



# Policy & Procedures Student Handbook

March 2025

This policy and procedures handbook does not constitute a contract and is subject to change.

### ***Our Vision***

*Our program is a positive and challenging experience.*

*We prepare our graduates to be effective and  
successful massage therapists.*

### ***Our Promises***

*We will always treat our students with respect.*

*To meet our students need for excellent training, we will stay  
current with the highest national standards.*

*When we make decisions, our highest priority will always be  
the most positive outcome for our students.*

### ***The Land We Are On***

*The Calgary campus of Vicars School is located on Treaty 7 Territory.*

*This land is the traditional home of many First Nations, including the  
Tsuut'ina First Nation, Stoney Nakoda,  
and  
the nations of the Blackfoot Confederacy, and is a part of  
Métis Nation of Alberta Region 3.*

*The Edmonton campus of Vicars School is located on Treaty 6 Territory.  
This land is the traditional home of many First Nations, including Nehiyaw,  
Denesuliné, Stoney Nakoda, Anishinabae, and Niitsitapi peoples,  
and a part of the Métis Nation of Alberta Region 4.*

*Vicars School students, staff, and clients come from many different ethnic  
and cultural backgrounds. What brings us together is a shared dedication  
to healing and wellness. We believe that participating in the ongoing  
work of Truth and Reconciliation is an integral part of that mission.*

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# ***Admissions policies***

## **Admissions process**

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Admission to our program is based on a single question: Is this student likely to succeed?

We enroll students who are capable of succeeding in the Vicars program. We have a rigorous admissions process, which includes a personal interview. As well as meeting our academic and English-language proficiency prerequisites, prospective students are expected to demonstrate an aptitude for independent study and a mature approach to learning. Each application is considered individually. We reserve the right to deny admission to those who we feel would not succeed in our program.

Admissions decisions are never based on race, ethnicity, religious belief, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

## **Academic prerequisites**

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To be considered for admission, prospective students must meet one of the following minimum academic standards. Meeting these standards does not guarantee admission into the program.

- A high school diploma, having earned 50% or higher in Grade 12 English and a Grade 12 Science course (or non-Alberta equivalent), **OR**
- A high school Equivalency Diploma, with General Educational Development (GED) scores of 50 % or higher in English and Science (or non-Alberta equivalent), **OR**
- 50 credits towards a high school diploma, including 50% or higher in Grade 10 English and Grade 10 Math, and have been out of high school for at least two years, **OR**
- Successful completion of an aptitude test administered by the school and have been out of high school for at least two years.

## **Language proficiency requirements**

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Our program is delivered in English. All students must have the ability to:

- Speak and communicate in English
- Listen and understand in English
- Read and write in English

We will accept official transcripts from students who have completed a high school, college, or university program delivered entirely in English as evidence of their English skills.

## Admissions policies

For students who have not completed the required English-language education, we will also accept a wide range of English language exams as proof of proficiency. The following is a list of the English tests we recognize, along with the minimum scores we will accept:

- TOEFL iBT: overall score of 95; with a minimum score of 20 in each component
- IELTS Academic: 6 or higher
- CLB: Listening 8; Reading 8; Speaking 8; Writing 7

Our language proficiency standards are based on industry-best practices across Canada, and we have done our best to make sure that they're in line with the requirements of the major professional associations and regulatory colleges. However, there is no single consistent standard across the profession. Meeting our language requirements does not guarantee that students will meet the language standard of any specific association.

## Returning students

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Students who do not complete either year of the program may apply to return. Students will be evaluated based on the same criteria as new applicants and must receive re-admission approval from the Registrar.

Students who need to take a leave of absence from their studies must submit a written request to the registrar and discuss the terms and timelines for returning to the program.

When a student returns after a leave or defers entry into the second year, their academic performance before the withdrawal will be assessed and the student may be required to complete additional coursework or evaluations to meet current curriculum standards.

## Police information check

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Vicars School requires all potential students to submit a recent police information check that includes a Vulnerable Sectors Check. The document must show that they have no criminal record as an adult and that they have not received a record suspension or a pardon for a sex-crimes-related offense or have had any police involvement that would result in them being a risk to vulnerable persons, as defined by the issuing law enforcement agency.

The document must be issued by the law enforcement agency that has jurisdiction where the student lives. It must be received by the school before their first day of on-campus classes and must be dated no earlier than 6 months before the first day of on-campus instruction.

Student acceptance and registration into the program will be considered conditional until the school has received and approved their record check document.

