

Camosun College  
Continuing Education

# Activity Assistant Program

March – June 2015



VICTORIA | BRITISH COLUMBIA | CANADA

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## Table of Contents

Who should attend? .....	1
Why should you attend?.....	1
Who is an Activity Assistant? .....	1
• General Duties .....	1
• Personal Qualities for Success .....	2
• You will study .....	2
Program Learning outcomes .....	3
Course descriptions. ....	3
Schedule.....	6
Practicum Schedule .....	6
• Observational Practicum I.....	6
• Full Practicum II.....	6
Admission requirements.....	7
Program Participation requirements .....	7
• Information session .....	7
• Criminal record check.....	7
• Requirements before full Practicum II .....	7
Program Costs.....	8
• Refund policy.....	8
• Financial aid may be available.....	8
Application procedures.....	9
Frequently asked questions .....	10
Important Numbers .....	11



## Who should attend?

If you know you have a keen interest in working with older adults with cognitive and physical challenges, you may be interested in becoming an Activity Assistant. You must have a Resident Care Attendant Certificate (RCA) or the equivalent (eg. RN or LPN) in order to have the background required to be an Activity Assistant.

## Why should you attend?

### **This program:**

- Has a first rate curriculum
- Is taught by professionals bringing the real world into the classroom
- Is part-time thereby allowing you to continue to work if you are employed
- “Spreads out” learning over a longer period of time thereby allowing integration of the curriculum
- Provides practicum placements in a variety of settings

## Who is an Activity Assistant?

Activity Assistants, also known as Activation Aides, plan and implement, under supervision, individual and group activities. Settings include private and public employers, intermediate care facilities, assisted living settings, adult day care programs, clients’ homes, seniors’ centres or residential group homes. They work collaboratively with other team members, families and volunteers.

### **General Duties**

Dependent upon the facility, you may perform the following duties:

- Assist in the development and evaluation of individualized programs and ongoing evaluation of activity program
- Prepare and maintain activity areas for programs
- Assist residents to and from activities in a safe and courteous manner
- Facilitate the continued involvement of residents in outside activities and social relationships
- Advocate for residents rights and responsibilities
- Utilize and direct volunteers where appropriate

## **Personal Qualities for Success**

To be successful as an Activity Assistant, you must:

- Lead by example – engage in an active lifestyle with a variety of interests
- Use good verbal and non-verbal communication and interpersonal skills
- Demonstrate a kind, caring and respectful approach with residents, families and visitors
- Work effectively with others in a multi-disciplinary team setting
- Use good observational and reporting skills
- Be able to problem solve
- Be tactful and diplomatic
- Respond effectively in an emergency
- Be dependable
- Be willing to take direction
- Be able to work competently without constant supervision
- Must be in good health and well-groomed
- Must have the physical capabilities which are compatible with walking; bending; lifting heavy residents; helping residents to stand, sit, walk and exercise; moving furniture and activity equipment

## **You Will Study**

- Health and Wholeness
- Role of Activity Assistant
- Interdisciplinary Care Team
- Activity as a Part of Life
- Activity Programming
- Working with Groups/Individuals
- Ethics and Decision making
- Care Plans
- Physical Illnesses in the Geriatric Population
- Programming Activities for Clients with Dementia/Alzheimer's Disease/Depression
- Care for the Caregiver

## Program Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the Activity Assistant program, the graduate will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the individual as a whole, his/her needs, rights and values.
2. Recognize the value and impact of meaningful, purposeful activities for individuals.
3. Plan activities that will enhance/restore or maintain a resident's/client's skills and abilities in the areas of daily living, productivity and leisure.
4. Apply effective interaction skills with individuals, groups and teams.
5. Apply knowledge of modifying activities to meet resident/client needs.
6. Demonstrate knowledge of environment and resources in the provision of activities.
7. Demonstrate the skills to observe and monitor changes in behaviors and report to Activity Coordinator.

## Course Descriptions

### Framework for Activity Assistant Role (ACAS 250)

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#### Course Description

This course assists students in understanding their role as an Activity Assistant. Building on previous knowledge, the students are introduced to the concept of activity and how it influences and is influenced by the components of health, age, interests, values and environment.

#### Learning Outcomes

At the end of the course the student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate the concepts and principles related to basic human needs, components of health, normal aging and the changes that may occur as we age.
2. Describe basic concepts of activity in relation to self.
3. Perform the role of the Activity Assistant in a care setting.
4. Perform the role of the Activity Assistant within an interdisciplinary care team.

