Foundational Learning Assistance Policy Manual

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Classification: Public

Contents

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Introduction

The Foundational Learning Assistance Policy Manual aims to provide policy guidance to Advanced Education staff, stakeholders, educational institutions and students.

Unless otherwise indicated, the policies described in this manual are effective for programs of study starting on or after April 1, 2022. Students with start dates prior to this will be subject to policies and procedures found in the Learner Income Support Policy Manual.

This manual is divided into nine chapters. Chapters 1 to 6 provides policy guidance on the eligibility criteria, application process all through designation of programs of study for students applying for Foundational Learning Assistance. Remaining chapters detail information for educational institutions and their role in delivering quality foundational and skill development programs to students.

Additional headings and links have been bolded to allow for quick referencing. In the case of a conflict between the legislation and this manual, the legislation takes precedence.

The 2022–2023 Foundational Learning Assistance Policy Manual can be subject to change. Refer to the Foundational Learning and Skills Development webpage on alberta.ca for the most up-to-date version of this manual.

Acts and Regulations

References to the following Acts and regulations provide authority for the policies in this manual:

- *Student Financial Assistance Act* S.A. 2002, c. S-20.5
- *Foundational Learning Assistance Regulation* AR 148/2021

Chapter 1: Eligibility for Foundational Learning Assistance

Student Eligibility

Act.: s.12(1)

Students applying for Foundational Learning Assistance are required to meet certain eligibility requirements.

Citizenship and Immigration Status

Reg.: s. 5(4)(b)

To receive Foundational Learning Assistance, a student must be a:

- Canadian citizen, or
- Permanent resident within the meaning of the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (Government of Canada), or
- Protected person according to the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (Government of Canada) who is legally entitled to work and study in Canada.

A student must have a valid Social Insurance Number (SIN).

A protected person must provide documentation showing that their protected person status is valid at the start of their current study period. Protected persons will be required to provide copies of the following documentation:

- A temporary SIN card or confirmation of SIN letter.
- A Notice of Decision issued by the Immigration and Refugee Board or Verification of Status document issued by Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Protected persons status documents issued prior to January 2013 are acceptable.
- A valid study and work permit.

Age

Reg.:s.1(c)

Foundational Learning Assistance is intended for adults who are at least 18 years of age at the start of their studies. This criterion can be waived for individuals as young as 16 if they are:

- Pregnant, or
- Single with a dependent child (e.g. single parent), or
- Married or in a common law relationship, or
- Enrolled in a transitional vocational program.

If none of the above circumstances apply, special consideration may be granted if there is a significant breakdown in the student's relationship with their parents or guardians.

The following documentation is required:

- Information from the student that outlines the family circumstances, and
- Letter from a third-party professional (e.g. social worker, physician, psychologist, high school counsellor, etc.) confirming the circumstances.

Students approved for special consideration will be treated as meeting the age criterion for future applications.

Residency

Reg. : s.4(a)

To be eligible for Foundational Learning Assistance, a student must:

- Have an established Alberta addressor an established address within the city of Lloydminster, and
- Be in Alberta at the time of acceptance into the approved program of study.

Not Eligible for Foundational Learning Assistance

Reg.: s. 5(3)
Persons who are the responsibility of the criminal justice system are not eligible to receive Foundational Learning Assistance. These may include:

- Offenders in a provincial or federal correctional centre.
- Persons who because of the condition(s) of their sentence or release are unable to attend programs of study or work.
- Persons who because of the condition(s) of their sentence or release are unable to leave their residence in order to attend a program of study and/or work, e.g. on "house arrest".
- Persons legally required to reside in a half-way house or Community Residential Centre.
- Persons on day parole from a federal Correctional Centre or Community Residential Centre.
- Persons required by a Temporary Absence to reside in a halfway house or Community Residential Centre.

Full-time Status

Reg.: s. 1(d)
To be considered full time, a student must be registered in at least 60% of a full course load or attending classes minimally 20 hours per week.

For full-time status:

- Educational institutions determine what constitutes a full course load in their programs of study.
- No averaging of course loads between semesters is permitted (e.g., student cannot take 80% one semester and 40% in the following semester).

Part-time Status

To be considered part time, a student must be registered in less than 60% of a full course load.

Student with a Disability

Reg.: s. 1(f)
A student with a disability means a student who has chronic or permanent physical, mental, sensory, intellectual or learning impairment that may hinder the student's participation in a program of study or the labour market. A student with a disability may be approved to take a minimum of 40% of a full course load and still be considered full time if they provide documentation by a medical or other professional to their educational institution. Students with a disability taking less than 40% of a full course load are considered part time.

Employment Status for Full-time Students

Reg.: s. 5(1)(g)
Full-time students must be unemployed or working less than 20 hours per week to be eligible for Foundational Learning Assistance.

Based on student circumstances, leaving employment for further education may be an appropriate course of action to increase or sustain long-term employment and financial independence. If working 20 hours or more per week, a student must apply for a Counsel to Leave Employment and receive approval from Advanced Education before leaving their job to attend a program of study.

The following factors are considered in reviewing a Counsel to Leave Employment request:

- Review of employment history.
- Current income and ability to be self sufficient.