## Admissions policies

Students are required to disclose any current charges or convictions; if they incur any charges or convictions after the date of issue of their submitted record check document, they are obliged to notify the school immediately. This obligation comes into force the day that they sign their contract with the school and applies even if they have not yet begun in-person classes. Notice must be given no more than 30 days after receiving any charges or convictions in their name. Failure to notify the school within 30 days will result in disciplinary action, which could include withdrawal from the program.

Vicars School reserves the right to withdraw students from the program based on changes to their criminal record status. The school's standard withdrawal and refund policy will apply.



## ***Student support***

### **Accommodation for students with disabilities**

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We believe that all our students deserve an equal opportunity to succeed, both in the program and once they enter the profession. Making sure that there is a level playing field for everyone sometimes means making adjustments or alternative arrangements for those with disabilities.

This is the principle of accommodation, and the goal is to allow students with disabilities to participate fully and equally in the educational experience.

Of course, there are limits to what accommodations we can make. Below is an excerpt from the interpretive bulletin on accommodation published by the Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission:

*“Accommodation does not require that post-secondary institutions lower academic or non-academic standards to accommodate students with disabilities [or] relieve the student of the responsibility to develop the essential skills and competencies expected of all students.”*

When a student discloses a disability or need for accommodation, the Registrar’s office will follow up with the next steps.

For more information on the school’s accommodation policies, please refer to “Academic Accommodation at Vicars: A Guide for students and Faculty”. This is available on our website or upon request from the Registrar’s Office.

### **Academic support**

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We encourage students to be proactive in their learning, stay connected while they're out of class, and seek help when they need it. Instructors are always available via the Student Information System (SIS), Moodle, and email.

The availability of supervised study halls, open campus hours, and other on-campus academic support sessions are subject to change.

### **Student resources**

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We encourage students to speak with faculty and staff at any time. In cases where additional support or resources are required outside of the scope of Vicars, the Student Support Resources folder in the Student Information System provides lists of external resources.

## **Vicars bursaries**

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The school has a budget for a limited number of student bursaries, which are granted based on need. They are not intended to replace other student funding, but to be available to meet unforeseen emergencies during the school year. In the event of financial hardship students are encouraged to reach out to the Registrar's Office to discuss options. Each case is considered individually.

# ***Academic policies & procedures***

## **Academics at Vicars School**

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What we teach, and how we teach, have been carefully designed to prepare students to be effective and knowledgeable massage therapists.

Our curriculum is based on Canada's inter-jurisdictional entry-to-practice standard, which was created by the Federation of Massage Therapy Regulatory Authorities of Canada. The "IJ standard" was designed to ensure that all therapists in Canada's regulated provinces meet a high standard of safety, effectiveness, client care, and academic knowledge.

Using the IJ standard and the Canadian Massage Therapy Council for Accreditation (CMTCA) as our guide, we have designed our learning materials to meet the needs of the mature, independent students who choose our school. To ensure that the education experience is consistent among all of our classes, all of our material is created centrally.

To complete the Vicars School of Massage Therapy program and graduate, students must achieve the minimum overall grades for first-year, second-year, Anatomy & Physiology, and Pathology. Students must also complete their supervised clinical experience; the school cannot issue a diploma until clinic requirements are completed and accepted as satisfactory.

## **First-year grades**

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To complete the first year and be able to continue into the second year, students must:

- achieve 75% on each final exam, **AND**
- achieve an overall grade of 75% in each course comprised of midterms, final exams, quizzes, and assignments, **AND**
- submit all quizzes and assignments, **AND**
- complete all first-year clinic hours, **AND**
- complete all first-year clinic objectives.

A detailed Breakdown of Marks for each course is available in the General section on Moodle.

## Second-year grades

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To complete the second year and graduate, students must:

- achieve 75% on each final exam, **AND**
- achieve an overall grade of 75% on coursework comprised of midterms, final exams, quizzes, and assignments, **AND**
- submit all quizzes and assignments, **AND**
- complete all second-year clinic hours, **AND**
- complete all second-year clinic objectives.

A detailed *Breakdown of Marks* for each course is available in the *General* section on Moodle.

## Anatomy & physiology grades

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The Anatomy and Physiology (A&P) section of our program is delivered and graded separately from the rest of the first and second year. The material is presented over the two years of the program and consists of online resources, assignments, quizzes, and a final written exam. The final exam is completed on campus.

To complete A&P and graduate, students must:

- achieve 60% on the final exam, **AND**
- achieve an overall grade of 60% including chapter and unit quizzes.

A detailed *Breakdown of Marks* for each course is available in the *General* section on Moodle.

## Pathology grades

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The Pathology section of our program is delivered and graded separately from the rest of the first and second year. The material is presented over the two years of the program and consists of online resources, assignments, quizzes, and a final written exam. The final exam is completed on campus.

