

Private Vocational Schools

Administration and Policy Manual

January 2024

The information in this manual is provided for reference purposes only and should not be considered a substitute for requirements set forth in *The Private Vocational Schools Regulation Act, 1995* and *The Private Vocational Schools Regulations, 2022*

The Private Vocational Schools Administration and Policy Manual may be revised. It is the responsibility of the operator to ensure they are using the most current version. In instances where there are differences in the information presented between the print and online versions of this Manual, the [online version](#) will be the principal source.

The Private Vocational Schools Administration and Policy Manual was last updated in January 2024.

Please consult with the Private Vocational Schools Unit of the Ministry of Advanced Education if you have any questions regarding interpretation of requirements.

Contact:

1120 - 2010 12th Avenue
REGINA SK S4P 0M3
Inquiry: 306-787-9723
Email: pvsinquiry@gov.sk.ca

<https://www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/education-and-learning/universities-colleges-and-schools/private-vocational-schools>

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1. Introduction

1.1 Definitions

“the ministry”:	Ministry of Advanced Education
“the unit”:	Private Vocational Schools Unit
“PVS”:	Private vocational school(s)
“PVSR”	<i>Private Vocational School Registry</i>
“the Act”:	<i>The Private Vocational Schools Regulation Act, 1995</i>
“the Regulations”:	<i>The Private Vocational Schools Regulations, 2022</i>
“the Minister”:	Minister of Advanced Education
“TCF”:	Training Completions Fund
“TCP”:	Training Completion Plan

An occupation included in the [National Occupational Classification](#) developed and published by the Government of Canada. See Table 2 in the Regulations for a list of vocation exemptions.

1.2 About Private Vocational Schools

Private vocational schools, also known as career colleges, offer vocational courses and programs to Saskatchewan students to prepare them for specific occupations in fields such as business, paramedics, massage therapy, broadcasting, fashion, esthetics, hairstyling, dog grooming and more. Schools are privately owned and operated and must be registered with the Ministry of Advanced Education and have approval of the programs they offer.

Find a list of registered private vocational schools [here](#).

The purpose of this manual is to provide information regarding the regulatory requirements for private vocational schools operating in Saskatchewan.

1.3 Act and Regulations

In Saskatchewan, private vocational schools are regulated under the authority of:

[*The Private Vocational Schools Regulation Act, 1995;*](#)
[*The Private Vocational Schools Regulations, 2022;*](#) and
[*The Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training Act, 2022*](#)

1.4 Qualifying Private Vocational Schools and Programs

Organizations are required to register as a private vocational school with the Ministry of Advanced Education if they offer training program(s) in Saskatchewan that:

- lead to employment in a vocation;
- comprise more than 50 hours of instruction;
- charge a tuition of more than \$1000; and
- produce graduates who address a labour market need.

1.5 Exemptions

A private vocational school does not include:

- A university, a regional college governed by [The Regional Colleges Act](#) and the Saskatchewan Polytechnic.
- A school governed by [The Education Act](#), by any other act or by any act of the Parliament of Canada.
- A school operated by a professional organization where the training or instruction is part of professional requirements or is part of professional development.
- A school operated or provided by an employer or group of employers for employees or an employer association.
- A school operated by an employee association for members of the employee association.
- A school or institution that:
 - Does not have a physical presence in Saskatchewan.
 - Is an educational institution located outside Saskatchewan and provides distance or online education to Saskatchewan residents.
 - Only delivers online, correspondence, or home study courses or programs.
 - Only delivers courses or programs that are entirely funded by a sponsor.*
 - A school that only offers education in the following exempt vocations:**
 - 31303 (physicians, midwives, and allied health professionals)
 - 32101 (licensed practical nurses)
 - 32200 (traditional Chinese medicine practitioners and acupuncturists)
 - 32209 (other practitioners of natural healing, except manual osteopathy)
 - 41302 (religious leaders)
 - 42204 (religion workers)
 - 55109 (other performers)
 - 65229 (other support occupations in personal service)
 - 72600 (air pilots, flight engineers and flying instructors).

*Schools that offer some programs to fee paying students as well as students whose tuition is paid for by a sponsor are required to register with the ministry.

**Schools that offer a combination of exempt vocational training programs with non-exempt training programs are required to register with the ministry.

2. Government Contacts

2.1 Private Vocational Schools Unit

The Private Vocational Schools Unit within the Ministry of Advanced Education administers the legislation governing private vocational schools, as follows:

- Acts as the government liaison to the private vocational school sector in the province.
- Registers private vocational schools.
- Registers private vocational school programs and instructors.
- Monitors private vocational school operations, reporting and solvency.
- Works with private vocational schools and students to resolve student concerns.
- Administers financial security requirements and the training completions fund.

Contact:

Ministry of Advanced Education
Private Vocational Schools Unit
1120 - 2010 12th Avenue
REGINA SK S4P 0M3

General Inquiries:

Telephone: 306-787-9723

Email: pvsinquiry@gov.sk.ca

Website: <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/education-and-child-care-facility-administration/services-for-post-secondary-educational-institutions/private-vocational-school-registry>

2.2 Student Loans

Student loan designation is the process through which post-secondary institutions are deemed eligible to receive students who qualify for federal and provincial student loans.

Criteria for designation include, but are not limited to, programs that:

- Lead to a certificate, diploma, or degree.
- Are at least 12 weeks in length.
- Are full-time (defined as a minimum of 20 hours per week for private vocational schools).

Prior to designation, institutions must be in operation for 18 months, be registered under [*The Private Vocational Schools Act, 1995*](#), and have had one class of students graduate. [The Saskatchewan Designation Policy Manual](#) outlines the full list of criteria to qualify for designation.

Institutions must contact the Ministry of Advanced Education to discuss their eligibility to become designated for the Canada-Saskatchewan Integrated Student Loans Program. Once an institution meets the criteria set out in [The Saskatchewan Designation Policy Manual](#), it will sign a Memorandum of Agreement with the ministry to become designated.

Contact:

Ministry of Advanced Education Student Service Centre
1120 - 2010 12th Avenue
REGINA SK S4P 0M3

Telephone: 306-787-5620

Toll free (outside Regina or within Canada): 1-800-597-8278

Email: studentservices@gov.sk.ca

[The Educational Institution Manual](#) outlines the responsibilities for administering student loans and grants for designated institutions. To learn more about the Canada-Saskatchewan Integrated Student Loans Program, please consult the [Administrative Guidelines](#).

2.3 International Students

Private vocational school operators who wish to enrol international students must abide by the [Saskatchewan Designation Framework for the International Student Program](#). The framework outlines the criteria that Saskatchewan post-secondary educational institutions must meet to become designated to host international students.

Post-secondary institutions must be designated if they want to enrol international students (who possess a study permit from the Government of Canada) for programs six months or longer in duration. Non-designated post-secondary educational institutions will be able to host international students holding a visitor visa only for programs that are less than six months.

International Student Program inquiries may be directed to:

Ministry of Advanced Education
internationaleducation@gov.sk.ca

2.4 Tax Receipts

The Government of Canada certifies private educational institutions to enable students to qualify for tuition tax credits. Additional information is available on the [Employment and Social Development Canada](#) (ESDC) website.

If a school would like to issue tax receipts to students, they must apply to ESDC for certification.

To apply for certification, visit [Employment and Social Development Canada](#).

3. Registering a Private Vocational School and Program(s) in Saskatchewan

A private vocational school delivers vocational training to fee-paying students. In some cases, they also offer training to both fee-paying students and students whose tuition is paid for by a sponsor agency (e.g., Workers' Compensation Board, First Nations Band, provincial or federal government). If sponsored students make up the entirety of students enrolled at a school, the school is exempt from registration.

Programs offered by private vocational schools must include more than 50 hours of instruction, have a tuition fee of more than \$1,000 and there must be a demand in the labour market for graduates of the program.

3.1 Pre-registration – Expression of Interest

Programs offered by private vocational schools must include more than 50 hours of instruction, have a tuition fee of more than \$1,000, and there must be a demand in the labour market for graduates of the program.

To become a private vocational school and offer vocational program(s) in Saskatchewan, the [Expression of Interest Form](#) must be submitted to the Ministry of Advanced Education by email to pvsinquiry@gov.sk.ca. Once the Expression of Interest Form is received, the ministry will review the information and determine if the school/program(s) qualify for registration pursuant to [The Private Vocational Schools Regulation Act, 1995](#) and its regulations. The applicant will be advised of next steps, if applicable, in the registration process.