- Job history, i.e. entry level jobs, working multiple jobs.
- Sporadic attachment to the labour market.
- The program of study will support career progression; improve employment situation.
- The program of study will support labour market conditions and address skill shortages.

A student will receive a Counsel to Leave Employment Approval letter if approved.

Persons receiving Special Benefits through the Employment Insurance program are not eligible.

Labour Market Destined

Reg.: s.5(1)(f)
A student must have a clear, definable and realistic employment goal, and understand that employment is the primary outcome of their program of study, and be committed to seeking employment at the conclusion of their program of study.

Maximum Funded Months

Reg.: s. 5(2)
A student can receive full-time Foundational Learning Assistance up to a total of 50 months during their lifetime. Up to an additional 10 months may be approved in extenuating circumstances.

- A funded month counts as one day a student attends in their program of study.
- No funded months are counted when a student's program of study is cancelled by the educational institution or withdraws from the program prior to the start date
- When a student completes early, withdraws during the program of study or is terminated by the educational institution, the number of months attended will count as funded months.
- The first month of a study period that begins on or after the 15th day will count as a funded month.
- The final month of the study period will always be considered funded month.

Academic Progress

Reg.: s.10(b)
Students are to maintain academic progress. Academic progress is when students:

- Complete a program of study and advance to the next level, e.g. moves from Grade 9 to Grade 10, or Canadian Language Bench Mark 5 to 6.
- Complete a program of study and enroll in a different program of study that allows the student to further advance to becoming labour market attached, e.g. completes English as an additional language (EAL) and enrolls in academic upgrading.

Full-time students enrolled in courses at different levels within their program of study will be considered to have progressed if the majority of their courses are at the higher level, e.g. students who are taking three courses-two are at the grade 10 level and one at the grade 9 level-will be considered to be enrolled in grade 10.

Full time students may repeat courses as long as they are making acceptable progress. Part time may be considered as an alternative.

Attendance

Reg.: s.10(b)
Students must attend their program of study to receive to Foundational Learning Assistance. Foundational Learning Assistance will stop when a student:

- Does not meet the attendance policy of their educational institution;
- Withdraws from their program of study; or,
- Is withdrawn from program of study by their educational institution.

History of Withdraws

Students who are considered a "no show" by their educational institution or who withdrawal from two study periods after having received foundational financial assistance, are not eligible for full-time Foundational Learning Assistance for 12 months from the date of their second withdrawal. Part-time may be considered as an alternative.

This does not apply to students who cancel their enrollment prior to their study period's start date.

Additional Time to Complete a Program of Study

Students who require additional time to complete their program of study may access up to one additional month. This will occur immediately after the scheduled end date of their program of study.

Program Eligibility
Reg.:s. 5(1)(e)
Students are able to apply for Foundational Learning Assistance after their acceptance into an approved program of study. Indigenous Employment Partnerships programs are not eligible for Foundational Learning Assistance.

Foundational Learning

Reg.: s.1(e)(i)(ii)
Foundational learning programs build students foundational competencies to pursue further education or to find employment. The following may be approved foundational learning programs:

- Academic upgrading.
- Adult basic education.
- EAL.

Skills Development

Skills development programs provide full-time occupationally focused training opportunities enabling students to get a job and substantially improve their employment situation, or adapt to changing labour market conditions, or gain skills to sustain employment.

The following may be approved skills development programs:

- Integrated skills training.
- Integrated foundational pathways.
- Skills training.
- Pre-apprenticeship training.
- Transitional vocational program.

Skills development programs approved by the Ministry of Labour and Immigration will be considered approved by Advanced Education for the purposes of Foundational Learning Assistance.

Types of Funding
Reg.: ss. 3 and 8

Full time

Foundational Learning Assistance is provided to eligible students enrolled in full-time approved foundational learning or skills development programs of study. Full-time students may be eligible for the following:

- Standard educational costs.
- Additional educational expenses.
- Standard living costs.
- Monthly child care costs.
- Other exceptional expenses.

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Part time

Foundational Learning Assistance is issued to eligible students enrolled in part-time approved foundational learning program. Part-time students may be eligible for the following:

- Standard educational costs.
- Additional educational expenses.
- Monthly child care costs.
- Other exceptional expenses.

Financial Eligibility

Act.: s. 12(1)
Reg.: s. 5(1)(d) and (5)

Foundational Learning Assistance is based on household financial need using existing household resources, ensuring students are contributing to their education.

Demonstrate Financial Need (full time)

All students must demonstrate they have a financial need to access Foundational Learning Assistance. The following calculation will only occur at the first application of the student's study period.

(Standard living costs $+$ Other allowable costs $-$ Monthly household resources) $\times$ Number of months in study period $+$

Standard educational costs $=$ Financial need

- If the financial need is a positive amount, the student is eligible to receive their standard educational costs and will proceed to the monthly financial award calculation (see below).
- If the financial need is between zero and -$5,000, the student is eligible to receive their standard educational costs and additional educational expenses if required.
- If the financial need is less than -$5,000 the student is not eligible for Foundational Learning Assistance.
  Exception:
    - The following students will be eligible for their standard educational expenses and be eligible to receive additional educational expenses if they are required:
        - Full-time Indigenous students who are receiving monthly living allowance from their band.
        - Students receiving Employment Insurance benefits that exceed the allowable monthly living allowance.