To complete Pathology and graduate, students must:

- achieve 75% on the final exam, **AND**
- achieve an overall grade of 75% including assignments and quizzes.

A detailed *Breakdown of Marks* for each course is available in the *General* section on Moodle.

## Assignments

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All assignments must be completed and submitted to complete the first year and graduate from the program.

Assignments handed in late or incomplete will be given a grade of zero.

Late submission of the year two written case report and business plan will be subject to a percentage deduction and/or a fee for marking.

## Failed final exams or courses

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To complete first year, students must achieve a minimum of 75% on **each final exam** and maintain an **overall grade** of 75% in each course.

To complete second year, and graduate, students must achieve a minimum of 75% on **each final exam** and maintain an **overall grade** of 75% in each course.

A course includes all exams, assignments, and quizzes. Completion documents for each year will not be provided until all requirements have been met.

Multiple factors may contribute to a student's lack of success in a particular course or aspect of the program. If a student does not meet the passing requirements in any course, an action plan will be determined to support the student's success. This may include, but is not limited to, additional coursework, clinical hours, and exam rewrites. Vicars retains the authority to determine the most effective approach to support a student's success.

There is a fee associated with rewriting exams and course retakes.

## Reviewing or appealing a final exam

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**Review of a successful final exam.** There is no fee associated with this review. Students may have one opportunity to review the final exam with a faculty or staff member, by appointment. Appeals are not permitted for successful exam marks.

**Appealing a failed final exam mark.** There is a fee for appealing a mark. If a student wishes to appeal their failed final exam results, they must submit a written appeal using the forms provided in the Student Information System. The faculty will re-evaluate the exam and their decision will be final. If a rewrite is necessary, an additional fee will be charged. To prevent delays in graduation or progression to the second year, it is advisable to initiate the appeal process as soon as possible. The specific deadlines for appeals will be determined upon request, and Vicars will make every effort to expedite the process.

## Rescheduling an exam

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A fee is associated with rescheduling an exam. Rescheduling an exam is determined on a case-by-case basis and granted only in exceptional circumstances.

Students who must reschedule an exam are required to have a confirmed date within 7 business days of the initial exam date. The rescheduled date must not exceed 30 days beyond the initial exam date.

Rescheduling an exam as soon as possible will help to prevent academic delay.

## Supervised clinical experience

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*The Federation of Massage Therapy Regulatory Authorities of Canada (FOMTRAC) 2021 states (in part) that “registered massage therapists – RMTs – help people by maintaining, rehabilitating, and augmenting physical function, or by relieving pain and promoting health. RMTs do this by assessing soft tissue and body joints, and by providing treatment that includes manipulation, mobilization, and other manual methods. RMTs work with people of all ages and conditions. They work in clinics, hospitals, retirement homes, care facilities, and in private settings such as home-based clinics or spas.”*

This is the definition that is used to calculate the required supervised clinical experience hours. Details regarding direct and indirect student hours can be found in the Objectives Journal.

Vicars students must complete a **minimum of 330 direct hours** of supervised clinical experience over the two years of the program. This clinic time provides direct, hands-on experience under faculty guidance and is an essential part of a Vicars education. Students will be assessed on practice competencies, including professionalism and manual skills.

The supervised clinical experience is made up of three parts: in-class clinics (“relaxation clinics” in the first year and “special conditions clinics” in the second year), public clinics, and outreach.

Beginning in module 5 (midway through the first year), in-class clinics will be held on scheduled class days, while public clinic shifts are scheduled outside of classroom time on campus. Outreach events are scheduled off-campus. There will be a scheduled outreach during first- and second-year classes. There will also be an opportunity to volunteer for supervised outreach outside of classroom time. These vary from year to year.

Students are responsible for arranging their transportation to and from off-campus clinics. Examples of outreach events include seniors’ homes, brain injury centers, shelters, non-profit support groups, and sporting events.

Students will work with members of the public in all clinics. The goal is the practical application of the skills and knowledge that they have learned in class to date.

To begin the supervised clinical experience in module 5, students must demonstrate a basic competency in the material up to that point in the program. This will be determined by instructors based on midterm exam marks and in-class performance.

Students who do not meet this competency may be required to complete additional work or undergo further evaluation to ensure readiness for the clinical experience.

The public clinic aims to gain experience and gradually develop the scope of practice throughout the program. Therefore, clinic shifts should be spread out evenly (except for the break between school years). The clinic coordinator will work with students to create a schedule to balance individual student needs, those of other students, and school policies and priorities. The clinic coordinator has the final say on all clinic scheduling decisions.

There will be a faculty member at each clinic to provide mentorship and direction. Students are required to fully participate in the running of the clinic during their shifts.

