



Pacific Design Academy

Student Handbook

Welcome to our creative community!

Mission

We educate creative and highly skilled designers who will one day make the world a better place. We support them as they turn their passions into success through their careers and service to others.

Vision

PDA seeks to be the premier training institute for aspiring designers in BC.

Core Values

- We believe that **student-centredness** improves learning.
- We believe that **relevant career training** sets students up for success.
- We believe in striving for **excellence** as we teach, learn, and lead.
- We believe in **social responsibility** and always acting in the best interests of our community.
- We believe that **creativity** benefits all human endeavours.

We gratefully acknowledge the Lekwungen traditional territories that Pacific Design Academy stands upon, and the Songhees, Esquimalt and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples whose relationship with these lands continues to this day.

August 2023

Table of Contents

Table of Contents

1. Regulations
2. Housekeeping Items
3. Academic Policies
4. Student Conduct
5. Student Support Services
6. Withdrawals, Refunds, Privacy, Disputes, and Sexual Misconduct
7. Respectful and Fair Treatment of Students Policy
8. Student Statement of Rights
9. Maps

1. Regulations

- 1.1 Admissions
- 1.2 Enrolment Contracts, Tuitions, & Fees
- 1.3 Communication and Contact Information
- 1.4 Course Content & Cancellation
- 1.5 Transfer Credits and Prior Learning

1.1 Admissions

Students are accepted annually on a first-come, first-served basis for qualified applicants. Failure to submit one's application promptly and in accordance with all regulations may render an applicant ineligible. Acceptance to Pacific Design Academy (PDA) programs is based upon meeting the minimum admission requirements, which cannot be waived:

- Completion of Grade 12 diploma or equivalent
- Completed application form
- Non-refundable application fee (\$200 domestic Students, \$500 international Students)
- Students under 19 require signature of parent or guardian
- Proof of education (transcript, diploma, letter of recognition)
- Copy of a valid photo ID or birth certificate
- Letter of intent detailing background and future goals
- If deemed necessary by the Registrar, a TOEFL score of at least 52, an IELTS score of at least 4.0, or a Duolingo score of at least 60.

1.2 Enrolment Contracts, Tuitions, & Fees

As per PTIB by-laws, Students sign a contract for each individual school year. This contract applies only to the year in which it is signed and, in the case of a two-year program, does not guarantee acceptance into future years of a program.

On their Orientation Day, each Student is required to complete a Student Enrolment Contract. This information is used as official Student contact information. If contact information changes, please inform the Registrar.

Students are responsible for the timely payment of all fees. For Students not paying fees with Student loans, bursaries, or scholarships, please note the following:

- The payment of equipment fees and at least half of a program's total tuition fee must be paid three weeks prior to the commencement of the first term.
- The remaining balance is due three weeks before the start of the second term.

For Students paying with BC Student Loans, bursaries, or scholarships, please note the following:

- a) Student Aid BC disburses funds for tuition after the start of terms one and two. PDA will deliver any remaining funds to the Student once the full tuition has been paid if necessary. Students should speak to Student Aid BC directly about funds set aside for living expenses, as those are typically released to the Student directly.
- b) The Student is responsible for paying the remaining tuition, if any, not covered by Student Aid BC, bursaries, scholarships, or other alternative forms of payment.

Students will not graduate unless all fees are paid in full. Equipment fees cover computers, software, and printing equipment.

1.3 Communication and Contact Information

All Students will be given a school email address (@pdaeducation.com) at their Orientation. This is the primary means through which the school will communicate with Students and Students are responsible for regularly checking/responding to this email.

1.4 Course Content & Cancellation

Course outlines are prepared in advance and may be subject to changes made at the discretion of instructors, Department Head, Academic Dean, or Director. PDA reserves the right to adjust schedules and may merge or cancel any class or program in the event of insufficient enrolment or unforeseen circumstances, often referred to as an Act of God.

1.5 Transfer Credits and Prior Learning

PDA strives to give students credit for prior learning where the learning outcomes of a given course or program have been demonstrably met prior to enrollment. The purpose of this Policy is to establish a consistent process that applies to all programs offered by PDA and outlines the mechanisms by which prior learning may be assessed.

PDA, through the Transfer Credit Committee (TCC), reserves the right to determine whether credits are to be awarded at PDA based on previous coursework completed at a post-secondary institution or other prior learning.

The TCC is composed of the Academic Dean and the Department Head of a relevant program. The TCC may call upon the expertise of additional faculty members or external parties as needed.

When seeking to transfer credits to PDA from another post-secondary institution, students must submit (i) a transcript showing a course grade and (ii) a course outline for each course proposed for transfer.

When evaluating whether a course credit is suitable for transfer from another institution or program, the TCC will consider:

- The course learning outcomes
- The course duration
- The course level
- The accreditation of the institution

PDA also encourages laddering between programs within the school. Credits earned in the pursuit of one PDA credential may be used to meet the requirements of an equivalent or more advanced credential when deemed applicable by the TCC.

In cases where prior learning is not evidenced through formal education, the TCC may use the following methods to assess a student's achievement of the learning outcomes of a course:

- Portfolios
- Examinations
- Assignments
- Interviews
- Letters and documents

The TCC will decide which methods to use in the assessment of learning outcomes, always endeavoring to apply a consistent and fair process.

Applications for transfer credit and prior learning assessment may only be submitted after a student has been accepted into a program and paid the deposit fee. Applications must be received at least two weeks before the start of a term to be considered.

In circumstances where prior learning is to be assessed by means other than the examination of transcripts and course outlines, a non-refundable fee of \$120CAD per course must be paid by the student. This fee is for the assessment, not the credit, and must be paid before the assessment takes place.

