Instructor qualifications
- How students perform on the Knowledge Exam that evaluates a selection of the skills and knowledge outlined in the occupational standards

Endorsement offers the educational institution a series of benefits that may help the institution to promote its program and allow its students to save money through reduced certification costs and time.

## Endorsement Levels

Effective January 2009, CITC offers four levels of Endorsement:



**Two Star**



**Three Star**



**Four Star**



**Five Star**

Similar to hotel star rating systems, a travel program receives stars based on the number of inclusions it offers, for example: travel services specific curriculum hours, field placement, live GDS training.

## Endorsement Criteria

Each level of endorsement must meet certain criteria in order to be endorsed.

Criteria	☆☆	☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆
Approximate # of hours for <b>travel services</b> specific topics	350	450	550	750 +
Mandatory purchase of the core curriculum	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Required % match to recommended core curriculum	70%	75%	80%	90%
Mandatory practicum	No	No	No, but Recommended	Yes
"Live" CRS/GDS training (versus a simulated system)	No	No	No	Yes
Instructor(s) teaching 25% of core subjects CITC certified (See note regarding Distance Learning Courses)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Two graduating classes of 5 or more students	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Program has been operating for a minimum of one year	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Educational institution must have students writing the Knowledge Exam (Minimum # of participants per year)	No	No	Yes Minimum of 6	Yes Minimum of 12
Mandatory provision of travel agency references ** (See note under Evaluation of Graduate Skills)	Yes	Yes for Full Time, recommended for Distance Learning	Yes	Yes

### Program Hours

- CITC recognizes that many travel programs include non-travel services specific topics such as event planning, second language, job search skills, computer skills that add to the overall value of a travel program. However, for CITC endorsement the minimum teaching hours in travel service specific topics must be met.
- CITC recognizes that it is difficult for Distance Learning courses to confirm the number of classroom hours due to the nature of a self-directed course

### Core Curriculum

- The Core Curriculum is developed by the travel industry & instructors of travel programs to ensure that the training to meet the occupational standards is being achieved or exceeded.
- Although provincial Ministry of Education guidelines exist for training they may not reflect the needs of the occupational standards.
- Higher levels of endorsement must meet a higher percentage of curriculum needs.

## **Core Curriculum**

CITC publishes a recommended Core Curriculum that travel programs may purchase to assist them in developing or changing their travel counselling courses offered. The curriculum is based on the Occupational Standards for travel counselling and is set out as follows:

### How the Curriculum is Designed

**Major Category** - identifies a general activity within the occupation.

**Skill** - identifies a general skill within the general activity.

**Sub-skill** - identifies a specific activity within the general skill.

**Details of the sub-skill** - outlines how the sub-skill can be achieved.

**Objectives of the sub-skill** - details knowledge and performance expectations.

**Objectives are knowledge and/or performance based** - K = Knowledge, P = Performance

**Objectives are memory or resource based** - M = Memory, R = Resource

**Degree to which the objective should be known or performed** - on a scale of 1-5 where 5 is high.

The curriculum also includes appendices that identify specific areas of knowledge relevant to the curriculum objectives. The goal of the appendices is to provide valuable resources in identifying areas of travel considered to be of major importance to the retail travel industry.

### How the Appendices are Organized

Appendix A - identifies by country: capital cities, city/airport codes and map locations that should be known from memory.

Appendix B - identifies by country: major attractions, bodies of water, deserts, mountain ranges and rivers that should be known from memory.

Appendix C - identifies: major activities and events by location.

Appendix D - identifies by airline code: worldwide airlines and country of origin.

Appendix E - identifies references widely used in travel training programs, as textbooks or resource manuals. These references could be sources for Entry Exam questions and extracts from these references could be used in the questions.

- Appendix F - provides examples of multiple choice examination questions used on the Entry Exam. Correct answers for Memory based questions are highlighted.
- Appendix G - minimum guidelines for program delivery
- Appendix H - organizes objectives by travel topic, i.e. Cars, Rail, etc. Objectives are referenced to the area in the curriculum where they are located.

### **Current Version:**

- The current version of the Core Curriculum that is available is 2009.
- The Occupational Standards will be revised in 2009/2010
- To purchase a Core Curriculum the fee is \$ 175 + GST/HST. Purchase of the curriculum is a mandatory component of the Endorsement process for travel programs.