## **Activity for Well-Being** (ACAS 251)

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### **Course Description**

This course builds on ACAS 250 and 270 (Practicum I; Observation) to assist students to gain knowledge and skills that will allow them to function effectively in the Activity Assistant role. The course emphasizes a client-centered approach and effective communication skills in planning and implementing activities that promote optimal well-being of clients, both individually and in groups. The process of providing activities is examined as it relates to clients, families, volunteers and the interdisciplinary healthcare team.

### **Learning Outcomes**

At the end of the course the student will be able to:

1. Describe the concept of activity as part of life.
2. Describe how the client-centered approach can be used in the cooperative planning and implementation of appropriate activities.
3. Apply principles of activity programming to a variety of group activities.
4. Follow principles of client-centered goals, activities, implementation and evaluation.
5. Describe the nature of groups and group processes, and utilization of group facilitation skills.
6. Explain how care plans for individual clients play a role in activity planning.

## **Programming Activities for Clients with Dementia** (ACAS 252)

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### **Course Description**

This course builds on ACAS 250, 251 and 270. Students will enhance their knowledge of dementia, especially Alzheimer's disease. This course provides ideas and strategies for activity involvement with the cognitively impaired client. A brief overview of depression and suitable activities is provided.

### **Learning Outcomes**

At the end of the course the student will be able to:

1. Define the different types of dementia.
2. Recognize and describe the symptoms and progressions of Alzheimer's disease.
3. Apply principles of activity programming and activity analysis to the cognitively impaired client.
4. Identify activities that may be beneficial to persons experiencing depression.
5. Review care for the caregiver.
6. Recognize the importance of assessing functional ability when planning activities for clients with Alzheimer's disease.



## **Practicum I (Observation) (ACAS 270)**

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### **Course Description**

This practicum observation course provides the opportunity through job shadowing for students to observe and assist with the provision of activities for clients within select care settings. Students attend three full days at the selected site over a four week period.

### **Learning Outcomes**

At the end of the course the student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the client/resident as a whole – former roles, values, needs and strengths.
2. Demonstrate good understanding of skills and resources required to assist in the provision of activities within their practicum setting.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the value of activity for those clients in a care setting.

## **Practicum II (ACAS 271)**

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### **Course Description**

Building on ACAS 270 Practicum I (Observation), this practicum of 120 hours provides experiences that enable students to develop skills and resources to effectively assist in the provision of activities within a care setting. Students have up to 7 weeks to complete this practicum.

### **Learning Outcomes**

At the end of the course the student will be able to:

1. Apply a resident centered approach when assisting with the provision of activities within a care setting.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of residents' changing needs and strengths related to their physical, emotional, social and cognitive status.
3. Perform planned activities in a safe and organized manner.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of activity modification.
5. Demonstrate effective interpersonal communication, both written and verbal with clients, families, groups and health care team.
6. Demonstrate an understanding of groups and group process.
7. Demonstrate sound judgment, creativity and resourcefulness in the provision of activities.

# Schedule

In order to accommodate working students' schedules, the Activity Assistant Program is offered over 6 weekends between March and May. Students will also be expected to complete 22.5 hours of observational practicum in March/April, and are given a 6 week period to complete 120 hours of full practicum in May/June. Classroom hours are: Friday 5-8pm (3 hrs), Saturday 9-3 (6hrs), and Sunday 9-3 (6 hrs).

The schedule is as follows (subject to change):

## March - June 2015 Schedule

<b>Week 1</b>	Friday, March 6	Saturday, March 7	Sunday, March 8
<b>Week 2</b>	Friday, March 20	Saturday, March 21	Sunday, March 22
<b>Week 3</b>	Friday, March 27	Saturday, March 28	Sunday, March 29
<b>Week 4</b>		Saturday, April 11	Sunday, April 12
<b>Week 5</b>	Friday, April 24	Saturday, April 25	Sunday, April 26
<b>Week 6</b>		Saturday, May 2	Sunday, May 3
<b>Observational Practicum I</b> of 22.5 hours will take place from March 23 – April 24 (on-site observation over five weeks)			
<b>Full Practicum II</b> of 120 hours will take place from May 4 – June 19			

# Practicum Schedule

There are two practicums in the Activity Assistant program. Each one takes place at a different site, and neither can be at a site that you currently work at. Past graduates of this program consistently report that the Practicum experiences were a highlight of the program for them; as an experienced RCA, it is a great opportunity to view how Activity Aide work is done in other facilities.

