Medical Office Assistant and Unit Clerk

SCHOOL OF HEALTH AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Overview

Our Medical Office Assistant and Unit Clerk program offers an integrated approach to healthcare administration, blending practical skills with foundational knowledge.

This comprehensive program is designed for those aiming to excel in unit clerk and medical office assistant roles.

In this program, you will:

- learn the basic concepts of medical terminology, including suffixes, prefixes, root words and combining forms
- learn the day-to-day operations of a medical office, including appointment scheduling, health and safety techniques, public relations and clinical skills
- understand how to organize the workplace efficiently, manage time effectively and maintain professional workflow systems
- master the skills required to manage patient records accurately, ensuring confidentiality and compliance with regulations
- gain expertise in standard office software as well as specialized healthcare management applications
- get acquainted with emerging technologies that facilitate patient care and enhance service delivery
- acquire the ability to handle billing processes, insurance claims and understand the financial aspects of medicine and healthcare services
- learn the legal aspects of handling health information, focusing on record security, confidentiality and authorized disclosure of patient information
- create a cover letter and resume, and practice effective communication and conflict management skills.

When you graduate, you'll be ready for roles such as medical office assistant, secretary, and in-patient and out-patient unit clerk in various healthcare settings, including hospitals, doctor's offices, radiology clinics, and rehabilitation centers.

If you are detail-oriented, have excellent communication skills and a passion for healthcare administration, this program is your key to entering the workforce as a professional in the healthcare administration field.

Traits, skills and aptitudes

Those in the medical office assistance field tend to be social, objective and directive.

You need:

- discretion
- critical thinking
- communication, organizational and time-management skills
- attention to detail
- adaptability
- interpersonal skills to establish a professional rapport with and instil confidence in patients
- conflict-resolution skills to deal effectively with the sometimes-difficult behaviours of people in distress
- the ability to maintain accuracy while multitasking or working under pressure
- a mature attitude toward the human body, wellness and disease processes
- the ability to work independently or as part of a team
- the ability to type 30 words per minute (wpm)
- to be comfortable sitting for long periods.

You should enjoy dealing with people, be comfortable using different types of computers and tech, and like compiling and organizing information.

You may be exposed to latex and disinfection materials or assist in performing some patient care procedures, which may be sensitive or performed in close proximity to the patient.

You are strongly encouraged to refer to the ALIS website for career, learning, and employment information for medical office assistants

and unit clerks to ensure you can successfully meet the occupational requirements for the program and profession.

SAIT program pathways

Graduates of SAIT's Pre-Health Sciences program may meet the admission requirements for this program.

Practicum, Co-op and Work Integrated Learning

You will complete a required practicum at a healthcare facility or medical office.

You will be assigned practicum placements with consideration given to your preference of location. However, due to limited availability in Calgary, it might be necessary for you to travel or relocate outside the city.

The healthcare field has a strong focus on health, wellness, and fitness to practice due to the demanding nature of the work and Occupational Health and Safety requirements. As such, special considerations will not be granted based on individual circumstances or preferences, except those stated as protected grounds when an accommodation has been approved.

In compliance with the practica agreements with our clinical partners, you will be required to provide specific documentation before you can participate in your practicum. Find out what requirements you need for this program.

Credentials

Upon successful completion of this program, you'll be awarded a SAIT Medical Office Assistant and Unit Clerk certificate.

Admission requirements

Applicants educated in Canada

Applicants must demonstrate English language proficiency and meet the following requirements or equivalents:

- at least 60% in English Language Arts 30-1 or English Language Arts 30-2

SAIT accepts high school course equivalents for admission for applicants educated outside Alberta.

Applicants educated outside of Canada

All applicants who were educated outside of Canada must demonstrate English language proficiency and provide proof they meet the program admission requirements with an international document assessment. Find accepted educational documents and assessment options.

SAIT may also accept courses completed at certain international post-secondary institutions.

Costs

2026/27 tuition and fees

The following estimated costs are effective as of July 1, 2026.

The estimated total cost of tuition and fees is based on the full-time suggested schedule of study. Following the part-time schedule will impact the fees you pay per semester and may alter final costs.

Domestic Students

Year	Number of semesters	Tuition fees	Additional fees	Total per year
1	1.5*	$6,552	$1,333.75	$7,885.75
			Total cost:	**$7,885.75**

The estimated total cost of tuition and fees for domestic students is based on the recommended course load per year.

*.5 indicates a combination of full-time semester(s) and part-time semester(s) in the same academic year. In many cases, students are completing a practicum during their part-time semester. Part-time students are those taking less than nine (9) course credits in a semester. You will not be eligible for the UPass in your part-time semester.

Books and Supplies

Books and supplies are approximately $650 per full-time year.

This is a bring-your-own-device program with a standard computer hardware and software requirement. See the specific requirements on our computers and laptops page. A laptop is preferred over tablets or phones.

Find your booklist on the SAIT Bookstore's website. Booklists are created by semester and available approximately two weeks before classes begin.

Required personal protective equipment (PPE)

The industry-approved PPE you'll need will be discussed during your first few days of classes.

Additional fees

- A fee is associated with obtaining a police information check, including a vulnerable sector check, payable to the police or the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP).
- The School of Health and Public Safety strongly recommends that students meet Alberta Health Services' Standard for Immunization of Post-Secondary Health Care Students. Fees for completing immunization requirements start at $85, however, may increase, depending on your vaccination history, and any new immunizations you choose to acquire.
- A fee of approximately $50 to $100 is associated with an electronic student permit checking submission required for clinical practicum placements, payable to Synergy Gateway through the Verified software platform.
- You are responsible for additional expenses related to your practicum, including pre-practicum requirements and relocation costs to practicum sites outside of Calgary.