Calculating Monthly Financial Award

The household monthly financial award calculation will occur if the initial Financial Need calculation resulted in a positive amount.

Standard living costs $+$ Other monthly allowable costs $-$ Monthly household resources $=$ Monthly financial award

- When the monthly household resources reduces the award, the monthly living allowance is provided before other allowable costs.
- When the monthly financial award calculation is between $0 and -$5000, the student is eligible to receive their standard educational costs and additional educational expenses if required.
- One-time payments for the additional education expense or other exceptional expenses will be calculated in the first month or in the subsequent month of when it was requested.

Treatment of Income

The following types of income will be used as a household resource in the calculation of financial need for full-time students. Students will report these types of income for themselves and/or their spouse or common-law partner

Exempt	Non Exempt	Partially Exempt
Student employment and self-employment earnings One time payments (examples include windfalls, gifts, awards, scholarships) Orphan Benefits First Nations payments resulting from per capita distribution for a specific claim (surrender) Government payments to assist with emergencies and/or natural disasters (examples include fires, floods and pandemics)	Rental property and room and board income Indigenous and First Nations Funds Pension income Child support (only exempt if the income is for a period of time the student was not receiving Foundational Learning Assistance) Alimony payments Government issued payments including: • Canada Pension Plan payments • Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped payments • Employment Insurance benefits • Workers Compensation Board funds	Spouse/Partner employment and self-employment earnings receive a 25% per month exemption on the net monthly earnings.

Demonstrate Financial Need (part time)

A part-time student and their spouse/partner must not have combined net incomes (from line 23600 of their most recent tax return) that exceed the yearly income threshold levels.

Household Unit Size	1	2	3	4	5	6	For each additional child add $5,000.
Net income	$35,000	$40,000	$45,000	$50,000	$55,000	$60,000	

Months Funded in a Study Period

The monthly financial award is based on household size and is intended to assist with monthly expenses. The start date and end date determine the months for which a student is eligible for Foundational Learning Assistance.

- The monthly financial award will only be issued for the first month of the study period when the start date is before the 15th of the month.
- The monthly financial award is issued the last month of the study period, regardless of where the end date falls within the month.

The start and end dates of a study period may be either the first and last day of a semester or the first and last day of the program of study. This may be a different date than the first or last day a student is in the classroom.

Allowable Costs

Act.: s.12(3)
Reg.: ss. 5(5)(b) and 8

Foundational Learning Assistance helps cover allowable educational and monthly living costs. This section describes the allowable costs used to determine the calculated financial need for Foundational Learning Assistance.

Standard Educational Costs

The actual amounts of tuition, mandatory fees, student association fees, books and supplies are allowable costs in calculating the student's financial need.

Educational institutions provides information on tuition, mandatory fees, student association fees, books, and supplies costs for each program of study.

Additional Educational Expense

Full-time and part-time students can request up to $525 per academic year (August 1 to July 31) to assist with their educational costs not provided through another benefit. Students who are only eligible for standard educational costs may also request this benefit. Requests can be incremental throughout the academic year to the maximum amount.

Examples of allowable expenses include computer hardware, software, internet access, testing fees, exam fees, work or school clothing not covered by monthly living allowance, e.g. work boots.

Documentation may be required.

Standard Living Costs

The standard monthly living allowance is to help cover the basic costs of a full-time student's food, clothing, personal needs, transportation, rent/mortgage and utility expenses. The monthly living allowance used to determine a full-time student's Foundational Learning Assistance is based on the student's household size.

2022-2023 Monthly Living Allowance Details

Household Composition	Monthly Living Allowance Rate
Single Adult	$1,039
Adult, 1 Child	$1,774
Adult, 2 Children	$1,882
Adult, 3 Children	$1,991
Adult, 4 Children	$2,099
Adult, 5 Children	$2,208
Adult, 6 Children	$2,316
Childless Couple	$1,556
Couple, 1 Child	$2,188
Couple, 2 Children	$2,296
Couple, 3 Children	$2,392
Couple, 4 Children	$2,501

Couple, 5 Children	$2,609
Couple, 6 Children	$2,717

For each additional child add $145.

Determining the Student's Family Size

To determine monthly living allowances, a full-time student's family size includes:

- The student
- The spouse or common-law partner of the student, and
- Any dependent children:
    - Children 17 years of age or younger residing with the student and for whom the student has legal responsibility.
    - 18 or 19 year old children who have been continuously attending high school and resides with the student and for whom the student has legal responsibility.

Foster Children
Students should not include foster children as dependents on their full-time or part-time Foundational Learning Assistance application.

Students should not list fostering income as a resource.

Common Law Definition
Common-law partner means an individual who is not married to the student but who:

- Has lived with that student in a conjugal relationship continuously for the past 12 months, or
- The students has declared to have a status equivalent to that of the student's common-law partner under any other law of Alberta or Canada, or
- Is living with that student in a conjugal relationship, where there are one or more children of the relationship by birth or adoption.

Spouse/Partner that Lives Outside Alberta
If a student has a spouse/partner that is living outside of Alberta, the student must still apply as a married or common-law student.

Spouse/Partner a Student
This refers to a situation when the student and their spouse/partner who reside in the same household both require Foundational Learning Assistance to attend their programs of study as full-time students.