3.2 Private Vocational School Registry

When the ministry determines pre-application requirements are met, registration of a private vocational school and program(s) must be submitted through an online system called the [Private Vocational School Registry \(PVSR\)](#). Schools will be able submit online applications, review registered school and program information, and submit other documentation and payments pursuant to [The Private Vocational Schools Regulation Act, 1995](#) and its regulations.

3.3 New School and Program(s) Application

If the ministry has indicated the proposed school/program meets the registration requirements pursuant to [The Private Vocational Schools Regulation Act, 1995](#), an application can be completed through the PVSR.

The registration of a new school must be accompanied by at least one program. Follow the [Registration Guide – New School and Program\(s\)](#) when completing the online application. Ensure all information provided in the application meet the regulatory requirements outlined in the [Private Vocational Schools Administration and Policy Manual](#). The ministry will not process incomplete applications or those submitted without the fee payment.

3.4 Registered School - New Program Application

Schools already registered with the ministry that want to offer a new program must submit an online application to the ministry through the PVSR. Follow the [Registration Guide – New Program\(s\)](#) when completing the online application. Ensure all information provided in the application meet the regulatory requirements outlined in the [Private Vocational Schools Administration and Policy Manual](#). The ministry will not process incomplete applications or those submitted without the fee.

3.5 Annual Registration Renewal – School and Program(s)

Pursuant to subsection 2-1(2) of the Regulations, school operators must renew the registration for the school and all programs on an annual basis. In the winter/spring of each year, the ministry will initiate this process online through the PVSR. This will require schools to update program components for the upcoming academic school year. The school will be asked to review the following areas and provide updates, where applicable:

- Start and end dates
- Fees (tuition, registration, learning resources, contract extension)
- Learning resources (textbooks, materials, kit, equipment)
- Scheduled dates the school will be closed (statutory, vacation and/or other closure dates)
- Student enrolment contract

Follow the [Annual Registration Renewal Guide – School & Program](#) when completing the annual registration renewal.

3.6 Update to an Existing Approved Program

Changes to an existing program cannot be made during the annual registration renewal process (as outlined above).

To make changes to a registered program (including but not limited to program hours, courses (curriculum), delivery method, learning outcomes, etc.), an application must be submitted through the PVSR. To make a change to an existing approved program, log into the [PVSR](#) and select the “Get Started” button. The PVSR will ask, “What do you want to do?” at which time you can click on “Update an Existing Approved Program.” The PVSR will walk you through your registered program and allow you to make changes within the system. Once complete, you must click “submit” to send the proposed changes to the ministry.

The ministry will conduct a preliminary review of the proposed changes. Before the ministry conducts a full assessment of the changes, the school may be required to pay a \$100 assessment fee. The school will be sent an email advising of next steps. The ministry may request updated industry reviews, evidence to support labour market need for the program and/or other information to support the proposed amendments. After the assessment is complete, the ministry will implement or reject the changes, at which time the school will be notified.

If your school offers a designated trade program or vocational training with oversight by a professional or accreditation body, any proposed changes to the program should first be approved by the [Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission](#) and/or the professional or accreditation body. Evidence of this approval must be provided to the ministry via email at pvsinquiry@gov.sk.ca.

3.7 Registration Fees

Registration Fee - The fee to register a school and one program is \$400. Additional new program(s) are subject to a \$400 registration fee.

Annual Registration Renewal Fee - The annual fee for registration renewal for a school and one program is \$300. For each additional registered program, a fee of \$75 applies. Payment must be made through PVSR and payment options include:

- 1) [E-Transfer](#)
- 2) Credit Card
- 3) Direct Deposit (contact the ministry for instructions) E-mail: pvsinquiry@gov.sk.ca
- 4) Cheque or Money Order to:
Ministry of Advanced Education
1120 - 2010 12th Avenue
REGINA SK S4P 0M3

Applications will not be processed without payment. Registration fees are non-refundable.

4. Regulatory Requirements for Private Vocational Schools

4.1 School

4.1.1 Business Information

Private vocational schools are considered businesses and are required to register with Information Services Corporation, Corporate Registry (ISC). Please contact ISC to attain a Certificate of Incorporation or Registration and/ or review the step by step process required to [Register a Business or Incorporate with ISC](#).

Contact:

Information Services Corporation, Corporate Registry
1301 1st Avenue
REGINA SK S4R 8H2

Phone: 1-866-275-4721

Email: corporateregistry@isc.ca

The ministry requires information about the proposed school and its classification (sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, or not-for-profit), and the applicant(s) name.

4.1.2 Business Plan

A business plan must be developed and provided as part of the application documentation. The [Business Plan Outline](#) describes what to include in the business plan, such as the operating plan for the school, proposed marketing activities, and a financial analysis including financial forecasts and cash flow projections.

4.1.3 School Closure

A school closure can occur for various reasons and may be planned or unexpected. In all cases, the ministry will work with the school and its students to ensure that students' interests are addressed.

In the event of a school closure, the ministry will provide guidance to schools and students on the processes to be followed to minimize disruption and anxiety for students, co-ordinate train-out activities in an efficient and timely manner and address media inquiries.

4.1.4 Change of Ownership

The Act addresses change of ownership in the following two provisions:

Section 7 allows for the transfer of a Certificate of Registration of a private vocational school with the prior written approval of the Minister.

Limitation on transfer of certificate

7(1) No operator shall transfer the operator's certificate of registration to another person without obtaining the prior written approval of the minister.

(2) The minister shall not unreasonably withhold his or her approval of a transfer of a certificate of registration.

Section 10 of the Act requires the operator of a private vocational school to inform the ministry of any fundamental change to the ownership or corporate structure of the school.

Operator to advise of fundamental change

Every operator that is a corporation shall immediately advise the minister of:

- a) a change in the ownership or share or equity holdings of the corporation; or***
- b) any continuance, amalgamation or other fundamental change involving the corporation.***

If approval is being sought for the transfer of a Certificate of Registration for a private vocational school, both the SELLER and the PURCHASER must meet the requirements set forth in the ministry's [Change of Ownership Checklist](#).

The first step in the change of ownership approval process is the completion of a [Change of Ownership Checklist](#). This form provides the ministry with essential information concerning the proposed ownership of the school and the date a change of control is anticipated. Please allow adequate time in advance of the transaction closing date for ministry review and approval. While some change of ownership transactions may be relatively minor and have minimal impact on the day-to-day operations of a school and its students, other transactions may be more involved and require comprehensive review by the ministry to ensure student

protection matters have been adequately and appropriately addressed.

Please note that, in some instances, the ministry may seek the assistance of the Ministry of Justice in reviewing legal documentation associated with the transfer.

4.2 School Administration

4.2.1 Admissions

Admission requirements are those credentials or other skills that students must have to qualify for entrance into a program. Admission requirements must be appropriate for the occupation and enable students to meet the learning objectives of a program.

The school must ensure that any admission requirements set by a regulatory, accrediting or professional body are adhered to.

If a school wishes to accommodate students who do not meet the minimum entrance requirements, the school must have a mechanism (formalized testing tool) to assess the student's skills and ability to be successful in the program.

If the school is enrolling students into an online/blended program, the admissions policy should include a mechanism for testing a student's computer and technology skills to ensure they will be successful in online course(s).

There are many prospective students whose first language is not English. Accordingly, admission policies should detail the minimum English language proficiency/benchmark requirements a student must possess prior to entering the program (speaking, reading, listening, writing).

To further demonstrate transparency and recruit students who are best suited to succeed in a program, private vocational schools are encouraged to incorporate the following admission practices:

- Inquire why the student wishes to undertake a program at the private vocational school.
- Inquire whether the student has contacted the [Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission](#) (if applicable) and explain to the student why this is important in meeting their learning objectives and related occupation.
- Provide the student with or encourage the student to research the following information:
 - labour market need for graduates of the program (for more information on Labour Market Relevance, see 4.3.5 below);
 - student success and/or failure rates of the school's program; and
 - call employers to inquire about their need for graduates of the training program.
- Before attaining signatures on the student enrolment contract, thoroughly review it with the prospective student to ensure they are well-informed about the school's program and the financial, academic, school and student responsibilities.

