

Maryland Higher Education Commission

Private Career Schools

*A brief look at MHEC and becoming a new
private career school*

- I. Introduction to MHEC
- II. New School Application
- III. Private Career School Responsibilities

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I. Introduction to MHEC

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

The Education Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland grants the Maryland Higher Education Commission authority to

Coordinate

and

Supervise

Postsecondary Education

(§11-105, General Powers and Duties)

FOR WHAT PURPOSE?

- ✓ To ensure that minimum *quality standards* for schools and instruction are maintained
- ✓ To ensure that adequate student *records* are maintained
- ✓ To ensure that students are *protected*

IN OTHER WORDS,

MHEC helps to establish and maintain basic, minimum quality standards for all Maryland private career schools to assure that the approved job preparatory training being provided *by* those schools is of *benefit* to students ...

WHILE ...

Providing certain *protections* to students enrolled in the approved programs of Maryland private career schools.

SO...

What IS a private career school?

A privately owned postsecondary educational institution offering occupational, non-degree training to the general public.

Education Article, Title 10 of the Annotated Code of Maryland

Where can the statutes, regulations and policies for private career schools be found?

- ✓ Statutes: Education Article, Titles 10 and 11,
Annotated Code of Maryland
- ✓ Regulations: Title 13B, Subtitle 01, Chapter 01,
Code of Maryland Regulations
(COMAR)
- ✓ Policies: Private Career School Policies and
Procedures Manual

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II. New School Application

Commission approval is required before a training provider may offer occupational or job preparatory training to the general public.

STEP ONE:

A prospective training provider may
submit a

Training Questionnaire

to determine whether Commission
approval is required to legally offer the
provider's training in Maryland.

Upon review of the Questionnaire,
the Commission will notify the prospective
training provider in writing whether the
provider is either:

- ✓ Required to seek and obtain approval from the
Commission to operate a private career
school in Maryland, or
- ✓ Exempted from approval by the Commission.

If exempted from approval by the
Commission:

no further applications are required by the
Commission; however, *restrictions will apply*.

For more information on this “exempt
status,” contact the Maryland Higher
Education Commission at 410-260-4500.

If required to seek and obtain approval from the Commission, a new school application must be completed and submitted.

The rest of this section provides a general overview of the *Application For Initial Approval To Operate A Private Career School*.

STEP TWO:

*Application For Initial Approval To
Operate A Private Career School.*

The application is designed in two parts,
conveniently titled

Part I & Part II

Part I

This is the “conceptual” stage in developing the school.

Although it requires complete curriculum materials as well as proposed school documents and policies, it only asks the applicant school to provide its anticipated or *projected* physical, staff and equipment requirements.

Part II

This is the “implementation” stage as the projected expenditure requirements of Part I become reality.

At this time, (1) the applicant and Commission staff continue to review curriculum, documents and policies for educational soundness and regulatory compliance; (2) the specific physical space has been obtained; (3) staff has been selected; and (4) equipment has been purchased and is in place. The School now stands ready to be operational.

The application requires the applicant to submit the following in Part I:

1. Documentation regarding the **ownership** of the proposed school.
2. Results from a Market Survey that provide evidence that there is **sufficient need** for the training and employment possibilities for graduates.
3. Documentation regarding the **financial capability** of the proposed school (e.g., financial statements and financial guarantees).

4. **Curriculum** that includes:

- ✓ Textbooks
- ✓ Program Outline
- ✓ Syllabi
- ✓ Detailed daily lesson plans
- ✓ Hand-outs
- ✓ Assignments
- ✓ Quizzes
- ✓ Exams

5. School **documents** that include:

- ✓ Enrollment agreement
- ✓ School catalog
- ✓ School records, such as:
 - ✓ academic transcript
 - ✓ attendance record
 - ✓ account card

AND

6. Anticipated or *projected* physical, staff and equipment requirements.

COSTS

Directly Related to the Application

- ✓ Application Fee: \$300 for up to three programs. An additional \$100 for every program over three. (Due with Part I)
- ✓ Guaranty Student Tuition Fund payment: \$1,000 (Due with Part II)
- ✓ Having a reviewed or audited financial statement prepared by an independent CPA. (*Optional*; due with Part I)
- ✓ Obtaining a financial guarantee to cover the tuition liability of all enrolled students. (Calculations due with Part I; must be obtained by Part II)

SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION

- Submit the application materials in tabbed 3-ring binders.
- The completed application cover page should be the first item in the binder.
- Tab the binder to reflect the order and sections of the application.
 - (e.g., Tab A: Background Information, Tab B: Ownership and Organization, etc.)
- Submit **TWO** copies and remember to keep a third for yourself.

