

Occupational Health and Safety Practitioner Certificate Program Frequently Asked Questions

Why should I consider the Occupational Health and Safety Practitioner certificate program? What sets this program apart from other programs?

The curriculum is based on the Canadian Registered Safety Professional exam domains.

This program also stands out because it is based on the Saskatchewan Occupational Health and Safety Regulations. The first five classes are available on-campus or online. The program prepares you for a higher level position in OH&S and it prepares you to write your Canadian Registered Safety Professional exam once you have three years experience working in the field.

What are the program highlights?

The courses provide extensive knowledge and are based on current trends in occupational health and safety.

Is the program approved?

The program is currently working towards approval by the Board of Canadian Registered Safety professionals.

How is the program offered?

Students have the option to complete the courses online, print-based distance or on campus. The first five classes are available on campus and then students complete a one week practicum at a worksite where they shadow an OH&S professional.

All courses are being converted to online format.

With student interest expressed to the program head or registration more courses will be offered on campus in the evening. But students must express interest in taking courses on campus for the offerings to occur.

How many students are in the program?

Currently we have 185 students active within the program. Our enrolment is growing each year. We are working to meet student and industry needs. The program has a program advisory committee that provides ideas on future direction of the program.

Do you accept students from outside of Saskatchewan?

Yes, we accept students from outside of Saskatchewan and Canada. Full-time options can be discussed with our office for international students. All courses are offered on campus or through distance learning and are available to non-Saskatchewan residents.

You may need to locate an appropriate practicum site close to your community. If an appropriate location is not available near your community, travel to and accommodation near the practicum site may be required. The travel and accommodation expenses are your responsibility. There are additional requirements if your practicum request is outside Saskatchewan. If it cannot be successfully arranged, **you may be required to attend a Practicum in Saskatchewan. Practicum sites outside of Saskatchewan will need to be organized well in advance to ensure a quality learning environment that meets our practicum criteria.**

If you live outside of Saskatoon and want to attend the full-time program in Saskatoon, you are responsible for finding and paying for your accommodation and travel expenses.

What is the application deadline for the program?

The full-time program intake is limited and admission method is first qualified/first admitted. You are encouraged to apply early to allow sufficient time to finalize your application and for you to make personal and financial arrangements before the start date.

You are encouraged to apply for distance courses six weeks before the start dates.

When will I know if I am accepted into the program?

When you apply to the program online, pay the application and provide your official transcripts you will know if you are accepted into the program within 2-3 weeks.

Can I take any courses prior to being accepted to the program?

You can take WHMIS, TDG or CPR First Aid before or during the on campus program.

You must be apply to the program to take courses in the program. Contact the program head if you have questions or wish to discuss options.

If I have a disability, what type of support services will be a available to me?

SIAST offers support for persons with disabilities. If you have a disability, identify yourself to SIAST Counselling Services. Designated staff will work with faculty and support services to assist in ensuring appropriate accommodations are in place. We encourage you to contact us as soon as possible, so that we may proceed on your behalf.

Can I get transfer credit?

Transfer credit for two courses is available from the University of Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Certificate. Ryerson College will allow up to five courses transferred to their Occupational Health and Safety Certificate.

To receive transfer credit for a SIAST Occupational Health and Safety course, you must provide the program head with a recent (five years) course syllabus/course outline and possibly assignments. SIAST requires that at least 80% of the course content is the same to obtain transfer credit from another post secondary institution. Transfer credits must be submitted to and approved by program head.

Can I PLAR any of the courses

PLAR is available on an individual course basis. If you are a CSO, NCSO, Occupational Health Officer (OHO) or Canadian Registered Safety Professional (CRSP) you are eligible to [PLAR](#) the entire program.

How many courses are there in the program?

There are 17 theory courses total. The WHMIS Train the Trainer and TDG Train the Trainer are two-day courses and the practicum is one-week.

How will I progress through the program?

Some courses have prerequisites but most do not. You can choose how you progress through the program and how many courses you would like to take at one time. You are required to attend a face-to-face one week practicum after you successfully complete all the other courses in the program.

Where will my practicum experiences take place?

