



Canadian Bureau for  
International Education

# International Students and Immigration Education Program

**HANDBOOK**

## List of Acronyms


- CCIE** Canadian Consortium for International Education
- CICC** College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants
- DLI** Designated Learning Institution
- IRCC** Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
- IRPA** Immigration and Refugee Protection Act
- IRPR** Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations
- ISIEP** International Students and Immigration Education Program

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# 1 Program Overview



CBIE is the national voice advancing Canadian international education by creating and mobilizing expertise, knowledge, opportunity and, leadership.

## CBIE'S VISION AND MISSION

The Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE) is a global leader in international education, dedicated to equity, quality, inclusiveness, and partnership. CBIE is the national voice advancing Canadian international education by creating and mobilizing expertise, knowledge, opportunity, and leadership.

## BACKGROUND

In 2013, International Student Advisors (ISAs) at educational institutions across Canada experienced significant changes to their ability to provide immigration advising to international students at their institutions, in light of Section 91 of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA), which restricted the provision of immigration advice for consideration to a regulated immigration consultant, lawyer or member of a limited number of other professions. Immigration, Refugees and



Citizenship Canada (IRCC) designated the College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants (CICC), formerly the Immigration Consultants of Canada Regulatory Council, as the body responsible for regulating immigration consultants in Canada.

The work of immigration consultants and ISAs differs significantly in the scope of the advising performed. Unlike immigration consultants, ISAs provide several support services for international students in an intercultural context. However, immigration advising is a key component of ISAs' advising portfolio enabling them to support students to successfully integrate into Canadian academic and social culture.

From November 2013 to June 2014, CBIE and the Canadian Consortium for International Education (CCIE), urged IRCC to review the matter of immigration advising by ISAs in view of the critical impact of this work on the services provided by educational institutions to international students. As a result, in the fall of 2014, CICC announced that it would develop a new designation, later titled Regulated International Student Immigration Adviser (RISIA). Over the course of several months, CBIE and CCIE members provided substantial input to the CICC to assist in the development of the RISIA designation. Following discussions with CICC, CBIE agreed to develop a RISIA education program, accredited by CICC in March 2016, which prepares ISAs for the RISIA entry-to-practice exam of CICC.<sup>1</sup>

## OVERVIEW OF THE ISIEP

The International Students and Immigration Education Program (ISIEP) is an intensive 13-week online course which prepares practitioners, currently in the field of international student advising at Designated Learning Institutions (DLI), to write the RISIA Entry-to-Practice Exam (EPE). This intensive program requires a commitment of roughly 25-30 hours per week to successfully complete all the coursework, including, readings, video lectures, quizzes, assignments, discussion forums, a group project, and exams. The learning outcomes of the ISIEP include:

- Collecting, analyzing, and organizing information relevant to the RISIA scope of practice;
- Applying immigration statutes and regulations in case-based scenarios related to key RISIA responsibility areas; and
- Providing accurate, relevant, and up-to-date advice and information to students within the RISIA scope of practice.

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<sup>1</sup> It is important to recognize that CICC has specific eligibility requirements for the RISIA designation and that only those meeting the requirements may write the entry-to-practice exam. For more information on these requirements, please visit the CICC [website](#) and consult the [RISIA Licensing Regulation](#).

ISIEP is managed by CBIE, who works collaboratively with a team of in-service professionals from across Canada with vast experience in the field of immigration advising. Many of these professionals are ISIEP instructors. For more information about our team of instructors, you can read their biographies, available on our [website](#).

## BECOMING A RISIA

### Step 1: Successful completion of the ISIEP

ISIEP is a prerequisite for all professionals who want to become RISIA. An overall grade of at least 70% is required to graduate from the ISIEP to be eligible to register for the RISIA EPE. CBIE will liaise directly with CICC to provide proof of successful completion of the program.

### Step 2: Passing the RISIA EPE

ISIEP graduates need to register for the RISIA EPE directly through the CICC and fulfil the necessary requirements. The RISIA EPE must be completed within 3 years from the date of ISIEP graduation, otherwise graduates may be required to upgrade their knowledge to meet the education requirements of the CICC.

### Step 3: Becoming a RISIA

Those who pass the RISIA EPE and meet all the requirements, including being employed at a [Designated Learning Institution](#) (DLI) in a position which includes (or would include, if designated) offering limited immigration advise to students as per CICC's criteria, can apply for the RISIA licence. Please note that CICC's criteria to becoming a RISIA may change without notice. More information on becoming a RISIA can be found on [CICC's website](#).

