

# Environmental scan of EAP program providers at universities across Canada:

## Insights for EAP Program Leaders and Academic Managers

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# Agenda:

Background

Internationalization at English-medium public universities in Canada

Embedded English Language Program Providers (EELPPs)

Programs within EELPPs

Linking findings to existing research

Overarching themes

Looking forward to the future

Shout-outs to specific EELPP websites

Questions

# Background

## 1. Practitioner as Learner

- why a PhD?
- my research study

## 2. Environmental Scan

- purpose
- passive scan
- website as data source
- search protocol: (62 universities; 50 have one or more EELPPs; 55 EELPPs identified)
- manual web scraping



# Internationalization at English-medium public universities in Canada

# The Basics: Rankings, International in Undergraduate, Tuition

## 1. Rankings

- QS Rankings: Half of universities scanned had a QS Ranking; the rest ranged from 21<sup>st</sup> place to the 1200 – 1400 block

## 2. International in Undergraduate

- 2023: 28% average (Times Higher Education - but only for universities that ranked [about 50% of 62 identified])

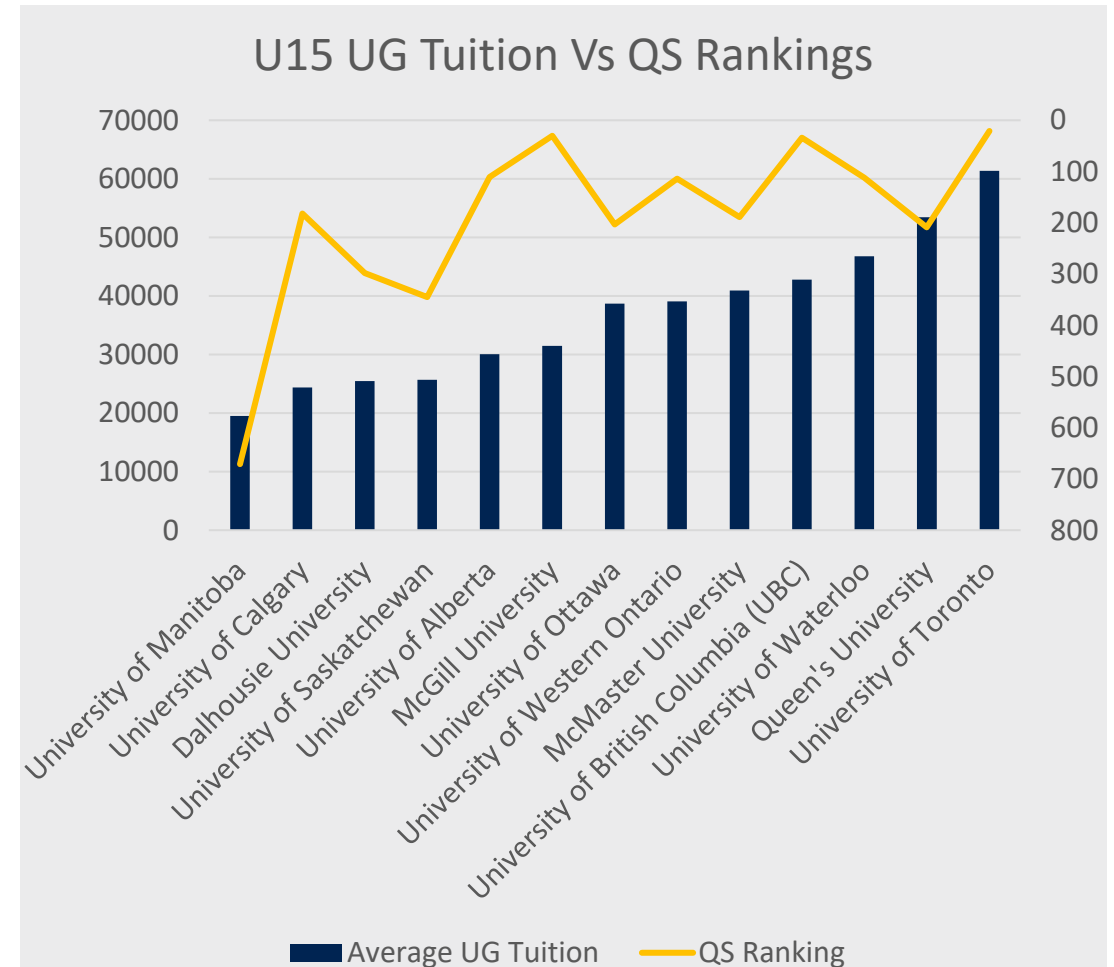
## 3. Undergraduate Tuition

- 22/23: \$30,782 average annual (Universities Canada 22/23 data)

