



WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE PRIVATE CAREER COLLEGES?

This paper is intended to help Ontario's community colleges as they focus on how to best position themselves to meet the needs of the clients of government funded labour market training programs. It provides an overview of what we know about another major player in the delivery of training to these clients - private career colleges in Ontario.

The information provided comes from the following sources:

1. *Survey of Canadian Career College Students*¹ - a recently released federally-funded research study of students at private career. Data were collected on student characteristics, influences and finances, as well as on typical program durations and tuition costs.
2. Colleges Ontario competitive assessment of private career colleges – internet research and telephone interviews in Spring 2007 on program features such as duration and costs, intake schedule, class size, etc.
3. Data on Skills Development clients by institution type – analysis of data provided by MTCU for the period January – June 2007, the first six months following transfer of the program from federal to provincial responsibility.

1. Survey of Canadian Career College Students

This research represents phase two of a three part research project; phase one comprised an initial assessment of Canadian career colleges and phase three will examine graduate outcomes.

It is estimated that there are 2,423 private career colleges in Canada (596 in Ontario), and that more than 150,000 students enroll in these colleges annually (including more than 52,000 students in Ontario).

The current study was limited to institutions where less than 30% of students were enrolled in either ESL or correspondence programs, and where the institution received less than 50% of its funding from government sources. Three hundred and eighty-four institutions were eligible and agreed to participate. A total of 13,721 students completed the in-class survey.

¹ The research paper available at:
<http://www.millenniumscholarships.ca/en/research/AllPublications.asp>

Key Findings:

Student characteristics

- females significantly outnumbered males, 72% to 28%
- median age was 29 years (only 9% were 19 or younger; 48% were 25 or older)
- 78% spoke English most often at home; 8% spoke French
- 11% reported Aboriginal or native ancestry
- 25% were born outside of Canada (in Ontario, 36% were born outside of Canada). Immigrant students were much more likely to have previous PSE, as compared to Canadian-born students
- 6% reported a disability
- 9% self-identified as a visible minority (13% in Ontario)
- 39% reported a household income of \$20,000 or less, and only 20% reported \$60,000 or more (24% in Ontario)
- One-third of students moved to attend their programs (29% in Ontario)
- 50% of Ontario students were employed prior to starting their programs; 14% were in school
- 60% of students took time off between high school and PSE, anywhere from one to ten or more years. In general, private college students were likely to take multiple breaks, between high school and PSE and between PSE programs

Programs

- Students were most commonly enrolled in Health (39%) or Media/Information Technology (24%) programs. It should be noted that Hairdressing and Beauty/Esthetics/ Cosmetology are included in "Health", accounting for a full 14.5% of students. The largest sub-categories under Media/Information Technology are Office Business Administration (13%) and Computers (5%).
- As well, about 5.5% are enrolled in Hospitality/Tourism/Travel or Culinary/Cook/Chef and apprenticeship training accounts for approximately 12% overall.
- 97% of students were studying full-time (compared to 89% of students at publicly funded institutions).
- Typically, program duration was between 7-12 months (57% in Ontario), but duration varied by program area. Trades/technical programs ranged from 3-12 months; Health, Media/Information Technology and other service programs ranged from 7-23 months.
- Programming in the public college system tends to run for a longer duration: 62% of public college programs run 24 months or longer vs. 12% of private college programs.
- Student satisfaction scores were quite high for most program-related questions (>80%)

Influences

- 72% of students reported that their current private college was their first choice. 12% would have preferred a community college/CEGEP, 8% a university.
- The majority of students reported employment or career-related reasons as main reasons for enrolment
- For school selection, 45% cited short program length, 41% program availability, and 40% institutional reputation/quality as the most important criteria. Other reasons of

interest include: courses not offered in public colleges or university (15%), graduate placement rates (14%), and frequent start dates (11%). Interestingly, only 6% cited cost of the program as a reason for selection.

- 35% of students learned about their programs from friends, 27% from advertising and 27% from a website or other online source.

Financing

- In Ontario, average tuition was \$15,006, with 20% of programs costing more than \$20,000
- 53% of students accessed government student loans, but only 44% of their total expenses were covered by these loans. Family members and EI or other forms of government assistance were the next most common funding sources.
- more than half of students expected to incur debts of more than \$10,000

Conclusion

Private career college students were divided into six general sub-groups:

1. older males, retraining after health concerns or difficulties with previous employment
2. older females, retraining after a leave due to family responsibilities
3. younger individuals attending programs not available at public colleges
4. individuals interested in a short duration program providing specific work skills
5. younger individuals intending to further their education at a college or university
6. immigrants, whose education/credentials were not recognized in Canada

2. Competitive Assessment of Private Career Colleges

In April 2007, Colleges Ontario conducted research into current program delivery practices at selected private career colleges.