Please note, the Canadian Massage Therapy Council for Accreditation (CMTCA) stipulates that clinical education must be supervised by Vicars faculty. Therefore, practical hours completed outside of the school's scheduled in-class, outreach and public clinics cannot be counted towards supervised clinical experience. We will make the supervised clinical experience schedule as flexible as possible to ensure students achieve the required hours. We expect that students will also be flexible in adjusting schedules to meet the requirements.

Students will be allowed to complete a limited number of second-year public clinic shifts during the break between the first and second year. Clinic extensions are granted only in exceptional circumstances and can only be authorized by the clinic coordinator.

More information about supervised clinical experience guidelines, and the full student therapist job description, can be found on Moodle and in the Objectives Journal.

## **Mandatory attendance**

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Students may not miss more than five full days within each school year. Students will be withdrawn from the program if they miss a total of more than five days. Any absence, regardless of reason, counts towards the five days.

It is important that students do not miss any of the presentations, discussions, or in-school practice sessions. Late arrivals and early departures are counted as partial absences. When a student arrives late or leaves early, it disrupts the entire class. During practical sessions, students take turns giving and receiving massages. A student leaving early or arriving late will negatively affect both students' education.

Attendance is recorded for each morning and afternoon session and is counted in quarter-day increments. Students who are 15 minutes late or less (or leave less than 15 minutes early), will

be given a quarter-day absence. Students who are more than 15 minutes late (or leave more than 15 minutes early) will be given a half-day absence.

Students who miss a shift of in-class supervised clinical experience (relaxation clinic, special conditions clinic, or an outreach event), will be given either a full- or half-day absence (at the instructor's discretion). Please see the section "Mandatory attendance at clinic" for details on making up missed in-class clinic shifts.

## **Mandatory class participation**

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Satisfactory participation during every class is essential to overall success in the program. During in-class practical sessions, students are expected to give and receive massage treatments and to participate in other hands-on learning activities as presented by instructors. Reasonable accommodation may be made in case of illness or injury. If we are not able to find a way to accommodate student circumstances, students will be asked to leave class. Please note that this absence will be recorded.

## **Mandatory attendance at clinic**

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Vicars students must complete a **minimum of 330 direct hours** of supervised clinical experience over the two years of the program. Satisfactory completion of all public and in-class clinics is mandatory to confirm that students have met our educational standards. Both the public and in-class clinics are intended to prepare students to work in the “real world”, and we expect students to display the same level of professionalism and dedication that would be expected in a private clinic environment. Just as in a private clinic, missing or arriving late for clinic shifts negatively affects clients, colleagues, and the therapist’s professional reputation.

Relaxation clinics and special conditions clinics (“in-class clinics”) are supervised clinical experience hours completed during class time. Any missed in-class clinic hours need to be made up to complete the supervised clinical experience portion of the program.

A missed in-class clinic can be made up by participating in a clinic with another class (if schedules permit and with prior permission from the school) or by completing an equivalent number of hours in a public clinic. Students who can make up the clinic with another class will have their absence cleared and receive credit for direct clinical hours. If the missed clinic is made up in the public clinic, students will receive credit for the clinical hours but will still be marked absent for the missed class day.

Students who cancel or miss a public clinic shift will be required to rebook that shift. Rebooking is made at the discretion of the campus clinic coordinator, and we cannot guarantee that replacement shifts will be available right away.



Students who need to miss a public clinic shift are required to find another student therapist to fill the shift. Missing or canceling scheduled clinic shifts without finding a replacement will be reflected in the supervised clinical experience professionalism grade.

Students are expected to be on-site and ready to work at the beginning of the shift and to stay until dismissed by the supervisor. Attendance will be recorded and reflected in the supervised clinical experience professionalism grade. Details regarding the professionalism grade, attendance, and direct hours tracking can be found in the Objectives Journal.

## **First aid & CPR**

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Students are required to obtain First Aid and CPR training through a provider of their choice before their first student clinic in Module 5. This certification must include an in-person demonstration of the application of AED (Automated External Defibrillator) for adults, children, and infants, as well as CPR techniques. Students must provide the school with a copy of their certificate and maintain up-to-date certification throughout the program.

## **Access to additional reference materials**

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Each campus has a small reference library of books from which students are free to sign out. Student resources on Moodle have a comprehensive list of current research articles. To gain access to a larger pool of massage-related textbooks and journals, we recommend that students apply for access to a larger public or university library system. Options include The Alberta Library (TAL) network, Mount Royal University, and MacEwan University. A TAL card allows students to borrow books from over 290 participating libraries across Alberta including public, university, college, and government libraries. Publicly funded university libraries will each have their policies for outside borrowers.

