

Occupational Health and Safety Practitioner Applied Certificate Program Frequently Asked Questions

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

As a student in the Occupational Health and Safety Practitioner applied certificate program, you will take courses that will prepare you to work on the Occupational Health and Safety Committee at your workplace or prepare you for an introductory position in occupational health and safety.

The curriculum is based on the current trends in occupational health and safety.

This program also stands out because it is based on the Saskatchewan Occupational Health and Safety Regulations. There is an on-campus option and it can be completed within 13 weeks. You also have the option to apply for transfer credit or PLAR courses. This means you can be assessed on prior learning and be recognized for that learning. A self audit and evidence file are required to PLAR a course.

What are the program highlights?

The program offers you the chance to work in occupational health and safety (OH&S). OH&S is a career pathway with opportunities in all industries locally and around the world. It is a career pathway that offers lifelong learning and every day is different.

Is the program approved?

The applied certificate program is currently approved by the Board of Canadian Registered Safety Professionals as one year post-secondary education required to write the Canadian Registered Safety Professional (CRSP) exam.

How is the program offered?

The on-campus program is offered in Saskatoon at Kelsey Campus from September to December. You are required to attend a face-to-face one week practicum after you successfully complete all the other courses in the program.

The program is also available by distance (online) delivery.

How many students are in the program?

The on-campus program accepts 20 students per year.

Is Saskatoon the only location where the program is offered?

Currently, the full-time on-campus program is only offered in Saskatoon. Distance students can be from any location. Regional Colleges can broker our program if so desired. If students express an interest more courses can be offered on campus. Students should send the program and registration a note of interest as to which courses they would like to attend on campus and when. The program will work to accommodate industry and student needs.

Do I need a computer for the on-campus program?

You will need a computer and access to the internet as many of the resources are electronic. Also, all assignments must be submitted in a typed format. Knowledge of word processing is a valuable asset.

Do you accept students from outside of Saskatchewan?

Yes, we accept students from outside of Saskatchewan. All courses are offered 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 and with a CRSP onsite 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 in time for the September start date.

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

How soon should I apply to the program?

In order to have enough time to meet all the admission requirements, you should apply to the program at least one month before the start date of your first class. When you apply you must decide if you will be applying into the applied certificate or the certificate program and if you will be taking full-time or part-time courses. Full-time courses means that you are interested in coming on campus. Part-time courses indicates that you will be taking distance courses.

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

You will find out in 2-3 weeks if you are accepted to the program. At that time you can then register for a course.

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

No. You must be accepted into the program before you can register for a course.

If I have a disability, what type of support services will be 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 (within last five years) course syllabus/outline and possibly assignments. At least 80% of the course must match the SIAST course content. 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 have 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 five theory courses and one-week practicum.

Do I need any courses other than those listed in the program?

You must have a valid WHMIS, TDG, Standard First Aid and CPR A/AED certificate to be eligible for the practicum. The program provides opportunity for students in the full-time on-campus applied certificate to take these courses during the 13 weeks on campus.

How will I progress through the program?

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 full-time on-campus program has a very heavy workload and it is highly recommended that you not work while taking this delivery option.

The distance courses are flexible and you should be able to work while completing them.

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. Students will need a computer with high speed internet for distance courses. Students also need word processing, excel and powerpoint skills before entering the program.

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. Days and times that the faculty is available will be provided to you by your faculty.

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 website 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 faculty.

What order should the courses be taken in?

The recommended order is: PCOM 180, SFTY 191, HLTH 180, EDUC 182, HLTH 181, and Practicum. Some courses have a pre-requisite.

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 scholarships and bursaries available?

Yes the program will notify you of scholarships that are available. CCOHS and CSSE offers scholarships to students. Please contact the program head for more information.

What completion document do I receive after completing the program?

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