Respiratory Therapy

SCHOOL OF HEALTH AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Overview

Our intensive Respiratory Therapy program trains you to diagnose, treat, and manage cardio-respiratory patients in various medical settings.

This program leverages theory and practical application to equip you with the skills needed for a successful career.

In this program, you will:

- learn life-saving procedures like cardiopulmonary resuscitation and advanced ventilator management
- master oxygen and aerosol therapies to support patient breathing
- develop comprehensive skills in patient evaluation
- gain experience with pulmonary function testing and blood analysis
- engage in simulations that mimic real patient responses in SAIT's Centre for Advanced Patient Care Simulation
- acquire hands-on experience in diverse settings, including ICU, emergency departments and home care environments
- benefit from classroom studies that cover new technologies and best practices in care for the respiratory system.

Embark on a career as a therapist in acute and community care settings, diagnostic labs and beyond. With experience, you can move into education, research, administration or management roles within the healthcare sector.

With a history of training successful graduates since 1970, our program is a beacon for those looking to make an impact in respiratory therapy.

Traits, skills and aptitudes

Respiratory therapists tend to be objective, methodical and innovative.

You need:

- effective communication skills
- organization, critical thinking and problem-solving skills
- the ability to tolerate the sight of human blood and tissue
- physical stamina to transport, lift, and position patients and equipment
- compassion and an interest in caring for others
- the ability to act quickly and decisively in a crisis
- the ability to work well under stress, maintain professional behaviour and regulate your emotions
- the ability to work on your own and within a team.

You will need to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) for long periods, which includes exposure to latex and other disinfection materials. You should be comfortable performing patient care procedures in very close proximity to your patients.

Some roles require extended work hours and shift work, including nights and weekends.

You are encouraged to refer to the ALIS website for career, learning, and employment information for respiratory therapists and the National Competency Framework for the profession 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'll complete practicum rotations in adult, pediatric and neonatal intensive care units, the emergency department, anesthesia, wards, home care, pulmonary function and blood gas labs.

Your shifts may occur at any time of day (including overnights), on weekdays or on weekends. During the program's third-year practicum rotations, you'll spend most of your time in the workplace but will be required to return to SAIT for a short period each semester, regardless of your practicum location.

You will be assigned practicum placements with consideration given to your preference of location. However, due to limited availability in Calgary, you might need 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.

In addition to the standard requirements, you'll need to complete the Neonatal Resuscitation Program offered by the Canadian Pediatric Society. Proof of completion must be submitted before your fifth semester. The certification must be valid for the entire practicum year.

Accreditations, designations and certifications

Our Respiratory Therapy program is accredited by Accreditation Canada. SAIT works closely with our advisory committee to ensure our curriculum continues to exceed provincial and national accreditation standards.

Graduates must successfully challenge the Health Professionals Testing Canada (HPTC) examination to earn the right to practice respiratory therapy in Canada. Most provinces in Canada also have a provincial regulatory body, which you will need to register with, in order to work in that province.

All graduates may become members of the Canadian Society of Respiratory Therapists (CSRT) by paying the membership fee, and this is required to practice in an unregulated province.

If you intend to work in Alberta after graduation and your first language is not English, you will need to meet the English language requirements of the College of Respiratory Therapists of Alberta (CRTA). Other regulators may also have specific language proficiency requirements. Please contact the regulator of the province you wish to work in to determine their specific requirements.

Credentials

Upon successful completion of this program, you'll be awarded a SAIT Respiratory Therapy diploma.

Admission requirements

Applicants educated in Canada

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

- at least 70% in Math 30-1 or at least 75% in Math 30-2, and
- at least 70% in English Language Arts 30-1, and
- at least 70% in Chemistry 30, and
- at least 70% in Biology 30

You must also achieve at least 50% in the School of Health and Public Safety's entrance testing process.

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 suggested schedule of study. Following a modified 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	2	$5,623.50	$1,764.50	$7,388
2	2	$5,623.50	$1,764.50	$7,388
3	3	$6,748.20	$1,905*	$8,653.20
			Total cost:	**$23,429.20**

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

If you began this program prior to July 2026, the following rates apply:

Year	Number of semesters	Tuition fees	Additional fees	Total per year
1	2	$5,370	$1,764.50	$7,134.50
2	2	$5,370	$1,764.50	$7,134.50
3	3	$6,444	$1,905*	$8,349
			Total cost:	**$22,618**

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

*You will be ineligible for the UPass during your third year.

Why are there two tuition rates for domestic students? Learn more about ETI adjustments.

International Students

The program total is based on the estimated amount you will pay if you enter this program during the 2026/27 academic year. The program total amount listed on your letter of admission may appear higher. This amount is your maximum tuition guarantee for the program. SAIT will not exceed this maximum, regardless of changes in tuition and fees between academic years.

Year	Number of semesters	Tuition fees	Additional fees	Total per year
1	2	$18,180	$1,764.50	$19,944.50
2	2	$18,180	$1,764.50	$19,944.50
3	3	$21,816	$1,905*	$23,721
			Total cost:	**$63,610**

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

*You will be ineligible for the UPass during your third year.

Books and Supplies

Books and supplies are approximately $2,500 per full-time year.

Books, laptops and computers

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 device that supports LockDown Browser and Respondus Monitor and is equipped with a microphone and camera is also required to access program assessments.

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

Lab supply kit

You are required to purchase a lab supply kit for your labs. To get your kit:

1. Pay for a kit at the SAIT Bookstore.
2. Bring your receipt to the appropriate instructor, who will provide you with your Lab Kit in exchange for proof of payment.

Personal protective equipment (PPE) and uniform

You will need your uniform for orientation day, so order your uniform early. You are expected to wear scrubs for all simulated labs, including the Centre for Advanced Patient Care Simulation, and at clinical/practicum. Only specific styles and colours of scrubs are approved for this program.

Approved scrubs can be purchased at Universal Workwear.

Stethoscopes

A stethoscope is part of your uniform and is also available at Universal Workwear. Stethoscopes need to be brought to all patient assessment labs and simulation labs.



Students outside of Calgary

If you live outside the Calgary area, you have two options to purchase your uniform:

1. Wait until you move to Calgary to order your uniform in person so that you can try on the tops before your name is embroidered and the SAIT crest is added. If you choose this option, please allow yourself at least two to three days for Universal Workwear to have it ready for pick-up, as you must wear your uniform to Orientation.
2. Find a local scrub provider who carries the **MOBB brand** of scrubs, and try them on for fit. Then, place your order by calling Universal Workwear at 1.866.442.7303 (toll-free) so they may have your uniform ready for you once you arrive in Calgary. If you use this option, please review the photo of your uniform to know what to look for.

Additional fees

- A fee of $375 is associated with the CompTracker application used in this program.
- A fee of $200 (USD) is associated with the EHR Go application used in this program.
- 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.
- The Health Professionals Testing Canada (HPTC) exam fee is approximately $900.
- Annual dues for the College of Respiratory Therapists of Alberta (CRTA) are approximately $425.
- Annual dues for the Canadian Society of Respiratory Therapists (CSRT) are approximately $180 for regular members.