Each spouse/partner is required to submit a separate Foundational Learning Assistance application documenting the total amount of expenses required by and resources available to the household as a whole. When the calculated need is determined, each will be assessed using half the income appropriate allowable costs and resources.

- When both spouses/partners are full-time students, employment income will not be used a resource as this is considered exempt income for a full-time student.

Monthly Child Care Costs

When completing the full-time or part-time Foundational Learning Assistance application, students should request the monthly amount they actually pay (parent portion after child care subsidy or the full amount if the student is not eligible for subsidy).

Child care costs are allowed for dependent children under the age of 12. Costs can be considered for dependent children 12 years of age or older who have a chronic or permanent disability. Documentation may be required.

	Full-time Student	Part-time Student

| Child Care Costs | Up to $725 per child per month without receipts | Up to $360 per child per month without receipts |
| | Up to $1,200 per child per month with receipts | Up to $600 per child per month with receipts |

Students are expected to access subsidized childcare where possible. To apply visit Child Care Subsidy.

Other Exceptional Expenses

Full-time students can request up to $1,500 per academic year (from August 1 to July 31) to assist with exceptional expenses not mentioned in this manual. Exceptional costs may be considered for students on an individual basis and documentation may be required.

Examples of other exceptional expenses are:

- Additional transportations costs.
- Health related costs: medical costs for students, spouse/partner and dependents not covered by insurance.
- Dental costs: dental work for student, spouse/partner and dependents not covered by other dental plans.
- Optical costs: optical expenses for student, spouse/partner and dependents not covered by insurance.
- Special diets.

Examples of non-allowable exceptional expenses:

- Credit card payments
- Car loan payments
- Utility bill payments past due
- Income tax payments
- Life insurance
- Tickets for fines or offences
- Extracurricular activities
- Veterinary costs (unless for an assistive pet)
- Child support arrears

Part-time students can request up to $100 per month to assist with the cost of transportation while attending a program of study.

Chapter 2: Application Process

Applying for Foundational Learning Assistance
Reg.: s. 4

MyAlberta Digital ID

The first step in applying online for Foundational Learning Assistance is to create an account through MyAlberta Digital ID. Students will need to verify their identity by:

- an Alberta's driver's licence, or
- an Alberta identification card.

A valid driver's licence or identification card is proof of residency in Alberta. Verification ensures the personal information provided belongs to the student.

Application Deadline

Students can apply up to 12 weeks prior to the start date of their program of study.

In exceptional circumstances, a student may apply for Foundational Learning Assistance any time during the program of study but must apply before the program of study's end date. Foundational Learning Assistance will be issued the month the application was received and not retroactive to the program of study's start date. Funding applications received on or after the 15th of the month will only be eligible for monthly living allowance the subsequent month.

Students applying after their program of study's end date are not eligible for Foundational Learning Assistance.

Application Details

A student may apply for more than one study period within the same educational institution on one application if:

- The study periods are for the same program of study; and
- There is no break between the study periods of 15 business days or more. Institutional breaks between semesters such as a winter break are an exception; and
- The study periods are within the lifetime maximum of 50 months.

A student will apply with a separate application if the following conditions apply:

- The student changes their program of study, or enrolls with a differenta different educational institution.
- The student has a break in their study period of three weeks or more.

Confirmation of Enrolment

A student requires a confirmation of enrollment from their educational institution prior to applying for Foundational Learning Assistance.

Funding Decision

When an application for Foundational Learning Assistance has been processed, a student will receive a funding decision to inform them of the outcome.

Students who have been approved for Foundational Learning Assistance will be notified of the following:

- Amount of Foundational Learning Assistance approved for the student's program of study
- Student's eligible monthly allowance
- Disbursement schedule
- Payment method
- Student responsibilities
- Review process

Students who have not been approved for Foundational Learning Assistance will be notified of the reason for being denied and of the request for review process.

Disbursements

Reg.: ss. 3 and 9
Students will receive their Foundational Learning Assistance two banking days prior to their start date. In subsequent months, payments will be made two banking days prior to the first of each month.

Tuition, student association fees, and mandatory fees are paid to the educational institution on behalf of the student. Books and supplies are paid directly to the student. Educational institutions with remote locations can request books and supplies payments on behalf of their students.

Length of Study Period	1st Payment	2nd Payment
1-6 months	First day of the study period	Not Applicable
7-9 months	First day of the study period	First day of the fifth month
10-11months	First day of the study period	First day of the sixth month
12 months	First day of the study period	First day of the seventh month

The preferred method of payment is by electronic funds transfer; however, students without a bank account can receive payment by cheque. A student may change their payment method if needed.

Classification: Public

Chapter 3: Ongoing Eligibility

Application Changes

Act.: s. 15(1)
Reg.: s. 10(a)

Changes to an application may occur based on information:

- Provided by a student whose circumstances have changed.
- Provided by an educational institution (e.g. amended enrollment).
- From a reassessment while verifying information provided on the student's application.

Changes may increase, decrease, or have no impact on the amount of Foundational Learning Assistance.

Change in Circumstances

A student must notify Advanced Education by the last day of their study period of a change to any of their application information. To report any changes, even if the change may not affect eligibility, a student will submit a Change in Circumstances.