Transfer and prior learning credit, combined, may not be granted for more than 50% of a program's total hours.

2. Housekeeping

- 2.1 Food & Beverages
- 2.2 Breaks
- 2.3 No Smoking
- 2.4 Lost and Found
- 2.5 Damage to School Property
- 2.6 Cell Phones
- 2.7 Computer Labs
- 2.8 Visitors
- 2.9 Animals
- 2.10 Display of Student Work
- 2.11 Holidays
- 2.12 Transportation
 - a) Bicycles
 - b) Cars
 - c) Walking
- 2.14 Fragrance Free

2.1 Food & Beverages

Please keep all work areas and classrooms clear of food and garbage. Beverages are only allowed in classrooms when they are in closed containers. No food or drink of any kind is allowed in the computer labs.

The student kitchen is a shared space. Please clean up after yourself and remove any old food from the fridge.

2.2. Breaks

We encourage Students to leave their classrooms and the school during their breaks. Students are expected to be respectful of the lounge areas, amenities, and other Students' use of these spaces.

2.3 No Smoking

All premises of PDA are non-smoking environments. Smoking is not permitted inside or in front of the school.

2.4 Lost and Found

Please turn in all found articles to the Registrar. PDA will hold these items for up to 30 days.

2.5 Damage to School Property

Students who damage school property are expected to acknowledge such damages and take responsibility for any replacements or repairs.

2.6 Cell Phones and Headphones

Cell phones are allowed in class but may not distract the Student, classmates, or the instructor. If a cell phone disturbs an instructor while class is in session, Students may be asked to excuse themselves or the cell phone may be temporarily confiscated.

Based on the discretion of the instructor, headphones are allowed during individual work periods; however, the instructor reserves the right to ask Students to put them away.

2.7 Computer Labs

The computers at PDA are shared units and school property. Students are responsible for any damage they cause. It is prudent to back up all work; computer crashes and technical failures are not acceptable excuses for late or incomplete work.

2.8 Visitors

Visitors are welcomed at PDA but are only allowed to enter classrooms by invitation from instructors, who must be consulted in advance. If you'd like to arrange a tour for friends or family, please make arrangements with the Registrar. Visitors must check in and check in at the front desk, and they must remain in the front foyer until their host is available to personally welcome them.

2.9 Animals

Animals, other than those certified and used for assistive purposes, are not permitted within PDA premises.

2.10 Display of Student Work

PDA reserves the right to copy and/or retain Student projects for use as display items. Student work used for this purpose may not be removed without permission of PDA staff. Projects not used for display must be removed from the school after final grades are received. Abandoned materials and possessions left at the school after graduation are not the responsibility of PDA.

2.11 Holidays

PDA observes statutory holidays as described in the school calendar, as well as winter and spring breaks. Classes will not be rescheduled because of a holiday. Please see the school calendar for details.

2.12 Transportation

Due to our location in the heart of historic Victoria, parking nearby can be difficult. Please consider using alternative modes of transportation. PDA is a short walk from the Douglas Street transit hub. (<https://www.bctransit.com/victoria/home>).

a) Bicycles

There are several bicycle corrals in the school's vicinity, including in Bastion Square. In cases of bad weather, covered bike stockades can be found on the first floor of the Yates Street parkade and outside the Mountain Equipment Co-op on the corner of Government and Pandora.

b) Cars

PDA does not have parking available for Students. There are several private parking compounds in walking distance of the school.

c) Walking

Consider your personal safety. If you are leaving the school at a late hour, please "buddy walk" or call a taxi service to meet with you outside of the school.

d) BC Transit

PDA is a BC Transit vendor and has the authority to sell 30-day bus passes at a discounted rate for students. Please see the Front Desk for more information about this.

2.13 Fragrance-Free Environment

Many people have sensitivities to the chemical agents found in scented products. Students and staff are asked to refrain from using heavily scented products such as perfume, hair spray, and certain deodorants while at school.

3. Academic Policies

- 3.1 Grades and Graduation
- 3.2 Late Assignments, Tests, and Exams
- 3.3 Extensions
- 3.4 Standards of Academic Progress
- 3.5 Student Assessment
- 3.6 Course Experience Surveys
- 3.7 Attendance Policy
- 3.8 Attendance Appeal
- 3.9 Academic Leave
- 3.10 Grade Disputes
- 3.11 Work Experience
- 3.12 Grading Breakdown

Students should receive a course outline on the first day of each class every term. This outline will detail course objectives, materials required, and how Students will be assessed.

3.1 Grades and Graduation

Courses are assigned a credit value equivalent to their duration on a weekly basis unless otherwise decided by the School Director, such as in the case of compressed courses. For example, a class of three hours per week is worth three credits and is weighted accordingly. Term and year-end grades are determined by averaging these classes according to their weighted values. Credits are earned when a Student achieves a grade of 60% or better in a course.

In order to pass a year of studies, Students must have a yearly program average of 65% or better and earned at least 52 out of 60 credits. Students who have received an average below 60% but hold an attendance record of no less than 75% will receive a Letter of Attendance. Students finishing with a yearly program average of 90% or greater will graduate with Honours.

3.2 Late Assignments, Tests, and Exams

All projects must be submitted on or before the specified deadline and to the appropriate instructor or teacher's assistant. Late work is subject to academic penalty. Please see Extensions (3.3) for information about extensions.

Projects submitted within one week of the due date have 25% of their mark deducted. Projects submitted later than one and within two weeks have 50% of their mark deducted. If an assignment is more than two weeks late, it is no longer acceptable for submission and receives a 0% unless an extension is granted (see 3.3).