This project was carried out in light of the devolution to the province of federal funding for labour market programming (for EI-clients) in January 2007 and the historically low levels of funding for those programs being directed to colleges (approximately 20%, including apprenticeship funding). As well, it was anticipated that additional opportunities could arise with a potential Canada-Ontario agreement for labour market funding for non-EI clients.

Four large career colleges were surveyed (each with 8 to 19 locations across the province), as well as 22 smaller colleges (with between 1 and 6 locations each). Six program areas were covered and 33 program types (see Appendix A).

Key Findings:

Costs

- For purposes of the analysis, costs were calculated based on the duration of the program and all related costs: tuition, books and other fees. This information is available for registered private career colleges by program area and type at: <http://www.riccpcc.serviceontario.ca/pcc/CommandServlet?command=publicreport&c>

[onfig=pccProgram1Html.xml&parm_type_1=StriNG&parm_value_1=EN](#). The site also includes information on locations for each program.

- In general, larger career colleges tend to charge more (and frequently have longer programs) than smaller institutions.
- Cost comparisons of career colleges' programs with apparently similar CAAT delivered programs were complicated by the lack of consistency in program duration, whether on a weekly, monthly or hourly basis.

Appendix B provides selected examples of duration and costs of programs at career colleges for which similar programs exist at some colleges.

Class Size

- 24% programs had classes under 10 students
- 61% had classes of 10 – 20 students
- 15% had classes with more than 20 students (maximum 35 students)

Intakes/Scheduling

Of the 33 institutions/programs/locations, intakes were as follows:

- 7 continuous (daily or weekly)
- 5 twice monthly (every other Monday)
- 5 monthly
- 6 five or six intakes per year
- 10 three to four intakes per year

Longer courses (e.g., 1,000 – 1,300 hours) (Paralegal, Advanced Diploma in Multimedia & Digital Design) frequently ran over 52 consecutive weeks.

Delivery Models

- Course delivery was mostly in the classroom, instructor-led
- 15% indicated computer-based, self-paced modules with instructors available for assistance
- 12% stated they had various formats – combination, online options, clinics, hands-on, etc.

Field Placements

- 36% had no co-op or field placements
- 36 % had some field placements during course, ranging from 2 weeks – 2 months, depending on course
- 12 % had field placements after the course was completed, 2 – 6 months; 1 program had a 12-week paid placement after graduation.
- 10% reported other arrangements for practical experience, i.e.,
 - Restaurant attached to school (Culinary Arts Diploma)
 - On-site clinic, outreach to hospitals (Massage and Hydrotherapy)
 - Partnership with company installing golf course (Heavy Equipment Operator)

Graduate Placements

- Graduation and placement rates for many private career programs are available on the OSAP website (2004-05 stats)
(http://osap.gov.on.ca/eng/PDF/0405/PCC_gradrates_0405.pdf)
 - Reported placement rates range from 40% placement (Hotel & Services Supervisor) to 100% (Dental Hygiene, Medical Laboratory Assistant)
- Services offered to graduates (from telephone interviews) include:
 - Job search assistance for 6 months after graduation
 - Help with resume, cover letter, job search, setting up interviews, setting up internship
 - Seeking out government funded hiring incentives for employers
 - Grad website for job postings
 - Assigned career advisor or job developer
 - On graduation, industry contacts are invited in to critique grads' work, make contacts, etc. (Digital Design-Animation)

Pre-admission procedures

- Pre-assessment procedures vary depending on the specific program, but most have some sort of testing and/or interview.
- Almost 60% indicated that advanced standing or exemptions from some course material were possibilities depending on the course, usually based on certification from a related course/program.
- A few career college representatives offer applicants the opportunity to spend a day or two in class, interviewing teachers, students (no charge). (Early Childhood Assistant, Medical Lab. Technician)
- One program offers an introductory weekend course (\$200) with a \$50 credit towards tuition. (Massage & Hydrotherapy)

Customer Service

- Although most large schools are reluctant to give information over phone (urging the applicant to come in for a personal interview), most others were very helpful, had good customer rapport, invited the applicant in for a personal visit/interview; several followed up with e-mailed information.
- One college offered a break on the tuition cost for following Monday start as they had an unexpected vacancy.