Useful links:

- The Alberta Library network <https://www.thealbertalibrary.ca/members.html> or contact any participating library
- Mount Royal University, Calgary <https://library.mtroyal.ca/>
- MacEwan University, Edmonton <https://library.macewan.ca/>

## **Electronic devices**

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Students must have access to a reliable computer and high-speed internet.

The use of electronic devices in the classroom is for schoolwork only.

Curriculum materials are available through Moodle, and students may bring a laptop to class to access these resources. Laptop use in class is at the discretion of each instructor.

Please note that Chromebooks, tablets, iPads, and mobile phones are not compatible with some of the online features of our course.

Recording devices are not permitted in the classroom or clinic.

Cell phones are not allowed in treatment areas and should have sound turned off while on campus. During class time and clinic, cell phones must be kept out of sight to avoid disruptions.

## **Student feedback**

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Students will have the opportunity to provide formal, anonymous feedback to their instructors and the school twice during the school year. Students who have questions, concerns, or suggestions are also encouraged to speak to their instructors or the administration at any time. Students may also submit a feedback form through the online Student Information System.

## **Transcripts, diplomas, and letters**

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At the end of each school year, students will receive several documents confirming their academic status. These documents will be issued following successful completion of all academic requirements.

Within five business days of completing the requirements for each year, students will receive a letter confirming the successful completion of the year. This can be used to obtain or confirm membership in a professional association. Letters confirming enrolment status may be requested at any time.

Upon successful completion of the second year, students will receive official final transcripts that include all first and second-year grades including supervised clinical experience grades. Transcripts and diplomas will be mailed, within four weeks of completing the program. Please note we do not issue first-year transcripts.

We are happy to email second-year transcripts directly to an association or professional college at no charge. Please contact the Registrar's office, [registrar@vicarsschool.com](mailto:registrar@vicarsschool.com) with association details to complete the request.

Replacement diplomas and additional printed copies of official transcripts are available upon request, for a fee.

Please note that completion documents (including first-year completion documents) will only be issued to students who are up to date with all tuition and fees.

# ***Conduct & professionalism***

## **Our values**

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We are committed to promoting diversity and inclusion in massage therapy and massage therapy education. We demonstrate these values through our policies (such as our codes of conduct and admissions policies) and actions (such as the creation of accessible learning platforms, incorporating diversity and inclusion discussions into our curriculum, and faculty and staff training).

## **Student code of conduct**

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Our Student Code of Conduct is a collection of ethical and behavioural guidelines that we expect our students to abide by when in class, in the clinic, and on any other occasion where they are representing the school.

Students will be provided with a copy of the Student Code of Conduct and can view it on the online Student Information System at any time.

## **Dress code**

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Students wear a uniform whenever they are in school, at the clinic, or outreach events. Massage therapy is a physical profession, and many practical considerations dictate what is and is not suitable to wear.

Please note that the school's dress code may be updated at any point. We will give students a reasonable amount of time to prepare for any changes.

The dress code for in-class work is a clean scrub top that may be any colour, pattern, or style, and plain loose-fitting athletic pants or scrub pants.

The dress code for supervised clinical experience is clean **black scrub top**, plain loose-fitting athletic pants or scrub pants, and a Vicars nametag.

Sweatpants and leggings are not permitted. Midriffs and shoulders must stay covered; the scrubs should fit loosely to allow a full range of movement in class. Clothing should not have prominent slogans or logos, including logos of other massage clinics. Shoes should be comfortable, closed-toe flats (such as sneakers) that have never been worn outdoors.

Scrubs must be clean and in good repair. We recommend bringing a spare set of clean scrubs in case of lotion spills, etc.

Students must also meet appropriate personal hygiene and presentation standards. During practical sessions and in the clinic, students must remove all jewelry from their hands and wrists. Nails are to be kept extremely short. Nail polish, gel/acrylic, and fake nails are not allowed for hygiene reasons and are required to be removed before class and clinic. Keep long hair tied back and avoid strong natural and artificial scents, including, food, perfumes and essential oils. Ensure that clothes, skin, and hair do not smell of cigarette smoke or body odor.

In addition to the standard dress code, students may be required to wear appropriate personal protective equipment. Because these requirements may change in accordance with standards of the massage therapy profession or public health guidelines, details are not included here. The school will continually update these requirements and keep students and faculty informed.

## **Using the Internet on campus**

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We offer free wireless internet to students and guests to use on their devices while they are on campus, via our public wireless network. The network password is posted in each classroom and is available by request. The school makes no guarantees about the speed or quality of the connection to the public network.

Each campus also has a private wireless network, which is available for staff and faculty. All school computers and laptops use this network. The password is not shared with students, clients, and other guests.

