

## Trustee Decision on Student Complaint

Complainant: [REDACTED] Institution: 659 – Blanche Macdonald Centre

### 1. Introduction

The Complainant was enrolled in the Professional Barbering Program [Program]. The Complainant did not graduate from the Program, which ended October 25, 2024, and filed a complaint against the Institution [Complaint] on August 29, 2025.

The Complainant exhausted the Institution's dispute resolution process [DRP] prior to filing this Complaint.

The Complainant submits as follows: "I was misled regarding fees, program content, promised services, and graduation outcomes, and I respectfully request a full tuition refund and associated fees".

**For the reasons outlined below I find the Institution did not mislead the Complainant regarding a significant aspect of the Program and, accordingly, deny the claim.**

### 2. Statutory Scheme

Section 23(1) of the *Private Training Act* [PTA] provides that, a student may file a claim against the Student Tuition Protection Fund [Fund] on the ground that a certified institution misled the student regarding any significant aspect of an approved program of instruction in which that student was enrolled. Claims are filed with the Trustee, being the minister or the person to whom the minister has delegated the relevant powers or duties.

Claims must be filed no later than one year after the student completed or was dismissed or withdrew from the program and only after the student has exhausted the institution's dispute resolution process.

Following receipt of the complaint, the process is as follows:

Claim the student was misled		
Who	What	When
Trustee	Gives a copy of the claim to the institution	As soon as practicable
Institution	May respond to the claim [Response]	Within 15 days of receiving a copy of the claim from the Trustee
Trustee	Gives the Response from the institution, if any, to the student	Within 15 days of receiving the Response from the institution
Student	May reply to the Response from the institution [Reply]	Within 15 days of receiving the Response from the Trustee
Trustee	Must give the Reply from the student, if any, to the institution	Within 15 days of receiving the Reply from the student
Trustee	Adjudicates the claim to determine whether any refund should be issued, and provides written reasons to the student, the institution, and the registrar.	

If a claim is approved, the Trustee may authorize payment from the Fund of all or a portion of the tuition paid to the institution by or on behalf of the student. Section 25(4) of the *Fees and Student Tuition Protection Fund Regulation* requires that payments from the Fund be directed first to the government if all or a portion of the tuition was paid using funds from a provincial or federal student assistance program, and then to the claimant.

### 3. Program Information

Program:	Professional Barbering
Start date:	May 8, 2024
End date:	October 25, 2024
Total charged:	\$ 9,870
Tuition:	\$ 8,100
Material and Supplies Fee:	\$ 2,520
Registration Fee:	\$ 250
Administrative Fee:	\$ 550
Assessment Fee:	\$ 150
Other Potential Expenses – Professional Barbering	\$ 200
Tuition Reduction: Grant	\$ 1,900
Amount paid to date by Complainant:	\$ 9,670
Amount of tuition paid to date by Complainant:	\$ 6,200

### 4. Issues

The following issues arise for consideration: Was the Complainant misled by the Institution in relation to fees, program content, services, and outcomes?

### 5. Chronology

<b>May 8, 2024</b>	Program start date
<b>October 25, 2024</b>	Program end date
<b>February 26, 2025</b>	Complainant submits complaint to Institution and initiates DRP
<b>March 12, 2025</b>	Institution issues decision
<b>August 29, 2025</b>	Complainant files Complaint

### 6. Analysis

I have summarized the issues complained about as follows:

#### ***Fees***

I understand the Complainant was charged \$200 prior to enrolment in addition to a \$250 registration fee.

The Complainant says the Institution initially described the \$200 fee as a mandatory “kit payment” and later confirmed the fee was not mandatory. The Complainant adds the \$250 registration fee “was vaguely referenced but not disclosed during enrolment”.

The Complainant submits “these shifting explanations were misleading and inconsistent”.

In response, the Institution says the \$200 fee represents a partial payment for the kit and confirms it was provided to the Complainant at the start of the Program and the balance was paid from the StudentAid BC payment. The Institution adds the \$250 registration fee is listed in the enrolment contract, tuition schedule, and Budget Planner. The Institution confirms the registration fee was paid by the Complainant’s funder.

In his Reply, the Complainant submits he was overcharged for the kit.

### ***Photoshoot***

The Complainant submits the Institution did not provide a “photoshoot” as part of the portfolio as promised.

The Institution responds the Social Media course does not include a photoshoot. The Institution adds this was discussed with the Complainant on December 3, 2024.

### ***Program Content***

The Complainant submits the Institution did not provide essential skills as part of the Program, such as shear cut and hot shaves.

The Institution responds as follows: “The department has shared that you would need to complete your exams to determine where there may be areas and an opportunity for development. You were offered extra mentorship within the school”.

### ***Kit***

The Complainant submits the kit was “of substandard quality, with tools like a hairdryer breaking prematurely”.

The Institution responds the Complainant could ask for a replacement.

### ***Budget Planner***

The Complainant submits the Budget Planner was originally presented as an editable document and the Institution later provided it as a PDF document “which raises serious concerns about transparency and the reliability of program documentation”.

The Institution responds the document is provided for informational purposes only to highlight the difference between educational fees and funding payments. The Institution confirms the two documents are identical.

### ***Final Exam***

The Complaint submits “My final exam was rescheduled to coincide with a meeting with Sherry and Gina disrupting my ability to complete it. This indicates poor lack of scheduling and lack of coordination”.

The Institution responds it contacted the Complainant to re-schedule the final exam.

### ***Transcripts and Attendance Records***

The Complainant submits the Institution did not provide the requested transcripts and attendance records in a timely manner.

The Institution responds it provided the records.

## **7. Decision**

For the reasons outlined below I find the Institution did not mislead the Complainant in respect of a significant aspect of the Program and, on this basis, deny the claim.

The adjudicative task for me, as trustee, is to determine whether the Complainant was misled in relation to a significant aspect of the Program. For a claim to be successful, there must be concrete evidence that the Institution promised the student something related to a significant aspect of the program that it objectively failed to deliver (PTA, 23(1)(b)).

I have carefully reviewed the evidence submitted in support of the Complaint and find the Complainant was not misled in respect of the fees, program content, services, and outcomes. The issues complained about do not meet the threshold of what is considered a “significant aspect of the Program” and the Complainant has not submitted any persuasive evidence in support of their claim. Further, I find the Institution’s response in respect of each allegation to be reasonable. Put otherwise, the Complainant has not provided an evidentiary basis upon which I could find they were misled within the meaning of PTA 23(1)(b).

This decision is final. The Trustee does not have authority to re-open or reconsider the decision and there is no appeal under the PTA. Parties may wish to seek legal advice regarding a judicial review by the BC Supreme Court.

January 13, 2026



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**Joanna White**

Trustee, Student Tuition Protection Fund