APPLICATION MISCELLANY

- Carefully read and follow all directions.
- It is to the applicant's benefit to read and understand applicable State laws, regulations and policies **before** completing the application.

(More...)

(More...)

- It is essential that program curriculum receive a great deal of careful, in-depth and detailed planning. The submitted curriculum will be sent to an independent consultant for review.
- Cross reference all documents against the provided checklists to make sure all information is addressed.

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III. Private Career School Responsibilities

**Once a private career school is
approved to operate in Maryland,
what does the Maryland Higher
Education Commission
EXPECT
from the School?**

There are three broad expectations:

Number ONE:

- ✓ To operate and deliver programs in the manner approved by MHEC

Number TWO:

- ✓ To adhere to all of the School's approved policies

Number THREE:

- ✓ To keep complete and well-maintained accurate student records

What does it mean to

***“operate and deliver programs in
the manner approved by MHEC?”***

For starters,

The program must be consistently *delivered* as approved by the Maryland Higher Education Commission. In the classroom that includes:

- ✓ Adhering to the approved curriculum
- ✓ Adhering to the *delivery* of the approved curriculum
(the *way* the School promised to teach it)
- ✓ Adhering to the qualifications of the instructors
- ✓ Adhering to the student:instructor ratio(s)

Furthermore,

The School must be *operated* as approved by MHEC. That includes:

- ✓ The approved facility location remaining unchanged
- ✓ Maintaining equipment in sufficient number and quality for all students
- ✓ Not exceeding the maximum class size(s) and overall tuition liability / enrollment limitation
- ✓ Adhering to the approved advertisements / promotions
- ✓ Adhering to the approved enrollment / admissions process
- ✓ The School's ownership remaining unchanged

What does it mean to
*“adhere to all of the School’s
approved policies?”*

During the application process, a school,
with the guidance of MHEC,
will develop policies on how it will operate
administratively
and
academically.

Clear and precise school policies are extremely important. They help assure that BOTH the School and the student understand limits and expectations.

Once the School is approved to operate, these policies become the School's "rules to live by"

and *cannot be changed* without the prior notification and approval of the Commission.

These policies are the framework upon which the School has promised the Commission it will do business with its students.

Examples of School Policies

- Admissions
- Attendance
- Academics
- Satisfactory Progress
- Completion / Graduation
 - Leave of Absence
 - Refunds
 - Withdrawals
 - Re-Admittance
 - Complaints
- Credit Granted for Previous Training / Experience

What does it mean to
*“keep complete and well-
maintained accurate student
records?”*

The School is responsible to *track* and *document* student progress from the time a student enrolls through the time the student leaves.

This “*paper trail*” must be contained
in the student’s permanent file.

Permanent file materials include,
but are not limited to:

- Documentation that *all* admissions criteria are met
- A complete and accurate enrollment agreement
- A record of the student's up-to-date attendance records and academic achievements
- An up-to-date record of the student's financial account
- For withdrawals: up-to-date student transcript, documents concerning the withdrawal circumstances, conditions, dates, and *refund calculations*
- For graduates/completers: a complete student transcript, certificate copy, and *placement tracking*

Permanent file materials may also include, depending upon the student:

- *Signed* and *dated* documentation / records of counseling or advising sessions
- Academic or attendance *probation* notification
- Leave of absence documentation
- *Changes* made to the enrollment agreement (acknowledged by the school and the student)
- Financial Aid documentation (this includes public and private funding sources [loans, scholarships, etc.])
- Complaints

What is “placement tracking?”

- Most private career schools are required to track their graduates’ initial employment information, regardless if the school offers “placement services.”
- The exception to this rule is when a school trains students to enter some licensed occupations (for example, real estate). Then, the school must track its students’ passage rates on the licensing exams.

Why track students who complete
and students who become employed?

**Because the Commission is charged
with assuring that private career
school programs are meeting
minimum job-preparatory goals.**

Again, those three private career school expectations are:

- ✓ To operate and deliver programs in the manner approved by MHEC
- ✓ To adhere to all of the School's approved policies
- ✓ To keep complete and well-maintained accurate student records

Questions / Information

Contact:

Private Career Schools
Maryland Higher Education Commission
6 N. Liberty Street, 10th Floor
Baltimore, MD 21201
410-767-3403
Website: www.mhec.state.md.us