Tests missed during the term that are not granted an extension are marked 0%.

Final Projects or Exams not handed in or missed are marked 0% unless an extension is granted. If a project or exam is completed after the end of term, the release of the Student's transcript may be delayed.

3.3 Extensions

Reasonable extensions are left to the discretion of the instructor. If a Student believes their request for an Extension has been unfairly denied, they may appeal the decision under the school's Dispute Resolution Policy (6.4).

3.4 Standards of Academic Progress

Students who fall behind in assignments or fail to learn the curriculum in any course or program will be required to meet with their Instructor(s), Department Head, Academic Coordinator, and/or the Academic Dean. Failure to make reasonable academic progress renders a Student vulnerable to academic penalties, including dismissal (see 4.3).

3.5 Student Assessment

Students may request an assessment and evaluation of their academic performance at any time.

3.6 Course Experience Surveys

Students will be given the opportunity to provide feedback on each individual instructor and course during the middle of each term. This feedback is typically in the form of surveys. Students may also meet with the Department Head and/or the Academic Coordinator to discuss the program, which can include concerns or suggestions about the courses and instructors.

3.7 Attendance Policy

Students are expected to promptly inform their instructors if they will be absent from or late to any class, preferably ahead of time. Students who are absent from classes are responsible for catching up on any missed material on their own.

As required by our regulating body, attendance is recorded precisely, with how late a Student arrives or how early a Student leaves class noted in 15-minute increments.

Absence from program hours may result in dismissal from the school. Absenteeism in excess of 25% of any one class will result in an Incomplete grade (0%) in that class.

Students who miss two consecutive calendar weeks of study are considered withdrawn by PDA unless the student contacts PDA directly with extenuating circumstances. Students holding a loan through StudentAid BC will have their loan cancelled. (The weeks are defined as being from Sunday to Saturday.)

The Student will receive an email from the Academic Coordinator notifying them if their absences become a problem and may be required to meet with them if the Student is nearing 25% absence in any course.

If the Student is having difficulties attending class for excusable reasons, they should follow the process outlined in Extensions (see 3.3), Attendance Appeal (see 3.8), or Student Accommodations (see 5.2).

3.8 Attendance Appeal

This policy governs academic exceptions made to help support Students in full-time credit courses who experience unexpected or unavoidable events or circumstances during the term that interfere with their ability to attend class.

Attendance Appeals are granted **only** when the need for an exception is not covered by another policy, such as the Student Accommodations Policy.

The process is as follows: Students are responsible for using their course syllabus at the beginning of term to anticipate any possible conflicts between course requirements and outside activities. If conflicts are discovered, it is the responsibility of the Student to resolve them in a timely fashion.

If the student is unable to resolve the conflict and misses class, they will be marked absent. Absenteeism in excess of 25% of any one class results in an Incomplete grade (0%) in that class. Please see the Attendance Policy (3.7) for more information.

If the Student receives an Incomplete in a course and wishes to appeal this grade, they may submit an Attendance Appeal. To do so, they must complete the Attendance Appeal form, addressing the grounds for the appeal, and, normally, providing supporting documentation (e.g., from a medical or mental health professional, or by a professional qualified to assess the effect of the event on the Student).

The grounds for an Attendance Appeal are:

- a. Medical circumstances: an acute physical or mental illness or medical circumstance that emerges or recurs during a term; the emergence of or change in a chronic physical or mental health condition.
- b. Compassionate circumstances: a traumatic event experienced by a Student, family member, or close friend; an act of sexual misconduct experienced by a

Student, family member, or close friend; a death in the family or of a close friend.

- c. Conflicting responsibilities: attending court as a witness, jury member, or party; being required to report to a government office for immigration/citizenship proceedings; attending a meeting as required by PDA administrative staff (e.g., academic discipline); participating in a religious observance or, for First Nations, Métis, or Inuit Students of Canada, a cultural observance; and, very occasionally, other conflicting responsibilities at the discretion of the Academic Coordinator.

No supporting documentation is required for planned religious or cultural observances.

The form and documentation must be submitted to the Academic Coordinator within five business days of the end of term. Appeals submitted after that point will not be considered.

The Academic Coordinator will arrange a mandatory meeting for the Student with the Academic Coordinator, Department Head, and Academic Dean all present. During this meeting, the Student will have an opportunity to explain their absences. Due to the pace of our academic programs, Students who missed more than two weeks in a row may be encouraged to withdraw from the program and return the following term or year.

The Academic Coordinator, Department Head, and Academic Dean will then make a final decision on whether or not to revoke the Student's Incomplete grade. This decision will be based on the reasons for the Student's absences, the Student's work in the class, and other relevant information. The decision will be presented to the student within 7 business days. This decision is final.

If the Student does not attend the meeting, their Appeal will not be considered.

Granting an Appeal shall not lower academic standards, remove the need for evaluation, or remove the need to meet academic requirements/learning outcomes.

3.8 Academic Leave

A Student who has been or will be away for an extended period and wishes to complete their studies later must arrange a meeting with the Academic Dean and Department Head to discuss possible options.

3.9 Grade Dispute Policy

This policy governs complaints raised by Students respecting a grade received in any course in any full-time program.

Informal Grade Dispute Process

A Student who wishes to dispute a grade in a course should ask the Instructor to review the assigned grade before initiating the Formal Grade Dispute Process.

The Instructor must receive the grade review request from the student within 5 business days after the assignment in question has been returned to the class.

The Instructor should review the assignment and present a decision to the Student within 7 business days of receiving the review request. If the review process takes longer than 7 business days, the Instructor should inform the Student of the reason (e.g. extra time is needed to arrange a meeting) and the date by which the review will be completed.