A student will submit a Change in Circumstances when there is a change to:

- Attendance status (full time to part time)
- Study period dates
- Changing of educational institutions
- Withdraws from program or study
- Income
- Spousal income
- Marital status
- Number of dependents
- Allowable costs

When a student's household resources change on or after the 15th of the month, the change will be reflected in the following month's financial award.

Changes to Study Period Start and End Dates

Changes to study periods should rarely occur. Please note:

- If an educational institution makes an error entering the start and end date of the study period, no changes will be made if the start date falls before the 15th of the same month.
- If a program of study is delayed or postponed, a new application is required.
- A student with an emergency medical situation, or studies impacted by circumstances beyond their control, may extend the study period end date of their application beyond a normal study period end date if the educational institution has approved the extension. The extension will count towards the student's lifetime maximum of 50 months. Please contact the Contact Centre.

Reassessments

Reg.: ss. 11, 12 and 13(1)(b)

A student's change in circumstance can cause a reassessment of their eligibility for Foundational Learning Assistance. The reassessment may result in an overpayment or underpayment, or may have no effect on the student's eligibility.

Advanced Education can conduct program reassessments on students' applications as a part of program compliance. The reassessments can occur more than once on a student's application. Program reassessments review situations arising after student eligibility is approved, when the student is attending studies or after completion of studies.

Reassessments will:

- Verify accuracy of the student's declared information
- Verify the student's eligibility for Foundational Learning Assistance
- Determine if a student has received the correct amount of financial assistance
- Confirm the student has maintained eligibility for financial assistance

The outcome of a reassessment will be communicated to students in writing.

Chapter 4: Review

Review Process

Reg.: ss. 11 and 13

A student applying for Foundational Learning Assistance is informed of decisions affecting their eligibility. The information will provide details of the decision, the rationale supporting the decision and advise the student of their right to request a review of that decision, and the manner in which the request for review can be submitted. A request for review may be due to:

- Refusal of an application for Foundational Learning Assistance
- Not eligible for any or all allowable costs
- Program reassessment outcomes
- Overpayments
- Maximum funded months

The review process is a three-step process:

- Level 1: Request for reconsideration
- Level 2: Request for executive review
- Level 3: Request for Ministerial review

Level 1: Request for Reconsideration

A request for reconsideration must be received within 30 calendar days from the date of the original decision rendered. A student must provide the reason they are requesting reconsideration and any supporting documentation within the specified timeframe.

Level 2: Request for Executive Review

A request for executive review can occur when a student is not satisfied with their level 1 request for reconsideration decision. A request for executive review must be received within 30 calendar days of the request of reconsideration decision date.

Level 3: Request for Ministerial Review

A request for Ministerial review can occur when a student is not satisfied with their level 2 request for executive review decision. A request for Ministerial review must be received within 60 days of the request for executive decision date.

A decision made by the Minister at Level 3: Request for Ministerial review is final and is not subject to further review.

If a student submits a Level 3: Request for Ministerial review, prior to submitting level 1 and level 2 requests, the request for Ministerial review will precede once level 1 and level 2 reviews occur and a decision is rendered.

A request for review is considered abandoned if the student does not follow through on any requests made by Advanced Education during the process within 60 days of the request.

Chapter 5: Overpayments and Debts

Reg.: s. 14

Overpayments

An overpayment is created when the student receives Foundational Learning Assistance and was not eligible to receive it. An overpayment cannot exceed the Foundational Learning Assistance issued for that period.

A student with an overpayment is notified in writing of the amount owing, the reason for the overpayment and the right to have the decision reviewed. The student can request the decision to be reviewed through the Request for Review process.

Underpayments

A student who applied for Foundational Learning Assistance and did not receive the amount eligible to receive may be issued the eligible amount while attending their program of study or for up to 90 days after the student completes or withdraws from their program of study.

A student may choose to use their underpayment towards reducing an overpayment or debt if applicable.

Debts

A debt is money owing to the Government of Alberta and occurs when a student:

- Did not file a request for review for the overpayment and the time period to do so has lapsed;
- Filed a request for review and the reason for the overpayment is valid or part thereof;
- Abandons a request for review; and/or
- Is convicted of fraud (provided false and misleading information).

A student is subject to the debt recovery process to recover any Foundational Financial Assistance they are not entitled to receive. The student is responsible to repay the debt resulting from an overpayment to the Government of Alberta.

Debts can be recovered at a rate of 5% of the monthly financial award and will be deducted from their monthly disbursement. Students may wish to pay off debts in full.

The recovery rate may be reduced to between 1.5-3% of the monthly living allowance in case of student is experiencing financial hardship. The following circumstances will be considered when determining the recovery rate:

- Other available resources
- Unexpected expenses

A student may request to make a payment in full or payments at a higher recovery rate. The rate should not exceed 10% of the student's monthly financial award.

When a student completes their program of study, withdraws from their program of study, or moves from full-time to part-time status, and they still have outstanding debt, the student is responsible to repaying the amounts owing.

Debt Transfer to Service Alberta

If a student does not submit a new full-time application within 90 days from their last day attended from their last study period, any outstanding amounts will transfer over to Service Alberta. The student will be notified in writing that Service Alberta is now assuming the collection of the student debt on behalf of the Government of Alberta. A student is expected to repay any outstanding debts in full.