## 4. Comparison of Top 11 in four categories:

Population	Canada QS WR	% INTL UG	Tuition
U of T (89 k)	U of T (21)	UBC (34%)	U of T (\$61 k)
UBC (53 k)	McGill (30)	U of A Arts (34%)	Queen's (\$53 k)
York (46 k)	UBC (34)	S Fraser (31%)	Waterloo (\$46 k)
U of O (41 k)	Alberta (111)	McGill (30%)	UBC (\$43 k)
U of A (40 k)	Waterloo (112)	Windsor (29%)	Carleton (\$43 k)
Waterloo (40 k)	Western (114)	York (28%)	McMaster (\$41 k)
McMaster (35 k)	Calgary (182)	Dal (28%)	Ont Tech (\$40 k)
U of C (34 k)	McMaster (189)	Regina (27%)	Western (\$39 k)
TMU (33 k)	U of O (203)	U of T (26%)	U of O (\$39 k)
McGill (32 k)	Queen's (209)	U of O (24%)	York (\$33 k)
Queen's (29 k)	Dal (298)	Waterloo (23%)	S Fraser (\$32 k)

# Undergraduate Tuition Vs QS Rankings

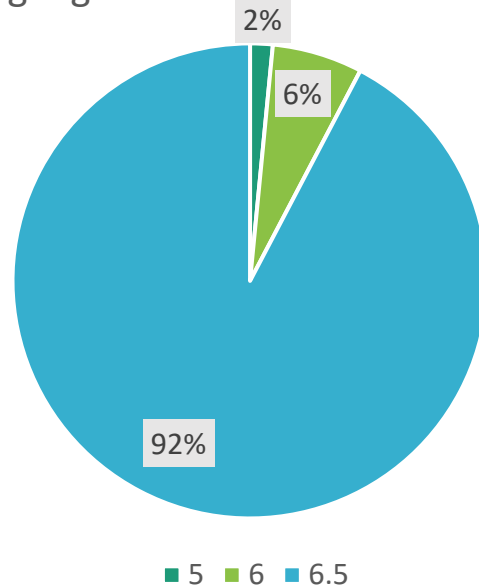


# English as lingua franca: Gatekeeping of English Language Skills

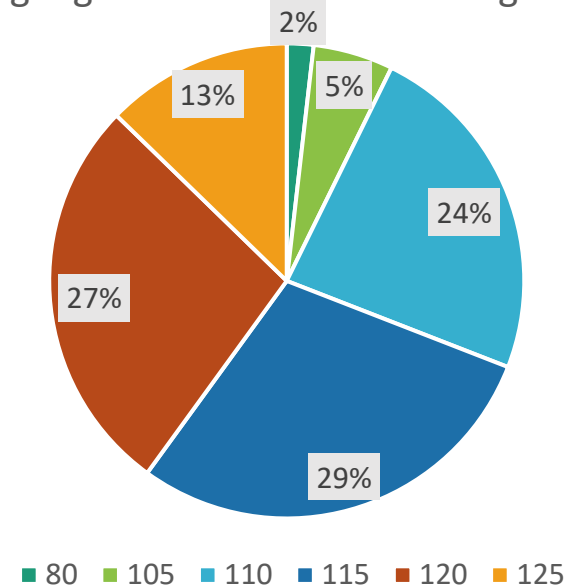
## 1. Standardized Tests

- Some universities accept up to 9 distinct standardized English language tests while others accept only 2 or 3
- 97% of universities scanned indicated they accept IELTS; 92% of these have a required overall score of 6.5; 87% require band subscores)
- 81% of universities scanned indicated they accept Duolingo; 29% of these have a required overall score of 115; 34% require sub-scores