At their discretion, the Instructor may ask the Student to submit their request for review in writing and/or ask the Department Head or Academic Dean to be present at in-person meetings.

Formal Grade Dispute Process

If the matter cannot be resolved informally, the Student may request a formal review by the relevant Department Head or the Academic Dean.

Department Heads shall review appeals related to courses by regular Instructors in their departments.

The Academic Dean shall review appeals related to courses taught by Department Heads and those that cannot otherwise be resolved.

The Formal Grade Dispute Form, available through the Academic Coordinator, must be delivered by the Student to the Academic Coordinator within 5 business days of receiving the Instructor's decision.

The Formal Grade Dispute must include all relevant information and documentation (e.g., the assignment, Instructor comments, supporting evidence if relevant) as well as the basis for the appeal and why the Student believes a better grade is justified.

The Formal Grade Dispute must not include compassionate grounds (e.g., illness, death in the family), which should be addressed through the Extensions process (see 3.3). It also must not include accessibility grounds, which should be addressed through the Accommodations Process (see 5.2).

If the Department Head cannot resolve the issue, the Student may submit an appeal to the Academic Dean within 5 business days of receiving a decision from the Department Head.

The grade determined by the Academic Dean shall be the final grade, regardless of whether it is higher, lower, or identical to the original grade.

In cases concerning the interpretation of course policy, the Department Head or Academic Dean will defer to the course syllabus whenever possible, and otherwise will make a ruling on the matter.

3.10 Work Experience

The work experience is a critical component of some programs by which the Student obtains practical skills relevant to learning objectives and professional practice. The work experience must be relevant to the program's body of knowledge.

1. The requirements for participation in the work experience are as follows:
 - a. Completion of two semesters of their program.
2. The process by which the Student will be placed in a work experience is as follows:
 - a. The Student will be given access to a list of relevant host organizations if necessary.
 - b. The Student will contact the organization(s) they are interested in working for to express their interest, arrange an interview, and secure the placement.
 - c. If a Student is unable to arrange an appropriate work experience, the Department Head or Academic Dean will make the placement. Any Student who wishes to have a placement arranged on their behalf must contact the Department Head and Academic Dean in writing during the third term of study.
3. PDA, the Student, and the host organization will enter into a written agreement (the Work Experience Agreement form, made available to the student by Administration) detailing each party's responsibilities and the activities the Student will undertake during the work experience. This form is due before the start of the work experience. A copy of the authorized agreement will be kept in the Student's file.
4. The Student will be evaluated by the supervisor at the host organization, using PDA's Work Experience Student Evaluation form.
 - a. The evaluation criteria fall into two categories:
 - i. Professionalism in the workplace, as described on the Student Evaluation Form.
 - ii. Technical competencies associated with program learning outcomes.
 - b. PDA will evaluate the fulfilment of the work experience criteria upon completion of 80 hours and the submission of the following documentation to the Academic Coordinator:
 - i. A written work experience agreement signed by the Student, host organization, and the Registrar, due before the start of the work experience).
 - ii. A Student Evaluation Form completed and signed by the supervisor of the work experience, which is due at the end of the work experience.

5. For multi-year programs, students will be expected to complete this process twice (once each summer) for a total of 160 hours.

3.11 Grading Breakdown

DESCRIPTOR	GRADE	PERCENTAGE
Excellent	A+	95-100
	A	90-94
	A-	85-89
Good	B+	80-84
	B	75-79
	B-	70-74
Satisfactory	C+	65-69
Pass	C	60-64
Fail	D	< 59
Incomplete	I	0

Students receive an "I" if they fall below 75% attendance.

4. Student Conduct

- 4.1 Professional Standards
- 4.2 Academic Integrity
- 4.3 Dismissal

4.1 Professional Standards

Students are expected to behave in a responsible and courteous manner. This includes, but is not limited to, acting in accordance with school policies. Students must maintain adequate attendance, follow directions from faculty and staff, avoid acts of dishonesty, cheating, or plagiarism, and behave in a professional manner with instructors, staff, and fellow Students. In cases where any Student fails to live up to these expectations, PDA reserves the right to take appropriate action, which may include dismissal from the school.

4.2 Academic Integrity

PDA takes academic integrity seriously. Students who commit acts of academic dishonesty are subject to various penalties including dismissal. Students who are uncertain about what constitutes cheating or plagiarism or who have questions about incorporating source material in their work should contact their Instructors or the Academic Dean.

Plagiarism is when you create or submit work that incorporates someone else's words, images, or ideas without giving them credit. PDA's definition of plagiarism includes copying words, images, or ideas from another source without providing a citation; having someone else do your assignment, even if they consent and you pay them; getting credit for an assignment, or part of an assignment, more than once by submitting the same work to different classes (self-plagiarism); collaborating on an assignment without the permission of your instructor; using someone else's ideas without citing them, even if the words are different; citing a source inaccurately; inadequately paraphrasing a source; and completing an assignment for someone else.

Cheating includes copying or attempting to copy from others during a test or on an assignment; using unauthorized materials during a test (e.g., notes, books, devices); communicating with another person during a test; taking a test for another person; having someone take a test for you; and using extra time or resources during a test or assignment without permission.

If an Instructor finds a Student has committed plagiarism or cheated, they will report the matter to the Academic Dean. A first incident of academic dishonesty usually results in a grade of 0% on the assignment, a second incident results in a grade of 0% for the course, and a third results in dismissal from the school.

4.3 Dismissal Policy

This policy governs the dismissal of Students from Pacific Design Academy for academic, behavioural, financial, or administrative reasons.