### **Practicum (Field Placement)**

- Minimum of 100 hours for Level 5 endorsement
- Employers sign off on a checklist of activities the student has completed while on placement or produce a similar written report confirming the content of the practical experience.
- Students will be required to submit proof of this experience to take advantage of certification benefits (see detail later on)
- Practicum may take place in any industry of tourism, but must be travel services specific – retail agency, tour wholesaler (hotel placement not acceptable) for student certification benefits (see detail later on)

### **Live GDS Training**

- A frequent complaint of employers is that students entering the workplace are not competent and confident in the booking process of a GDS. In many instances this is due to the fact that training takes place in a simulated GDS system where additional tools of the GDS are not recognized. CITC feels that schools that go to the extra expense of providing better GDS training should be recognized.

### **Instructor Qualifications**

- Instructional staff teaching 25% or more of the travels services curriculum should be certified in the profession of travel counselling.
- CITC will also consider certification as a Tourism Trainer through the emerit™ standards for endorsement purposes
- Instructors will also be required to submit proof of annual professional development activities as a component of the endorsement renewal process.
- Distance Learning should be supervised by a CTC/CTM

### **Evaluation of Graduate Skills**

- Educational Institutions will be rated on how well their graduates perform on the industry standard “Knowledge Exam”. Educational Institutions that do not have participating grads will not qualify for the highest level of endorsement, since this valuable assessment tool of how well students have mastered the skills and knowledge of travel products is unavailable.
- Educational Institutions will be asked to provide **references for a minimum of 2 travel agencies that have hired graduates in the preceding two years**. CITC will contact these references independently for an assessment of graduate skills and knowledge. Responses

to the assessment will form part of the final recommendation for endorsement or renewed endorsement. Including this recommendation as a part of the evaluation assists with making the Educational Institution accountable to the travel agency community it serves. In addition employers will gain increased insight into the value that a travel program provides for new graduates entering the workplace and feel connected to the process since their opinion is now valued and expected. This will result in increased communication of needs between the industry, training Institution and professional trade association which will impact on graduates being better prepared to enter the workplace.

- CITC recognizes that due to the nature of self-directed learning in Distance Learning programs it may be difficult to provide industry references. Therefore it's only strongly recommended it is not mandatory for DL programs.

If an application does not meet all the criteria for Full Endorsement then ***Provisional Endorsement*** may be granted for a maximum of two years. Provisional endorsement may not be renewed.

The endorsement is **valid for 2 years and renewable thereafter for subsequent 2-year periods**. Educational institutions are required to submit any changes in curriculum or teaching staff on an annual basis and this may warrant a re-assessment of endorsement status prior to the endorsement renewal period.

## Benefits

Each level of endorsement will reflect some common as well as specific benefits.

Benefit	☆☆	☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆
Authorization to use the <b>CITC recommended</b> logo	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Listing in the CITC website</b> of endorsed schools including link to program website	✓	✓	✓	✓
Students receive a <b>reduced price on Knowledge Exams fees</b> if written within 6 months of graduation	✓	✓	✓	✓
Complimentary <b>Knowledge Exam prep materials</b> for instructor	✓	✓	✓	✓
Students that write and pass the Knowledge Exam receive a <b>reduced fee on certification enrolment costs</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓
Students that submit a copy of their practicum report may apply their practicum experience towards <b>25 hours</b> of the required work experience for certification (must be travel services specific – may be less than 100 hours but a minimum of two weeks )			✓	
Students that submit a copy of their practicum report may apply their practicum experience towards <b>50 hours</b> of the required work experience for certification (must be travel services specific – 100 hours minimum)				✓
Reduced registration fee for instructors attending the CITC's Educator's Update Conference	✓	✓	✓	✓
Reduced purchase price for CITC textbooks	✓	✓	✓	✓



## **Endorsement Procedures**

***Having a Travel Program endorsed is a 3-step procedure:***

- 1) Decide which level the Educational Institution wishes to apply/qualify for.
- 2) Purchase the core curriculum (if not already done so)
- 3) Complete and return the Endorsement application along with submitting applicable fees and any required documentation. Incomplete applications will be returned for re-submission.

