

# Haul Truck Operator FAQs

(last revised 21 March 2023)

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- **What does the course cost?**

As of 1 April 2014

Course deposit (due upon acceptance into the course)	\$250.00
Course tuition	\$5,813.75
GST	\$303.19
Tech Fee	\$5.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$6,371.94</b>
Work Term Fee	\$661.50
GST	\$33.07
<b>Total for Work term</b>	<b>\$694.57</b>
<b>Total for Course</b>	<b>\$7,066.51</b>

- The non-refundable \$250 deposit is due upon acceptance into the course. The remaining \$6,816.51 is due six weeks prior to your start date.
- Students must provide their own CSA-approved, steel-toed safety boots with 8-inch uppers and anti-skid grips. These boots will be required at the beginning of the course.
- While every effort is made to assist eligible students in obtaining a paid work term placement.

- **How do I register?**

Before you can register, you must apply and pass successfully through the admissions process.

- **How do I apply?**

1. Fill out and sign the application, and send it in with the following documentation:

- **Official transcripts** if you have your Grade 12 diploma, its international equivalent, or your GED. You can obtain official transcripts from your province's ministry of education. Please note that you do not get this document back once we receive it. If you graduated from high school or obtained your GED in Alberta, Keyano College will order your transcripts on your behalf. **If you take the transcripts out of their sealed envelope, they are no longer official.**
- Photocopy of your valid, unrestricted Class 5 driver's license (or your provincial equivalent).
- A current driver's abstract (available from Alberta Registries or your provincial motor vehicles department) that proves you have no suspensions and no more than two (2) driving convictions within the past three (3) years.

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- Proof that you are a Canadian Citizen or have attained Permanent Resident (formerly Landed Immigrant) status.
  - Your current resume.
  - A Career Profile Questionnaire (provided with application package).
2. If you meet the eligibility requirements, we will notify you to schedule your in-person interview and Physical Demands test at that time.

Please note that applications which are missing documentation, will not be reviewed.

- **Can I apply online?**

You can e-mail your application to: [haultruck@keyano.ca](mailto:haultruck@keyano.ca)

- **How long is the waitlist?**

Approximately 2-3 months (and sometimes longer) so if you are interested, please get your application in as soon as possible

- **How soon after I apply will I hear back?**

Our goal is to acknowledge receipt of your application within two weeks. No admissions decisions will be made until after you have been interviewed and completed your Physical Demands Test.

- **What if I don't have my Grade 12?**

In lieu of Grade 12 we will also accept 10 years of work experience. If you did not graduate from high school and have less than 10 years' work experience, you can write your GED, which is an acceptable substitute for this course (<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/post-secondary/diploma.html> or do a google search for GED + your province).

- **What if I got my Grade 12 in another country?**

Send an official copy of your international diploma or transcripts. If they are not in English, please provide a certified English translation. If we are unable to verify from existing resources that your school is accredited, we may request an IQAS report (International Qualification Assessment Service). Note that there is a fee for an IQAS report.

We can accept notarized copies of official documents for this course.

Alternatively, it may be quicker and less expensive to obtain your GED.

- **What if I don't have my Grade 12, or don't have the records, but I do have a university degree?**

We recognize that it seems a little backwards to require proof of Grade 12 when you have a post-secondary certificate. However, due to the variations in admitting procedures at universities and colleges from around the world, our policy is that we require proof of Grade 12 (or GED), regardless of post-secondary education.

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- **What if I have credentials that don't meet your stated requirements, but have been accepted by other employers or schools?**

Our partner mines do extensive back-checking of all your submitted documents. There are many different educational scenarios in the world, including grandfathering in of previous credentials, and not all these scenarios are acceptable to the oilsands industry. If their investigation reveals that your credentials are not, in fact, considered to be equivalent to a Grade 12 or GED in Alberta, they may require you to obtain your GED before they will offer employment, regardless of decisions made by other institutions.

- **Do I have to have an Alberta driver's license?**

No, but your license must be your province's equivalent of an Alberta non-GDL Class 5.

- **What if I have more than two driving convictions within the past three years?**

If you have more than two driving convictions within the past three years, you are not eligible for the course. You may apply again when your abstract shows only two convictions that is not older than three years. ***There are no exceptions to this policy.***

Note that we count the conviction date, not the date of the incident.