Implications/Considerations for Colleges

- Given findings, colleges may want to review their own practices regarding:
 - Frequency of intakes
 - Fast-track programs
 - Customer service orientation
 - Shorter (1 year) programs
- Colleges may find the MTCU website on private career colleges
(http://www.riccpcc.serviceontario.ca/pcc/CommandServlet?command=publicreport&config=pccProgram1Html.xml&parm_type_1=STRING&parm_value_1=EN) valuable to conduct local market research.

3. Skills Development Client Data

- Currently, Ontario's colleges train approximately 10 per cent of clients of the provincially funded Skills Development program, based on MTCU data covering the period January – June 2007, i.e., the first six months of provincial responsibility for the former federal program. (Note that this data do not include activity during the fall, when college intake activity is highest. Colleges Ontario expects to receive full 2007-08 fiscal year data from MTCU by mid-May.)
- Considering the “top 100” course (program) types taken by Skills Development clients during this period, colleges trained 700 clients² or 10% of the total. The top 100 course types represent 93 percent of total Skills Development trainees (7,054) for this time period. (Appendix C provides a list of the “top 100” course types by occupation for activity during January to June 2007.)
- By course type, the percentage varied from 0 to 100 percent but, generally, both percentages and absolute numbers trained by colleges are low.
- There was considerable regional variation in the number and proportion of clients trained by colleges, ranging from 28 percent in the North to 4 percent in Central Ontario. The following chart summarizes the number and proportion clients by course type in each of MTCU's four regions:

Skills Development Clients: January – June 2007			
REGION	# clients trained by CAATs	Total # clients	% clients trained by CAATs
Northern	227	813	28%
Eastern	138	927	15%
Western	204	2001	10%
Central	131	3313	4%
Total	700	7054	10%

- Appendix D contains bar graphs illustrating the relative volumes of private and CAAT delivered training in each region, extrapolated from the January to June data.
- College share of clients funded through Skills Development in Francophone courses, at 44 percent of the total (61 of a total of 140 clients), is considerably higher than for English language courses.

² Ministry staff noted the following caveats regarding the data:

- Some discrepancies exist between the course listed and the actual course taken by any one individual (due to listing of the future occupational goal or the participant's last job).
- There may be some input errors regarding the classification of the institution; these errors are not considered to be significant.
- The appearance of any particular course listed in the report does not necessarily mean that that course would be funded in the future.

APPENDIX A

List of Program Areas and Types Surveyed for Competitive Analysis

Business

1. Office Administrative Assistant (36 weeks, 905 hours)
2. Legal Administrative Assistant (30 weeks, 750 hours)
3. Hotel & Services Supervisor (26 weeks, 520 hours)
4. Entrepreneurial Business Applications (29 weeks, 660 hours)
5. Accounting and Payroll Administrator (32 weeks, 800 hours)

Health Services

6. Dental Administrator (33 weeks, 855 hours)
7. Dental Hygiene (76 weeks, 1900 hours)
8. Medical Laboratory Assistant (32 weeks, 890 hours)
9. Medical Receptionist (27 weeks, 600 hours)
10. Personal Support Worker (28 weeks, 640 hours)

Human Services/Applied Arts

11. Early Childhood Assistant (28 weeks, 780 hours)
12. Immigration Consultant Diploma (15 weeks, 301 hours)
13. Massage & Hydrotherapy (69 weeks, 2200 hours)
14. Medical Laboratory Technician (24 weeks, 720 hours)
15. Paralegal (52 weeks, 1040 hours)
16. Law & Security Officer (34 weeks, 850 hours)
17. Digital Design (animation) (33 weeks, 660 hours)

Information Technology/Electronics

18. Advanced Diploma in Multimedia & Digital Design (52 weeks, 1300 hours)
19. Network Management Technology Diploma (30 weeks, 600 hours)
20. Network Administrator (51 weeks, 1140 hours)
21. Computer Service Technician (34 weeks, 765 hours)
22. Microcomputer Business Application (40 weeks, 1000 hours)
23. Game Design (48 weeks, 1365 hours)

Services

24. Banking and Financial Services (29 weeks, 725 hours)
25. Culinary Arts Diploma (18 weeks, 360 hours)
26. Cook: Basic – Level I (15 weeks, 300 hours)
27. Tractor Trailer Driver Training (5 weeks, 126 hours)
28. Travel Counsellor (28 weeks, 660 hours)