**Applications may be submitted at any time but should be a minimum of 90 days prior to the requested effective date.**

**NOTE:** For new Travel Programs beginning in the Province of Ontario there is additional criteria to be met from the Ministry of Education & Training. (see additional note below, if applicable) In this case you must complete the steps in this order:

- a) Submit your curriculum & the Ministry Application to CITC for review
- b) Once you have the curriculum reviewed – submit your course application to the Ministry
- c) After this is approved you are welcome to apply for Endorsement and have CITC review the balance of your application.

### **New Travel Programs Beginning in Ontario**

CITC is pleased to work with the Ministry of Education and Training in the province of Ontario to assist in the process of ensuring that the national occupational standards are met for all new travel counselling programs.

CITC's role in this process is to "approve" the curriculum to be taught as "meeting the minimum standards" as set out in the recommended Core Curriculum that is based on the occupational standards for travel counselling.

Travel programs wishing to receive Ministry approval of their application to run a travel program should submit their curriculum details along with Appendix Form K from the Ministry application to CITC. The fee charged to review the application is \$ 200 + GST/HST.

Results are sent directly to the Ministry with a copy to the Travel Program. You should allow 4 weeks for this process to occur, depending on the time of year your application is received at the CITC office.

Travel Programs that subsequently choose to apply for Endorsement of their Travel Program (and the benefits that arise from this endorsement to the educational institution and students) will receive a \$ 50 credit towards their Endorsement application fee. For further information on this process contact the Education Standards Division of CITC at [jane@citc.ca](mailto:jane@citc.ca).

## Endorsement Procedures

### General Information

- Endorsement applications must be accompanied by the appropriate fee and completed in full. Incomplete applications will be returned for re-submission.
- Every Endorsed program is subject to **BI-ANNUAL** (every other year) review for which there will be a renewal fee. Renewal applications and the applicable fee must be received at CITC prior to the current endorsement expiration date.
- Application and renewal fees will be adjusted from time to time by CITC.
- Every Endorsed program must submit any updates to curriculum or teaching staff on an **annual** basis.
- Each location where a travel program is offered shall be considered by CITC as a separate entity and shall be subject to a separate Endorsement fee and Endorsement procedure, including those programs offered through correspondence or satellite delivery with on-site facilitators.
- If an application is not accepted, an administration fee shall be retained by CITC. The amount of this fee shall be set, from time to time by CITC, but in no event shall it exceed the amount of the initial evaluation fee.
- Evaluation fees are non-refundable and are not pro-rated.

### Prerequisites

The Educational Institution **MUST**:

- be licensed by the appropriate provincial Ministry in the appropriate category, according to the law
- have purchased the CITC Core Curriculum
- have offered the travel program for a minimum of one year, or two graduating classes of 5 + students. ***Provisional Endorsement*** may be granted until this prerequisite is satisfied
- complete the Travel Program Evaluation Form requested by CITC, and as part of the evaluation process, will supply documentation to confirm that it is following or exceeding the CITC Core Curriculum or any other documentation deemed by CITC to be necessary to grant endorsement
- upon request by CITC, as part of the evaluation process, allow an on-site evaluation visit to determine first hand if standards are being met - a minimum of 7 days prior notification will be given for an on-site evaluation
- encourage students to write the CITC Knowledge Examination

### Instructional Staff

- Each individual Education Institution shall appoint a liaison person to communicate with CITC regarding all matters pertaining to endorsement.
- At **least one** faculty member teaching 25% or more of the travel services subjects shall hold a designation at the CTC, or CTM level. ***Provisional Endorsement*** may be granted for up to two years until this prerequisite is satisfied.
- Faculty should continue to enhance their instructional experience through the pursuit of teaching credentials, development of educational programs, subscriptions to educational publications, association with retail/wholesale travel trade, and membership in professional trade associations or their equivalent. Proof of this must be submitted at renewal time.

## **Endorsement Evaluation Fee**

The evaluation fee for a new application is: **\$ 450 + tax (GST or HST as applicable)** regardless of the level of endorsement applied for.

If the program is offered with an **alternate delivery method (example - distance learning)** and the curriculum being taught matches 75% or greater with the full time day program – then Educational Institutions may request an additional endorsement number (level may not be identical) for the alternate delivery method upon payment of an **additional \$ 100 + tax (GST or HST as applicable)** fee.