English Language cut offs for UG IELTS Direct Entry

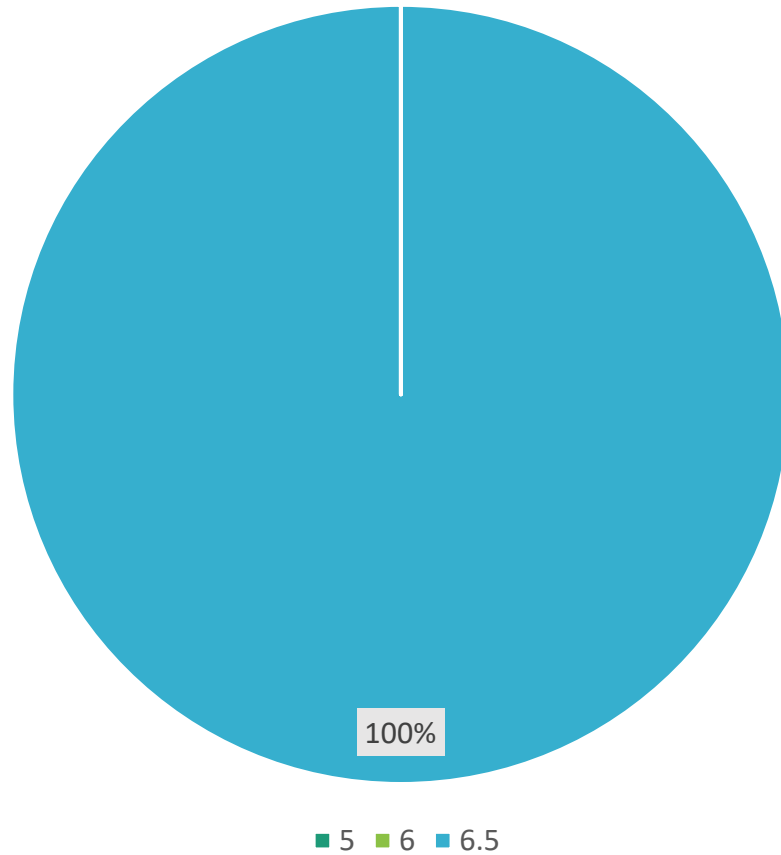


English Language cut offs for UG Duolingo Direct Entry

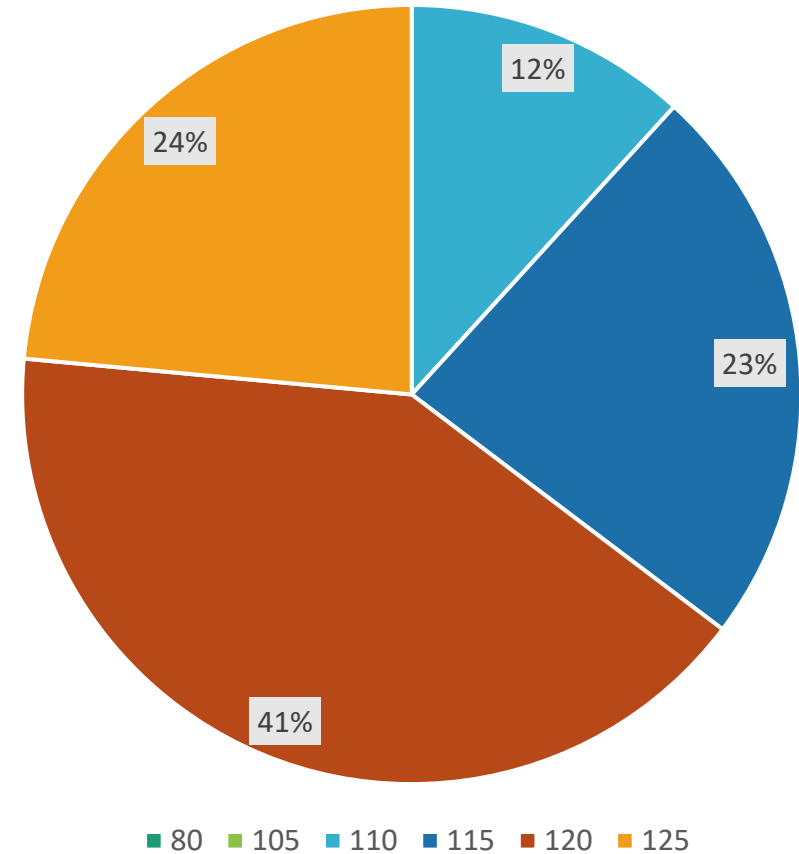


# Standardized Testing (U15): IELTS and Duolingo

English Language cut offs for UG IELTS Direct Entry



English Language cut offs for UG Duolingo Direct Entry





# EELPPs: The Basics

## 1. EELPP

- All 55 EELPPs act as some form of conduit into their respective universities;  
few mention their history / year of origin (31%) or reference a mission / vision (9%)

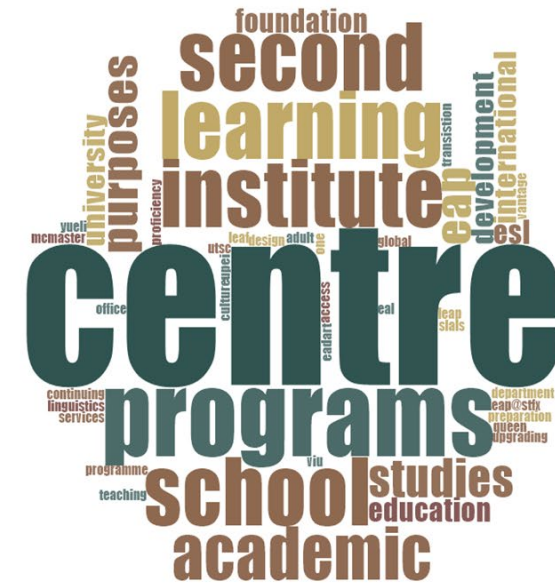