Practicum experiences are available in a number of locations throughout Saskatchewan. The program attempts to locate your practicum close to your home community and will consult with you throughout the practicum site selection process. Practicums outside Saskatchewan may be able to be arranged with requests made well in advance. For information on practicum criteria please contact the program head.

Where can I buy my books and other materials?

Information on purchasing textbooks and course manuals will be provided when you register. Material is available for purchase online, by phone, or in person.

You can purchase your course materials from the SIAST **Kelsey** Campus online bookstores. You will be given access to an online course on or slightly before the start date. All information regarding contacting your instructor and due dates for assignments is inside the online course. Online courses have mandatory discussion on OH&S topics and issues with your fellow students.

Can I use second-hand course material and books?

It is recommended that you purchase new course material. This information is updated on a regular basis in an attempt to keep up with changing OH&S information. The textbooks are excellent reference manuals for future use.

Where do I write my exams?

An approved test site will be assigned to you when you are registered in program courses.

Generally, students write their exams in the test centers located at the SIAST campuses.

How likely am I to get a job in occupational health and safety after I graduate?

The success rate of our students finding occupational health and safety employment has been very good.

Can I still work while I am completing the program?

The program has a very heavy workload and students should consider how busy they are in the evenings and weekends before they decide how many courses they will take in a semester.

I have not been in school for awhile. Do you have any suggestions for enhancing my study skills?

There are wonderful study skills tools on the internet. One that former students recommend is Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Review (SQ3R). Type this into a search engine to find resources using this strategy. SIAST Libraries also has a wealth of resources that they direct you to help you study, write exams and write papers.

I have never taken online courses before. How do I know if I have the attributes to be a successful online learner?

Distance education takes added time and energy, therefore it is suggested that you evaluate your readiness for learning via distance. Self assessment tools to determine if online learning is right for you are available on the internet and on request to the program.

Personal attributes of the successful online learner are:

- Ability to assume responsibility for own learning
- Self-directed and motivated
- Persistent and confident
- Ability to problem-solve
- Active in their learning
- Effective time management skills
- Disciplined to study without external reminders

Basic technical skills that you need include:

- Basic computer literacy
- Word processing
- Searching on the internet
- Taking time to complete available online tutorials and use help screens

What kind of supports can I put in place to ensure I am successful as an online learner?

SIAST has a wealth of tutorials and support tools to ensure your success. A successful online student searches out these tools and uses them. When a student is registered into a SIAST course for the first time, the student is also enrolled in a free orientation course called "Online learning made easy." Students are strongly encouraged to complete this short course to learn about supports SIAST has in place to enhance your success. Students who complete the orientation tools before the course begins have reduced frustration when the course starts.

Student success is also enhanced through family and employer support. Families can provide childcare or assist with household chores. When employers allow flexible hours for school obligations or use of a computer at work, success is also enhanced. Some students have found that having a personal laptop that can be taken with them wherever they go enhances their success.

How will I communicate with faculty for online courses?

Program faculty are available to support you via telephone and email. Instructors will provide days and times when they are available to answer questions.

There is no faculty support during the two-week Christmas break or in July and August as these months are not counted when determining your end date.

What do I do when websites don't work?

If a web site link in an online course is not working, type the title of document into your search window of your internet program (internet explorer or Google). If the proper document does not appear, contact your instructor.

When do I need to pay for the program?

If you are in the full-time program, tuition is due on the first day of the program.

If you are in the distance learning option, you pay for the course that you are registering in at the time of registration.

If you are in the PLAR delivery option, you pay for the component of the program that you are attempting to challenge at the time you submit your PLAR documents. For more information go to [PLAR Availability](#). Please note if you receive PLAR for a course with pre-requisites, it does not waive the need to take the pre-requisites. You should PLAR your course(s) when it would normally happen within your program.

Are there any scholarship and bursaries available?

Yes, please contact the program head for more information. Also check the CSSE and CCOHS website for scholarships that are available.

What completion document do I receive after completing the program?

Upon graduation, you will receive a certificate in Occupational Health and Safety Practitioner.

What other recognition will I receive after completing the program?

You will be better prepared with three years experience and a position in OH&S (where you are working at least 50% of your time in OH&S) to apply to write the Canadian Registered Safety Professional exam.