If the alternate delivery method does not match at least 75% of the curriculum then a separate application including regular evaluation fees must be completed.

In the event an Educational Institution does not receive Endorsement, a **\$150.00 non-refundable Administration Fee** will be retained by CITC, with the balance of the evaluation fee refunded.

There is an impartial appeal process in place for rejected applications. This should be done within 30 days of receipt of a rejected application, accompanied by a non-refundable \$100 re-assessment fee. Final results will be supplied in 60 days. No further appeal is available.

## **Scoring System**

CITC will evaluate the information provided on the Travel Program Evaluation Form according to a scoring process determined by CITC's National Certification Manager. Educational Institutions will be rated on the endorsement criteria identified on page 5 of this information package including reference checks and student exam performance results.

## **Endorsement Governance**

- 1) CITC shall be the sole body to grant Endorsement to a travel program offered by any Educational Institution applying for such approval. Similarly, it shall be the sole agency to remove the Endorsement from any Educational Institution's program which it, in its sole discretion, deems does not meet the stated criteria.
- 2) Endorsement shall be granted for one of four levels:
  - Two Stars** - corresponding with or exceeding the criteria as listed on page 5
  - Three Stars** - corresponding with or exceeding the criteria as listed on page 5
  - Four Stars** - corresponding with or exceeding the criteria as listed on page 5
  - Five Stars** - corresponding with or exceeding the criteria as listed on page 5
- 3) No Educational Institution shall be permitted to advertise or claim Endorsement for its program, or use CITC's logo or name, without written authorization from CITC.
- 4) This written authorization shall take the form of a Certificate of Endorsement issued according to the standards of CITC and may be modified or rescinded from time to time. It is confirmed bi-annually (every other year) with a new certificate of Endorsement. The certificate shall remain the property of CITC.
- 5) Any course material, promotion, calendars, etc., produced by an Educational Institution that refers to CITC Endorsement must state clearly the level of endorsement.
- 6) Any course material, promotion, calendars, etc., produced by an Educational Institution must clearly stipulate that it is the «**Travel Program**» that is endorsed, not the Educational Institution. A copy of this promotional piece should be submitted to CITC at endorsement renewal time.
- 7) Any course material, promotion, calendars, etc., produced by an Educational Institution must clearly stipulate if the Endorsement is «**Provisional**».



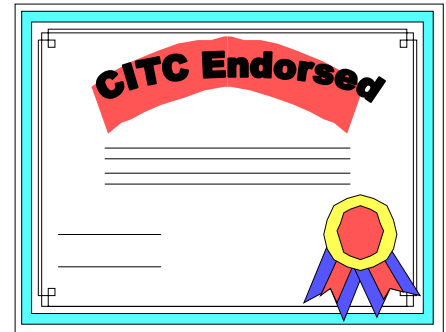
## *Once The Travel Program Is Approved for Endorsement*

### *Notification of Endorsement*

Educational Institutions will be notified by letter as to whether or not they received Travel Program Endorsement and the regulations attached thereto, no later than 90 days from the date of receipt of the application. A letter rejecting endorsement will clearly state the reasons why endorsement was not granted.

### *Certificate*

Upon Endorsement, the Educational Institution will receive a Certificate of Program Endorsement for display at the Educational Institution, clearly showing expiry dates. CITC will retain ownership of the Certificate, which must be returned by the Educational Institution if the conditions for continued entitlement are not met.



### *Promotional Information*

- The Educational Institution and Endorsed Travel Program are listed on the CITC website.

### *Advertising*

- It is the responsibility of the Educational Institution to ensure that any stipulation clearly states that it is the «**Travel Program**» that is endorsed, not the Educational Institution.
- An Educational Institution offering a travel program that receives «**Provisional Endorsement**» may advertise to that effect in the following manner: **Provisional Endorsement – Two Stars or Three Stars or Three Stars or Four Stars or Five Stars depending on the case.**

## **Endorsement Renewal**

It is the responsibility of the Educational Institution to renew its Travel Program Endorsement on a bi-annual (every other year) basis by completing the Travel Program Endorsement Renewal Form, sent from the CITC office at least 90 days prior to the renewal anniversary date. The completed form, along with the appropriate renewal fee must be received by the CITC office **no later than the endorsement expiration date each year**. Failure to renew the application **by this date** will result in it being considered a new application and renewal fees will no longer be applicable.