### Step 4: Yearly renewal and CPD

Maintaining the RISIA designation requires a yearly renewal, which includes payment of professional dues. RISIAs are required to complete a certain number of hours of continued professional development hours (CPD) annually and are required to be employed at a DLI. For more information regarding the RISIA regulations, visit [CICC's website and the RISIA Licensing Regulation](#).


## IMPORTANT NOTES

- The RISIA profession, including the EPE, licensing and requirements are managed solely by CICC and may change at their discretion.

- It is illegal to provide immigration advice to international students without being regulated to do so (i.e.: you must be a RISIA or RCIC).
- Before applying for the ISIEP, please ensure that you have read and understood the [RISIA Licensing Regulation](#) as well as the RISIA registration process, available on [CICC's website](#).
- [Contact CICC](#) for more information on policies regarding leave of absence, changing employment and moving from one DLI to another.
- For those who are seeking to access the profession but are not employed at a DLI or are planning on becoming an immigration consultant to work outside of the institutional context, there is the option of becoming a Registered Canadian Immigration Consultant (RCIC). For more information on the difference between RISIA and RCIC, please review [CICC's website](#).



## 2 Program Content



The program aims to develop learners' skills and knowledge on how to read the primary sources of immigration law as they pertain to international students.

### PROGRAM DELIVERY

The ISIEP is a 13-week course delivered entirely online via *Brightspace* by D2L, a highly intuitive and user-friendly Learning Management System (LMS). Learners have the option to complete the program in either official language. Learners should anticipate spending 25–30 hours per week to complete the necessary coursework. The curriculum is delivered through online readings and videos, discussion forums and live webinars with the instructors on a weekly basis. All activities, such as quizzes, assignments and exams must be completed within the online learning platform.

Highly skilled and experienced instructors support learners throughout the program and ensure that learners get an interaction that is equivalent to learners completing an in-class program. The program aims to develop learners' skills and knowledge on how to read the primary sources of Canadian immigration law (i.e., the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) and the Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations (IRPR)) as they pertain to international students.

## PROGRAM MODULES

The International Students and Immigration Education Program (ISIEP) is an intensive 13-week online course which prepares practitioners, currently in the field, to write the RISIA Entry to Practice Exam (EPA). Participants will learn about the College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants (CICC), Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and key resources and documents that define or impact the role of a RISIA.

The course is divided into three main components: Foundations (modules 1-7), Knowledge (modules 8-14) and Application and Practice (modules 15-17). Each module has several sections, which outlines a particular element or concept. A detailed overview of the modules and sections is available on the ISIEP [website](#) (see ISIEP Course Outline).

### I. FOUNDATIONS

Modules 1-7) introduces the foundations of Canada's legal system, including related terminology and concepts that shape the application of laws and the rights and responsibilities of the parties involved in making and assessing immigration applications.

### II. KNOWLEDGE

Subsequently, Modules 8-14, focus on specific information regarding types of applications, how applications are assessed, and the pitfalls and common reasons for refusals. There is a considerable amount of information to be covered in this component specifically; therefore, students are encouraged to participate in the live classrooms and online discussions to support and strengthen their learning.


### III. APPLICATION AND PRACTICE

Lastly, in modules 15-17, participants will learn about the practice of immigration advising for students and their dependents, including forms, different models of advising, and how to build professional networks to support continuous learning and to develop expertise in the field.

In each component of the course, participants will be instructed on the professional and ethical obligations they will be required to follow once they have received their designation as a RISIA. In addition to the regulatory frameworks that affect students and their dependents, participants will be introduced to best practices in advising and the application of the laws, regulations, and policies.

Throughout the program, participants will review the CICC Code of Ethics and learn about the importance of staying current and informed of changing immigration laws. Participants will be tested on their synthesis of the concepts covered by way of knowledge checks at the end of each section, and with assignments focused on student immigration scenarios.

# 3 Application and Admission



Applicants must be working in the education sector, advising students.

## APPLICATION PROCESS

### Step 1: Complete the online application

Applicants must complete the online application, which includes uploading all required documents (see list below under admission requirements). Visit our [website](#) and click the “Apply Now” button to apply to one of our upcoming cohorts and to view each cohort’s respective application and payment deadlines. Please note that you should receive a follow up message within roughly 10 business days of your application submission.

### Step 2: Conditional acceptance & program payment

Once the application has been reviewed and approved, applicants will receive a conditional acceptance via email. This conditional acceptance will be pending upon the full program payment. Please note that the program fee must be paid in full before the cohort’s respective application/payment deadline to be guaranteed a spot in the selected cohort. When the payment has

been processed, the spot is guaranteed. Applications will be declined if applicants do not meet eligibility criteria.