All internet activity that is conducted on the school's networks is also subject to the student, staff, and faculty codes of conduct.

Content filtering is enabled at the firewall level and is applied to all local and wireless networks throughout the school. By default, the restrictions include (but are not limited to) the categories of pornography, violence, racism, hate speech, gambling, drug use, terrorism, and illegal activity. Anyone using the school's networks (wireless, LAN) is subject to these content restrictions.

## ***School facilities & resources***

### **Linens**

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When a student is on the massage table for a demonstration or practicing massage in class, they will use their linens, including sheets and towels. Students must bring clean linens with them to every class.

The number and types of linens expected for public and in-class clinics will be discussed during clinic introduction in module 3.

### **Lotions**

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Students are responsible for bringing their massage gel to use for in-class work. Lotion bottles will be provided for use during public and in-class clinics.

Each first-year student will receive a bottle of gel. Refills and new bottles can be purchased from the office. The school does not supply loaner bottles.

The school uses specific lotions, gels, and oils that we have chosen for their quality and ingredients. For safety and hygiene reasons, do not use any other brands or types of products in class or at the clinic. If there are any issues with a product that we use, please discuss it with an instructor or staff member and we will attempt to find an alternative.

### **Parking**

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In both Edmonton and Calgary, we share our spots with many other businesses. As a courtesy to our neighbours and our clinic clients, please avoid the parking spots next to the building. Please choose spots in the middle and far end of the parking lots.

### **Building maintenance & esthetics**

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We are proud of our school and strive to create a positive learning environment within our physical surroundings. We believe that our students and staff deserve to learn and work in a beautiful space and have put a great deal of care into the design of our campuses. We appreciate everyone's assistance in keeping our campus beautiful and functional.

Students and visitors may not bring pets on campus, except for trained service animals.

The Alberta Tobacco Reduction Act prohibits both smoking and the use of e-cigarettes ("vaping") within 5m of a door, window, or air intake of a non-residential building.

# ***Tuition, expenses & funding***

## **Paying tuition and fees**

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Tuition and mandatory fees are due in full on the first day of class. Students who have chosen to follow our in-house tuition instalment plan, receive student aid funding, or have third-party sponsorship should review their acceptance package or contact the Registrar's Office for details.

In addition to tuition, students need to purchase textbooks and school and massage supplies. For a complete list of required textbooks and resources, as well as estimates of supplies and expenses, students should review their acceptance package and student contract or contact the Registrar's Office.

Students must be up to date with all payments (including tuition and fees) to write exams and to receive official documents.

## **Student loans and grants**

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All Vicars students can access full-time federal and provincial funding in the form of student loans and grants provided they meet the provincial eligibility and Canadian residency criteria. Students access government financial aid through the province or territory they are a resident in (not the province they are attending school in).

The application process and eligibility criteria vary by province. In Alberta, students can apply at any time, up to 30 days before their scheduled last class day, for full funding consideration for that academic year.

Third-party funding options may also be available to students in the form of loans, grants, bursaries, and scholarships. For more information or to book a one-on-one funding consultation, please contact the Registrar's Office.

## **Repaying student loans**

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A student loan is a formal agreement between the student and the lender and must be paid back once a student leaves school. Most students have two loans that need to be managed separately, a provincial loan (Alberta Student Loan) and a federal loan (Canada Student Loan). While attending school full-time, all student loans are interest-free and payment-free.

### **Alberta Student Loans:**

Interest is accrued monthly, and repayment will begin on an automatic monthly schedule 12 months after a student leaves school.

### **Canada Student Loans:**

No interest will be added to the balance of student loans and repayment will begin on an automatic monthly schedule 6 months after a student leaves school.

Students can adjust their repayment details, such as increase or decrease payment amount or adjust the payment frequency at any time to accommodate their life and financial situation.

There are financial consequences for students who default on their student loan payments. Students need to contact their lender(s) if they are unable to make a payment or are experiencing financial hardship, as they may be eligible to apply for the Repayment Assistance Program (RAP).

### **Students who have previous student loans**

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A student may need to notify Student Aid that they are enrolled in a full-time program to maintain the interest-free and non-repayment status of their existing Canada and provincial student loans.

Students applying for funding will have their enrolment confirmed by their province or territory and the educational institution. Their loans will automatically be in (or return to) interest-free and non-repayment status.

Students who are not applying for funding for their current academic year will need to notify their provincial and federal lenders of their enrolment to keep (or return) their loans to interest-free and non-repayment status.

To learn more about how previous student loans may affect loan eligibility or for more details on accessing student loans, please reach out to the Registrar's Office.

