



# Public College-Private Partnerships: Application guidelines

Ministry of Colleges and Universities  
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## Purpose

This guide has been developed to assist colleges in the preparation of an application for minister's approval of a new PCPP or the renewal of an existing PCPP and is being reissued to reflect March 2023 updates to the Public College-Private Partnerships Minister's Binding Policy Directive.

## Approvals required

Prior to signing a new public college-private partnership (PCPP) agreement or renewing an existing PCPP agreement, a public college must have received all three of the approvals below:

1. The Minister of Colleges and Universities' approval of the PCPP application.
  - Learn about the [application process](#) and [requirements](#).
2. Approval from the Minister of Finance or the President of Treasury Board under section 28 of the [Financial Administration Act \(FAA\)](#).
  - Approval under section 28 of the [Financial Administration Act](#) is required for any contingent liabilities arising from the agreement.
  - Colleges should submit the section 28 application as per the process outlined in the [Banking, Investments and Borrowing Operating Procedure](#).
3. Designation under the International Student Program (ISP).
  - Private providers must be independently designated under the ISP to enrol international students at the proposed PCPP campus location. If the private provider is not already designated for the proposed PCPP campus location, it is recommended that both parties fully understand [the requirements](#) and process for designation before submitting an application for a PCPP.
  - Private providers applying for first-time ISP designation status, to amend an existing designation agreement to include a new campus location, or for re-designation must submit their application directly to Ontario's International Student Program at [ISP@ontario.ca](mailto:ISP@ontario.ca).

# Application process

## Step 1: Community consultation

Public college consults with the local communities (including local municipal governments, postsecondary institutions, and other stakeholders as appropriate) in which they intend to locate the proposed PCPP campus(es) to ensure adequate community capacity.

## Step 2: Finalize draft PCPP agreement and obtain board approval

Public college and private provider finalize draft PCPP agreement and receive college Board of Governors approval for the purposes of submitting an application to the ministry.

## Step 3: Submit application for minister's approval

Public college and private provider work together to develop PCPP application and public college submits application for minister's approval to [colleges.unit@ontario.ca](mailto:colleges.unit@ontario.ca). [See application requirements](#).

## Step 4: Ministry review

Ministry reviews PCPP application against the requirements in the [Public College-Private Partnerships Minister's Binding Policy Directive](#) and the [application requirements](#).

## Step 5: Communicate minister's decision

Ministry informs college of minister's decision on the PCPP application.

## Step 6: Establish partnership

To establish a partnership you will need to do the following:

- Public college and private provider enter into PCPP agreement. College Board of Governors must approve the final signed agreement.
- Public college to provide a copy of the final signed agreement to the Ministry of Colleges and Universities at [colleges.unit@ontario.ca](mailto:colleges.unit@ontario.ca).
- The ministry will amend the ISP designations of both the public college and private providers to reflect the new partnership campus location(s) as needed.

- Public college to notify the ministry prior to any public announcement about the PCPP.

Note: Ministry review of the application and communication of the minister's decision ([steps 4 and 5](#)) will be aligned where possible with processes and timelines related to the college's section 28 application.

## Application requirements

Applications for the minister's approval of new PCPP agreements or the renewal of existing PCPP agreements must include the following:

1. Legal Name and Designated Learning Institution number of private partner(s).
  2. Address of proposed PCPP campus(es).
  3. Board of Governors approval of proposed PCPP arrangement.
  4. Copy of final, unsigned contract(s) with private partner(s), approved by the Board of Governors.
  5. Contingency plan with provisions for student protection, such as student financial compensation and/or guarantees that students be able to complete their programs.
  6. Anticipated start date.
  7. Public college's attestation of compliance with all applicable federal and provincial legislative and binding policy directive requirements.
  8. Attestation to adoption of Colleges Ontario and Career Colleges Ontario's standards for international student activity by the college and private provider respectively.
  9. Business case (see below for requirements).
  10. The public college's notice of intention to amend their current International Student Program designation agreement to include the PCPP location(s).
- Note: The ministry will conduct a review of the proposed PCPP campus and may conduct a site inspection to ensure that the proposed PCPP location meets all requirements under the International Student Program.

