

# Starting a Private Training Institution in BC:

*What you need to know before  
applying for a certificate*

Private Training  
Institutions Branch





PRIVATE TRAINING  
INSTITUTIONS  
BRANCH (PTIB)



WHO REQUIRES A  
CERTIFICATE?



REGISTRATION  
OR DESIGNATION  
CERTIFICATE



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# TOPICS COVERED

# REGULATORY AMENDMENTS 2025

- Amendments to the *Private Training Regulation* and *Fees and Student Tuition Protection Fund Regulation* come into effect on January 1, 2025.
- The amendments require action by certified private training institutions to be compliant by the in-force date **and have implications for institutions applying for a certificate for the first time.**
- Applications are assessed based on the legislation and regulations effective on the date the registrar reviews the application. For example, an application submitted by an institution on May 1, 2024 and reviewed by the registrar on January 15, 2025 will be assessed based on the amended regulations that come into force January 1, 2025.
- Amendments impacting information in this resource are noted in red.
- See the [Regulatory Amendments 2025 page](#) for more information.

# PRIVATE TRAINING INSTITUTIONS BRANCH (PTIB)

PTIB is the branch of the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education & Future Skills that administers the [Private Training Act and associated regulations](#).

PTIB **regulates** private training institutions in British Columbia by:

- requiring institutions offering career training to hold a **certificate**
- ensuring **compliance** through use of enforcement tools

PTIB provides **consumer protection** by:

- publishing information about institutions
- assisting students affected by institution closures
- handling student complaints
- enforcing standards to be met by institutions

For complete information about certification, see the [Private Training Act Policy Manual](#) and the [PTIB website](#).

# WHO REQUIRES A CERTIFICATE?

Institutions require a certificate if they provide, or offer to provide, at least one **career-related** program with:

- 40 hours or more of instructional time, and
- tuition of at least \$4,000.

This applies to all programs, whether delivered in class or by distance education.

These programs are called **Class A programs**.

Some exceptions apply and certain institutions, such as public institutions, are not required to hold a certificate. See Sections 1.1 and 2.2 of the [PTA Policy Manual](#) for information about excluded institutions and occupations, respectively.

## REGISTRATION OR DESIGNATION

Institutions can choose between two distinct pathways to certification:

### 1. Registration certificate

- minimum requirement for institutions offering Class A programs

OR

### 2. Designation certificate

- mandatory for institutions seeking:
  - StudentAidBC (SABC) designation or
  - BC Education Quality Assurance (EQA) designation

# EQA AND SABC

Only institutions that hold a PTIB **designation certificate** have access to **EQA** and **SABC**.

**Note: the Province has implemented a moratorium on initial EQA applications until February 1, 2026.**

Institutions must apply directly to EQA and SABC (separate process from certificate application) and those applications are assessed by EQA and SABC program staff, not PTIB staff.

- First time applicants will not be issued a PTIB designation certificate. One of the requirements to be issued a designation certificate is holding a certificate for the past year. **As of January 1, 2025, this requirement will be extended to two years.**
- You must have **EQA** to be included on the federal list of [Designated Learning Institutions](#) to host international students on study permits.
- International students who wish to enrol in a program 6 months or longer require study permits issued by the federal government.

## VOLUNTARY DESIGNATION

Institutions not offering Class A programs may apply for designation if they offer ~~a Class B~~ or Class C program.

*As of January 1, 2025, an institution not offering a Class A program may not apply for designation if they only offer Class B programs.*

They may not apply for registration.

**Class B programs:** career-related programs at designated/interim designated institutions, other than Class A programs, for which tuition is at least \$1,000

**Class C programs:** language programs at designated/interim designated institutions that are longer than six months, **or** for which tuition is at least \$4,000. A language program is defined as a program that has as its learning object that students gain or improve proficiency in a language.



## CONSIDERATIONS FOR APPLICANTS



It may take 12-18 months for a PTIB certificate application to be processed.



First time applicants will not be issued a designation certificate. One of the requirements to be issued a designation certificate is holding a certificate for the past year (for the past two years effective January 1, 2025).



The Province has implemented a moratorium on initial EQA applications until February 1, 2026.



Sole proprietors or partnerships are not eligible for EQA, and therefore may not enrol international students.



A certificate is not transferable, so it can't be sold as an asset.

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR APPLICANTS



Application fees are non-refundable.



There are a number of fees, in addition to the application fee, associated with certification. See Chapter 7 of the PTA Policy Manual. **New fees apply effective January 1, 2025.**



Most first time applicants are required to provide financial security of at least \$25,000.



Estimated/projected tuition revenue from approved programs must be realistic and will be used to calculate fees and payments to the Fund.

## APPLYING FOR A CERTIFICATE

1. Submit an [Orientation Session Request – Pre-Assessment](#) form and a [Request for Confirmation of Program Class](#) form for each program you plan to offer
2. Participate in a PTIB Orientation session scheduled by PTIB staff
3. Obtain a [BC Electronic Identification account](#) (BCeID)
4. Submit an [Application – New Certification](#) form for certification that includes:
  - a) Business plan (industry analysis, marketing plan, financial plan, balance sheet)
  - b) Student enrolment contract
  - c) Student policies
  - d) Evidence of general liability insurance
  - e) Copy of business license
5. Submit full program applications for all programs
6. Pay Application Fees (\$2,450 for registration; \$2,600 for designation; \$500 for a Class A program)

## MAINTAINING CERTIFICATION

Once certified, institutions must:

- Re-apply annually
- Meet all deadlines (penalties are associated with late submissions)
- Provide student data as required
- Provide annual financial statements prepared by a Chartered Professional Accountant
- Pay annual fees and payments to the Student Tuition Protection Fund based on tuition revenue
- Continuously meet compliance standards
- Offer at least one **Class A or Class C** program

## INSPECTIONS AND ENFORCEMENT

- PTIB can inspect institutions at any time. No notice is required.
- Inspections are conducted at all institutions applying for a new certificate.
- Inspections are conducted on a routine basis to assess compliance.
- Inspection authority includes but is not limited to:
  - Observing program delivery
  - Interviewing students and staff
  - Examining records
- Enforcement tools for non-compliance include:
  - Compliance orders
  - Administrative penalties
  - Certificate suspension
  - Certificate cancellation

# RESOURCES AND CONTACTS

- [Private Training Act and Associated Regulations](#)
- [Private Training Act Policy Manual](#)
- [Private Training Institution Directory](#)
- [Forms, Templates and Resources Library](#)

Information about the regulatory amendments effective January 1, 2025, including a version of the Private Training Act Policy Manual annotated with the regulatory amendments, is available at: [Regulatory Amendments 2025 | Private Training Institutions Branch \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)

Or, after reviewing these resources, contact us:

Toll-free: 1-800-661-7441

Email: [PTI@gov.bc.ca](mailto:PTI@gov.bc.ca)