Trades

29. Auto Body Repair (Pre-Apprenticeship) (22 weeks, 608 hours)
30. Plumber Pre-Apprenticeship Program (12 weeks, 300 hours)
31. Gas Technician (39 weeks, 795 hours)
32. Welder – Combination (Mig-Tig-Stick) (6 weeks, 325 hours)
33. Heavy Equipment Operator (6 weeks, 225 hours)

APPENDIX B

Costs/Duration of Career College Programs – Selected Examples

- **Office Administrative Assistant**
Duration: 36 weeks (905 hours)
Total Cost: \$6,240.00
- **Legal Administrative Assistant***
Duration: 30 weeks (750 hours)
Total Cost: \$10,365.00
- **Accounting & Payroll Administrator***
Duration: 32 weeks (800 hours)
Total Cost: \$11,751.00
- **Personal Support Worker**
Duration: 24 weeks/28 weeks PT (640 hours)
Total Cost: \$4,900.00
- **Medical Laboratory Technician**
Duration: 24 weeks (720 hours)
Total Cost: \$9,115.00
- **Network Administrator***
Duration: 51 weeks (1,140 hours)
Total Cost: \$12,920.00
- **Tractor Trailer Driver Training**
Duration: 5 weeks (126 hours)
Total Cost: \$4,800.00
- **Heavy Equipment Operator***
Duration: 6 weeks (225 hours)
Total Cost: \$10,720.00

* Larger institutions

APPENDIX C

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT CLIENTS – REGISTRATIONS AND CAAT SHARE IN “TOP 100” COURSE TYPES BY SECTOR (January to June 2007³)

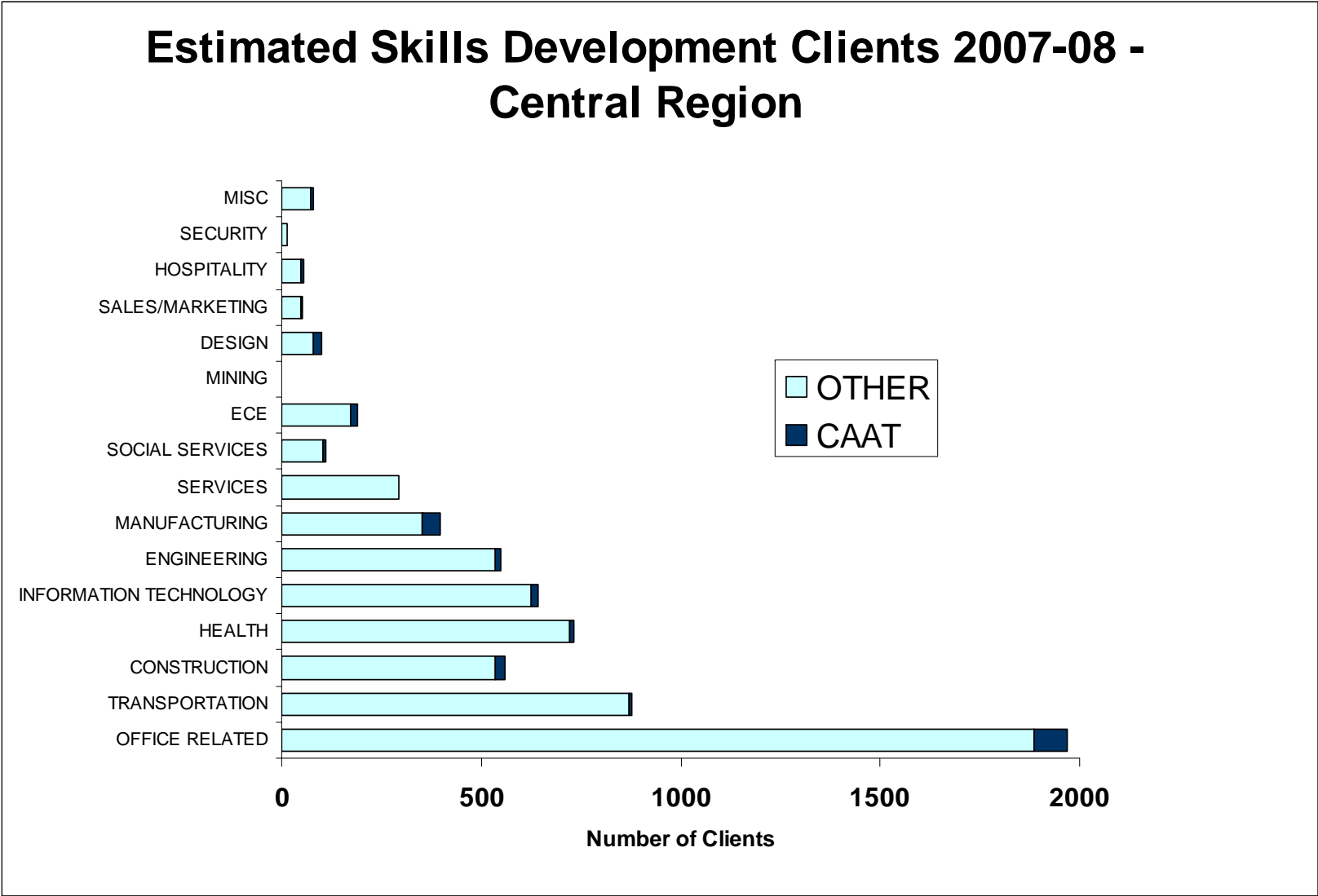
	Total Skills Development Registrations	CAAT Share
<u>Office Related Occupations</u>		
Medical secretaries	120	1%
Accounting	487	4%
Administrative clerks	226	12%
General office clerks	204	16%
Administrative officers	155	12%
Paralegal and related	103	8%
Receptionists and switchboard	93	5%
Payroll clerks	74	0%
Bookkeepers	55	9%
Financial auditors and accountants	30	17%
Supervisors, finance and insurance clerks	26	23%
Supervisors, general office and support clerks	17	13%
Secretaries	12	17%
Banking, insurance and finance clerks	12	17%
Medical stenographers	11	0%
Tellers, financial services	10	0%
Executive assistants	9	22%
Court reporting and medical transcriptionists	9	0%
Legal secretaries	<u>8</u>	13%
	1661	
<u>Transportation</u>		
Truck drivers	1317	2%
Motor vehicle mechanics, technicians	<u>43</u>	26%
	1360	
<u>Construction and Related</u>		
Heavy equipment operators	489	5%
Welders	355	11%
Gas fitters	100	35%
Trade helpers and labourers	64	33%
Millwrights and mechanics	49	37%
Electricians	48	21%
Refrigeration and air conditioning	23	48%
Carpenters	17	53%
Inspectors	15	27%
Oil and solid fuel heating mechanics	14	14%
Bricklayers	<u>9</u>	0%
	1183	
<u>Health</u>		
Nurse aides and orderlies	241	14%

