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## Admission Requirements Guide

[1. What are admission requirements, and why are they important? 1](#_Toc183442182)

[2. Admission requirements or admission procedures? 1](#_Toc183442183)

[3. What should admission requirements include? 2](#_Toc183442184)

[4. Setting your program’s admission requirements 3](#_Toc183442185)

[5. Prior learning recognition 4](#_Toc183442186)

[6. Subjective and/or non-quantifiable admission requirements 4](#_Toc183442187)

[7. Other requirements to participate in work experience or employment 5](#_Toc183442188)

[8. Common problems with admission requirements 6](#_Toc183442189)

### What are admission requirements, and why are they important?

Admission requirements are the skills, knowledge and/or other background, including minimum language proficiency, a student must have to be admitted to a program and that make it likely the student will successfully complete the program. Appropriate admission requirements support student retention, success and satisfaction, which is good for both students and the institution.

Admission requirements may not be varied or waived by either an institution or a student, and they must be applied consistently to all students in the program.

Student records must show that admission requirements have been met by each student and have been applied consistently to all students.

Should you want to change the admission requirements listed with Private Training Institutions Regulatory Unit (PTIRU), you must first obtain PTIRU’s consent.

### Admission requirements or admission procedures?

**Admission requirements are different from admission procedures.**

In general, any requirement on which the decision to admit a student to a program will be based, in whole or in part, is an admission requirement. If it is part of the admitting process, but will not influence the decision whether to admit a student, it is an admission procedure.

Admission procedures might include the following:

* Completion of application form
* Payment of application fee
* Proof of identity
* Parental signature for minors

You may include admission procedures in your program materials (program outline, etc.), but PTIRU does not list these with program information. Some processes are administrative in nature (e.g. completion of forms, payment of fees) or may be legal requirements (parental signature for minors). These are either not subject to regulation or are covered in another context, such as requirements for the student enrollment contract.

### What should admission requirements include?

Admission requirements should be clear and specific, and state a minimum standard to be met.

To be compliant with *Private Training Regulation* 18(2)(a)(ii) *“admission requirements make it likely students will meet the learning objectives of the program”*, PTIRU requires that admission requirements for career training programs (Class A and B), in addition to academic or other requirements already in place, must, as of January 1, 2025, include a language proficiency requirement (LPR), regardless of the program’s language(s) of instruction.

Language requirements should be at a sufficient level for the student to understand and discuss, in speech and in writing, the level and complexity of the educational materials.

English language proficiency requirements that include testing options must include tests that are broadly recognized by the sector (e.g., TOEFL, IELTS) and that are conducted by a reputable third party.  Language proficiency tests for programs delivered in a language other than English will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Institutions will no longer be permitted to use in-house language assessments.  

Student records must contain evidence of language proficiency at the level required by the institution’s admission requirements.

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| For more information about language proficiency requirements, please refer to the PTIRU’s **Language Proficiency Requirements Guide**. |

When developing admission requirements you should consider the following:

* The level of proficiency in the language of instruction required in order for the student to be successful
* Prior education, if required: e.g. Grade 12 or equivalent; Bachelor’s degree; Grade 10 math with minimum grade of C+.
* Prior experience, if applicable: e.g. program-related work or volunteering, with minimum duration and type of documentation required.
* Membership: registration, certification, licensure (for example, private pilot’s license, registered counsellor).
* Minimum age. (Having a parent or guardian sign for a minor is a legal requirement. It is not an admission requirement.) “Grade 12 or minimum 19 years of age” is common and meets StudentAid BC requirements.
* ‘Mature student’ status may be considered as part of a program’s admission requirements *if* it is an alternative to other requirements such as prior education, *and* it has a documentable definition.

### Setting your program’s admission requirements

* Choose admission criteria and standards that address all skills and/or knowledge students will need to succeed from their first day in this program.
* Ensure each requirement you set effectively addresses the criterion it is meant to. For example, to prove a level of language proficiency, choose assessment tests or proof of prior education in the language of instruction. Citizenship or residency does not guarantee fluency in a language.
* Set clear standards by specifying minimum levels and acceptable scores: for example, IELTS 6.5; English 12 with a minimum grade of C+; 80 hours documented work or volunteer experience; etc.
* The criteria and standards you set must be documentable, by the student or another organization (e.g. Grade 12 diploma, IELTS results, prior credential or transcript, letter of

reference), or (for requirements other than language proficiency) by means of a test or process designed and administered by your institution.

* If you design a test of your own, for something other than language proficiency, it must effectively assess the applicant’s knowledge of the subject. Be prepared to provide a copy to PTIRU if requested.
* Language proficiency requirements for Class A and B programs must include language tests that are broadly recognized (e.g., IELTS) and that are conducted by a reputable third party. Institutions will no longer be permitted to use in-house language assessments.
* **If there are equivalents you will accept, they must be specified**, **and are considered part of the admission requirements**. A detailed Language Proficiency Policy is also considered part of your Admission Requirements for each program it applies to. Both must be included in the program outline and posted on your website.
* A program designed to teach intermediate or advanced skills must have admission requirements that ensure students already have an appropriate level of skills and knowledge in the program area.
* If your program is in a regulated field (e.g. health occupations) the admission requirements may be set by the regulator. It is your responsibility to know if this applies to a program you are applying for or offering, and if so to ensure you set, maintain and apply the regulator’s minimum admission requirements.