## 2. EELPP Unit Names

- Variety of names and naming conventions such as “institutes”, “centres” “departments”, “schools” “services” or “office”. The rest are referred to by their main programs or more generically by “ESL” or “EAP program”.

## 3. EELPP Unit Locations

- Variety of locations (for 37 that identified this):

Continuing Studies / Extension:	9
Faculties of Education:	7
Academic Dev / Career Prep:	6
International	5
Other:	10



## 4. Members of Languages Canada

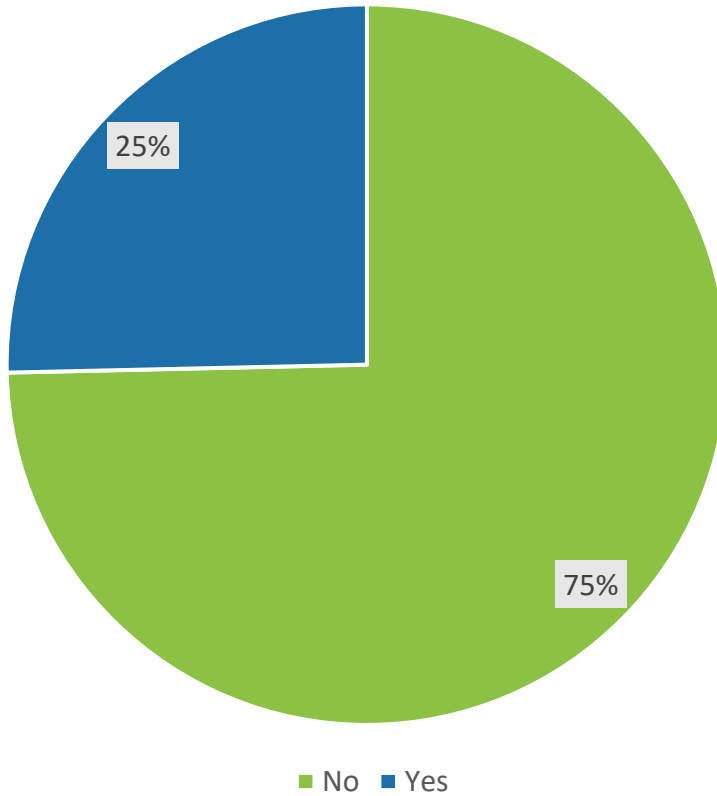
- Only 44% of the 55 EELPPs are members of Languages Canada (according to LC membership list)