4.2.2 Student Enrolment Contract

Student Enrolment Contract Approval by Ministry

Pursuant to subsection 5-1(1) of the Regulation, every school is required to establish a legal agreement with each student enrolled in a registered program in the form of what is called a student enrolment contract. Also, in accordance with section 13 of the Act, no operator shall use any form of student enrolment contract without obtaining the prior written approval of the Minister. Ministry approval is also required if a school wishes to make changes to the student enrolment contract.

The student enrolment contract is a legal agreement that establishes the terms and conditions between the school and student. The contract should clearly indicate what is expected of the student and what the student can expect to receive from the school. The contract often includes or attaches school policies, procedures and/or a handbook. The contract is signed by the school operator (or designate) and the student. The originally executed contract must be given to the student and a copy must be kept in the student file at the school.

The [Student Enrolment Contract Required Information](#) is a guide for what schools must include in their student enrolment contract.

Contract Extension

If a student is unable to complete the training in the timeframe originally contracted for, schools may offer to extend the student's contract so they can complete the program. This will require the execution of a new student enrolment contract, which outlines the additional training the student requires to complete the program. The start date of the new enrolment contract should be the first day of the extension period and the end date should be the last day of the extension period.

The school may charge the student a contract extension fee if the school has registered a contract extension fee with the ministry. No other fees should be charged to the student unless they are registered with the ministry.

Contract Cancellation

Other than the non-refundable student registration fee, a student is not required to pay any fees prior to three months before the start of a training program.

Pursuant to subsection 5-5(1) of the Regulations, a student contract can be cancelled up to the day before the commencement of the course or program. In such a case, the school is required to refund the full amount of any tuition fees paid by the student. Learning materials must also be refunded if the student has paid for but not received them. The student is not entitled to the non-refundable registration fee.

Once a student begins attending the program, tuition fees must be refunded in accordance with section 5-4 of the Regulations, as outlined in 4.2.5 below. Learning materials may be refunded if the student has paid for but not received them.

If the school is required to provide a refund, refunds must be paid to the student, Canada Student Loans, Indigenous/First Nations Band, or another identified funding party according to

how the school received payment for tuition. See Payment of Refunds in 4.2.6 below.

4.2.3 Attendance

Attendance Policy

Schools must have a *Student Attendance Policy*, which outlines the expectations for student attendance, how attendance is tracked, and how the school will address absenteeism and dismissals. It is important the policy includes proactive measures for dealing with absenteeism (absenteeism is addressed as soon as it is identified). Attendance policies and tracking tools are used by the ministry to validate tuition refunds (pursuant to s. 5-4 of the Regulations) if/when a student withdraws or has been discontinued from the program.

Discontinuing a Student Due to Prolonged Absence

Pursuant to section 5-4 of the Regulations, if the student is absent from a program for 21 consecutive calendar days (i.e., the student has not been in contact with the school and has not attended classes for 21 consecutive days), the student is deemed to have discontinued the program. The school will provide written notice to the student that the operator, in accordance with subsection 5-4(2), will refund or retain the applicable proportion of the tuition fee for the course or program.

A written notice sent by the school to the student is deemed to have been received by the student on the tenth day after it was mailed, unless the student establishes that, through no fault of his or her own, the notice was received at a later date. It is the shared responsibility of students and school operators to communicate with each other regarding program withdrawal/discontinuation and the refund/retention of tuition fees.

Leave of Absence

If the school and student have established that the student is unable to fully participate in a program (e.g., for a medical reason, family crisis, etc.), the student should not be provided a leave of absence. Instead, the student must be discontinued from the program and provided with a refund in accordance with the regulations. If circumstances change such that the student can participate in the program again, a new student enrolment contract must be drawn up and executed between the school and student. The new enrolment contract must include the terms and conditions, including what is expected of the student and what the student can expect to receive from the school. Information provided in the contract about the program must align with what the school has registered with the ministry.

4.2.4 Student Withdrawal/Discontinuation/Failure

The school is required to report to the ministry within 30 days students who did not complete a program, including when:

- The student has been discontinued from a program.
- The student has withdrawn from a program.
- The student did not earn a credential for the program because:
 - The student owes the school money.
 - The student finished the program but did not pass.
 - The student has taken a temporary leave from a program with the intent to return.

The school must notify the ministry by submitting a copy of the [Refund Calculator](#) and supplemental documentation even if there is no tuition refund. See **4.2.5** below for more information on Tuition Refunds guidelines (i.e., submitting a refund calculator, full refund of fees, and payment of refunds).

4.2.5 Tuition Refunds

The Regulations govern the procedures to be used for the refund of fees to students who leave a training program prior to program completion.

The following guidelines are intended to provide an explanation in a simplified form. Please refer to sections 5-2, 5-3, 5-4 and 5-5 of the Regulations for full details governing this subject.

Submitting a Refund Calculator to the Ministry

When a student does not complete a program for whatever reason, the school is required to submit a completed [Refund Calculator](#) to the ministry at pvsinquiry@gov.sk.ca within 30 days. Along with the Refund Calculator, the following documentation must also be provided:

- Copy of the executed student enrolment contract.
- Documentation confirming the program hours made available by the school to the student and the student's attendance (tracking tool). Where an attendance tracking tool is not clear, please provide an explanation about how to interpret the student's attendance record.
- Written correspondence from the student requesting discontinuation (if applicable).
- A copy of the refund payment (e.g., cheque, e-transfer, deposit, etc.) to the student, Canada Student Loans, Indigenous or First Nations Band, or any other funding source, where applicable.

The Refund Calculator advises about the enrolment status of the student and whether a refund was made pursuant to the Regulations. Follow all instructions in the Refund Calculator to determine the amount. Please note that a Refund Calculator must be submitted to the ministry by the school even if the student is not owed a refund and/or when the student has failed the program. If a student is owed a refund, the payment to the student or the associated funding party must also be made within this 30-day timeframe (see subsection 5-4(6) of the Regulations).

Note: The Refund Calculator and associated documentation must be placed on the student file at the school. It is audited by the ministry during a monitoring visit to the school.

In general, once a training program has started, the tuition refund requirements of the Regulations (sections 5-2, 5-3, 5-4 and 5-5) are in effect. The Regulations prescribe the percentage of the tuition fee payable or retained by the school.

“Tuition fee payable” refers to the program’s tuition fee as registered with the ministry at the time the contract is signed. Tuition fees do not include the non-refundable student registration fee.

A refund is based on the total program hours the school has made available to the student (program start date to discontinuation/withdrawal date), and **NOT** the actual number of hours the student attended. Program hours include theoretical, practical, and experiential instruction, and mandatory hours for lab work, practicums or work experience the student must complete as a requirement to graduate from the program.

The refund/retention of fees can be calculated pursuant to section 5-4 of the Regulations as follows:

- If a school has offered **20 per cent or less** of the instructional hours of a program, then the school may retain 25 per cent of the tuition fee payable for that program.
- If a school has offered **more than 20 per cent but 50 per cent or less** of the instructional hours of a program, then the school may retain 60 per cent of the tuition fee payable for that program.
- If a school has offered **more than 50 per cent** of the instructional hours of a program, then the school may retain 100 per cent of the tuition fee payable for that program.

Full Refund of Fees

A student is owed a full refund of fees pursuant to section 5-3 of the Regulations, as follows:

- (1) An operator shall immediately refund to a student all amounts paid to the operator pursuant to the student contract if any of the following circumstances occurs:***
 - (a) at the time the student contract was entered into, the operator did not have a certificate of registration;***
 - (b) the course or program contracted for was not approved pursuant to the Act and these regulations;***
 - (c) the operator or the operator’s employees made a false or misleading statement regarding the course or program contracted for, or the nature of the student contract, that induced the student to enter into the student contract.***
- (2) If an operator fails to fully deliver a course or program contracted for, the minister may require the operator to:***
 - (a) refund any unearned tuition fee to the student; or***
 - (b) make up the deficiency in the course or program.***

Payment of Refunds

Payment of a tuition refund by a school must be made within 30 days. Refunds to students with Canada-Saskatchewan Integrated Student Loans must be sent to the National Student Loans Service Centre. Refunds to students whose tuition was paid for by another source (e.g., Indigenous or First Nations Band, other) must be paid directly to the third party.