³ NB: Data in this chart do not include activity during the fall, when college intake activity is highest. Colleges Ontario expects to receive full 2007-08 fiscal year data from MTCU by mid-May.

Visiting homemakers, housekeepers	167	10%
Other aides and assistants	140	2%
Dental assistants	107	2%
Medical lab technicians	89	0%
Therapy and assessment related	30	0%
Elemental medical and hospital assistants	24	4%
Dental hygienists and therapists	14	7%
Medial lab technologists	13	8%
Ambulance attendants and other paramedical	12	8%
Veterinarians	10	0%
Pharmacists	<u>9</u>	0%
	856	
<u>Information Technology</u>		
Computer network operators; web technicians	126	2%
Computer engineers	74	9%
Computer programmers and interactive media	62	11%
Computer systems analysts	48	4%
Systems analysts and consultants	47	11%
Data base analysts and administrators	45	13%
Computer programmers	22	0%
Software engineers	<u>18</u>	0%
	442	
<u>Engineering</u>		
Mechanical engineering technologists & technicians	67	6%
Drafting technologists & technicians	56	9%
Electrical and electronics technologists & technicians	52	19%
Applied chemical technologists & technicians	63	0%
Civil technologists & technicians	40	13%
Mechanical engineers	28	7%
Electrical and electronics engineers	<u>19</u>	16%
	325	
<u>Manufacturing</u>		
Machining tool operators	77	13%
Labourers in processing, manufacturing, utilities	44	7%
Industrial electricians	37	14%
Material handlers	35	6%
Industrial eng. & manufacturing technicians	30	0%
Shippers and receivers	25	0%
Electronics assemblers, fabricators, testers	23	91%
Machinists and tooling inspectors	20	20%
Chemists	15	0%
Industrial and manufacturing engineers	<u>11</u>	0%
	277	
<u>Services</u>		
Estheticians, electrologists and related	127	0%
Hairstylists and barbers	83	6%
Customer service, information clerks	20	0%
Household and business equipment repairs	16	38%
Pet groomers and animal care workers	<u>9</u>	22%
	255	