- **What if I took a course and got the demerits removed from my license?**

Unfortunately, that won't help you. We don't count demerits or accidents. We count convictions.

- **What if my extra driving conviction was just a technicality?**

If it's a conviction, and it's on your abstract, we must count it. The only way to get us to disregard a conviction that is less than three years old is to convince a judge to have it removed from your record, and send us a new abstract that doesn't have that conviction on it anymore.

- **What if I'm not a citizen or permanent resident, but I do have a work visa?**

Due to the number of variations that exist regarding student and work visas, the Advisory committee has decided that we will only consider students who are either Canadian Citizens or have attained Permanent Resident of Canada status.

- **What if I'm refugee or protected person?**

You must provide proof of your refugee/protected person status and proof of your work visa. If your work visa states you are ineligible for education, you must also provide a student visa.

- **Can I pay a deposit to hold my seat while I become eligible?**

No. You don't pay anything for the Haul Truck course until AFTER you are accepted.

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- **What is the physical demands test?**

The physical demands test is to ensure that you are physically capable of getting on and off the truck in the event of an emergency, and that you have no conditions that would be exacerbated by operating heavy equipment. Upon successful completion of the course, there will be a more in-depth physical prior to gaining employment at any of the mines.

The haul truck physical demands test starts with a blood pressure test. If your blood pressure is unacceptably high, the test will not continue. The rest of the test comprises of:

- Step-up warm up
- Floor to waist lift 50 lbs.
- Sustained shoulder-height work
- Ladder climb
- Basic back assessment
- Check to ensure you do not exceed the weight restriction for haul truck seats
- Hearing test
- Vision test
- Leg measurements to ensure you can reach the Haul Truck's pedals

- **How long do my legs have to be?**

The testing protocol for the leg stature is for the client to sit on a chair with their back against or supported by the chair. They extend their legs in the driving position, the measured reach distance can extend from 20 – 40 inches comfortably and for 3 minutes.

- **I wear glasses. Can I still take the course?**

Provided that you have adequate depth perception and night vision to operate heavy equipment, corrective lenses (in the form of prescription safety glasses) are acceptable to the mines, and therefore to us. Please note that contact lenses are **not** permitted at any of our partner mines.

- **I have hearing aids, or received an “abnormal” audiogram result on my Physical Demands Test. Can I still take the course?**

Provided that you can provide DriverCheck with a report from your audiologist such that they can provide us with an “abnormal – no safety concerns” result, yes.

- **What if I have high blood pressure?**

The physical demands test, which you must pass to be accepted, starts with a blood pressure test. If your blood pressure is too high, the test will not continue, and you will not be accepted into the course. We recommend that all health-related concerns be addressed with your doctor prior to your physical demands test.

- **What if I've had a heart attack?**

When you have your physical demands test, bring a note from your doctor permitting you to exert yourself.

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- **What if I have another medical condition?**

If you have or previously had a medical or health condition that may impact your ability to work, or may be exacerbated by operating heavy equipment, then it is your responsibility to disclose that information to the testing technician, and to provide documentation from your doctor stating that you are able to participate in the physical demands test. If you have any doubts at all as to whether your condition is a concern, check with the testing clinic in advance.

- **Are there any other courses I can take that will improve my chances of being accepted?**

No. There are some on-line preparation courses out there, but past students who took them have reported that they were ultimately not helpful. However, should you be accepted, you will need to complete the OSSA Basic Safety Orientation (or BSO) training prior to your work term starting, so you could get that done while you're waiting.

- **Can I apply again if I don't pass my interview?**

Yes, but you will not be eligible for another interview for a full calendar year, so time your application accordingly, and take some time to practice your interview skills.

- **What is the BSO?**

This Basic Safety Orientation certificate replaces CSTS and OSSA as of July 1, 2015. If you already have CSTS and OSSA tickets dated prior to that, you do not need to get your BSO.

- **Is there funding available for this course?**

No. The course is not eligible for student loans or government grants. Some students have been sponsored for career retraining by Worker's Compensation Board (WCB) or the military, but not Employment Insurance (EI). Some indigenous students have been sponsored by their bands' education funds. Each student is responsible for finding their own source of funding.

- **Is there a payment plan for the course fees?**

No. Payments are required on their due dates. If you do not pay by the due date, you will be cancelled from the course. You may pay your fees in increments, as long as the full amount is paid by the due date.