Review the [Tuition Refund Flowchart](#).

Learning Resources Fees

The school must refund money paid for learning resources (e.g., textbooks, materials, kits, equipment) that the student did not receive.

Other Fees

Fees classified as “other” may include, but are not limited to:

- Lockers.
- Student field trips/shows.
- Memberships in professional organizations related to the training.
- Criminal record checks.
- Examinations from external organizations.

A school must refund money paid for "other fees" if the student did not receive the items or participate in the activities.

4.2.6 Dispute Resolution Policy

Section 5-6 of the Regulations requires that every operator of a school establish a *Dispute Resolution Policy*, which must be registered with the ministry and made widely available to students (e.g., in the Student Handbook, on the school website, or attached to or included within the Student Enrolment Contract).

The school’s Dispute Resolution Policy must include the following:

- The procedures a student can follow to make a complaint.
- The school official to whom the complaint should be addressed.
- The process the school will follow when it receives a complaint.
- The manner in which the complaint and the resolution will be documented.
- The period within which the school will provide the student with its decision and rationale in writing after the school receives the student complaint.
- A statement that encourages a student to have another person present during interactions with the school.
- A statement describing the student’s right to contact the Ministry of Advanced Education to seek further resolution.

Ministry contact information:

Phone: 306-787-9723

Email: pvsinquiry@gov.sk.ca

[Website](#) | [Student Complaint Form](#)

Note: It is incumbent upon private vocational school operators to ensure that school policies and practices are in compliance with provincial laws related to discrimination and harassment. More specifically, to meet obligations under the *Saskatchewan Human Rights Code* and *The Saskatchewan Employment Act, 2014*. Please contact the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission and the Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety for more information.

Operators are **required to maintain a record of all complaints received from students and the documented resolution**. Records must be made available to the ministry upon request. See 5-6 (3)(a) and (b) of the Regulations for more information.

Ministry Procedures for Responding to Student Complaints

Point of first contact with a student

- If health or safety issues are at stake, the school or another agency may need to be contacted (e.g., Public Health Authority, Fire Marshall, Occupational Health and Safety, City Building Inspector, etc.).
- The ministry will encourage a student to first follow the school's Dispute Resolution Policy; however, there is no legislative requirement compelling a student to utilize the school's policy in advance of sharing a complaint with the ministry.
- If the school's Dispute Resolution Policy was utilized and did not result in a satisfactory resolution, the ministry will assess whether the student complaint relates to a breach of the Act, its Regulations and/or related policies. If so, the student will be asked to submit a formal complaint in writing to the ministry and include a copy of the student's original complaint to the school and the school's written response.
- If the complaint does not relate to a breach of the Act, its Regulations and/or related policies, the student may be advised that the ministry is unable to address the complaint and directed to other resources such as the [Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission](#), independent legal advice or small claims court.

After a letter of complaint from a student is received by the ministry

- When a student complaint is received, the ministry will notify the school about the alleged compliance and/or student complaint issue(s). The school will be provided with the student's formal written complaint, which may be redacted to ensure third party names, health, and contact information is removed.
- Throughout the process, the ministry may have further contact with the school and the student to clarify the issue(s). Contact may take the form of telephone conversations, email or other written correspondence, and/or meetings.
- The school will be asked to provide a written response to the ministry within one week of being contacted about the complaint. The school will be asked to include in its response a proposed means of resolution.

After the review is complete

- The ministry will determine if the school is in breach of the Act, its Regulations and/or policies and will inform the school and student in writing of its findings and decision.
- Pursuant to section 17 of the Act, the student or school operator may appeal the ministry's decision on a question of law only to a judge of the Court of Queen's Bench within 30 days of the date of the decision.
 - If the school is not in compliance, the ministry will address the matter with the school. For more information, review the [Non-Compliance Flowchart](#).

Mediation

Pursuant to section 5-7 of the Regulations, a student of a school who wishes to have a dispute mediated must give written notice to the Minister and the operator of the school. The written notice must set out the issues that the student wishes to have mediated and the student and school operator are required to agree to the process. Pursuant to section 14 of the Act, the Minister may appoint and pay for a mediator to assist the student and the operator in resolving the dispute.

4.2.7 Students Records

Contents of Student Files

It is necessary that a school create a file for every student and, when requested by the ministry, make available a hard copy of the student file containing the following documentation:

- Contractual arrangements with the school (e.g., student enrolment contract, list(s) of learning resources provided to and paid for by the student).
- Admissions documentation (e.g., copy of credentials or entrance exam demonstrating the student meets the prerequisite requirements for entrance into the program).
- Records showing academic progress in the program (e.g., transcripts, assignments, examinations).
- Credentials (e.g., certificates/diplomas issued by the school, industry certifications).
- Attendance records, documentation regarding program withdrawal or discontinuation.
- Financial matters (payment plan, if applicable; record of payments made by student to the school; record of funds received from third parties).
- Records of student complaints and resolutions.
- [Refund Calculator](#) and associated documentation to detail a refund made to the student (or funding party) or retention of fees by the school. This is always required when a student withdraws, has been discontinued or has failed the program.
- Student loan documentation.
- Information about student employment after graduation.

Student files are audited during monitoring visits by the ministry.

Retention of Student Records

Section 6-3 of the Regulations addresses retention of student records as follows:

Retention of student records

- 6-3(1) Every operator shall keep, with respect to each student, a file of all of the student's exams and assignments for at least two (2) years after the student has completed the student's course or program or has left the course or program.***
- (2) Every operator shall keep, with respect to each student, a file that contains the student's transcript, diploma, and certificate for at least 25 years after the student has completed or left the program.***
- (3) If an operator's certificate of registration expires and is not renewed, if an operator ceases to operate or if an operator's certificate of registration is cancelled, the operator shall immediately send to the minister:***
- (a) all files and other records held by the operator relating to present and former students; and***
 - (b) any other information that the minister may request.***

Schools are encouraged to keep academic/financial records indefinitely (i.e., for the life of the school). Schools are also encouraged to maintain off-site backups where records are stored electronically.

4.2.8 Student Evaluation

Schools are required to provide a breakdown of percentage weighting of any tests, projects, presentations, peer-evaluation, and other assignments that make up the student's final mark in a program. Indicate the passing mark for any midterms, finals and comprehensive tests.

Student evaluation criteria must also be clear and made available to students for each course. A summary/outline should be provided to students for each course and include learning objectives, student evaluation criteria and a schedule of learning activities.

4.2.9 Student Support

The ministry encourages schools to have designated staff member responsible to provide students with information and services required to support them during their studies (e.g., counseling, mental health support, accommodation for disabilities, study skills workshops, time-management, resume writing, job searches, student loans, etc.).

4.2.10 Student Feedback

Feedback is a vital element in improving programs, instruction and the student learning experience. Pursuant to section 2-2(1)(f) of the Regulations, schools are required to provide students with an opportunity to provide feedback about their school and program experience through tools such as questionnaires, surveys, focus groups, etc.

4.3 Programs

4.3.1 Program Delivery Methods

Private vocational school programs can be delivered using face-to-face (onsite), online and blended (combination of onsite and online) delivery methods.

Onsite Delivery of Programs

The onsite delivery is instruction, learning, and support that occurs in a face-to-face setting where students and instructors are required to be physically present to receive program instruction at the school campus.

Online Delivery of Programs

Online delivery is instruction, learning, and support that occurs online and may include:

- The use of a learning management system.
- Web-delivered activities.
- Online activities that offer feedback throughout a session.
- Video-captured talks and presentations by industry experts.
- Online modules, quizzes, etc.
- Opportunities to collaborate with classmates and instructors (e.g., online discussions and chats via social media, learning management system, video conferencing etc.).
- The use of virtual reality learning environments (e.g., simulations).

Online learning may occur:

- Synchronously (a learning event in which a group of students are engaging in learning at the same time, often with a specific program/course start and end date); and/or
- Asynchronously (where students engage in learning at their own pace).

Before the ministry will register an online program, the school must:

1. have a physical location (e.g., school building) in Saskatchewan; and
2. already offer a registered onsite and/or blended program(s) for at least 18 months or have graduated at least one class of students.