If you do not receive either a conditional acceptance or follow up message within 10 business days of your application submission, please contact [isisp-peiei@cbie.ca](mailto:isisp-peiei@cbie.ca), as it is possible that the messages are being blocked or being sent into your spam/junk folder.

### **Step 3: Confirmed enrollment**

Upon receipt of the full program payment, applicants will receive an email confirming their enrollment. This message will contain details on how to access the online learning platform and link to attend the ISIEP orientation.

## **PROGRAM FEES**

The program fees are indicated on our website. The fees include all required course materials. Learners must pay the full fees before the start of the program, or they will lose their spot in the cohort.

## **ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

- Canadian citizen or permanent resident. You will need to upload proof of citizenship or residency into the online application.
- Employed at a [designated learning institution \(DLI\)](#) in Canada. Please follow the link to verify if your institution is a DLI. Note that all primary and secondary schools in Canada are a DLI.
- Professional working in the education sector with international students. You will need to submit an employment verification letter and a current job description.
- Enrolls in the ISIEP for the purpose of skills upgrade in their current institutional role. Unfortunately, it is not a pathway program to a career in international student advising, but rather a professional development program for those who are already working in this field at a DLI.

Those seeking to access the profession; and/or who are agents; and/or who are not employed at a DLI; and/or who plan to offer immigration consulting services outside of the educational institution; have the option of becoming a Registered Canadian Immigration Consultant (RCIC). For more information, visit [CICC's website](#).

## TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

An internet connection along with a desktop or a laptop computer with audio capabilities (speakers and microphone) are required for this course. A webcam is optional. Learners will not need to purchase additional software. Program participants will be given access to a secure online learning environment which will house course schedules, readings, assignments, and grades. Computer operating systems must meet the following minimum specifications:

- PC: Windows XP SP2 Home/Pro.
- Mac: Mac OS x 10.4.

Please note that the online learning platform, *Brightspace*, is not designed for tablets or mobile phones. Please do not attempt to complete this course on these devices because you will likely encounter difficulties with some functionalities (i.e., uploading assignments into the Dropbox). Please note that your participation and progress through the course material is always visible to the instructors.

## PROGRAM OFFERINGS

CBIE aims to offer the program at least twice in English and once in French, per academic year. However, this is subject to change based on demand and availability of resources to offer the program. CBIE may sometimes cancel an offering due to insufficient enrolment or other factors. Should this occur, a refund will be processed and mailed to the learner. CBIE also reserves the right to limit enrolment in a particular offering in order to provide a robust learning experience for learners.



## CONTENT UPDATES

Given that immigration is a highly dynamic field, curriculum and regulatory requirements will evolve over time; the curriculum of the ISIEP will change to reflect regulatory requirements and developments in the field of immigration. The curriculum may also be adapted based on the needs of participants and the availability and best use of CBIE resources.

Learners need to keep abreast of the revisions and changes in immigration policy, legislation, and case law; just as is required of anyone working in student immigration advising. Although instructors will be available to answer learners' questions on the changes as they are proposed or come into force, it is the learners' responsibility to be informed of these changes. Learners will be notified by email should a major program change arise.

## PROGRAM COMPLETION REQUIREMENTS

Learners must complete the midterm exam and the final exam as well as submit the final group assignment. Learners must obtain an average of 70% in order to receive the course certificate and qualify for the RISIA EPE. CBIE does not offer exemptions from particular requirements of the program. Learners must complete all modules and assessments.

## GRADING POLICIES

All assessments are marked by instructors who make sure to be correct and fair in their grading. Learners are encouraged to contact their instructor if they would like advice on how they can improve their academic performance. If you discover that your mark was incorrectly calculated, or a question was inadvertently not graded, please bring this to the attention of the instructor within one week of receiving your grade so that it may be adjusted. A detailed grading scheme will be provided in the ISIEP Learners' Manual, which learners will receive once enrolled in the course.

## LATE SUBMISSIONS

### Quizzes, Midterm and Exam

All due dates are shown in the ISIEP Calendar, available directly from the online learning platform. All quizzes, midterm and exams must be completed by the due date/time identified in the ISIEP Calendar. Late submissions will not be accepted, except in the case of family bereavement or sudden, serious illness of the learner or an immediate family member. Please note that official documentation may be required. Missed quizzes, midterm and exam will be given a score of 0 and learners will not have access to the questions thereafter.

## Assignments

Late submissions for assignments will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Please notify your instructor well in advance to avoid any grade deduction. If you do not provide any notification to your instructor, a 10% deduction will automatically apply to assignments submitted after the Saturday deadline, up until the subsequent Live Classroom. Once the Live Classroom of that week has occurred, late submissions will not be graded and will therefore receive a mark of zero.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

A breach of academic integrity is any word or deed done alone or with others with the direct or indirect intention of obtaining an undeserved advantage or benefit for oneself or other learners and includes, but is not limited to: cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, lying, misrepresentation, falsification and alteration of documents.