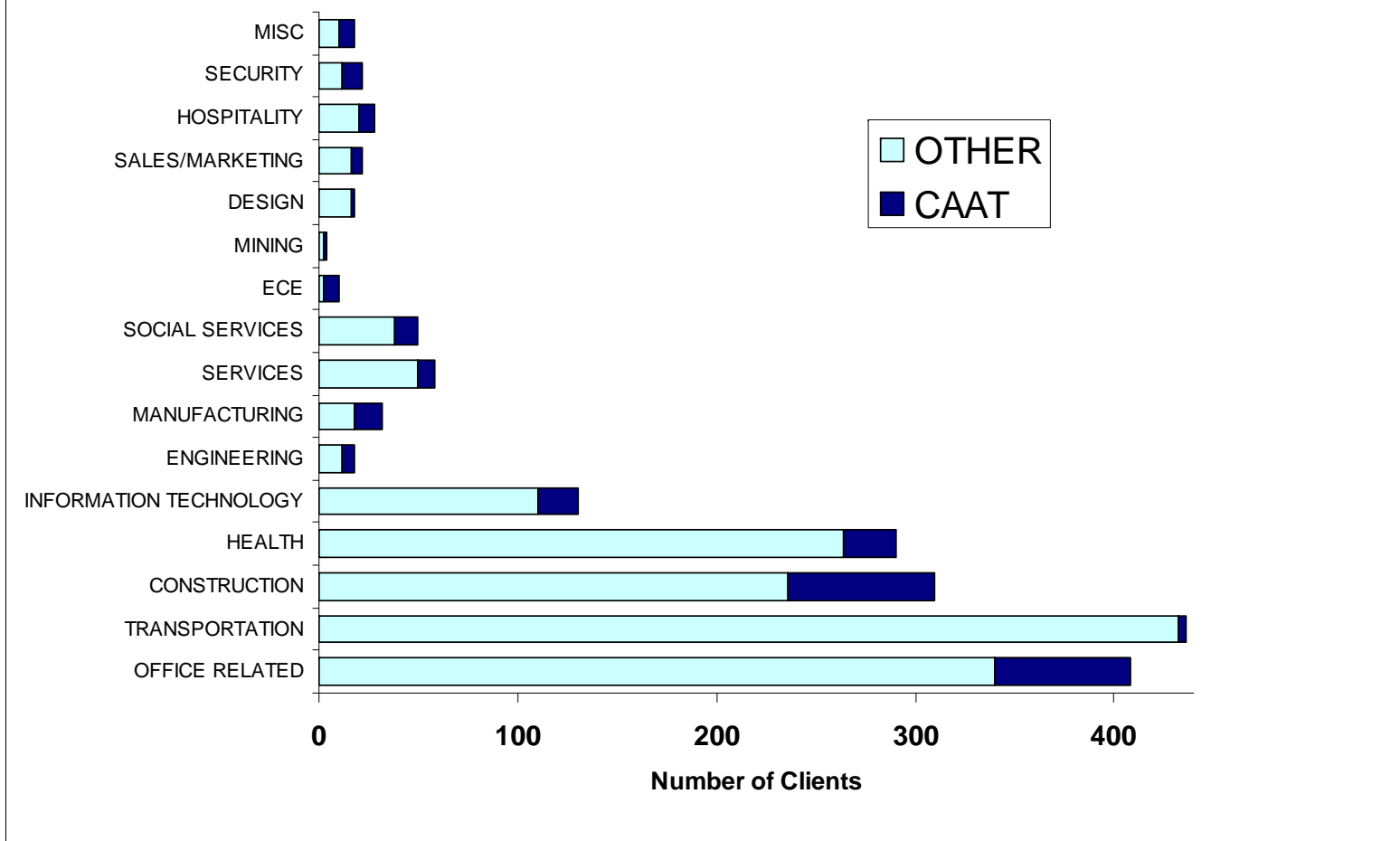
<u>Social Services</u>		
Community and social service workers	111	10%
Social workers	<u>16</u>	38%
	127	
<u>Early Childhood Education</u>		
Early childhood educators	75	15%
Early childhood assistants	25	12%
Elementary school and kindergarten teachers	<u>9</u>	11%
	109	
<u>Mining</u>		
Underground production and development miners	37	97%
Labourers	31	100%
Underground mine service and support workers	<u>11</u>	91%
	79	
<u>Design</u>		
Graphic designers and illustrators	44	30%
Web designers and developers	<u>35</u>	9%
	79	
<u>Sales and Marketing</u>		
Real estate agents	26	0%
Retail sales and clerks	22	9%
Travel counselors	12	25%
Sales, marketing and advertising managers	<u>11</u>	45%
	71	
<u>Hospitality</u>		
Chefs	33	18%
Cooks	<u>31</u>	29%
	64	
<u>Security</u>		
Police officers	22	36%
Correctional services officers	12	17%
Security guards and related	<u>9</u>	33%
	43	
<u>Miscellaneous</u>		
Janitors, caretakers and building superintendents	22	0%
College and vocational instructors	16	19%
Public works and maintenance workers	10	0%
Landscape and horticulture technicians	9	44%
Audio and video recording technicians	9	0%
Labourers in food, beverage and tobacco processing	9	22%
Dispatchers and radio operators	9	22%