# EELPPs: The Basics

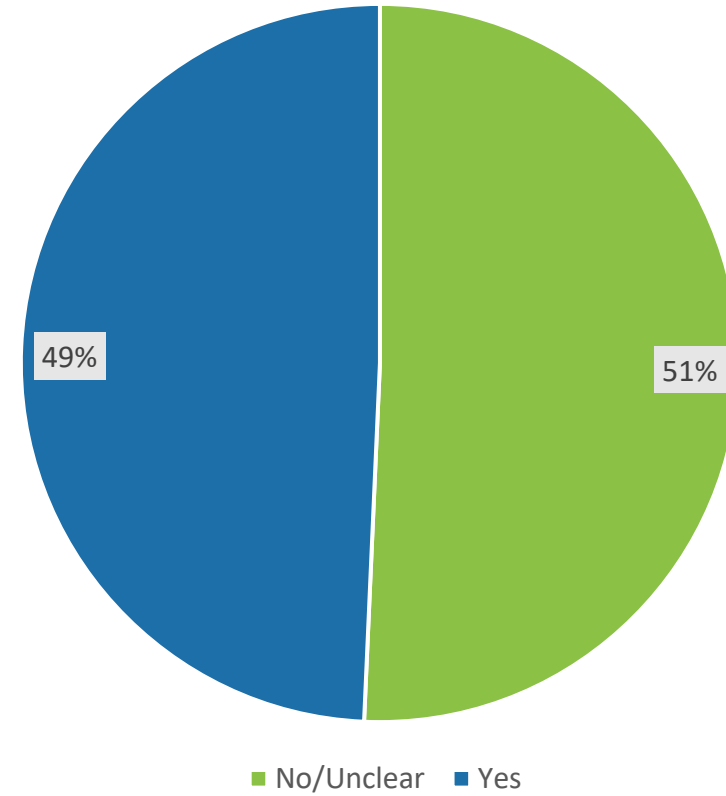


## 5. EELPP and credit courses

Do any EELPP courses count as credit?



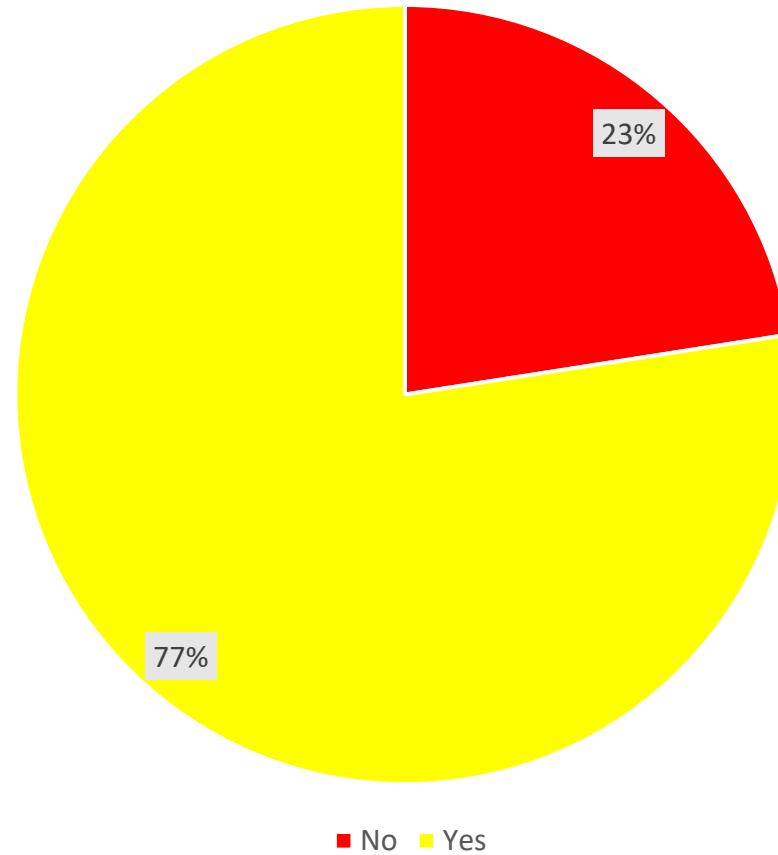
Can Students take academic UG credit courses while in the EELPP?



