







# The Difference Between Certification vs Certificate vs Diploma vs Associate's Degree

	CERTIFICATION	CERTIFICATE	DIPLOMA	ASSOCIATE DEGREE
 <b>HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO COMPLETE</b>	Depending on your own pace, it can take from a week to several months.	Typically less than a year.	Typically 2 years.	Typically 2 years.
 <b>IS IT CREDIT BEARING</b>	No	Yes, it can be used as a stepping stone for further education.	Yes, it can be used as a starting point for students who wish to continue their studies.	Yes, it can be used as a starting point for students who wish to continue their studies.
 <b>HOW IS THE PROGRAM CONTENT DEVELOPED</b>	The content standards are developed by third party organizations that set industry standards.	It is developed with specific learning outcomes & set to meet industry needs.	It is developed to meet specific demands of trades and technical or vocational careers.	It is developed as a hands-on learning with a focus on skills for transitioning directly to the job market.
 <b>WHAT DOES THE ASSESSMENT VALIDATE</b>	Mastery of industry expertise.	Successful completion of specialized training.	Successful completion of a particular study.	Successful completion of a particular study.
 <b>DO I NEED WORK EXPERIENCE</b>	A year or more of industry-related job experience is usually necessary.	Typically open to anyone regardless of work experience.	Typically open to anyone regardless of work experience.	Typically open to anyone regardless of work experience.
 <b>IS IT COST-EFFECTIVE</b>	More cost-effective than diploma and associate degree.	More cost-effective than diploma and associate degree.	Typically more expensive than certificate and certification programs.	Typically more expensive than certificate and certification programs.