If a student submits a new full-time application within 90 days from their last day attended from their last study period, the debt recovery process will remain with Advanced Education.

Chapter 6: Designation for Foundational Learning Assistance

Designation of Educational Institution
Act.: ss. 8 and 11
Reg.: s. 7
To be eligible for Foundational Learning Assistance, an educational institution must be designated. This means the educational institution has met the requirements set by the Minister. The requirements for educational institutions include:

- Maintaining any licensing, certification or accreditation required for the educational institution to deliver the program of study
- Providing security in a form and amount and subject to any terms
- Entering into a Designation Agreement that addresses any matter(s) necessary or appropriate for the proper administration of the program of study.

Once an educational institution completes the designation successfully, a Designation Agreement is signed by the educational institution and Advanced Education. The agreement addresses any matter(s) necessary or appropriate for the proper administration of the program of study. These include:

- Compliance with legislation, regulations and/or policies governing foundational learning and skill development programs.
- Policies and procedures are in place for students to be informed of their rights and responsibilities while attending a program of study.
- Student records securely maintained and meet freedom of information and protection of privacy legislative requirements.
- Tuition refund policy for tuition, mandatory fees and student association fees and related processes.

Student Records

Educational institutions must ensure student records are securely maintained and meet freedom of information and protection of privacy legislation requirements. These records will be subject to monitoring and must contain the following information:

- Student attendance records.
- Student progress records.
- Information related to a student moving from full time to part time.
- Tuition refund records.
- Other information that has been used to inform decisions.

Designation of Program of Study
Reg.: s. 6
To be eligible for Foundational Learning Assistance, a program of study must be approved. Program approval ensures that the program:

- Is foundational or skills development in nature.
- Has standard educational expenses that are similar to comparable programs of study.
- Is between 3 and 52 weeks in length.
- Leads to a student attending further education or training or to find employment in a related occupation.
- Meets the established outcomes for the program of study.
- Addresses a labour market need or skills shortage.

Foundational Learning Programs
Foundational learning programs provide students the foundational competencies to pursue further education, training, or employment. Program elements include:

- Academic upgrading
- Adult basic education
- EAL

Programs of study may include a work experience component if the following conditions are met:

- Participating employers must not receive any compensation from educational institution's for providing work experience opportunities for students.
- The educational institution must ensure the employers' comply with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* and other labour-related codes and regulations.
- Students must comply with work place requirements related to Occupational Health and Safety codes and regulations, and other employer requirements.

Academic Upgrading

Academic upgrading provides students the opportunity to develop academic competencies at the grade 10-12 educational level. Academic upgrading can be any one of the following:

- Academic upgrading programs, including college preparation, must be taught at the grade 10-12 level in accordance with Alberta Education's curriculum or equivalency. This will ensure the programs provide a bridge for adults from a variety of academic backgrounds, to gain prerequisite entrance requirements needed for post-secondary career study.
    - Equivalency courses must be accepted by post-secondary institutions in accordance with the Alberta Council for Admissions and Transfers' agreement.
- General educational development (GED) programs at the grade 10-12 level satisfy minimum academic requirements of a high school education and, if approved by the Government of Alberta, may be considered under academic upgrading.
- University and College entrance programs (UCEP) are intensive one-year programs that enable students to achieve the necessary matriculation course equivalents for admission to Alberta post-secondary institutions under the non-matriculated applicant requirements.
- Technical entrance preparation programs are intensive upgrading programs designed to provide entrance requirements for programs at one of Alberta's technical institutes. Programs are designed from the point of view of practical application.

Training may also include one supervised, for-credit work experience per grade level.

A single occupational training or post-secondary course may be considered in the last term as one of the three courses the student is enrolled in if all the following conditions apply:

- The course is in the last study period of the student's upgrading.
- The student has met the academic prerequisites in their upgrading for the course or program.
- The course is a component of further training or employment. If the course is work experience, it must lead to employment.
- Successful completion of the course accelerates or assists students to reach their training or employment goals sooner.
- The overall costs to the Government of Alberta are reduced as the length of support to the student will be less in the long term.

All programs included in the academic upgrading program element must result in a recognized credential and be offered by a recognized public institution or a designated educational institution. A recognized credential is a credential that is recognized by both the issuing institution and by other receiving institutions. The Alberta Transfer Guide identifies transfer agreements for academic upgrading programs and courses among post-secondary institutions in Alberta.

Adult Basic Education

These programs of study provide students with foundational skills that are used for making decisions, learning, and participating in everyday life. Adult basic education programs must include at least one of the following program components:

- Literacy and numeracy (grades 1-6)
- Adult basic education (grades 7-9)

Literacy and numeracy (grades 1-6), and adult basic education (grades 7-9) training must result in a grade level that is recognized by Alberta Education.

Literacy and numeracy and adult basic education courses must be in accordance with Alberta Education's curriculum. Equivalency courses must be transferable to further education and training at other educational institutions.

Literacy and numeracy and adult basic education courses must not be used to enhance a student's EAL level.

One work experience course may be included as a part of adult basic education programs per study period.