# EELPPs: The Basics

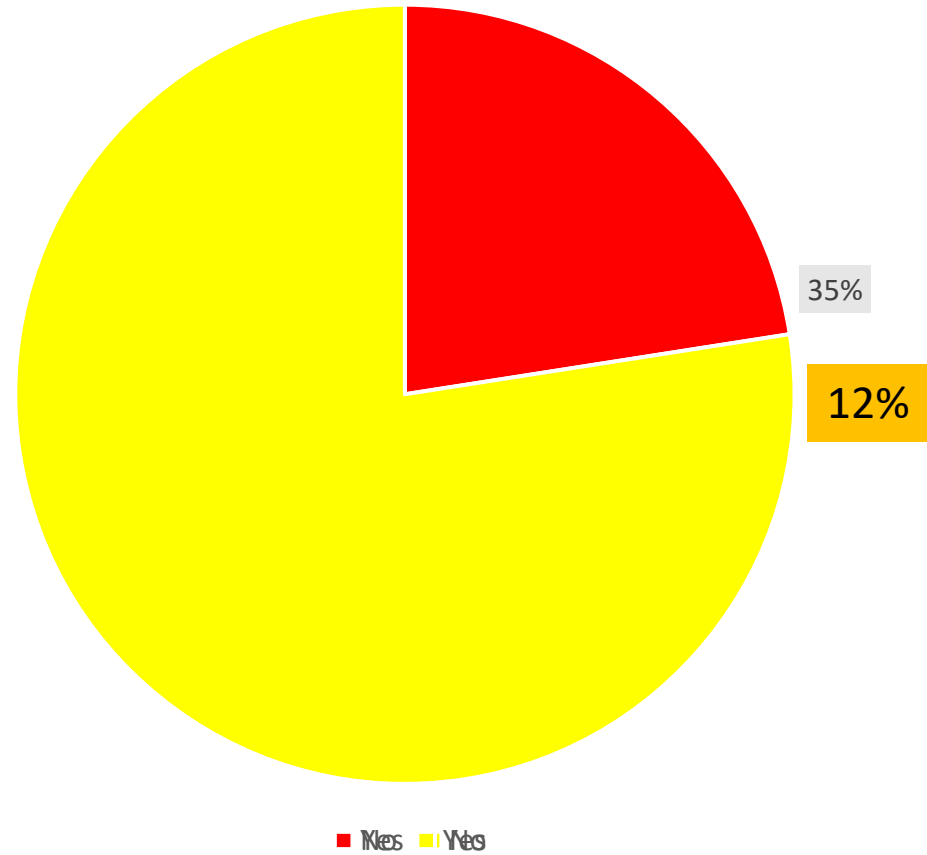
## 6. EELPP and other language pathways

Does the university have an EELPP?



# EELPPs in Public Universities

Does the university accept other ELP ways?



# EELPP Programs





## The Basics: Program names, descriptions, weeks and hours, tuition and fees

### 1. Program Key Words

- The first sentence of each program description was extracted
- WFA results include: skill (83), academics (72), improve (26), speaking (20), writing (20), Reading (18), listening (13), confidence (11), grammar (8) and vocabulary (5).

### 2. EAP Tuition:

- The tuition for EELPP programs ranged from \$.79 to \$500.00 per hour.
- The average was \$31.49 per program hour.