Blended Delivery of Programs

Blended delivery is instruction, learning and support that occurs both in a face-to-face as well as online setting. This method of delivery is possible for new schools given there will be a face-to-face delivery that requires a physical location/school campus.

Applications for Blended/Online Programs

Applications submitted to the ministry for a proposed blended or online program will be required meet the following criteria:

<p>Online Program - Student Requirements</p>	<p>Prior to enrollment, the school will ensure students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have the skills and ability to effectively use the online learning platform and technology; and • have the necessary technology (e.g., computer/laptop, minimum internet speed) required to participate in online courses/programs. <p>The school will provide students in online programs with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information about updates on technology and learning platforms; • tutorial support(s) and/or virtual program advising; • online access to school policies and the student handbook; and • information about requirements related monitoring/tracking online student attendance and progress toward course/program completion.
<p>Online Program - Technology Requirements</p>	<p>The school will have the infrastructure and connectivity for students and instructors to be successful in courses/programs delivered online in a learning management system.</p> <p>This system will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • verify student/instructor identification (e.g., include standard internet encryption (i.e., https: not http:) and store passwords in an encrypted fashion, where passwords are known only to the student/instructor); • allow students/instructors to access the online course/program learning resources/materials with ease; • facilitate communication between instructor and students; • allow instructors to administer and grade quizzes/exams with strategies in place to mitigate risk of cheating;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure students can complete each module (if applicable) without skipping them; and • have a documented and published recovery plan/policy to address technology failure. <p>The school will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a strategy in place that ensures students are supported and/or compensated if technology is down for more than 24 hours; • have technology recovery strategies/policies that will be used to restore hardware, applications, and data to efficiently meet the needs of students and instructors; • have strategies/policies in place when data is lost and/or corrupted from hardware failure, human error, hacking or malware; • ensure data and electronic information is backed up and restored offsite and on an ongoing basis; • inform students how their information is stored/used. For example, if the school's learning management system stores student information outside of Canada, the student is made aware of this and the fact that their personal information may be used under the laws of the country involved; and • identify the school's dedicated resource(s) (staff, third party vendor) responsible for assisting students and instructors and maintaining the system.
<p>Online Program - Instructor Requirements</p>	<p>The school ensures instructors who teach online/blended program(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have the qualifications and experience required to use online technologies; • are provided with continuous training in the delivery of online courses; • are provided with an orientation and technical support; and • are assessed on their effectiveness in delivering online programs (e.g., student survey, questionnaire, instructor evaluation).

<p>Online Program - Other Requirements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools will have policies in place that address: • how examinations for online courses will be delivered; • how student cheating in online courses/programs are prevented/addressed; and • processes for continually evaluating the effectiveness of an online course/program.
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4.3.2 Program Quality

Through legislation, policies and practices, the Ministry of Advanced Education promotes the delivery of high-quality private vocational school programs that are characterized by the following:

- A curriculum that includes all the necessary components to ensure that graduates have received instruction that adequately prepares them for employment in the field of study.
- A learning climate that is safe, welcoming, inclusive and accommodating of a diverse student body.
- Opportunities for hands-on learning or off-site practicum/work placements, depending on the nature of the program.
- A robust mechanism for reviewing the curriculum, with input from independent, well-informed third parties to ensure the program’s currency and relevance.
- Clearly identified learning outcomes that are directly related to the curriculum and that match the competencies necessary for employment.
- A clear indication of how the learning outcomes will be assessed and competencies demonstrated.
- A comprehensive program plan that clearly communicates to students what they will learn, when they will learn it, how they will learn it (or be taught it), how they will achieve the learning outcomes, and how and when they will be assessed.
- Adequate learning resources to support the curriculum and program plan.
- Adequate student supports, including but not limited to pre-admission assessment, counselling, study skills, remedial supports, time management tips, resume writing and job search skills.
- Well-qualified instructors who have knowledge of the subject matter, an understanding of how to effectively teach adult learners and have access to ongoing opportunities for professional development and learning.
- Clearly articulated instructor evaluation mechanisms and criteria.
- Formal opportunities for students to provide feedback on their courses and instructors.

Many of these characteristics are supported by [*The Private Vocational Schools Regulation Act, 1995*](#); [*The Private Vocational Schools Regulations, 2022*](#); and [*The Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training Act*](#).

The purpose of maintaining the quality of private vocational school programs is to assure the public (i.e., students, parents, employers) that the school demonstrates competence and a commitment to continuing quality improvement of its courses and programs. The school does this by assessing its programs, the knowledge and skills of its students and the need for its graduates in the labour market. In addition, the ministry encourages schools to incorporate into their policies and practices some activities and steps outlined in [Program Quality Activities](#) in an effort to deliver quality vocational programs across the province.

4.3.3 Program Review

Pursuant to subsection 2-3(1) of the Regulations, on receipt of an application for the issuance or renewal of a Certificate of Registration of a private vocational school and at any other time the Minister considers appropriate, the Minister may require a program review. There are three types of program reviews including:

- **Ministry Program Review** – where the ministry conducts the program review.
- **Industry Program Review** – where the program review may be conducted by a subject matter expert, hiring manager, industry association or regulator.
- **Expert Third Party Program Review** – where the program review is completed by an organization or person the ministry deems fit to properly assess the program and there is no suitable industry reviewer.

With the exception of the Ministry Program Review, pursuant to 2-3(2) of the Regulations, the operator is responsible for all costs associated with program reviews carried out by an expert third party, a relevant employer or hiring manager, industry association, accreditor, regulator or other independent person, where applicable.

Ministry Program Review

The ministry may request a review of a school's program when areas of concern are identified, including but not limited to, the following:

- Information collected through student complaints.
- A high number of student complaints received by the ministry.
- The program demonstrates poor student completion/graduation rates.
- The program demonstrates poor student employment rates.
- A lengthy period of time (five or more years) has elapsed since a program review has been conducted. The ministry will notify the school in writing when a program review is being considered. The ministry will contact the school to discuss the purpose and scope of the review, the information required and associated timelines. The school is responsible for providing information to the ministry as requested.

Industry Program Review

A private vocational school must seek three industry program reviews to validate the quality and need for a program. Approved sources include professional associations, regulatory/accrediting bodies, and/or prospective hiring employers. The reviewer must have knowledge and/or expertise in the field/industry of the proposed training.

Note: Industry program reviews from professional/accrediting/regulatory bodies must be from the organization's Executive Director/Program Manager, not a subscribing member. Furthermore, industry program reviews will not be accepted from people who present a conflict of interest (e.g., employee, business partner, friend, etc.).

Accordingly, the school operator must seek qualified individuals to complete the [Industry Review Form](#). Please contact ministry officials if you have questions about selecting qualified industry reviewers. *Note: If a school is proposing the same program in more than one location, three industry program reviews will be required for each location.*

Prior to the review, the school operator must provide the reviewers with information on the program including:

- Curriculum (course outlines) and learning objectives.
- Length of the program (Instruction hours include but not limited to theory, clinical practicum, labs, or mandatory onsite/off-site practicum/work placement/floor hours).
- Admission requirements for the program.
- Method(s) of program delivery [face-to-face (onsite), blended or online]. If there are online components, provide information to the industry reviewer about how the program will be delivered to the student using this delivery method.
- Learning resources (textbooks/materials/kit/equipment).
- Instructor qualifications.
- Training location description.

The Industry Program Review is confidential. The person(s) reviewing documentation provided for the purpose of the review must not share it with any other person or organization unless given written authorization from the respective school.

Once completed, the reviewer must submit the Industry Program Review directly to the ministry, per the instructions provided in the form. However, the reviewer is encouraged to send a copy of the completed Industry Program Review to the school operator.

A minimum of three completed Industry Program Reviews are required for each proposed new program.

Expert Third Party Program Review

Where there is no suitable industry reviewer, the program review may be completed by an organization or person the ministry deems fit to properly assess the program. The reviewer must have knowledge and/or expertise in the field or related field of the proposed training.

Prior to the review, the school operator must provide the reviewer(s) with information on the

program as listed for the industry review process above. The review is confidential, and the reviewer is expected to submit the review directly to the ministry and a copy may be sent to the school operator.