Grounds for Dismissal

Absenteeism

Unexcused absences in excess of 25% of the total course hours will result in an incomplete grade for the course (0%). Missing more than 25% of the total course hours in more than two courses may result in dismissal from the school.

Any Student who misses two consecutive calendar weeks of study is considered withdrawn by PDA. If the Student holds a loan through StudentAid BC, their loan is cancelled. (The weeks are defined as being from Sunday to Saturday.)

Any Student whose attendance drops below 60% of a full-time course load for three consecutive calendar weeks is considered withdrawn by PDA and, if holding a loan with StudentAid BC, has their loan cancelled. With a 20-hour week, this translates into a Student attending less than 12 hours of class per week for three consecutive weeks.

Students who are absent for a total number of hours that would render them unable to pass their courses or program of study will be dismissed.

Failure to make reasonable academic progress

Students who fail more than two courses, or who otherwise fail to make reasonable academic progress, are at risk of dismissal.

Disruptive behaviour and/or harassment of Students, faculty, or staff

PDA believes in the basic right of Students and instructors to enjoy an atmosphere free of disruptive behaviour, harassment, or abuse of any kind. Any behaviour that limits an Instructor's ability to teach, a Student's ability to learn, or a staff member's ability to perform their duties is considered a violation of these rights and is grounds for dismissal.

Such behaviour may include, but is not limited to, insulting an instructor, staff member, or Student; raised voices in the school; abuse of staff time; theft; improper use of equipment; unsafe working practices; disruptive behaviour in or outside of class; submission or circulation of written material that is offensive or abusive; sexual misconduct; and violations of basic human rights.

Refusal to Meet

From time to time, a Department Head, the Academic Dean, or School Director may request a meeting with a Student to discuss matters of academic progress, finances, conduct, or other matter. PDA will provide Students with flexible meeting times during business hours to facilitate such meetings. A refusal to meet with admin staff or multiple appointment cancellations are grounds for dismissal from the school.

Plagiarism & Cheating

PDA takes issues of Academic Integrity seriously. Students who commit acts of academic dishonesty are subject to academic sanctions and dismissal.

Unpaid tuition or fees

Students are required to make their payments in a timely manner, as outline in the enrollment contract. Students will be subject to dismissal if payments are in arrears and/or if no appropriate arrangements have been made.

Course/Program Cancellation

Students may be dismissed in the case of course or program cancellation (see 1.4).

Dismissal Process

In the event of violence, unsafe conduct, harassment, theft, sexual misconduct, cheating, unexcused absence from school for longer than 2 weeks, or course cancellation, PDA reserves the right to dismiss a Student immediately.

In all other cases, Students at risk of being dismissed will be given a written or verbal warning and will be asked to attend a meeting with the Academic Dean or School Director.

If the behaviour in question persists after a first warning, the Student will be given a second warning in writing.

If a Student receives two warnings and the behaviour in question persists, the Student will be dismissed.

Note that penalties other than a warning or dismissal may apply to behaviours described in this policy (e.g., a Student who plagiarizes an assignment will receive an assignment grade of 0% for a first offense in addition to a warning).

5. Student Support Services

5.1 Internal Support Services

5.2 Student Accommodations

5.3 Academic Support

5.4 Other Support Services

a). Financial & Academic Assistance

b). Health & Well-Being

5.1 Internal Support Services

All Students have access to the Academic Coordinator should they need additional support. These conversations are subject to confidentiality, unless PDA is obligated by law to disclose specific information.

The Academic Coordinator may refer students to the Academic Dean or external support services depending on the circumstances.

If the issue is strictly academic, students should first speak with the relevant instructor and/or Department Head before going to the Academic Coordinator.

5.2 Student Accommodations

PDA is committed to creating an inclusive learning environment that, whenever possible, reduces barriers to participation for those with Disabilities and other protected characteristics. We take a collaborative approach to designing individual Accessibility Plans based on the functional impact of diagnosed disabilities.

To register with Accessibility Services, Students must contact the Academic Dean and provide reasonable documentation from qualified professionals as requested. PDA does not provide diagnostic services or assume their costs.

5.3 Academic Support

PDA employs Teaching Assistants for classes with more than 16 Students if deemed necessary by the Instructor and/or Academic Dean. Please see the appropriate TA or your instructor(s) if you find you are having difficulty with the material and/or assignments.

No instructor may decline to meet with a Student to discuss academic matters. It is imperative that Students work with PDA staff and faculty as soon as difficulties arise.

5.4 Other Support Services

Contacts for various organizations and associations can be found below (organizations are not exclusive arbiters or aides; provided lists are not exhaustive; organizations and associations are not necessarily affiliated with PDA).

a). Financial & Academic Assistance

StudentAid BC

Studentaidbc.ca

1-800-561-1818

National Student Loans Service Centre

1-888-815-4514

csnpe-nslsc.canada.ca

Ministry of Education, Province of British Columbia

1-888-879-1166

gov.bc.ca/bced

b). Health & Well-Being

Vancouver Island Health Authority

1-877-370-8699

250-370-8699

info@viha.ca

viha.ca

Island Sexual Health Society

250-592-3479

islandsexualhealth.org

Island Community Mental Health Association

icmha.ca

250-389-1211

Need Crisis and Information Line

Talk Line: 250-386-6323

Youth Line: 250-386-8255

needcrisis.bc.ca

Counselling BC Directory

counsellingbc.com

United Way of Greater Victoria

250-385-6708

questions@uwgv.ca

unitedwayvictoria.bc.ca

6. Withdrawals, Refunds, Privacy, Disputes, and Sexual Misconduct

- 6.1 Withdrawal Policy
- 6.2 Refund Policy
- 6.3 Student Records & Privacy
- 6.4 Dispute Resolution
- 6.5 Sexual Misconduct Policy

6.1 Withdrawal Policy

A Student wishing to discontinue their studies at PDA must submit a letter expressing the intention to withdraw to the Registrar. Failure to submit written notification results in a failing grade and no refund of paid tuition or other fees (where applicable).