Adult basic education programs must also meet the following criterion:

- Must result in a recognized certificate of completion. The student must be supported to develop competencies up to and including the grade 9 levels in order to pursue further education and/or achieve sustainable employment.

English as an Additional Language

EAL programs must include all four language competency areas (listening, writing, speaking and reading) and must be part of the curriculum at the [Canadian Language Benchmark](#) of level 4 or higher. The minimum standard of the required competencies are:

- Listening: Understand some simple formal and informal communication and understand conversations about familiar topics. The person speaking will be visible to the student, speak at a slow to normal rate while helping the student understand. The topic will also be familiar to the student.
- Writing: Write simple sentences and short, simple paragraphs with capital letters and simple punctuation. The topic and the person being written for is familiar to the students.
- Speaking: Communicate information about common everyday activities, experiences, needs and wants. Basic grammar is used to connect ideas. The person communicating with the student will sometimes help them and the student will sometimes use pictures and gestures.
- Reading: Understand short and simple paragraphs when the topic is familiar. There may be pictures, charts or diagrams to assist with comprehension. Sometimes, a dictionary in the student's first language may be used.

One work experience course may be included as part of an EAL program. Participating employers must not receive any compensation from an educational institution for providing work experience opportunities for students.

Skills Development Programs

Skills development programs provide full-time occupationally focused training opportunities enabling students to get a job and substantially improve their employment situation or adapt to changing labour market conditions or gain skills to sustain employment.

Program elements include:

- Integrated skills training
- Integrated foundational pathways
- Occupational training
- Pre-apprenticeship programs
- Transitional vocational programs

Integrated Skills Training

Integrated skills training is a program element under Skills Development. It is a competency-based occupation-related training program intended to provide students with a unique blend of occupation-related skills, work experience placement(s), employability and/or essential skills and applied academics and/or EAL.

The following components must be incorporated into all integrated skills training programs:

- Occupation-related skills;
- One or more work experience placement(s);
- Employability and/or essential skills;
- and when necessary:
  - Academic competencies relevant to the occupation/occupational outcome; and/or
  - Workplace EAL.

Integrated skills training cannot replace or duplicate certificate, diploma or degree programs that are delivered through the *Post Secondary Learning Act* or the *Private Vocational Training Act*.

Integrated Foundational Pathways

Integrated foundational pathways is a program element under skills development. The program targets students to improve their foundational and academic competencies in a supportive and interactive learning environment.

Integrated foundational pathways programs must include the following program components:

- **Essential skills**. Prepares students with the skills needed for learning and enabling people to evolve in their education, jobs and life. Examples of content include reading, writing, document use, numeracy, computer use, thinking, oral communication and working with others.
- **Academic components** in one or more of the following areas:
  - Basic skills provides literacy and numeracy skills at grade 1-6 levels and adult basic education at grade 7-9 levels.
  - Academic upgrading programs, including college preparation, must be taught at the grade 10-12 level in accordance with Alberta Education's curriculum or equivalency. This will ensure the programs provide a bridge for adults from a variety of academic backgrounds, to gain prerequisite entrance requirements needed for post-secondary career study.
  - Equivalency courses must be accepted by post-secondary institutions in accordance with Alberta Council for Admissions and Transfers Agreement.
  - EAL to gain the language skills to be proficient in speaking, reading, writing and listening in English.
- **Applied skills development.** Allows the student to learn and apply theoretical knowledge in practical situations: in the classroom, and/or on the job to build their experience and increase their effectiveness in real circumstances. This component can also include the first period technical training, or courses/training that lead to credit towards a post-secondary program. Safety courses are considered prerequisite.

The essential skills and academic components must make up a minimum of 50% of the IFP program.

Occupational Training

Occupational training is a program element under skills development. Occupation-specific training that provides students the skills required to secure employment.

Occupational training must include the following program components:

- A minimum of 80% occupation-specific training.
- Not include more than 20% of work experience.

Occupational training programs cannot duplicate a program of study already approved by Student Aid.

Occupational training programs must meet the following additional program requirements:

- Identify the industry-recognized credential that is required for a specific occupation.
- Must be between 3 and 12 weeks in length.

Pre-apprenticeship Training

Pre-apprenticeship is a program element under skills development. The program seeks to close the skills gap by creating access to training for individuals interested in apprenticeship education. Students will develop the necessary academic competencies and meet the minimum entrance requirements in apprenticeship education.

Pre-apprenticeship programs must include one of the following program components:

- The pre-apprenticeship fundamentals component must include:
  - Academic upgrading courses to attain the minimum entrance requirements to pursue apprenticeship education and/or EAL or English for academic purposes to facilitate language acquisition for entry into an apprenticeship program or employment.
  - Exposure to multiple trades and experience in a variety of areas; rotate through different trades and gain hands-on, practical knowledge through theory and on-the-job work experience.
  - Apprenticeship education entrance exam preparation.
- The pre-apprenticeship advanced component must include:
  - Emphasis on one principal trade. May include exposure to minimally one or more additional related secondary trades.
  - Academic upgrading to attain the minimum entrance requirements into the post-secondary system, including apprenticeship education so that the student can pursue their educational goals and/or EAL or English for academic purposes to facilitate language acquisition for entry into an apprenticeship program or employment.