4.3.4 External Jurisdiction Assessment

If your private vocational school is operating or has previously operated in another jurisdiction in Canada, you must provide evidence from the career college regulator in your home jurisdiction(s) confirming that your school has been and continues to be compliant with that jurisdiction's regulatory requirements. You must contact the respective career college regulator and ask them to complete the [External Jurisdiction Assessment Form](#). The regulator is asked to email the completed form directed to pvsinquiry@gov.sk.ca.

4.3.5 Labour Market Relevance

The labour market is the market in which employers compete on a regular basis to attract and retain the best employees for their organizations. It is important for educational institutions, including private vocational schools, to assess whether there is legitimate demand in the labour market for its graduates.

If there are other schools/institutions in Saskatchewan offering the same or a similar program to the one proposed, please explain:

- How the program proposed in this application differs from those currently being delivered.
- Whether there is a need in Saskatchewan's post-secondary sector and labour market for another program.

Private vocational school operators can utilize several resources to attain data and statistics to demonstrate the need for their school's program(s) based on Saskatchewan's labour market. Key resources include, but are not limited to the following:

- [Ministry of Immigration and Career Training](#)
- [Saskatchewan Detailed Occupational Outlook \(2019-2023\)](#)
- [Statistics Canada](#)
- Job sites: Saskjobs.ca and National Job Bank - jobbank.gc.ca
- [Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce](#)

Relevant labour market information must be attached to the online application. Copies of job ads alone are not sufficient.

4.3.6 Training Completion Plan

Pursuant to section 2-5 of the Regulations, a [Training Completion Plan](#) is a required element of a new program application. The Training Completion Plan provides information that will assist the ministry in identifying alternative training providers in the event a school is unable to complete the delivery of a program.

The Training Completion Plan should either identify alternative programs that are compatible with the program under consideration (e.g., similar programs delivered by other training providers in the province) or flag that the program is unique and alternative training may not be available or feasible. In situations where a program is unique, the ministry will require the school to inform students (via the student enrolment contract) and explain how students will be assisted and/or compensated if the school cannot deliver the program to completion.

Pursuant to subsection 2-5(3) of the Regulations, the operator shall maintain, as part of the Training Completion Plan, the following information for each student enrolled in an approved course or program:

- (a) full name***
- (b) gender***
- (c) date of birth***
- (d) residential address and permanent address***
- (e) residential phone number and permanent telephone number***
- (f) email address***
- (g) educational history before enrolment in the course or program***
- (h) status in the course or program at any given time.***

In addition, every operator shall record any changes in the above information and make all of the school's Training Completion Plans available to the ministry for inspection, as requested.

4.4 Instructors

4.4.1 Instructor Requirement

A school must have adequate number of qualified instructors. The ministry will assess the minimum qualification required for instructors, student to instructor ratio, ability of potential instructors to teach adult learners and in online environments, and whether there are ongoing professional development opportunities for instructors.

Note: Instructors teaching in designated trades and apprenticeship programs must have Journeyman Certification in the applicable trade. Similarly, the school must ensure that any instructor requirements set by any other regulatory, accrediting or professional body are adhered to.

Instructors must be registered with the Ministry of Advanced Education. For each proposed instructor, you will be required to complete an [Application for Registration of Instructor or Examiner](#) but first, read the instructions as outlined in 4.4.2 to 4.4.4 below.

4.4.2 Application for Instructor and Examiner Registration

Pursuant to section 6-4 of the Regulations, every school must ensure each instructor and examiner employed in a program offered by the school is approved and registered by the ministry before the instructor commences employment. Complete the [Application for Registration of Instructor or Examiner](#) and submit it through the online application portal, PVSR.

- (1) Every operator shall ensure that each instructor and examiner employed in a course or program offered by the school is approved and:**
 - (a) possesses a degree from a university recognized by the minister in an area of study directly related to the vocation to be taught and has at least 12 consecutive months of occupational experience in that vocation;**
 - (b) is a graduate of an educational institution recognized by the minister in an area directly related to the vocation to be taught and has at least 12 consecutive months of occupational experience in that vocation; or**
 - (c) has at least 3 years of occupational experience in the vocation to be taught.**

- (2) The minister shall approve the employment of an instructor if the instructor meets all of the qualifications required of persons instructing in the course or program of instruction by any of the following:**
 - (a) an Act or regulation;**
 - (b) an Act of the Parliament of Canada or regulation made pursuant to an Act of the Parliament of Canada; or**
 - (c) the bylaws of a professional association or professional regulatory body, accrediting body or other association related to the course or program of instruction.**

A school operator must immediately notify the Minister when an instructor ceases to teach at the school, ceases to teach a particular program, or when the information provided by the school to the ministry changes in any way.

Operators of schools cannot employ any person to be an instructor of a program who does not have the qualifications or experience prescribed in section 6-4 of the Regulations, without obtaining the prior written approval of the Minister. It is important that the instructor/examiner application include copies of credentials achieved.

4.4.3 Processing of Instructor and Examiner Registration

To expedite the processing of instructor/examiner approvals, it is important that application forms be completed in full and be signed by both the instructor/examiner and the school representative. Include no fewer than three references and confirmation of instructor credential(s). The application must indicate each program/course in which the instructor/examiner will be involved. The statement “all programs” or similar statements should be avoided.

If an instructor/examiner application is denied, a letter will be sent to the school explaining the criteria used in assessing the application and the reason for the denial.

In urgent situations (e.g., the sudden departure of an instructor), conditional approval of registration may be granted only if the school provides the credential/transcript for the incoming instructor to demonstrate they have the required education, training and skills pursuant to section 6-4 of the Regulations.

4.4.4 Quality of Instruction

The ministry encourages private vocational schools to deliver programs using instructors who possess sound teaching principles and practices to effectively address the diversity of learning needs in the classroom. Accordingly, it is important that schools provide instructors with ongoing opportunities to strengthen teaching skills and knowledge.

Private vocational schools may strengthen instructor/teaching skills and knowledge by undertaking the following activities:

- Become a member of the [National Association of Career Colleges](#) (NACC) and utilize instructor training resources.
- Provide information about and/or enrol instructors in adult education training opportunities to enhance teaching skills.
- Provide training and/or certification in distance education/online learning delivery, where applicable.
- Provide in-house instructor training and mentoring opportunities.
- Designate time for instructor upgrading.
- Provide monthly instructor development days with a focus on the skill area to be improved.
- Utilize training provided by textbook publishers.
- Conduct regular evaluations of instructor skills and abilities to learn and improve the quality of instruction.

4.5 Facilities

Section 6-5 of the Regulations states no operator of a school shall provide any course or program unless the premises have been approved by the ministry. The premises, equipment and other facilities used to provide the program must comply with all applicable building safety, fire safety, and health/sanitation laws.

The ministry requires fire, health, and building inspection reports be submitted as proof of compliance with regulatory requirements. Reports may also be requested when a registered school changes location or when a facility-related student concern is brought forward to the ministry.

4.5.1 Fire Inspection

A fire inspection is required to ensure training facilities adhere to the [National Fire Code](#) and are appropriately maintained. School operators should contact their local fire safety authorities (e.g., Saskatoon Fire and Protective Services' Fire Prevention Branch) or a private inspection service to arrange for a fire inspection.

4.5.2 Health Inspection

A health inspection is required to ensure training facilities meet health and sanitary standards. School operators are asked to arrange for a health inspection through the [Saskatchewan Health Authority](#).

4.5.3 Building Inspection

A building inspection is required to ensure training facilities adhere to the [National Building Code](#). This inspection may include a fire inspection. Contact the appropriate municipal office to arrange for a building inspection by a licensed professional.

4.6 Financial/Security

4.6.1 Training Completions Fund Contribution

The Training Completions Fund (TCF) is established pursuant to section 18 of the Act and provides consumer protection to students attending private vocational schools. In the event of a school closure, the TCF is used to refund tuition fees paid by a student to the school (as applicable).

The revenue of the TCF consists primarily of contributions that private vocational school operators are required to provide on an annual basis in accordance with sections 4-2 and 4-3 of the Regulations and any interest earned on the fund.

