



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 15-week online course which prepares practitioners working with international students 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, tutorials, workshops, quizzes, assignments, discussion forums, a group project, and exams. This is a self-taught course where learners are required to do all of the coursework in order to benefit from the full extent of the program. 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. These requirements may differ from those of the ISIEP and can change at the discretion of CICC. 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. Instructors are available to assist, guide and help learners by offering drop-in hours, tutorials and workshops to help deepen the learners' knowledge. Instructors are not there to do lecture courses. 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 advice to students as per CICC's criteria, can apply for the RISIA licence. Please note that CICC's criteria to become 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 the CICC and may change at their discretion.
- Eligibility criteria for ISIEP, such as employment criteria, differs from CICC's requirements to become a RISIA. Successful completion of ISIEP does not guarantee the right to take the RISIA EPE or become a RISIA.
- 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 the [CICC 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 eligible to enroll in ISIEP 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 15-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, discussion forums and live webinars with the instructors on a weekly basis. Weekly online live webinars which include 30 minutes of lecture / review and 2 hours of interactive tutorials and workshop, are normally held Thursday evenings from 7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. eastern time. In addition to weekly live webinars, some weeks also have mini webinars or corrector sessions on Tuesdays from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. eastern time. All webinars and corrector sessions are recorded for students who may be unable to attend. However, because there is a considerable amount of information covered in the program, students are encouraged to participate in the live webinars and online discussions to support and

strengthen their learning. 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. 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.

ISIEP uses a flipped learning or flipped classroom approach. This means that learning is initiated by the student with instructors as guides. Participants will be expected to learn about new content independently through readings, activities, discussion forums, knowledge check quizzes, as well as individual and group assignments. Webinars will focus on answering questions, discussing challenging topics and giving real life examples. Immigration is a dynamic and evolving field. A flipped learning approach supports future RISIAS in developing the skills to stay up to date and research important immigration topics and regulations. Learners who are not familiar with this type of teaching style are encouraged to look up information on flipped learning in preparation for the program.

## **PROGRAM CONTENT**

The International Students and Immigration Education Program (ISIEP) is an intensive 15-week online course which prepares practitioners to write the RISIA Entry-to-Practice Exam (EPE). 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.

During the program, learning will focus on three main components: Foundations, Knowledge and Immigration Practice and Advising.

### **I. FOUNDATIONS**

Participants will be introduced to 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**

Participants will gain an understanding of different types of applications, how applications are assessed, and the pitfalls and common reasons for refusals.


## **III. IMMIGRATION PRACTICE AND ADVISING**

Participants will learn about the practice of immigration advising for students and their dependents, different models of advising, intercultural competencies and how to build professional networks to support continuous learning and to develop expertise in the field.

Moreover, 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 Professional Conduct 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 either be working in the education sector with international students or have completed two prerequisite courses.

## 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. The program fee must be paid in full before the cohort’s respective application/payment deadline. When the payment has been processed, the spot is guaranteed. Please note that because seats are

reserved on a first come first served basis, a cohort may already be full before the application/payment deadline. 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 the date for the ISIEP orientation. Details on how to access the online learning platform will be provided a few days before the start of the program.

## **PROGRAM FEES**

The program fees are indicated on our website. The fees include all required course materials.

## **ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

ISIEP is designed for practitioners who have a foundational knowledge of international education in Canada. To be eligible to enroll in ISIEP, applicants must either be currently employed in a designated learning institution (DLI) working with international students OR have completed two prerequisite courses offered online by CBIE.

Currently employed in a DLI:

- 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 a **current** letter of employment (prepared by your supervisor or human resources) including a **detailed job description** demonstrating that you work with international students in some form of advising capacity.
- Enrolls in the ISIEP for the purpose of skills upgrade in their current institutional role.

If you are not currently an employee of a DLI in a position working with international students, you are not eligible to enroll directly into ISIEP. However, you can become eligible to enroll in ISIEP by completing two [prerequisite courses](#) prior to your ISIEP application.

These self-directed prerequisite courses are offered online by CBIE. These standalone courses can be taken in any order; however, it is recommended to take them in the following sequence:

1. [Fundamentals of International Education in Canada](#)
2. [Internationalization in Action](#)

Those seeking to access the profession; and/or who are agents; and/or who are not eligible to enroll in ISIEP; and/or who plan to offer immigration consulting services outside of an educational institution; have the option of becoming a Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultant (RCIC). For more information, visit the [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 issued 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.

## 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.

Re-takes of any assessments (assignments, group project, mini exam or final exam) are not offered under any circumstances.

## LATE SUBMISSIONS

### **Mini Exam and Final Exam**

All due dates are shown in the ISIEP Calendar, available directly from the online learning platform. The mini exam and final exam 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 exams will be given a score of 0 and learners will not have access to the questions thereafter.

## **Assignments**

A 5% deduction per day will be automatically applied to assignments and group projects submitted after the deadline, up until the next Live Webinar. Late submissions will not be accepted after the Live Webinar has begun, and you will receive a zero mark for that assignment. If extenuating circumstances will prevent you from meeting the assignment submission deadline, please notify your instructors by email in advance to request an extension and avoid a grade deduction. These requests will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

## **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, alteration of documents and use of artificial intelligence generated text. Academic Integrity is taken very seriously by CBIE. A breach of academic integrity entails important consequences for learners which can include grade reduction, failure, suspension, or expulsion. All learners are responsible for reading and adhering to the Academic Integrity Policy.

## **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:

- 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 knowledge checks, mini-exam, and the final exam
- posting all questions regarding the course modules and upcoming/past assignments in the respective discussion forums
- joining/viewing all scheduled Live Webinars and Mini Webinars
- participating and completing required activities, tutorials, and workshops
- providing feedback by completing the course evaluation survey at the end of the program

## COMMUNICATION

Learners are encouraged to post all course-related questions in the 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).

Timeline	Policy
Before the application deadline date of the respective cohort.	Full tuition refund, without additional charges.
After the application deadline date of the respective cohort, but no later than 14 days before the official start date of the respective cohort.	A full tuition refund, less a 10% cancellation fee.
Within 14 days before and 14 days after the official start date of the respective cohort.	A full tuition refund, less a 20% 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 a 10% 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 a 10% 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. Students will be required to restart the ISIEP program from the beginning of the new cohort and participate fully in all aspects. All completed coursework will need to be re-submitted, and students will be expected to follow the pace of the cohort. Any grades from the initial cohort will not be transferred into the new 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)