### 3. Application Fee:

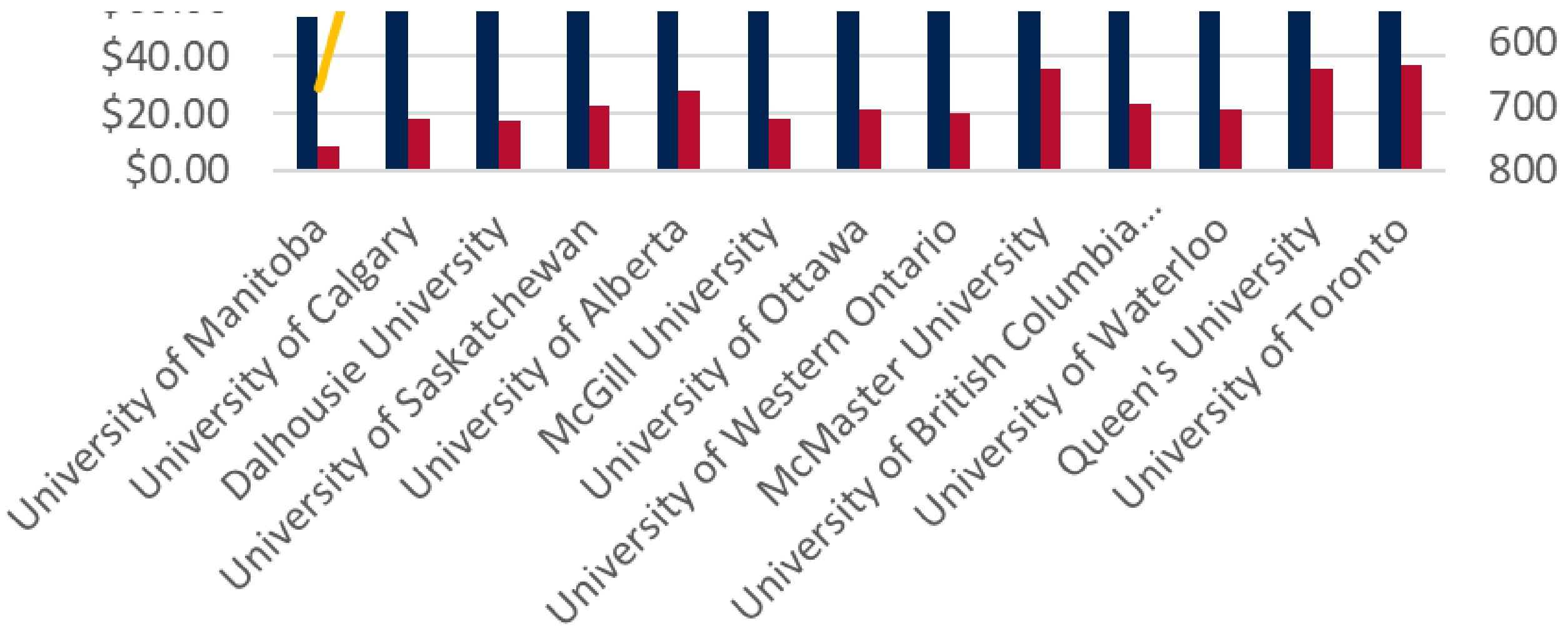
- Average fee is \$134.98 (over 45% noted that they have an application fee)

### 4. EAP scholarships

- Only 24% indicated they provide their own scholarships or bursaries; 20% of these earmarked for domestic and refugees.



# Undergraduate Tuition Vs EAP Tuition Vs QS Ranking





# Linking Findings to Research

## A myriad of lacks...

### 1. Lack of Research

EELPPs at universities in Canada operate within a “dimly lit space” (Corcoran et al, 2022, p. 58).

In the Canadian context of EAP, program provision is “under examined” (Fox et al, 2014, p. 59) with “little available data on EAP programs across Canada” (Corcoran et al, 2022, p. 56).

There is not much in the scholarly literature to offer points of comparison between Canadian EAP programs (Douglas and Landry, 2021). Relatively little is known about the stakeholders for EELPPs, including who studies at them and who works within them (Corcoran et al, 2022).

### 2. Lack of consistency and cohesion

There is “little consensus on fundamental approaches within these programs and an absence of research to document their effectiveness” (Cheng and Fox, 2008, p 311).