Practicum sites are approved by Camosun College. Students are given a list of approved sites and are expected to contact them to arrange placement at a mutually convenient time. A Criminal Record Check must be completed prior to the first practicum site visit – please see *Criminal Record Check requirement, page 7*.

## Observational Practicum I

You will complete three day-long on-site visits for your Observational Practicum during March/April. You will job-shadow an Activity Assistant throughout your shift, to observe and integrate what you have learned to-date.

## Full Practicum II

We have extended the time to complete this practicum, to enable working students to continue earning some income. The 120 hour full practicum takes place over six weeks between May and June. For optimal learning and integration of your new skills, you will be expected to attend practicum a minimum of 3 days per week during this period.

# Admission Requirements

Prospective students must submit proof of:

- Resident Care Attendant (RCA) or Home Support/Residential Care (HSRC) certificate or Health Care Assistant (HCA) certificate or equivalent credential (e.g. RN or LPN)

# Program Participation Requirements

## 1. Information Session

In order to participate in the Activity Assistant program, you **MUST** register for and attend a free information session. Dates are posted on the website at [camosun.ca/ce](http://camosun.ca/ce). Please check this website the day of your scheduled session, as cancellations may be posted.

If you are reapplying for the program and/or attended an Activity Assistant Information Session in the past, you must attend one of these scheduled Information Sessions to receive the current program information. *If you are unable to attend a scheduled session, please contact the Program Coordinator at 250-370-3136.*

## 2. Criminal Record Check

The *Criminal Record Review Act* requires that students registered in a post secondary program where they may be working with children and/or vulnerable adults, must have a criminal record check done through the B.C. Government's Criminal Record Review program. The Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, Policing and Community Safety Branch / Ministry of Justice is the authorized body under the Act to make the determination of risk.

**Any student found to be at risk by the Ministry will not be able to participate in clinical/practicum experiences, and may therefore be unable to complete the program. Please refer to the special refund policy that applies for this program.**

Information regarding application for the appropriate Criminal Record Check will be provided during the first months of class, prior to the practicum. Students are responsible for all associated costs <http://camosun.ca/learn/fees/miscfees.html>.

Please refer to the special refund policy that applies for the Activity Assistant program.

Note: Any Criminal Record Checks done outside of the College will not be accepted and will result in additional cost to the student.

## 3. Requirements before Practicum II

(Proof to be submitted to instructor by before Practicum II)

- Standard First Aid Certificate (including CPR, Level C)
- FoodSafe Level 1 Certificate

# Program Costs

## Tuition

Program tuition: \$2,750 (2015). GST is not applicable for this program.

*Includes: All course materials, practicum placement, program support, guest speakers, and Camosun supports Counselling and the Disability Resource Centre.*

- A \$500 non-refundable registration deposit (due by the date indicated on the letter offering you a seat and applied to your tuition)
- \$1250 non-refundable tuition is due February 20, 2015
- \$1000 non-refundable tuition is due April 24, 2015.

You must meet payment dates or you will forfeit your seat and must reapply. Credit cards can be used to pay both deposit and tuition for all certificate programs.

Financial aid may be available, please refer to separate handout for information on external awards, scholarships and bursaries.

## Other costs (not included)

Application fee (non-refundable)	\$38.64
Criminal Record Check	\$50 (approx.)
Name tag for worksite placement	\$18 (approx)
Parking (see <a href="http://camosun.ca">camosun.ca</a> for current rates)	

## Financial aid

- Because this is a part-time program, students do not qualify for a Canada Student Loan.
- External Awards (<http://camosun.ca/services/financialaid/external-funds.html>)
- Human Resources and Skills Development (HRSDC) may provide financial assistance to recipients of employment insurance. Interested students should contact their local HRSDC office for more information.

## Refund Policy

Note that a "Special Refund Policy" applies to this program.

- A 100% refund, less the \$500 non-refundable registration deposit, is provided up to fourteen (14) calendar days prior to the start date of the program.
- No refunds are provided after this unless approved by the Program Coordinator.
- Exceptions will not be made for declined Criminal Record Checks, which are processed after the program has begun. Students who are unsure if they will have a clear criminal record are encouraged to contact our CRC office at [crimrecchk@camosun.bc.ca](mailto:crimrecchk@camosun.bc.ca) or 250-370-3570 before accepting a seat in the program.

# Application Procedures

The College application form (Application for Admission) can be found at:

<http://camosun.ca/documents/forms/apply/application-form.pdf>

This Program offers seats on a first qualified, first come, first served basis. **You may apply for this program at any time, there is no deadline. It is to your advantage to apply early.** Once your application is processed, you will be sent a letter that will indicate if you have met the admission requirement.