APPENDIX D

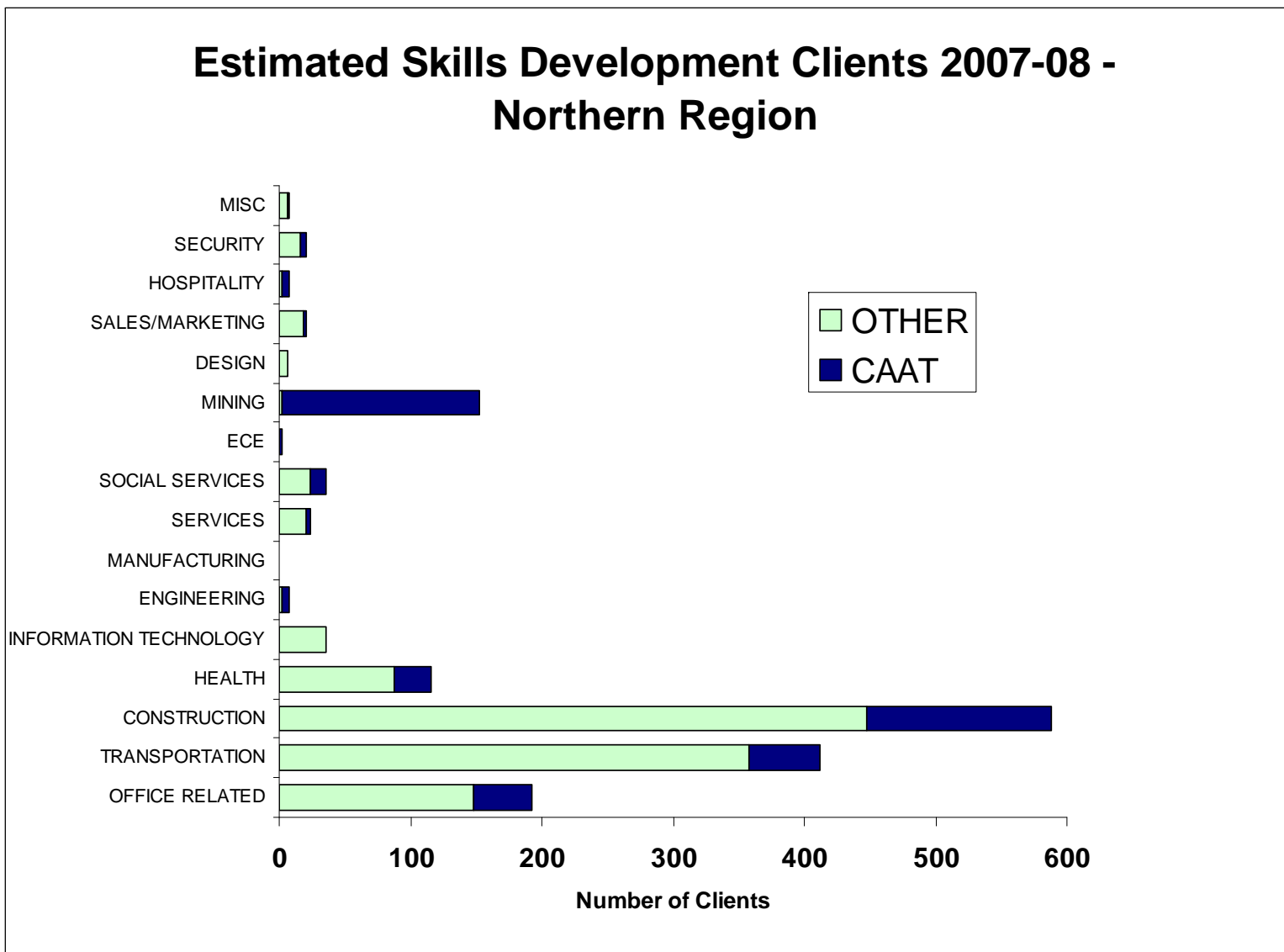


Source: Extrapolated from MTCU data on Skills Development clients starting training January – June 2007