# Business case requirements

The business case should comprehensively demonstrate compliance with the Public College-Private Partnerships Minister’s Binding Policy Directive and include each of the sections outlined below. Colleges may include additional information in their business case at their discretion.

The ministry recommends that the business case be limited to 20-25 pages.

## Projected enrolment and compliance with enrolment ceiling

Projected enrolment at proposed PCPP campus(es) and other existing PCPP campuses (if applicable) over the length of the proposed agreement. Distinguish between domestic and international enrolment if applicable.

Note: PCPP enrolment refers to the total full-time international headcount enrolment in programs delivered through public college-private partnerships in Ontario, including in programs approved for ministry funding and full-cost recovery programs, not including students enrolled in co-op terms.

Example: Layout of table headings for enrolment reporting

Projected full-time headcount enrolment

PCPP campus	Fall Year 1	Winter Year 1	Spring Year 1	Fall Year 2	Winter Year 2	Spring Year 2
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- include a column for all other applicable years
- complete a row in the table for each PCPP campus
- include a row indicating the total across all PCPP campuses per semester and year

In addition to the enrolment reporting table, please provide a description of:

- the measures to be put in place to ensure ongoing compliance with the enrolment ceiling
- the enrolment strategy (for example, domestic vs. international, countries of origin, etc.)

## **Financial forecast**

Colleges are required to submit:

- Projected costs and revenue from the PCPP over the length of the proposed agreement (gross and net) for both parties (that is, college and private provider) where college revenue is after payments made to the private provider if the college is collecting tuition from PCPP students.
- Plan for how the public college's revenue from the PCPP will be re-invested at home campuses and in local communities and support the college's education and training mandate.

## **Program plan**

Colleges are required to submit:

- List of programs that are planned to be offered at the PCPP campus(es) over the length of the proposed agreement, including information on program length, credential level and inclusion of any experiential learning/work integrated learning components (for example, laboratory, workshop, fieldwork, practicum, placement, co-op) if applicable. Identify any programs not already offered on the college's home campus(es), programs in regulated professions and programs where the government is a major direct employer.
- Rationale for program offerings, including evidence of labour market demand for example employment rates for graduates; national, provincial and local labour market reports; industry-specific reports or support) and student demand.
- Description of how the proposed program offerings complement existing postsecondary program offerings in the proposed PCPP campus location(s). If proposed programs duplicate other postsecondary institutions' existing program offerings in the surrounding community, include a rationale for why they are needed.

## **Risk management**

Description of:

- Risk management strategy, including but not limited to how risks associated with the termination of the PCPP agreement or the failure of a partner to deliver services to students will be addressed with specific planning for student assurances.
- The exit clauses and off ramps for both parties and risk management strategies stemming from these clauses.

## **Quality and student experience**

Description of:

- Quality assurance policy and procedures to be put in place to ensure the ongoing quality, relevancy, and integrity of programs delivered through the PCPP.
- Supports and services to be provided to PCPP students, including whether they will be offered on the PCPP campus, in the community, or through the college's main campus, and the college's role in overseeing the delivery of these services.
- Measures to support PCPP students' access to appropriate housing.

## **Recruitment and advertising**

Description of processes to be put in place to ensure:

- ethical international student recruitment practices
- advertising and marketing of PCPP programs is transparent and accurate, including advertising and marketing done by partners or agents

## **Colleges Ontario and Career Colleges Ontario standards for international student activity**

Description of processes to be put in place to ensure alignment with Colleges Ontario and Career Colleges Ontario's standards for international student activity.

## **Community consultation**

Description of community consultations undertaken, including the organizations consulted, feedback received and how the college plans to address any identified issues.



## Contact

For questions about PCPP approvals, please contact the ministry by email at:  
[colleges.unit@ontario.ca](mailto:colleges.unit@ontario.ca).

Colleges are encouraged to reach out to the ministry prior to submitting an application for minister's approval to discuss alignment with policy requirements.