6.2 Refund Policy

This policy applies in all cases where a refund may be issued, including but not limited to Student withdrawal, Student dismissal and/or course/program cancellation.

After acceptance and prior to the commencement of the program, the \$200 (\$500 for international Students) application fee is not refunded while all paid tuition and lab fees are subject to refund as outlined below.

Refunds after the program of study commences are based on a percentage of annual tuition fees and issued in accordance with the Private Training Institutions Branch of BC (PTIB):

If written notice of withdrawal is received by PDA or a Student is dismissed after no longer than 10% of the program of study's duration, then 70% of the total fees under contract will be recompensed.

If written notice of withdrawal is received by PDA or a Student is dismissed after no longer than 30% of the program of study's duration, then 50% of the total fees under contract will be recompensed.

If written notice of withdrawal is received by PDA or a Student is dismissed after 30% of the program of study's duration, no refund of the total fees under contract will be allocated.

If an enrolled Student has not met admission requirements for the program and did not misrepresent their knowledge or skills when applying for admission, and the Registrar orders the Institution to refund tuition and fees, the Institution will refund 100% tuition and related fees.

If the Institution fails to provide work experience within 30 days of the contract end date, the Institution will refund 100% of tuition and fees other than application fees, unless the Registrar determines the Institution was prevented from doing so by circumstances beyond its control.

6.3 Student Records & Privacy

Current and incoming Student records are housed in secure storage in the school. All documents related to individual Students are maintained in their file. Archived records are maintained and stored electronically in a secured offsite location for a period of 55 years.

Under the Personal Information Protection Act, Students are entitled to access their Student file. To do so, please contact the Registrar. The personal information collected will only be used for the purpose for which it was originally collected or for a use consistent with that purpose, unless the Student consents to other use.

Former Students requesting copies of transcripts may do so by completing the Transcript Request Form, available through the Registrar. A fee of \$20.00 is charged for copies of all transcripts, letters, and diplomas.

6.4 Dispute Resolution

This policy governs complaints from Students regarding Pacific Design Academy and any aspect of its operations.

A Student who makes or is otherwise involved in a complaint will not be subject to any form of retaliation by the Institution at any time.

PDA offers two Dispute Resolution Procedures: Informal and Formal. Most disputes can be settled through the Informal Procedure. The Formal Procedure should be used if the Informal Procedure fails to resolve the dispute. From time to time, depending on the nature of the dispute, a Student may choose to initiate the Formal Procedure immediately.

Informal Resolution Procedure

Any dispute should first be discussed with PDA Instructor(s), who will attempt to address the concern immediately.

If the concern is not resolved, Students may bring their complaints to the relevant Department Head, who will consult with the Instructor.

The Student may discuss concerns with the Academic Coordinator if the Instructor or Department Head cannot resolve the situation.

If the problem is not resolved within 10 business days, the Formal Resolution Procedure described below should be followed.

Formal Resolution Procedure

Student complaints must be made in writing. Students must submit the Formal Complaint to the Academic Dean. If the Academic Dean is named in the complaint or not available to accept the complaint submission, Students may submit their complaints to the Academic Coordinator (admin@pacificdesignacademy.com)

The written complaint should include the following information:

- A description of the nature of the complaint and its impacts;
- The names of all parties involved, including witnesses where appropriate;
- And the dates of relevant incidents.

The Academic Dean is responsible for making the initial determination within 15 days of receiving the complaint. Reasons for the decision will be provided in writing.

If the Academic Dean cannot resolve the issue, or if Students wish to appeal the initial determination, Students can submit their complaints to the school Director (Isabel Yu, Isabel.yu@pacificdesignacademy.com).

The school Director is responsible for delivering the reconsideration within the 30 days after the Formal Complaint has been made. Reasons for the reconsidered decision will be provided in writing.

The written reasons will advise a Student that, if the Student is dissatisfied with the determination and has been misled by the Institution regarding any significant aspect of that program, the Student may file a complaint with the Private Training Institutions Branch of BC (www.privatetraininginstitutions.gov.bc.ca). Complaints must be filed with PTIB within one year of the date that a Student completes, is dismissed from, or withdraws from the program.

The Student making the complaint may be represented by an agent or a lawyer.

6.5 Sexual Misconduct Policy

Pacific Design Academy is committed to the prevention of and appropriate response to sexual misconduct.

Sexual misconduct refers to a spectrum of non-consensual sexual contact and behaviour including the following:

Sexual Assault

Any form of sexual touching or the threat, express or implied, of sexual touching without the individual's consent.

Sexual Exploitation

The sexual abuse of children and youth through the exchange of sex or sexual acts for drugs, food, shelter, protection, other basics of life, and/or money. Sexual exploitation includes involving children and youth in creating pornography and sexually explicit websites.

Sexual Harassment

Unwelcome conduct, by comment or gesture, of a sexual nature that detrimentally affects the working, learning, or living environment, or leads to adverse consequences for the individual directly subjected to the harassment.

Stalking

Stalking through the use of the internet or other electronic means, or engaging in unwelcome conduct, expressed or implied, that causes an individual to fear for their physical or psychological safety. It can include repeatedly following the individual, repeatedly communicating with the individual through any means, engaging in threatening conduct, or keeping watch over the place where the individual happens to be.