- **What kind of license or ticket will I get from the course?**

After you pass the course, you will receive a Certificate of Training, which states that you successfully completed the Haul Truck Operator course. There is no change in your driver's license, and you do not obtain an operator's ticket, as Haul Truck Operator and Heavy Equipment Operator are not regulated trades in Alberta.

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- **If I fail one part of the course, will I get a certificate of completion for the parts of the course I passed?**

No. You must pass all aspects of the course, including the simulator driving test, to successfully complete the course. We do not provide certificates for unsuccessful course completion.

- **What is the likelihood of getting a job afterwards?**

Haul Truck Operator is an entry-level position at most mines in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, and therefore there is a steady trickle of demand for new operators. Since January 2016, 99% of our students have obtained paid term work placements, and we estimate that 80% of those have obtained full-time employment in the field.

- **I've heard they're replacing drivers with autonomous (robot) trucks. Is there a future in this job?**

Autonomous haulage systems (AHS) – haul trucks that use GPS and perception technologies to navigate prescribed routes – are being gradually implemented at Suncor, starting with their North Steepbank Extension mine. While an autonomous haul truck does not require a driver, operators are still needed in an autonomous mine. It's important to know that in mines where AHS technology is deployed, operators are still required for shovels, dozers, and other pieces of equipment. Autonomous haulage fleets also need people for supervision, maintenance, and new roles to support and manage the technology.

Currently, Suncor is the only employer implementing AHS trucks.

- **How do I get a work term?**

As of January 2016, all the reasons that one of our partner mines would have to reject you should come up during the admissions process, such that, if you are accepted into the course, successfully complete it, and meet any other requirements, there will be a work term for you.

- **What if I don't get a work term?**

If you do not get a work term offer from one of our partner mines, we will refund your work term fee in full and do our best to start you on your job search. Ultimately, though, it's up to you to find a job on your own.

- **I've heard I must pass a pre-employment aptitude test. Is that true?**

No

- **Can I choose which mine I get a work term with?**

As of January 2016, all courses are blended such that students will have the opportunity for placement with any of our industry partners. Student selection will be made by drawing lots.

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- **What books/materials do I need to buy?**

You will need CSA-approved, steel-toed work boots with eight-inch laces and anti-skid grips to work on the simulators.

- **What is the expected annual income for a new Haul Truck Operator?**

The answer varies greatly depending on what company you work for, what kind of shift you work, whether you're unionized, how much experience and seniority you have, and how much overtime you work. The annual salary of a haul truck operator could range from \$100K to \$150K.

- **Do the employers provide accommodations/meals/travel allowance?**

Yes, some of our industry partners do.

- **Can I work in the oilsands and commute back and forth from home (outside of Fort McMurray)?**

We have several companies who offer work terms to our students. Some of them have policies that emphasize a strong preference for local employees and will require that you re-locate to the region if they offer you permanent employment. We do have other industry partners that support commuting and will provide camp accommodations and flights in and out.

- **Are there any age restrictions?**

You must be at least 18 years old to apply for the course. There is technically no upper age limit on the course, but you must realistically consider your physical condition and health, and the impact of shift work.

- **Are there accommodations for students at the College?**

Yes. Once you are accepted into the course, you may apply for Student Housing (<http://keyano.ca/continuing-ed/campus-services/student-housing>). You are eligible for Student Housing throughout your course and your work term placement, should you obtain one.

Note that, even if your employment is extended past the six-month work term, you are no longer considered a student, and are therefore no longer eligible to stay in Student Housing. (You are usually permitted to stay in student housing during any gap between the end of your course and the start of your work term.)

- **Is Haul Truck Operator a good career for women?**

Absolutely. About one-third of our students have been women.

- **Can I wear my religious head gear and still operate a haul truck?**

Provided that your head gear doesn't interfere with your vision or hearing, or with the fit of your hard hat or other safety equipment, yes. This may mean arranging your hair differently, as buns do not fit under a hard hat, and may mean a sport hijab or a patka. Please note that hard hats may NOT be modified in any way.

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- **What are the mines looking for in Haul Truck Operators?**

Our partner mines have told us that people who do well as Haul Truck Operators:

- Like to drive.
- Are excited about operating heavy equipment.
- Enjoy being alone, with no social interaction, for their 12-hour shift.
- Are alert and maintain situational awareness during a long, repetitive shift.
- Are cooperative and focused on team success.
- Are trainable