Attendance at an Information Session is a requirement for participating in this program. Please register for an Information Session by calling 250-370-3550 (see page 7) or register on-line at <http://camosun.ca/ce/register.html>. Be sure to sign in when you arrive so that we have a record of your attendance.

Seat Offer letters will be sent to qualified applicants who have attended an Information Session. When you receive your Seat Offer letter, a \$500 non-refundable fee (applied to your tuition) will be due within 2 weeks of the date of the letter. The balance of your tuition is due 14 calendar days prior to the start of the program; please refer to the Fee Schedule page 8. If you do not meet payment dates, your seat will be forfeited.

## How to Apply

*Step 1:* Fill out a College Application and include the non-refundable application fee. Fees may increase annually in September.

*Step 2:* Attach documented proof of all Admission Requirements.

*Step 3:* Submit your application by mail or in person to:

Enrolment and Admission Services  
Interurban Campus, Camosun College  
4461 Interurban Road, Victoria, BC V9E 2C1

*New applicants:* An application fee will be charged for each program of interest for which the student applies. *Continuing students:* An application fee will be charged when changing programs and/or when applying to additional programs.

## Further Program Information

Continuing Education, Health Programs

Phone: 250-370-3103 or Email: [activity@camosun.ca](mailto:activity@camosun.ca)

## Application Inquiries

Enrolment and Admission Services

Phone: 250-370-3550

Toll-free: 1-877-554-7555 (*Canada only*)

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Where is Camosun?**

Camosun is located in Victoria, BC, Canada. Camosun has two main campuses: Lansdowne Campus, 3100 Foul Bay Road and Interurban Campus, 4461 Interurban Road.

All classes will take place at the Lansdowne Campus in the Wilna Thomas Building.

Parking information and campus maps can be found at [camosun.ca/services](http://camosun.ca/services).

## **What are the job opportunities?**

At present, work in this field mainly consists of part-time, casual, and on-call opportunities. There is a high need for workers to fill these shifts, especially in private and affiliate centres. Wages are comparable to current RCA wages.

Please note that some employers MAY require the following as conditions of employment:

- Class 4 driver's licence
- Clear Criminal Record Check (separate from the one completed for your Practicum)
- Minimum of one year related work experience

## **How much homework will I have?**

Most students spend about 10 hours a week studying for quizzes and presentations, and completing assignments, although it can be more or less hours depending on your study skills, and familiarity with the material from previous experiences.

## **Are there any health considerations?**

The work environment in which the Activity Assistant graduate may be employed requires lengthy periods of time standing and bending and extensive hand-washing. Any prospective students with back, neck, or arm injury or serious skin disorders such as psoriasis, eczema, dermatitis or latex allergy should consider carefully before making application to this program.

As in most health care professions you are in close contact with infectious diseases.

Students with significant health challenges are advised to discuss concerns with their physician and to consult with the Program Coordinator at 250-370-3136.

The flu vaccine is highly recommended and is available at your local health clinic or through your physician.

## What do I need to graduate?

To complete the program and obtain the *Certificate in Activity Assistant*, you must:

- Successfully complete the requirements of each theory course with a minimum of “C+” (65%):  
ACAS 250 – Framework for Activity Assistant Role  
ACAS 251 – Activity for Well-Being  
ACAS 252 – Programming Activities for Clients with Dementia
- Successfully obtain a “COM” grade (*student has met the goals, criteria, or competencies established for this course, practicum or field placement*) for:  
ACAS 270 – Practicum I (Observation)  
ACAS 271 – Practicum II



All course modules and the practicum are mandatory. Each course must be successfully completed and passed in order to progress to the next course.

## Important Numbers

Camosun Academic Advising..... 250-370-3550  
<http://camosun.ca/services/advising/>

Camosun Disability Resource Centre..... 250-370-3312  
<http://camosun.ca/services/drc/>

Camosun Enrollment Services (Registration)..... 250-370-3550

Camosun Financial Aid and Awards..... 250-370-3550  
<http://camosun.ca/services/financialaid/>

Valerie Montague, Program Coordinator ..... 250-370-3136  
Activity Assistant Program  
Camosun College  
[activity@camosun.ca](mailto:activity@camosun.ca)

BC High School Transcripts, Ministry of Education..... 250-356-7269  
<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca>. Regardless of when you graduated high school, a copy of your transcript is still available.

### Outside BC:

Call your high school or the local school board and they will send you a copy at minimal cost. Regardless of when you graduated high school, a copy of your transcript is still available.