Estimated Skills Development Clients 2007-08 - Eastern Region

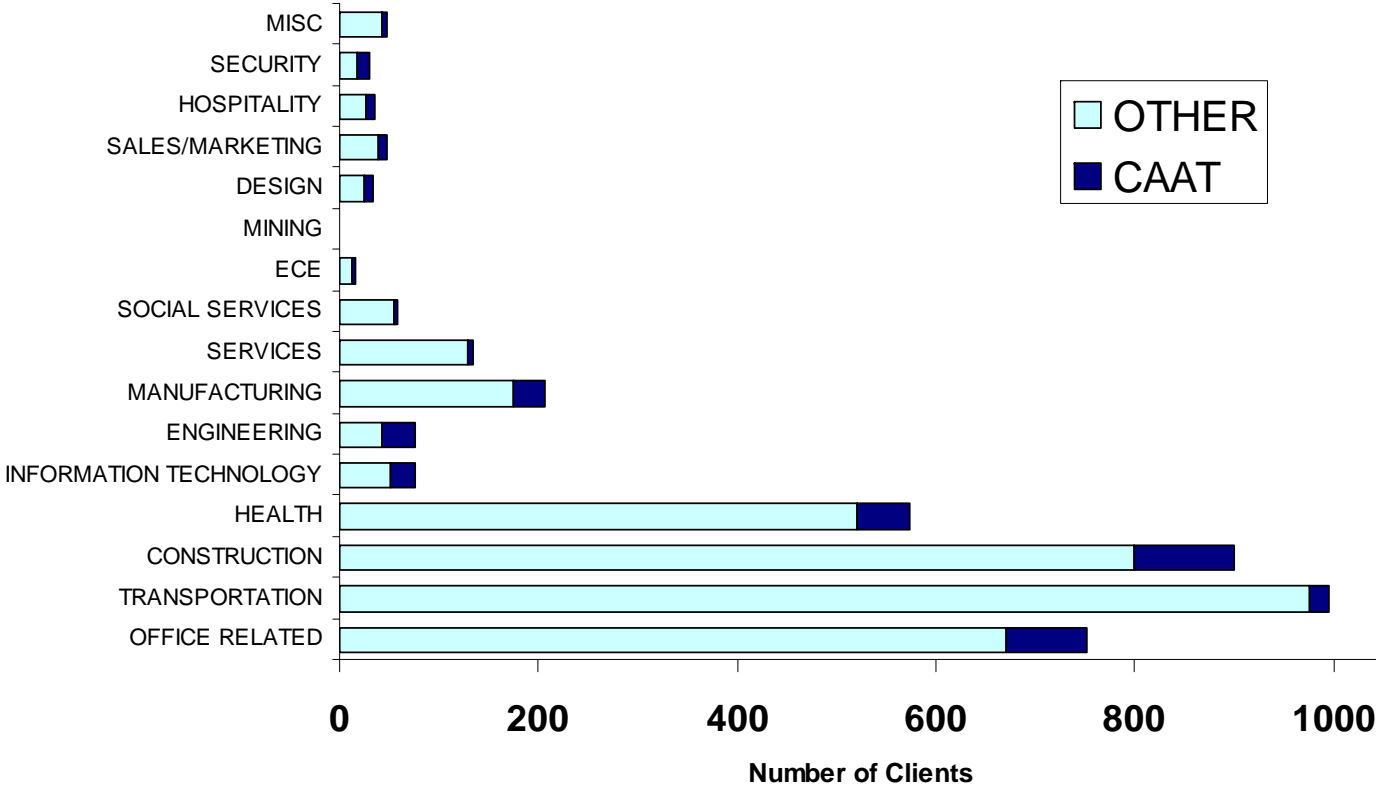


Source: Extrapolated from MTCU data on Skills Development clients starting training January – June 2007



Source: Extrapolated from MTCU data on Skills Development clients starting training January – June 2007

Estimated Skills Development Clients 2007-08 - Western Region



Source: Extrapolated from MTCU data on Skills Development clients starting training January – June 2007