A contribution to the TCF is required when a new school is registered and every year thereafter and is based on tuition revenues reported on the school's most recent financial statements. The annual contribution is calculated as follows:

- For the first year of registration, one per cent of projected revenue or \$2,000 (whichever is greater) contribution is required.
- For registration years two through five, one per cent of the school's annual tuition revenue for the applicable private vocational school year or \$500 (whichever is greater) contribution is required.
- Once the school has been in operation for more than five years and is compliant with the Act and Regulations, 0.75 per cent of the school's annual tuition for the applicable private vocational school year or \$500 (whichever is greater) contribution is required.
- If there is a draw on the fund, a 0.25 per cent of tuition revenue surcharge applies in the year following a draw on the fund. However, depending on the nature of circumstances, the Minister may choose to waive the 0.25 per cent surcharge.

Every registered school will receive a letter explaining the calculation of the required contribution along with an invoice in January/February with a payable deadline of March 31. TCF payments may be addressed to Minister of Finance.

Audited financial statements for the TCF are produced annually and posted on saskatchewan.ca/advancededucation.

4.6.2 Financial Security Requirement

Pursuant to section 3 of the Regulations, every operator of a school is required to post security based on the school’s tuition revenue from the most recent financial statements.

The following chart identifies the security amount required by schools.

Amount of Security Required

Table 1 of *The Private Vocational Schools Regulations, 2022*

Annual Tuition Revenue (from recently submitted year-end financial statements)	Security Requirement
0 - \$100,000	\$10,000
\$100,001 - \$200,000	\$20,000
\$200,001 - \$300,000	\$30,000
\$300,001 - \$400,000	\$40,000
\$400,001 - \$500,000	\$50,000
\$500,001 - \$600,000	\$60,000
\$600,001 - \$700,000	\$70,000
\$700,001+	\$75,000

The security provided must be in the form of a note, bond, debenture or other evidence of indebtedness issued or guaranteed by an authorized issuer. The operator is required to post as much of the required security amount as possible in the form of a surety bond. If the operator is unable to obtain a surety bond, the remaining amount can be posted in the form of a trust, an irrevocable letter of credit, or any other form of security that is acceptable to the Minister.

To demonstrate that a bond has been posted, the school may complete the [Guarantee Bond Template](#) or have the bonding company provide the relevant documentation.

Section 3-5 of the Regulations outlines the process in the event of a forfeiture of security. The financial security may be forfeited (and paid to the Minister of Finance for deposit into the TCF) if the school:

- Is unable to continue providing the program for which a student has signed a contract or is unable to meet its other obligations as specified in any terms and conditions attached to the Certificate of Registration.
- Is convicted of an offence pursuant to the Act.
- Is convicted of an offence pursuant to [The Criminal Code](#) of conspiracy to commit an offence involving fraud or theft, and the conviction has become final.

- Is unable or refuses to refund applicable fees to a student or students.
- Does not comply with provisions set out in these Regulations requiring evidence that the security is being maintained in accordance with these Regulations, either annually or on request from the Minister.
- Is undergoing proceedings to wind up the school.
- Is the subject of proceedings pursuant to the [Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act](#), including a consumer proposal.

4.6.3 Year-End Financial Reporting

Year-end financial reporting gives the ministry an indication of a school’s financial strength. Monitoring of financial health over time allows the ministry to assess whether a school may be experiencing financial difficulties and to proactively communicate with a school owner if concerns arise regarding ongoing financial viability.

Requirements for financial reporting are provided in subsection 6-1(4) of the Regulations as follows:

Every operator of a private vocational school shall provide the minister:

- (a) within 120 days of the end of the school’s fiscal year, a copy of the school’s financial statements for the previous fiscal year; and***
- (b) any other information, in a form satisfactory to the minister, that the minister may request.***

Confidentiality

Financial information provided to the ministry will be treated confidentially under [The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#) as follows:

19(1) Subject to Part V and this section, a head shall refuse to give access to a record that contains:

- (b) financial, commercial, scientific, technical or labour relations information that is supplied in confidence, implicitly or explicitly, to a government institution by a third party.***

(2) A head may give access to a record that contains information described in subsection (1) with the written consent of the third party to whom the information relates.

Definitions

The following definitions will aid in understanding the reporting process:

Accountant: A [Chartered Professional Accountant](#) licensed to perform assurance services such as audit engagements or review engagements.

Review Engagement Report: A review of the financial statements is carried out to determine the credibility of the school. A Review Engagement Report is generally limited to inquiries of management and a review of financial data. It provides some assurances of the reliability of the financial statements.

Auditor’s Report: Based on an independent verification, it is a study and evaluation of internal controls and tests of records and balances. This report represents the highest level of credibility and reliability that an accountant can express about financial statements.

4.6.4 Year-End Financial Reporting Process

Step 1: Letter of Notice

Approximately two to four weeks prior to a school’s fiscal year-end, the ministry will send a letter of notice of financial reporting coming due. The ministry will only accept financial statements accompanied by either the Auditor’s Report or a Review Engagement Report prepared by a designated accountant in good standing. A “Notice to Reader” statement is not acceptable.

The Minister reserves the right to ask for additional financial information and documentation at any time.

Step 2: Submission of Financial Report to the ministry

Per subsection 6-1(4) of the Regulations, the required financial documentation must be submitted to the ministry within 120 days of a school’s fiscal year-end.

Step 3: Ministry Review

Upon submission of financial statements, accompanied by either a review engagement or audit report, the ministry will assess the financial strength of the school. The ministry may request additional information as required and may wish to discuss financial matters directly with a school operator if questions/issues arise as a result of the review process.

Annual financial reporting indicates the financial strength of a private vocational school. The analysis over a period of time may assist schools and the ministry to provide solutions to potential problems which may threaten the school or its students. However, it must be reaffirmed that any review cannot consistently predict future financial viability.

The Training Completions Fund contribution for each school is calculated using the information provided in the school’s most recently submitted year-end financial statements. For more information, please review the Training Completions Funds contribution in 4.6.1 above.

4.7 Ministry Site Visit

New School Site Visit

When the ministry is satisfied that the registration requirements for a new school have been met, an onsite visit by a ministry official will be required to confirm the facilities and resources are adequate. If satisfactory, the ministry will issue a letter confirming school and program registration, at which time the school may begin advertising the program and enrolling students.

Monitoring (Compliance) Visits.

Pursuant to sections 21 to 24 of the Act and 6-5 of the Regulation, ministry staff regularly visit schools to ensure operators are delivering programs in compliance with the Act and Regulations. These visits may be scheduled or impromptu and typically involve a more detailed examination of school records (e.g., student files, building/safety inspections, etc.).

Ministry officials utilize the [School Visit Checklist](#) and [Student File Checklist](#) when conducting a monitoring visit. The school operator is encouraged to use these forms in preparation for a scheduled monitoring visit.

Following a monitoring visit, information and guidance about issues of concern will be communicated to operators with the applicable timeline for response from the school.

Educational Visits

Educational visits (or information sessions) are conducted by ministry staff with the purpose of sharing information and answering questions related to the requirements and processes of the Act and the Regulations. The school may also request an educational visit (or information session) by ministry officials at any time.

4.8 Advertising

Requirements related to advertising are prescribed in section 26 of the Act and sections 7-1 and 7-2 of the Regulations. School operators are prohibited from publishing advertising that is misleading to the public, as follows:

- 7-1 (1) No operator shall publish or cause to be published any advertisement relating to the private vocational school that:***
- (a) May tend to mislead the public, or***
 - (b) Subject to section 7-3, refers to the prices charged by the school for work performed by its students.***
- (2) Subject to subsection (3), no operator shall publish or cause to be published any advertisement relating to the school that states that the Government of Saskatchewan, the minister, the ministry or any official of the ministry has approved:***
- (a) the school, or***
 - (b) any course or program offered by the school.***
- (3) If an operator has a certificate of registration, an advertisement relating to the school may state that fact.***
- (4) Every operator who publishes or causes to be published any advertisement relating to the school shall ensure that the advertisement clearly sets out the name of the school to which the advertisement relates.***
- (5) The minister may, after giving the operator an opportunity to be heard:***
- (a) prohibit the publication of any advertisement relating to the school; or***

(b) require the deletions of changes to be made to any advertisement relating to the school published by the operator.