Indecent Exposure

Exposing one's body to another individual either physically, electronically, or through any other means, for a sexual purpose without the individual's consent, or coercing another individual to remove their clothing in order to expose their body.

Voyeurism

Non-consensual viewing, photographing, or otherwise recording another individual in a location where there is an expectation of privacy and where the viewing, photographing, or recording is done for a sexual purpose. This includes:

- The distribution of a sexual explicit photograph or video of a person to one or more persons other than the person in the photograph or video without the consent of the person in the photograph or video and with the intent to distress the person in the photograph or video.
- The attempt to commit an act of sexual misconduct.
- The threat to commit an act of sexual misconduct.

Complaints of Sexual Misconduct

A **Complaint** of sexual misconduct is different than a **Report** of sexual misconduct. A person may choose to disclose or complain of sexual misconduct without making a formal report. A Report is a formal notification of an incident of sexual misconduct to someone at the institution accompanied by a request for action.

A Student making a Complaint will be provided with resolution options and, if appropriate, accommodations, and will not be required or pressured to make a Report.

The process for make a Complaint about sexual misconduct involving a Student is as follows:

- An individual may choose to make a Complaint to any Student, faculty, and staff of PDA without making a Report.
- A Student who has experienced sexual misconduct may make a Complaint by contacting the school management team in the Office.
- A Complaint does not initiate an investigation or other action by PDA, subject only to Confidentiality and Privacy.

Primary Contact: Donna Dowling, Academic Dean. ddowling@pdaeducation.com.

Alternate Contact: Isabel Yu, School Director. isabel.yu@pacificdesignacademy.com.

A person who makes a Complaint does not need to prove that the sexual misconduct occurred in order to access supports and/or receive accommodations.

The Complainant may wish to disclose sexual violence in order to seek emotional support, medical support, or advocacy, but may not want to report it to the police. Subject to certain limited exceptions, this decision should be respected, and the Complainant should still be offered support services.

The process for responding to a Complaint of sexual misconduct involving a Student is as follows:

- PDA will acknowledge receipt of the Complaint within 5 working days.
- PDA will respond supportively. This may include helping the Complainant to:
 - Make a report to the police. The Complainant may wish to make a police statement, which would generally be followed by a criminal investigation. An appointed PDA employee can accompany the Complainant if requested, or PDA can contact a community-based victim support worker to support and accompany the Complainant.
 - Make a Third Party Report to the police via a Community Victim Service Agency. The Complainant may wish to make an anonymous Third Party Report through a community-based victim support worker; reports are sent to police by an intermediary agency and provide detailed information about

the incident and the Respondent but do not include the name or contact information of the Complainant. A Third Party Report is not in and of itself a police investigation; it is an option of last resort for the Complainant, who would not otherwise provide information to the police but who may want to access support and let the police know of a sexual predator in order to protect other.

- Receive medical assistance or a forensic medical exam. It is advisable for anyone who has experienced sexual assault to seek medical attention to address possible physical injury, pregnancy, and/or sexually transmitted infections. The Complainant will be referred to the nearest hospital and will be connected with a sexual assault response worker or advocate who can provide support and can accompany them to the hospital. The Complainant will be informed of the need to collect any forensic samples while they decide whether or not to report the sexual assault to police. Forensic samples can be collected and stored for up to one year while the Complainant decides whether or not to speak with the police.

Report of Sexual Misconduct

A **Report** is a formal notification of an incident of sexual misconduct to someone at the institution accompanied by a request for action.

The process for making a Report of sexual misconduct involving a Student is as follows:

- A Student who has experienced sexual misconduct may make a Report by contacting the Academic Dean or School Director in writing. A Report may be made in writing by e-mail or letter.
- A Report to PDA may be made at any time.
- Reports must be submitted in writing and should set out the relevant details with regards to the alleged sexual misconduct. Reports should include a list of any potential witnesses, along with a description of the information those witnesses are expected to provide. Copies of relevant documents, including any social media communications, should be provided with the Report.
- Upon receipt of a Report, the Academic Dean or School Director will determine whether or not the subject matter of the Report falls within this policy and whether or not to initiate an Investigation.

The process for responding to a Report of sexual misconduct involving a Student is as follows:

- PDA will review the Report within 10 working days.
- The Academic Dean or School Director will determine whether or not the subject matter of the Report falls within this policy.

- If the Complainant, after initial consultation, wishes to proceed to a formal complaint of Sexual Misconduct under the Policy, the School Director may provide advice on the necessary elements for a Request for Formal Investigation.

The Academic Dean and/or School Manager does not determine whether or not behaviours are sexual misconduct; the Academic Dean and/or School Manager only confirms that behaviours as described by the Complainant may constitute Sexual Misconduct. Only a Formal Investigation can determine whether or not Sexual Misconduct has taken place.

Informal Resolution

If a Complainant wishes to pursue further actions after an initial consultation with the Academic Dean and/or School Manager and the Misconduct and/or harassment behaviours are subject to process under this policy, they may first seek Informal Resolution. Informal Resolution is not mandatory and may not be appropriate for all manner of Sexual Misconduct. The Complainant may choose to proceed immediately to Formal Resolution.

If the behaviours are Student-to-Student and classroom-based, the Complainant may request that the Instructor or Academic Dean intervene to address the Misconduct or harassment behaviours and take action as appropriate to the situation.

