What are private vocational institutions?

Private vocational institutions (PVIs) are schools that offer employment training in a variety of fields, including business, technology, health care, cosmetology, transportation and security. Unlike public universities or colleges, most PVIs are privately owned and operate as for-profit businesses.

Most privately owned schools that offer employment training need to be registered by the provincial government. The government, in turn, makes sure the schools follow basic consumer protection and accountability rules, such as:

- hiring qualified instructors
- having a clear refund policy
- paying into an insurance policy that gives students some financial protection, should the school close unexpectedly

To see a list of registered private vocational institutions and programs, visit: www.edu.gov.mb.ca/ald/pvi/list.

If a school you’re considering is NOT registered, check with the Private Vocational Institutions Office before you enrol to find out why the school isn’t registered and how that might affect students who attend the school.

BEFORE YOU SIGN ON THE DOTTED LINE

Once you have been accepted into a program, you will be asked to sign an enrolment contract. It’s important that you read the contract carefully and make sure you are comfortable with all the details—before you sign. Once you have signed the contract, get a copy from the institution. Keep the copy in a safe place, in case you need it in the future.

If you have a complaint

If you are attending a private vocational institution and have a complaint, your first step should be contacting the school administration. If you can’t resolve the issue, you have one year to submit a written and signed complaint to the Private Vocational Institutions Office.

An investigation by the Private Vocational Institutions Office can result in action being taken against a school. However, the office has limited ability regarding full refunds.

For more information

If you need more information about private vocational institutions, or if you have a complaint about a PVI, contact:

Private Vocational Institutions Office
401-1181 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3G 0T3
Phone: 204-945-8507
www.edu.gov.mb.ca/ald/pvi

Be smart. Be ready. Be informed.
Things to consider when choosing a PVI

You should spend as much time picking a school as you would a career. Manitoba is home to many private vocational institutions. With so many choices, it’s important to research and compare all institutions that offer the training that interests you. Make appointments to visit these schools, find out if they’re registered and ask for program outlines. The school you choose can have a big impact on your career opportunities, so make sure you’re well informed.

Here are some questions you should ask:

TRAINING
- How long will it take to complete the program and what skills will students learn?
- How much training is classroom lecture and how much is practical experience? Is there an opportunity for work experience?

FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT
- How many students are there in a class?
- What equipment is used? Is it shared? Is the same equipment used in most workplaces?

COSTS
- What does my tuition include?
- Do I have to buy books and supplies?
- Are there other costs?
- How does the cost compare to other institutions? If it is quite a bit higher or lower, what are the reasons?
- What is the school’s refund policy?

ADMISSIONS
- What qualifications do I need to enrol (e.g., high school diploma, specific skills/abilities, licences)?
- Is there an admissions test or personal interview? How are these scored?

JOBS
- Is job placement included as a part of the program? If so, what services are provided and which employers does the school work with?
- Are students taught job search techniques? Do they receive interview referrals?

STUDENT SUPPORTS
- If students have problems, is someone available to help them?
- Does the school offer tutoring? If yes, is there a cost?

STATUS
- Is the school registered with the Manitoba government?

What are my job prospects once I complete my PVI program?

Completing a training program does not guarantee you a job. So before you pick a school and an educational program, look into the kinds of jobs you can get after you finish your training. Find the answers to these questions:

- What positions will I be qualified for once I complete my training?
- What’s the average salary?
- Are the jobs mainly full or part time?

Manitoba’s Labour Market Information Unit can help you find out how many jobs are currently available in your chosen field, and what the job outlook is in the future. For more information, contact:

Labour Market Information Unit
Phone: (204) 945-8836
E-mail: lmi@gov.mb.ca
http://www.gov.mb.ca/jec/lmi/

The Manitoba Jobs and Skills Development Centres also have resources to help you figure out what career path is right for you. For more information, contact:

Manitoba Jobs and Skills Development Centres
Phone: 204-945-0575 in Winnipeg; toll free in Manitoba 1-866-332-5077
e-mail: mjsd@gov.mb.ca
www.gov.mb.ca/wd/contact/index.html

If you know where you want to work, call the employer and ask what specific training they look for, and if they have hired, or are open to hiring, graduates of the vocational program you’re considering.

Also, if you’re leaning towards a certain school, ask that school for a list of companies that have hired recent graduates.