

# Going back to school as a mature student

submitted by Career & Advanced Learning Centre

Post secondary resources

**Y**ou are never too old to head back to school. Deciding to pursue your educational dreams as a mature student can lead to many new opportunities and friendships, and awaken a potential in yourself that you may not have thought possible.

Many older students return to college or university to get the education they need to pursue a new career or to keep themselves busy after they retire. In many ways, your age and life experience will be a tremendous asset as you return to school. Along with all the excitement of going back to school, it can also bring some challenges that may cause you to doubt your decision.

Returning to the classroom after years of being in the workforce or after you retire can pose particular personal and interpersonal challenges which can lead to stress and anxiety.

New developments in education and training such as computer technology and distance education can be very intimidating for the older student. Along with learning new subject material, you may also be faced with adapting to technological advancements you are unfamiliar with.

It is important to recognize that you may encounter some feelings of anxiety and intimidation and it is okay to seek help to develop strategies to cope with the excitement and stress. There are many things that can overwhelm the mature student and it is important to keep a sense of balance.

## Things that may creep up on you without warning are:

### Remembering the past

Heading back to school can stir up memories from your youth that you did not anticipate. You may encounter things such as low self-esteem, family expectations, fear of failure, and past personal and social relationships.

### Perfectionism

This is a common phenomenon in older students which can cause a lot of stress and anxiety when they don't achieve a perfect test results or if it is taking them longer to complete a task than it takes their younger peers.

### Generation gap

You may feel the younger generation is more technologically advanced, therefore smarter. You may also develop feelings of superiority because of your life experiences and feel the younger generation just doesn't get it.

### Physical limitations

There may be activities that older students cannot easily participate in. For some, it may not be an easy thing to accept that they are not as agile as they once were.

### Time management

Older students may take longer to complete tasks and may require additional classroom and instruction time.

There are supports in the community to help you as you move towards your educational goal. Heading back to school is a great decision for many mature individuals. Being aware of potential challenges that may interfere with your education and knowing where to get help is the first step to a successful graduation.

### Family pressures

When you return to school, you may experience family pressures to stay in your current role or you may feel some guilt about returning to school and not fulfilling your obligations at home.

The **Career & Advanced Learning Centre** provides one-on-one counselling to adults thinking about enrolling or enrolled in post-secondary programs.

A psychologist is on staff to help you develop strategies and to provide counselling and therapy to work through some of the difficulties you may be facing.

## How do I book an appointment?

The central location for the Island-wide service is in Charlottetown.

Visit the centre at 55 Grafton Street from 9 am to 5 pm or call to make an appointment at **368-7214** or e-mail [referrals@careeralc.ca](mailto:referrals@careeralc.ca)

This project is funded in whole or in part through the Canada-PEI Labour Market Agreement.

Check out the website at [www.careeralc.ca](http://www.careeralc.ca)



## Website of the month: [www.jobbank.gc.ca](http://www.jobbank.gc.ca)

submitted by Craig Abbott, Labour Market Analyst

**M**any Islanders have clicked on this website to look for jobs. But those who have not fully explored the website may not realize the amount of information available for job seekers and workers.



Here is a look at some of the features on the Job Bank website. Please note that some of the features require that you register on the site and create a username and password. This is free and only takes a few moments.

### Job Match Profiles

This feature allows you to advertise your profile to employers or match your profile to current job ads. You can create up to three different profiles which you can then advertise to employers. This allows them to view your profile. You can also choose to match your profile to current ads on the Job Bank.

### Job Alert

With Job Alert, you can create up to three different profiles. You can create your profile based on jobs in a certain occupational sector, by selecting a certain occupation, or by region. You will then receive e-mails whenever jobs are advertised that match your profile. So instead of having to check the Job Bank every day, the Job Alert feature will send you new job ads that match your profile.

### Resumé Builder

Resumé Builder allows you to create as many as three different resumés which can be saved on-line. Once your resumé is complete, you can print it off or copy and paste it into an e-mail to an employer. The site also has sample resumés and cover letters, as well as tips for writing them.

### Career Navigator

This feature includes a series of career quizzes that help you explore your abilities, interests and preferences. After you complete these short quizzes, you will get a list of occupations that are suitable for you based on your answers to the quizzes. You can click on the occupations to find out more details, and there are links to labour market information for the occupations. Your answers are saved so you can go back at any time and review or change your answers. This is a great starting point for anyone exploring career options.

### Federal and provincial job ads

The Job Bank also includes federal government job ads and the student job board in the spring and summer months.

### More features

There is a lot of other information for job seekers and workers on the site, including links to labour market information, employment standards, training and learning, your rights as a worker and other job websites. Take a few minutes to go through the site and see the different features that can help you in your job search!



If you have any questions, contact **Craig Abbott**, Labour Market Information Analyst, Service Canada Summerside, at **432-6850** or **Laura Hagen-Grant**, Labour Market Information Analyst, Service Canada Charlottetown, at **566-7476**