For more information, please contact:

- [Studentaid.alberta.ca](http://Studentaid.alberta.ca).
- Student Aid Alberta Service Centre toll-free 1-855-606-2096.
- National Student Loans Service Centre 1-888-815-4514.

### **Vicars grants**

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Vicars offers several grants available to students based on specific eligibility criteria. A student's eligibility is assessed before the first day of each academic year.

## ***Leaving the program without graduating***

### **When we withdraw a student from the program**

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Students will be automatically withdrawn from the program if they miss more than five full days of class within one school year.

During class, the clinic, or on any other occasion when students are representing the school, we expect a high degree of professionalism and ethical behaviour. Students will treat their clients, fellow students, and staff with respect, and will uphold the standards of the Student Code of Conduct.

Failure to meet these standards will result in disciplinary action, which may include being withdrawn from the program. Examples of actions that may lead to involuntary withdrawal include, but are not limited to cases of academic dishonesty (such as cheating on an exam or falsifying documentation); behavior that is disruptive, unprofessional, or interferes with the ability of other students to learn; or a breach of a clinic client or fellow student's confidentiality.

### **If a student withdraws voluntarily**

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The student contract is an agreement to complete the full two years of the program. The decision to break that contract and leave the program early should never be taken lightly. Students who are having difficulty with the program should speak to an instructor or a staff member as soon as possible. We may be able to help resolve the problem and help the students stay on track with their education.

Students who wish to withdraw from the program may do so by informing the registrar in writing. Email is sufficient. For their security, the email must come from the same address that we have on record. Students may also send a message from within the Student Information System.

Whether a student is paying out of pocket or has received student aid funding, withdrawing from the program will have financial implications. Please see the following sections of this handbook for details.

### **Financial implications of withdrawal**

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Vicars School is governed by Alberta's Private Vocational Training (PVT) Act and PVT Regulation, which set out rules for how licensed colleges can collect tuition and fees, and how refunds are calculated and repaid if a student withdraws from the program.

Students who change their mind within four business days of signing their student enrolment contract can cancel the contract with no penalty and we will refund their deposit. If they cancel



their contract after four business days have passed, but before classes begin, we will keep the deposit, but they will not owe any other tuition or fees.

The Alberta government requires us to calculate the tuition that is owed (or what refund we owe) as a percentage of **the full tuition for the two-year program**, based on what percentage of the two-year program has been completed.

We calculate refunds as follows:

- When 10% or less of the total two-year program has been provided, the student owes 25% of the total tuition;
- When more than 10% but 50% or less of the total two-year program has been provided, the student owes 60% of the total tuition;

When more than 50% of the total two-year program has been provided the student owes 100% of the total tuition.

If the amount that the student owes is more than they have already paid on the day that they withdraw, they are obligated to pay the school the difference. If the amount that they owe is less than what they have already paid, we will issue a refund. If the school owes them a refund, we will issue the funds to whomever originally paid the tuition.

These policies apply both to students who withdraw by choice, and to those who have been withdrawn from the program.

## **Repaying tuition after withdrawal**

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The student contract is a legally binding document, and students are required to pay any outstanding tuition if they withdraw. Failure to do so will negatively affect their credit rating and their future ability to borrow.

## **How withdrawals affect student aid**

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When a student withdraws or is required to withdraw from the program, the school is obligated to report to the student's loan providers within 15 calendar days of the date of withdrawal (within seven calendar days in December). We are required to state the date they last attended class and their reasons for withdrawal.

If a student does not attend class for five consecutive class days and has not notified the institution of their withdrawal, the school will consider that student as having withdrawn, effective the first day of absence, and is obligated to notify Student Aid.

If a student receives either federal or provincial grants or scholarships, these may be reassessed by Student Aid and converted into loans based on the date of withdrawal.

# ***Campus safety***

## **Fire safety and emergencies**

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To prepare students for a fire or other emergency (such as extreme weather or man-made threats), the school will stage several fire and emergency/lockdown drills throughout the school year.

In case of fire, please proceed calmly and quickly to the nearest exit.

In Edmonton, the fire exits are located at the main entrances at the front of the building, and the back doors. There are fire extinguishers in the kitchens, and next to the shoe racks at the front doors. In the event students are required to evacuate the building, they will muster in the middle of the front parking lot with their class.

In Calgary, the fire exits are located at the main door at the front of the building, and at the back of the building (past the music school, unit 102). There are fire extinguishers located by the front door in rooms 101 and 203 and the kitchen in room 103. In the event students are required to evacuate the building, they are to exit the classroom and proceed down the hall to the nearest exit. Never use the elevator, only the stairs. Students are to muster in the far southeast corner of the parking lot (the corner closest to the intersection at the bottom of the hill) with their class.