It is “difficult for an EAP program to understand where it fits in the overall landscape of EAP in the Canadian context” (Douglas and Landry, 2021, p. 51).

## A myriad of lacks...

### 3. Lack of credibility

Researchers have noted a “degree of ambiguity from students, the university community, and sometimes EAP teachers themselves as to their role and status within the university” (MacDonald, 2016, p. 107)

EELPPs can find themselves to be positioned as more of an “add-on” to a university’s overall structure, taking on a subordinate position that is generally perceived as lower to that of other programs and academic disciplines (Smithwick, 2014)

### 4. Lack of exclusivity (providing English language program pathways to respective universities)

Universities in Canada are also increasingly handing over responsibility for language support to private businesses outside the university, which also hire teachers on short-term contracts and often without the expertise that has characterized language teaching professionals working in university programs (Fox et al, 2014, p. 77).

Universities generally receive a fee as compensation for use of their brand (and sometimes even their physical infrastructure) along with a stream of international students that they didn’t have to recruit themselves (Falvo, 2010).

# Overarching Themes

## 1. Academic Corporatization

Pressures brought about by provincial budget cuts sees universities respond to “globalization and neoliberal policy regimes by becoming more entrepreneurial, and competing intensely for resources and market shares” (Slaughter and Cantwell, 2012, as cited in Cantwell, 2019, p. 516).

Within Canada, it was found that 17% of faculty at one of the largest universities associated the term ‘internationalisation’ with producing income for the institution (Ilieva & Beck, 2014).

## 2. Academic Colonization

Some scholars believe that “internationalization has strengthened Western intellectual imperialism (academic colonialism) and the dependency status of higher education institutions and research in Third World countries” (Hayle, 2016, p. 6).

The main functions the EELPP is as a gatekeeper for students deemed to have a perceived lack of English proficiency and require remediation. This concept of remediation has a “debilitating” effect on English programs as it assumes EELPPs “have nothing to teach but that which should have been taught before” (Swales 1990, as cited in Lakey, 2009, page 4).

# Optimism for Future

## 1. EELPPs are successful!

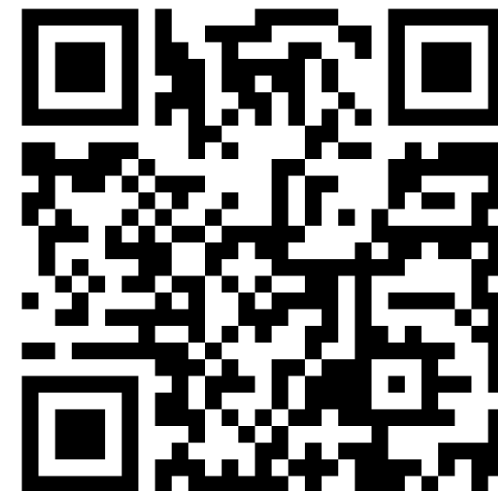
The “best predictors of EAL student success in academic programs, overall, would appear to be EAP courses” (Johnson and Tweedie, 2021, p. 110).

EAP programs make a significant difference in EAL students’ “transition to a new academic study culture in university” (Fox et al, 2014, p. 78).

## 2. Future orientation:

- *Shift to Sustainability and Reciprocity*
- *Credibility and Identity Building*
- *Collaboration across units at respective university*
- *Embrace notion of a third space*
- *Keeping up with shifting demands*
- *Building a nation-wide community and brand*

<https://queensuniversity3.padlet.org/stevemcwilliams/LCConference2024>



# Shout-outs to specific websites

- **Trent University** – Pitching Canada as a destination for language study
- **Royal Roads University** – Land Acknowledgement
- **University of Calgary** – Fantastic brochure
- **Vancouver Island University** – Intuitive and clear layout of how EAP works
- **University of Ottawa** – Relevant and useful FAQs
- **McGill** – Chart describing programs in relation to each other
- **University of Saskatchewan** – Excellent policy document

## Things to avoid:

- Not student-centred, text-heavy, confusing, obscured information (including fees), hard to understand how pathway(s) work, not referenced in parent university admission's page, conflicting information between pages.

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# Questions?

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