**Educational Institutions are given a maximum of a 30 day grace period before the listing is removed from CITC's website. A 10% LATE FEE PENALTY will apply to applications received after expiration date. <No exceptions>**

If a renewal application is submitted incomplete it will be returned to the Educational Institution immediately for re-submission. There is no extension granted on submission dates due to incomplete renewal applications.

Endorsement renewals will be assessed by CITC and Educational Institutions will be notified by letter as to whether or not they received renewal of the Endorsement **no later than 60 days from the date of receipt of the renewal application**.

There is an impartial appeal process in place for rejected applications. This should be done within 30 days of receipt of a rejected application, accompanied by a non-refundable \$100 reassessment fee. Final results will be supplied in 60 days. No further appeal is available.

**Bi-Annual Renewal Fee: \$ 400 + tax (GST or HST as applicable) \***

*\*Where required this may be invoiced as \$ 200 + tax per year*

## **Removal of Endorsement**

- The Educational Institution shall notify CITC in writing at the conclusion of each teaching term of any changes in curriculum, staff, location, or any other pertinent information that alters the application. Failure to do so may result in a review of its Endorsed status, which may or may not be removed.
- CITC reserves the right to survey students attending an Endorsed travel program and to use the results of the survey to justify removal of a program endorsement. Minimum 7 days prior notification will be given for an on-site survey.
- If an Educational Institution alters its course in such a way that the CITC recommended Core Curriculum is no longer taught (or taught to sufficient depth/breadth), a review will be conducted by CITC and the Endorsement may be temporarily suspended. The Educational Institution will then have one year or one complete cycle, whichever is less, to regain curriculum competency. CITC reserves the right to conduct on-site evaluation visits with 7 days advance notification to determine first hand if an Endorsement should be removed.
- If the Educational Institution fails to regain curriculum competency within the time specified above, the CITC Endorsement will be withdrawn, the Travel Program Endorsement Certificate will be returned, and all fees paid to CITC forfeited.

- Educational Institutions who plan to advertise the CITC Endorsement to the public in any advertising media must ensure that they do so in a way that fairly and honestly represents the purpose and intent of the CITC Endorsement. Failure to do so will result in a review by CITC and possible removal of the Endorsement, or the imposition of some other sanction.
- The Educational Institution **must** encourage its students to write the Knowledge Examination, failing which a review will be conducted, and Provisional Endorsement may be instated.
- The performance of an Educational Institution's graduates on the Knowledge Examination will be a factor in granting Endorsement. Consistent failure of graduates to pass the Knowledge Examination may result in a review by CITC and may result in the removal of the Endorsement.
- Withdrawal of an Educational Institution's Endorsement will not prejudice any subsequent application for Travel Program Endorsement by the Educational Institution.
- Reapplication for Travel Program Endorsement will be treated as a new application and shall be subject to the appropriate fees and criteria.



# Core Curriculum Order Form

<b>Fee:</b> August 2009 Edition (new edition)	(GST/HST Req. #: R123637621)
<b>Single Use Application (not to be used for multiple campuses)</b> <b>\$ 175 .00 + Applicable Tax</b>	
<b>Additional copies \$ 125 + applicable tax</b>	

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

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

School: \_\_\_\_\_

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

City/Town: \_\_\_\_\_ Prov: \_\_\_\_\_ P-Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Quantity ordered: \_\_\_\_\_ English \_\_\_\_\_ French \_\_\_\_\_

Payment of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed. (GST/HST No: R123637621)

Payment is in the form of a:

Company cheque \_\_\_\_ Money order \_\_\_\_\_

*Please make cheque or money order payable to CITC*

Credit Card Name: AMEX \_\_\_\_\_ M/C \_\_\_\_\_ VISA \_\_\_\_\_ E/R \_\_\_\_\_

Card Holder Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Cardholder Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Forward Payment and Order form to:**

**CITC, Education Standards Division  
505 Consumers Road, Suite 406  
Toronto, ON M2J 4V8**