Plagiarism is considered to be the use of ideas, phrases or parts of phrases, images, tables, etc., from a given source (e.g., written publication, book, website, colleagues or others) that are incorporated into the body of work without any mention of the source by way of references, footnotes or endnotes. Sanctions for breaches of academic integrity may include the following:

- failure of an assignment, examination or course;
- suspension from the program for a specified period of time; or
- or expulsion from the program.

**NOTE:** No supplemental examination or work will be granted in cases where any of the above infractions have been committed. Please always cite your sources!

## PARTICIPATION AND EXPECTATIONS

Learners taking the program should expect to spend between 25–30 hours per week to complete the coursework, depending on their degree of experience in the field. Learners are required to complete all aspects of the course, including:

- viewing/reading all the content of the weekly modules
- submitting all assignments
- collaborating in a timely, diligent, and professional manner with classmates to complete the group project
- reviewing all the content available in the ISIEP Library
- becoming familiar with all the key web links provided
- completing all the quizzes, midterm, and the final exam

- posting all questions regarding the course modules and upcoming/past assignments in the respective week discussion forums
- joining/viewing all scheduled Live Classrooms

## COMMUNICATION

Learners are encouraged to post all course-related questions in the General Discussion Forum so that the entire class may benefit from the discussion. For personal or confidential matters, send an email to your instructors, who will try to reply within 24 hours.

## PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

CBIE strives to offer a positive learning environment that respects the diversity of individuals and enforces standards pertaining to a professional place of work. Learners are expected to behave in a professional manner. Learners must especially strive to be respectful when working as part of a cooperative environment, be it with other learners, instructors, and program staff. CBIE reserves the right to require a learner to withdraw from the program at any time due to unsatisfactory professional conduct. Tuition will not be refunded in such cases.

Students are welcome to bring scenarios or questions they have relevant to their work; however, we ask that you limit your questions to the current topics in the course.

***Please avoid putting the instructors in the situation of ‘advising by proxy’, by taking information that they provide, and relaying this information to your students. This is still considered advising and is not permitted until you have received your designation. Information provided by the instructors regarding your specific questions is for your learning only – not to be given as advice to students.***

## WITHDRAWAL POLICY

A withdrawal from the ISIEP must be provided in writing to the CBIE, via [isiep-peiei@cbie.ca](mailto:isiep-peiei@cbie.ca).

Applicants who withdraw before the application deadline date of the respective cohort will receive a full tuition refund, without any additional charges.

Applicants who withdraw within the first 14 days of the official cohort start date will receive a full tuition refund, less a \$300 cancellation fee.

Thereafter, the program fees are non-refundable, except for serious reasons such as bereavement or a documented medical condition. Notwithstanding the foregoing, we may provide a full or partial refund, less the cancellation fee, at our sole discretion on a case-by-case basis for exceptional circumstances.

A letter from a practicing medical physician in Canada must support documented medical conditions. In these cases, the program fees may be refunded on a pro-rated basis, less the cancellation fee, for the uncompleted portion of the cohort, which shall be calculated from the date we receive the notice of your withdrawal and supporting documentation.

Enrollment in a future ISIEP cohort is certainly welcomed and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and subject to our sole discretion. Fees will be charged in accordance with the most current program fees, and not those applied upon the original registration.

## DEFERRAL POLICY

To defer from one ISIEP cohort to another, you must provide notice in writing to the CBIE, via [isiep-peiei@cbie.ca](mailto:isiep-peiei@cbie.ca).

Applicants can defer, without any additional charges, up until the application deadline date of the respective cohort.

In the cases of serious reasons such as bereavement or a documented medical condition, learners can opt to defer their application to the following offering rather than withdraw from the program. Following the official start date of the respective cohort a deferral fee of \$300 will be charged.

Deferrals might be subject to additional charges should a program fee increase occur between the original and deferred cohort. Applicants will be invoiced accordingly. Any such deferrals will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and subject to our sole discretion.

Learners are required to restart the program from the beginning of the new cohort. Learners are expected to participate fully in all aspects, complete all quizzes, resubmit assignments and follow the pace of the cohort. The grades of the learner will not be transferred into the deferred cohort.

# 4 Contact Information

We are happy to answer your questions.



## ISIEP CONTACT

For more information visit our [website](#) or contact us: [isiep-peiei@cbie.ca](mailto:isiep-peiei@cbie.ca)