## **Medical emergencies**

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All members of the faculty are certified in first aid, including adult and child CPR and the use of AEDs. Basic first aid kits are located throughout the school, and each campus has an AED. Students who have severe allergies or other health conditions must alert the school. It is their responsibility to ensure any medications that they require are on hand, including emergency medications like an EpiPen.

## **Reporting**

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The school keeps a record of all safety incidents that result in threat or injury to anyone on campus or at official Vicars School events at an off-site location. Tracking safety incidents allows us to help reduce future risk.

Anyone who is involved in a safety incident must inform a faculty or staff member as soon as possible. They will be asked to complete an Incident Report or Health Incident Report.

Reporting and appropriate documentation are required immediately so campus administration can, when necessary, take appropriate steps to investigate and respond appropriately.

# ***Privacy & records management***

## **How we store information**

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Vicars is governed by the Alberta Personal Information Protection Act.

Information that we collect from students and prospective students is stored in a secure electronic database, which is located in secure off-site servers. Information about students who took the program before 2020-2021 may also be stored in paper files, which are stored in locked areas on campus.

## **Accessing student records**

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Our administrative staff has access to student records. Faculty and the clinic coordinator may have access to specific information in student records when necessary. When a student record contains particularly sensitive or private information, such as medical information, this information may be stored in a separate secure location to ensure that it is only accessed by those who need to see it.

Students can access their student records, including financial information, at any time using the online Student Information System.

## **Sharing information with people outside the school**

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By applying for student aid, students authorize us to work with that funding agency as required to ensure that their funding is processed correctly. From time to time, this requires us to share personal information with those agencies. This might include dates of the classes, addresses, etc.

At the end of each school year, we will release a list containing the names and diploma numbers of successful graduates, as well as students who have completed their first year and are enrolling in the second year. This list will be shared with Alberta's major professional associations (MTAA, NHPC, and CMMOTA). This is an essential security step to ensure these associations only provide membership benefits to qualified students and graduates.

If we are asked, we will acknowledge that a particular person is a student or staff member but will not give out any further information. Before we share additional information about a student, we would need to receive written consent.

Upon request, the school will formally communicate the nature, content, and requirements of our program to other post-secondary institutions or the regulatory colleges of other provinces. Students or alumni should apply for this service in writing (an email will do) outlining all

necessary documents and providing the full contact information for the institution requesting the material. The cost of this service will vary depending on the type of documentation required.

## **Sharing information with other students**

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All students are asked to share their basic contact information (email and phone number) on the campus contact list. This list is shared with other students and allows students to connect with their peers in other classes to arrange study groups, coordinate clinic shifts, and carpool. Students may opt out of this list. However, we recommend that students who are worried about sharing their information set up a separate email address specifically to share with their classmates.

## **Breaches of privacy**

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Vicars staff and faculty must collect and handle certain pieces of personal information belonging to students and clinic clients to do their jobs.

Students must also collect and handle certain pieces of personal information from the clients that they treat as part of their education.

Vicars takes our responsibility to protect this information very seriously.

Our electronic systems are hosted on secure servers and supported by a local IT company that takes steps daily to safeguard information. Our Student Information System also internally encrypts certain confidential information such as Social Insurance Numbers.

Students must abide by the Student Code of Conduct, Student Policy and Procedures Handbook, the standards of their professional association (if applicable), and Alberta privacy laws and regulations.

All faculty and staff access and manage student information through SharePoint, the Student Information System, Moodle and Jane.

Faculty must abide by the Faculty Code of Conduct, their employment contract, the standards of their professional association or College as applicable, and Alberta privacy laws and regulations.

Staff must abide by the Staff Code of Conduct, their employment contract, and Alberta privacy laws and regulations.

Any privacy breach must be reported to leadership immediately. Any breach of electronic systems will be directed to Vicars' IT company for resolution.

Failure to meet these standards will result in disciplinary action, including legal consequences. If the school becomes aware of a potential breach of privacy from a student or employee, we will take appropriate steps to investigate the incident.

Potential disciplinary actions include a written warning and a note placed in the individual's employee/student record, additional training or supervision, termination of their contract (for employees), or expulsion (for students). The severity of the disciplinary action will depend on the type of violation, the impact it has had on others, whether this is the first violation and other factors.

All disciplinary decisions will be documented and signed by all parties involved. Vicars will communicate the decision to affected individuals.

## ***Who should I ask?***

Sometimes it can be a bit confusing trying to figure out the best person to talk to about a request, question, or concern. For the most up-to-date staff listing, reference the *Who to Ask* document on Moodle.

When in doubt, ask any member of the faculty or administration or call the office in Edmonton or Calgary.