Prohibited representations

7-2 No operator shall:

- (a) guarantee, orally or in writing, an employment position to any student or prospective student;***
- (b) make a false or misleading oral or written statement with respect to the earnings of any person who has completed a course or program at the school; or***
- (c) make a false or misleading statement in an oral or written communication made to any person or persons with the intent to recruit prospective students with respect to, but not limited to: (i) a course or program, (ii) the terms of a student contract, (iii) the needs of the relevant labour market, (iv) the expected employment attainment or earnings, or (v) any approvals or accreditations obtained for the course or program.***

In addition to the requirements of the Act and Regulations, the ministry recommends that schools adhere to the following guidelines related to advertising:

- Advertised job expectations must be realistic. All testimonials are to be substantiated within a Saskatchewan context. For example, a school may claim it is “number one,” “the leader” or that a certain percentage of graduates received employment in an area directly related to their field of study; however, such statements must be substantiated with statistical information.
- Student financial assistance cannot be the primary focus of a school advertisement. The availability of financial assistance is not to be presented as an endorsement of the program value. The following wording may be used to advertise financial assistance: “Financial assistance may be available to qualified students.”
- Using the [Canadian Code of Advertising Standards](#) as a reference, consider the following:
 - Advertising should reflect high standards of honesty, truth, accuracy and fairness.
 - Advertisements may not contain inaccurate, exaggerated, or deceptive claims or statements, either direct or implied.
 - Truthfulness of a message is assessed by how the message is received or perceived, or the general impression conveyed, not by the intent of the sender or legality of the phrasing.

4.9 Annual Statistics Reporting

Pursuant to section 6-1 of the Regulations, schools are required to prepare and submit an annual report to the ministry containing information about the students enrolled at the school.

The ministry will send a student statistic reporting form (with instructions) to all private vocational schools in the summer of each year. Schools are required to submit the completed

form to the ministry by October 31 of each year.

4.10 Annual Regulatory Responsibilities

The [Annual Regulatory Responsibilities](#) is designed as a quick reference to inform school operators about the regulatory requirements for private vocational schools. This document summarizes the annual regulatory activities required of schools and associated timelines in accordance with the Regulations.

4.11 Non-Compliance of a Private Vocational School

When the Minister has determined that a private vocational school is in non-compliance, the school operator will be advised as follows:

The ministry will outline the non-compliance matter(s) and ask the operator to resolve its non-compliance through a specific directive aimed at bringing the school into compliance with its responsibilities under the Act and Regulations (e.g., refund a student for a program or fee not registered with the ministry). A school operator may either comply with the directive or appeal the ministry's decision on a question of law only to a judge of the Court of King's Bench within 30 calendar days of the date of the Minister's decision.

If the school does not comply and no appeal to the court has been made, the Minister will decide on the appropriate regulatory measure to address the school's non-compliance. The school will be notified of the ministry's consideration of a specific regulatory measure.

Regulatory measures include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Refusal to issue or renew a Certificate of Registration (subsection 5(1)(b) of the Act).
- Suspension or cancellation of a Certificate of Registration (section 15 of the Act).
- Imposition/variation of terms on Certificate of Registration (subsection 5(2) of the Act).
- Forfeiture of a school's financial security (section 3-5 of the Regulations).

In addition, any operator who contravenes any provision of the Act or Regulations is guilty of an offence and liable to a fine of up to \$20,000, and, in the case of a continuing offence, a fine of up to \$2,500 for each day that the offence continues (section 27 of the Act).

The Minister will provide the operator with an opportunity to be heard before implementing a decision, in circumstances where the ministry is considering to:

- Refuse to issue or renew a Certificate of Registration.
- Impose any terms on a Certificate of Registration.
- Suspend or cancel a Certificate of Registration.

The school operator may either comply or request an opportunity to be heard.

Outside the three regulatory measures listed above which provide the operator with an opportunity to be heard, all other regulatory measures decided upon by the ministry are final and the school's only option is to appeal the ministry's decision on a question of law only to a judge of the Court of King's Bench within 30 calendar days of the date of the decision.

When the ministry makes a decision and provides an implementation date for the regulatory measure, the school may either comply or appeal the ministry's decision on a question of law to a judge of the Court of King's Bench within 30 calendar days.

Opportunity to be Heard

Pursuant to section 16 of the Act, the Minister shall not refuse to issue or renew a Certificate of Registration, impose any terms on a Certificate of Registration, or suspend or cancel a Certificate of Registration without giving the operator an opportunity to be heard, except in a case where the Minister considers it necessary to protect students or the public interest.

If the Minister considers it necessary to protect students or to protect the public interest, the Minister may immediately impose terms on, suspend or cancel a Certificate of Registration without giving the operator an opportunity to be heard, but shall give the operator an opportunity to be heard within 15 calendar days of the impositions, suspension or cancellation.

The opportunity to be heard may occur through 1) written submissions only; or, 2) written submissions and an oral hearing.

The Minister will notify the operator in writing whenever the Minister is considering whether to refuse to issue or renew a Certificate of Registration or impose any terms on a Certificate of Registration or suspend or cancel a Certificate of Registration.

The Minister's written notice to the operator will outline the reasons why the Minister is considering a particular action and will include:

- Copies of information in the ministry's possession applicable to the situation.
- References to appropriate legislation.
- Information regarding the opportunity to be heard before the Minister decides to proceed with regulatory measure(s), including:
 - Notice to the operator that he/she is entitled to provide written submissions and to submit new or alternative information for consideration by the Minister.
 - The date by which such submissions and new or alternative information must be received by the Minister.
 - Notice to the operator that he/she is entitled to an oral hearing before the Minister if the operator requests an oral hearing.
 - The date by which the request for an oral hearing must be made.

Please note that unless the operator requests an oral hearing, the Minister will proceed on the basis of the written materials only.

If the operator does not provide written submissions within the time indicated, the Minister will make a decision in the absence of submissions.

Request for Oral Hearing

Upon receipt of a request for an oral hearing, the Minister shall normally set a date no earlier than 15 calendar days from the date of the request and no later than 30 calendar days from the date of the request. This timeline may change depending on the urgency of the matter.

If the operator intends to make written submissions and attend an oral hearing, the Minister shall also set a date by which written submissions and new or alternative information must be received by the Minister. The operator will be advised in writing of the date(s) set.

The hearing will take place before a representative or representatives of the Minister which include but are not limited to the executive director, director, or other ministry officials familiar with the private vocational schools Act and Regulations.

If the operator fails to attend on the date and time indicated for the oral hearing, the Minister will proceed on the basis of the written materials, if any, filed by the operator.

Request for Postponement

In the event the operator is unable, for *bona fide* reasons, to meet the date specified by the Minister for receiving submissions or attend on the date set for an oral hearing, the Minister may grant a postponement to a later date where it is shown to the satisfaction of the Minister that a postponement is required to permit an adequate hearing to be held.

Final Decision

After receiving the response and new or alternative information from the school, the Minister will assess all evidence and make a decision. The school operator will be notified in writing of the final decision. Typically, a response by the Minister will occur within 5 to 10 business days of receiving the written response from the school or the oral hearing, if applicable.

Proceeding with Regulatory Measures to Address Non-Compliance

Where the Minister decides to proceed with regulatory measures, the Minister will provide written reasons to the operator explaining its decision.

Appeal

Pursuant to section 17 of the Act, any person who is aggrieved by a decision of the Minister may appeal the decision on a question of law only to a judge of the Court of Queen's Bench within 30 calendar days of the date of the Minister's decision.

Review the [Non-Compliance Flowchart](#).

4.11 Documents

The following list identifies all relevant documents referenced in the [PVS Manual](#). The full list of applicable documents can be found on saskatchewan.ca, or in separate hyperlinked, downloadable forms below:

[Annual Regulatory Responsibilities](#)

[Applicant Profile Form](#)

[Application for Registration of Instructor or Examiner](#)

[Registration Guide – New School and Program](#)

[Registration Guide – New Program \(Registered School\)](#)

[Registration Guide – Annual Renewal \(Registered School and Program\(s\)\)](#)

[Business Plan Outline](#)

[Change of Ownership Application](#)

[Change of Ownership Checklist](#)

[E-Transfer Letter](#)

[Expression of Interest Form](#)

[External Jurisdiction Assessment Form](#)

[Guarantee Bond Template](#)

[Industry Review Form](#)

[Non-Compliance Flowchart](#)

[Program Quality Activities](#)

[Refund Calculator](#)

[Student Enrolment Contract Required Information](#)

[School Visit Checklist](#)

[Student File Checklist](#)

[Training Completion Plan](#)

[Tuition Refund Flowchart](#)