- One work experience placement of minimally 8 weeks or two work experience placements of a maximum 12 weeks combined.
  - Work experience may earn credit towards advanced standing in an apprenticeship program based on work experience placement or classroom training.
  - Work experience placements must be trade appropriate and based on the trade requirements in order for those students choosing a pathway into apprenticeship program.
- Apprenticeship education entrance exam preparation.

Pre-apprenticeship programs must also meet the following criteria:

- Job readiness components according to the needs of the students (e.g.; job-search, job readiness, and interview skills).
- Relevant safety training, e.g. WHMIS, Workplace Health and Safety, First Aid. All safety training must take place prior to the work experience placement.

Transitional Vocational Programs

Transitional vocational Programs is a specialized program under skills development for students with a diagnosed developmental disability.

Transitional vocational programs must include the following program components:

- Training in employability skills, transferable occupational skills (such as keyboarding/computer skills, use of tools and equipment, safety, etc.), job search and retention skills and independent living/life skills.
- Work experience that is consistent with the student's interests and abilities, and their long-range career goals. Work experience in a competitive worksite is desired rather than in a sheltered work or school environment.

Students attending transitional vocational programs meet the following criteria:

- Have a diagnosed developmental disability by a medical professional.
- Experiencing limitation in adaptive skills and require assistance with communication, home living, community use, health and safety, leisure, self-care, social skills, self-direction, functional academics, and work.
- Have the ability to participate within a work setting without the assistance of a full time job coach.

Chapter 7: Monitoring and Reporting of Educational Institutions
Reg.: s.7

Monitoring is the deliberate and organized process of reviewing approved programs of study at a designated educational institution to ensure that programs of study are delivered in accordance with legislation, regulations, policies and the Designation Agreement.

Educational institutions involved in monitoring and reporting:

- Will receive a list of performance expectations that outline specific areas of improvement to move towards compliance.
- Will be responsible to submit a progress report to outline their progress.
- Advanced Education will review the progress report to determine if the educational institution is compliant with their obligations.

Advanced Education will create an action plan to identify any required corrective actions and associated timelines the educational institution must complete to address concerns found during the monitoring process.

Educational institutions that do not complete the corrective actions by the required timelines will be considered non-compliant and remedial action will be taken. The remedial action will be determined by Advanced Education and will be dependent on the severity of the non-compliance. Examples of remedial action include restricting the number of students the educational institution can accept, or de-designation a program of study or the educational institution.

Chapter 8: De-designation

Programs of Study
Reg.: s.6(3)

De-designation of a program of study is a remedial action that may occur when an educational institution is considered non-compliant. Examples of when de-designating a program of study may be applied as a remedial action include:

- Educational institution fails to charge comparable standard educational expenses to students enrolled in a program of study.
- Educational institution fails to meet the employment and educational outcomes of graduates of the program of study.
- Educational institution fails to meet any or all requirements of their Designation Agreement. Examples include:
  - Does not comply with legislation, regulations, policies governing foundational and skill development programs.
  - Does not secure qualified instructors to deliver the program of study.

De-designation of a program of study will also occur if a program has not been offered by the educational institution in two academic years (from August 1 to July 31).

Educational Institution
Reg.: s. 7(2)
De-designation of an educational institution is a remedial action that may occur when an educational institution is considered non-compliant. Examples of when de-designating an educational institution may be applied as a remedial action include:

- Educational institution does not maintain any licensing, certification or accreditation required for the program of study.
- Educational institution does not maintain security in the form of amount required.
- Educational institution misappropriates funds.
- Educational institution fails to meet any or all requirements of their Designation Agreement.

Review of Decision
The educational institution will receive written notification of the loss of its designation status for Foundational Learning Assistance and the effective date of de-designation. An educational institution may contact Advanced Education if they wish to request a review of the decision.

The request must be received within 60 days from the de-designation decision date.

Advanced Education will review all of the information submitted and may contact the educational institution if additional information is required.

The educational institution's owner or designated representative will be notified in writing of the de-designation status and be informed the decision is final.

Re-instatement of Designation
Reg.: ss. 6 and 7
Educational institutions with de-designation status may be re-designated after Advanced Education is satisfied the reason for de-designation has been rectified and their programs of study still meet approval.

Educational institutions may be subject to enhanced monitoring dependent on significance and severity of the reason for de-designation.

Educational institutions de-designated for fraudulent behavior and misappropriation of funds may not re-apply for designation. Their de-designation status is final.

Chapter 9: Performance Measures / Outcomes
Reg.: s. 6(1)(iii)(A)(B)
Primary measure of success is further education or employment of approved programs of study. The overall provincial standard for students who have been accepted into and started foundational and skill development programs, is 70% of students will be employed or have advanced to further education within 90 days of completing their program of study.

Program	Outcome / Output	Target
All	Successfully completed program	80%

Integrated skills training program	Employed in a related occupation or field of study	70%
Occupational training program	Employed in a related occupation or field of study	70%
Pre-apprenticeship training program	Employed in a related occupation or field of study	70%
	Registered as an apprentice	70%
	Employed as an apprentice	70%
Integrated foundational pathways program	Employed in a related occupation or field of study	70%
	Employed	70%
	Further education	70%
Transitional vocational program	Employed	70%