### Prior learning recognition

If you design a test for program-related admission criteria such as computer skills, familiarity with the program's subject matter, etc. it must effectively assess the applicant's knowledge of the subject(s) it covers and must be used and graded consistently and a copy kept in the student's record. Be prepared to provide a copy to PTIRU of any such assessments if requested.

If you develop a course that a student must successfully complete in order to meet an admission requirement, the course and its evaluation must be sufficient to demonstrate the student has the same level of understanding as someone who completed the course at a high school. For example, if the admission requirement is Grade 11 biology, your course must be equivalent to a BC public course. Language courses/programs used as part of an LPR for class A and B programs must have an established pathway/articulation agreement allowing direct entry (no further testing required) to a diploma or degree program at a public institution in Canada.

If you develop your own courses for equivalencies, you will be asked to submit course outlines to show that these will adequately prepare students for admission to the institution. PTIRU will review the outlines to ensure they accurately show the course content and what the course can be used for. The registrar may request an evaluation by a third-party or may appoint an inspector to confirm the level of the course in question.

If you use a prior learning assessment process, it may accept a student's prior education or experience to be equivalent to no more than 50% of the hours of instruction of the program. (For more information and the exceptions to this, see Private Training Regulation s.42.)

### Subjective and/or non-quantifiable admission requirements

These include pre-existing skills, aptitude, maturity, etc. If they are included in admission requirements, these are usually assessed by means of an interview, assessment, portfolio, audition and/or essay.

Examples:

* Interview: is it meant to determine aptitude, maturity, oral language proficiency, or otherwise help establish whether candidates are prepared to succeed? *If so, it is an admission requirement*.
  + However, if an interview is just a chance to get acquainted and find out how the applicant heard about the program, it is an admission *procedure*, not an admission requirement, even if all applicants must do it. See Section 2 above.
* Portfolio: does the portfolio’s content help you make an admission decision? *If so, it is an admission requirement*, and there must be documentation of criteria for assessing the work and what standards must be met.
  + If the portfolio is meant only to give the instructor an idea of the student’s work to date, media used, etc., it is a *procedure*. See Section 2 above.
* Student statement: A statement by which the student represents to the institution that they meet admission requirements, such as skills difficult to test or document (e.g. for backcountry guiding programs), is an admission *requirement*.
  + If a student may be admitted based on his or her own statement of background and preparedness it is very important that the questions asked and criteria for assessing responses be effective and rigorous, for protection of both the student and the institution.

**Note:** for any of these, the rationale for making admission decisions need not be explained in the admission requirements, but it must be articulated in the tools used for assessing the interview, portfolio, audition, etc., and documented in the student record

### Other requirements to participate in work experience or employment

Some items often listed in admission requirements may not need to be met before admission into the program, but are required to complete the program. These usually relate to eligibility for work experience (WE) placement and/or employment in the field, and include things like a negative TB test, current immunizations, and satisfactory criminal record check. Usually WE hosts will require these to have taken place recently (within six months of start of the placement or employment is common), so having students meet these requirements before the start of a long program may not make sense.

Requirements to attend a WE (including specifics such as type of criminal record check) must be included in the student enrollment contract and should be included in the program outline to ensure students understand their importance, and help them make an informed choice about whether this program is right for them.

These requirements should often not be included in the admission requirements for the program: listing them separately in the program outline ensures students are aware of them but allows a more appropriate time frame for students to complete them. It also allows them to be changed without an application to PTIRU if circumstances require it.

For programs leading to an occupation regulated by a regulator, the requirements of the regulator for employment in the career occupation must also be included in the student enrolment contract.

### Common problems with admission requirements

PTIRU staff may ask you to clarify or revise your admission requirements if:

* Requirements do not fully address the language proficiency a student must have to achieve the learning objectives of the program, setting a realistic minimum level of proficiency and effectively covering reading, writing, listening and speaking.
* The various standardized English assessment/test scores listed as part of the language proficiency requirements are not equivalent to each other.
* Requirements are not consistent in their effect for all applicants to the program. (Different measures may be used depending on a student’s background, but all measures must ensure the same minimum level of preparation in areas essential to achieving the learning objectives. The admission requirements as a whole must cover all potential applicants to the program.)
* Requirements cannot be confirmed by the institution and documented in students’ records (other than exceptions such as talked about in s.6 above).
* Requirements are not consistent between the program outline, program evaluation report, and/or other program materials.
* A requirement is too vague: for example, a requirement for “good English proficiency” or “basic computer skills” is subjective (it does not define ‘good’ or ‘basic’), and does not describe how an applicant is expected to demonstrate or document that they have the required skill.
* It is not clear whether an interview contributes to the admissions decision.
* It is not clear how the institution conducts interviews consistently for all applicants.
* Admission procedures have been included as admission requirements.