Where misconduct or harassment behaviours are not Student-to-Student/classroom-based or faculty intervention is not appropriate or possible, the Complainant may seek Informal Resolution. When the Academic Dean and/or School Director receives a written Complaint of Sexual Misconduct, they will follow-up on such allegations in a timely manner including informing the Respondent of the Complaint and providing a copy of this policy. Such follow-up may involve attempting to facilitate a mutually agreed-to resolution between the Complainant and Respondent, and/or taking appropriate preventative, disciplinary, or remedial measure. Disciplinary actions may include but are not limited to:

- Warning or reprimand
- Referral to educational or psychological services
- Restricted/no access to specific areas of campus
- Suspension/expulsion from specific classes and/or from the Academy

Formal Investigation

Where the Complainant wishes to pursue Formal Investigation, the Complainant must submit a written and signed request for Formal Investigation to the Academic Dean and/or School Director.

The process for responding to a Formal Investigation is as follows:

- The appointed Investigator will ensure that both the Complainant and the Respondent are aware that a Formal Investigation has commenced and that each has a copy of the Sexual Misconduct Policy.
- The Investigator will receive information from the Complainant, the Respondent, and any other individuals whom the Investigator believes may have information relevant to the complaint.
- Information may be received through written documentation and/or interviews. The Investigator will ensure that both the Complainant and the Respondent are aware of the positions of the other, and of any allegations made against them, and are given a reasonable opportunity to respond.
- Where an Investigator conducts interviews, the Complainant and the Respondent may request that a support person be present. This person will act as an observer/supporter and will not participate in the proceedings. An interpreter for either or both the Complainant and Respondent (where either or both parties have English as a second language) may be provided by the Investigator.
- After completion of the investigation and within ten working days, the Investigator will complete a written report, including a copy of the written complaint and findings of fact, and submit the report to the Academic Dean and/or School Director. The report will state a positive or null Finding of Misconduct/Harassment based on the balance of probabilities and may include recommendations for resolution of the complaint and/or for remedial or disciplinary action.
- PDA reserves the right to initiate an independent investigation of Sexual Misconduct if sufficient cause has been demonstrated to warrant such action.

After reviewing the Investigator's Report, the Academic Dean and/or School Director will make decision(s) on findings of Sexual Misconduct and on appropriate actions in the circumstances.

The decision will be rendered, in writing, to the Complainant and Respondent, as soon as possible but in any case within 10 working days of the receipt of the report of the Investigation. The Academic Dean and/or School Director will provide a summary of the findings of the Investigator with their decision to the Complainant and the Respondent.

Where the Academic Dean and/or School Director finds that Sexual Misconduct has occurred, disciplinary decisions may include, but are not limited to:

- Warning or reprimand
- Referral to educational or psychological services
- Restricted/no access to specific areas of the Academy
- Suspension/expulsion from specific class and/or from the Academy

- Disciplinary action up to, and including, termination of employment

It is contrary to this policy for the Institution to retaliate, engage in reprisals, or threaten to retaliate in relation to a Complaint or a Report.

Any processes undertaken pursuant to this policy will be based on the principles of administrative fairness. All parties involved will be treated with dignity and respect.

All information related to a Complaint or Report is confidential and will not be shared without the written consent of the parties, subject to the following exceptions:

- If an individual is at imminent risk of severe or life-threatening self-harm
- If an individual is at imminent risk of harming another
- There are reasonable grounds to believe that others in the institutional community may be at significant risk of harm based on the information provided
- Where reporting is required by law
- Where it is necessary to ensure procedural fairness in an investigation or other response to a Complaint or Report

This institution is certified by the Private Training Institutions Branch (PTIB). Certified institutions must comply with regulatory requirement, including the requirement to have a Sexual Misconduct policy. For more information about PTIB, go to www.privatetraininginstitutions.gov.bc.ca.

7. Respectful & Fair Treatment of Students Policy

Pacific Design Academy is committed to an environment that respects and promotes human rights and personal dignity. Pacific Design Academy supports the principle that all employees, volunteers, Students, clients, and visitors are entitled to an environment that is free from any form of discrimination and harassment. Students can expect to be treated fairly and with respect.

At PDA, all staff and Students are expected to agree to and uphold the following standards:

- Behave in ways that show respect for others
- Promote a climate that is fair
- Refrain from discriminatory practices, harassment, and violence
- Respect confidentiality
- Establish a safe physical and social environment that supports learning
- Avoid the use of alcohol, cannabis and/or illegal drugs
- Communicate in an honest, straight-forward, timely, and objective manner
- Honour commitments
- Avoid potential conflicts of interest

Any and all human-rights violation concerns should be brought to the Academic Dean's attention immediately. Any Student or employee found to be in violation of another's rights will be subject to discipline, which may include dismissal.

8. Student Statement of Rights

Pacific Design Academy is certified with the [Private Training Institutions Branch](#) (PTIB) of the British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training.

Before you enrol at a certified private training institution, you should be aware of your rights and responsibilities.

You have the right to be treated **fairly** and **respectfully** by the institution.

You have the right to a **Student enrolment contract** that includes the following information:

- amount of tuition and any additional fee for your program
- refund policy
- if your program includes a work experience, the requirements to participate in the work experience and the geographic area where it will be provided
- whether the program was approved by PTIB or does not require approval.

Make sure you read the contract before signing. The institution must provide you with a signed copy.

You have the right to access the institution's **dispute resolution process** and to be **protected against retaliation** for making a complaint.

You have the right to make a **claim** to PTIB for a **tuition refund** if:

- your institution ceased to hold a certificate before you completed an approved program
- you were misled about a significant aspect of your approved program.

You must file the claim within **one year** of completing, being dismissed or withdrawing from your program.

For more information about PTIB and how to be an informed Student, go to:

<http://www.privatetraininginstitutions.gov.bc.ca/Students/be-an-informed-Student>

9.School Map

