



Certification Handbook

DISCLAIMER

Certification does not constitute a license to practice and is not a substitute for compliance with government, agency or other requirements. SEDA and SIEDN cannot, and do not, guarantee, warrant, endorse or otherwise make representations with regard to an individual applicant or provincially certified professionals' performance. SEDA and SIEDN expressly disclaims any and all liability, costs or damages, including, but not limited to, direct, indirect or consequential damages that may result from the certification program or the actions of an individual certified under the program.



SASKATCHEWAN INDIGENOUS
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT *network*

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I. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Professional Community and Economic Developer of Saskatchewan (PCED.SK) certification emphasizes the importance of assessing practical competency rather than specific educational pathways. This is particularly important in the community and economic development sector due to the multi-disciplinary nature of the work. The absence of an accurate National Occupation Classification for the profession supports this perspective.

The designation will be inclusive to the field of practice relevant to the industry and its employers. This includes community development, business development and traditional economic development as well as any other related professional that may align with the model. The designation will be voluntary.

1.1 Certifying Body

The Saskatchewan Economic Development Alliance (SEDA) has operated successfully for over thirty years as the non-profit association for those engaged in community economic development throughout Saskatchewan. During those years, we have witnessed the evolution of economic development into what is now an inclusive process that encompasses a variety of activities performed both at the community and regional level and within a global arena. From community economic development and social enterprise to international trade and investment, SEDA works consistently to support practitioners and community leaders in all paths of economic development.

In establishing the PCED.SK, SEDA aims to:

- Fulfill its' mandate to assist communities in building economic capacity. Certification ensures that communities are served by professionals with a minimum standard of expertise and knowledge.
- Establish a standard for ongoing professional development in the industry.
- Enhance recognition for the community and development professional by establishing a baseline credential for employment of professionals in the community and economic development sectors.
- Work in harmony with existing certifying bodies nationally and internationally.

SEDA's certification policies and procedures are guided by ISO 17024, the international standard for Personnel Certification Bodies. SEDA will work towards ISO 17024 Accreditation to serve as recognition of our commitment to continual improvement and our ability to meet or exceed the industry standards for certification services.

As of August 4, 2017, SEDA and the Saskatchewan Indigenous Economic Development Network(SIEDN) have agreed to offer the PCED.SK in partnership with SEDA being the administrating body.

1.2 Why Certify?

Certification is a vehicle for community and economic development professionals to validate their skills and receive industry recognition by proving that they meet a benchmark level of training, experience, and continuing education.

Currently, there is no Canadian or Provincial legislation defining the practice of community and economic development or the qualifications of its practitioners; it is an unregulated profession. As a result, anyone may retain the services of a self-defined community or economic developer.

Achieving professional status – and the recognition and authority that comes with it – sends a message that users of community and economic development services should employ recognized members of the profession.

1.3 Professional Code of Ethics

Community and economic development practitioners must be dedicated to providing competent and ethical service to the communities they serve. A recognized code of ethics, adopted and adhered to by a profession, protects the public by requiring its members to perform their duties to the best of their abilities and within the dictates of prescribed conduct. This code of professional standards is designed to protect both the public and the professional by prohibiting acts which may jeopardize the credibility of the profession and the interest of the public.

All individuals certified under the Professional Community and Economic Developer of Saskatchewan Program must subscribe to the following Code of Ethics:

1. Carry out all activities in a manner which will maintain the good reputation of the profession and its ability to serve the public interest.
2. Ensure that the level of professional services they provide is competent and in keeping with the high level of standards set out by SEDA and SIEDN by the continuing study of the profession's developments and innovations. The practitioner will endeavor to perfect themselves in their chosen occupation to the best of their ability as an opportunity to serve our collective society.
3. Maintain the spirit of fairness in competition and help eradicate all forms of deception that violate that spirit.
4. Hold themselves free of any interest, influence or relationship in respect to any professional activity when dealing with clients which could impair professional judgment or objectivity or which, in the reasonable view of the observer, has that effect.
5. Keep in confidence the affairs of any client, colleague or organization and shall not disclose confidential information obtained in the course of professional activities. Nor shall a member in any way exploit information obtained in the course of duties to their own advantage.
6. Conduct their activities on a high ethical plane so that others emulating by example will help to raise the standards of conduct in industrial, business, and economic and community development.
7. Endeavor to continuously raise the standards of the profession by conducting and sharing research developments and methodology.
8. Treat all other Members with the respect and consideration due between professional colleagues.
9. To exemplify good citizenship in appreciation of the fact that the strength of the nation depends upon the caliber of its individual citizens.

Failure to comply with this Professional Code of Ethics as outlined above may result in the suspension or revocation of an individual's certification.

1.4 Professional Competencies

Four sets of professional competencies have been validated by Saskatchewan professionals and are the foundation for the program and assessment process.

1. PROFESSIONALISM
<i>Ethics and Trust</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates initiative and effective self-management skills. • Carries out all activities in a manner which will maintain the good reputation of the profession and its ability to serve the public interest. • Has the capacity to ethically assess policy, program and organizational decisions and situations. • Is fair, tactful, compassionate, respectful and consistent with principles of inclusion and diversity. • Exercises due diligence. • Holds themselves free of any interest, influence or relationship in respect to any professional activity when dealing with clients which could impair professional judgment or objectivity or which, in the reasonable view of the observer, has that effect. • Accepts the duty to keep in confidence the affairs of any client, colleague or organization and shall not disclose confidential information obtained in the course of professional activities. Nor shall a member in any way exploit information obtained in the course of duties to their own advantage. • Is familiar with and complies with all current legislation relevant to the work at hand.
<i>Professional Development</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses professional networks as a means of better serving the community and/or organization. • Takes personal responsibility for continuous self-learning and growth. • Applies new learning to operational activities. • Builds relationships across jurisdictions.
<i>Problem Solving</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses a systematic approach to problem-solving from problem identification to solution and reporting. • Evaluates alternatives in order to form recommendations. • Uses meaningful consultation with those affected by decision making.
<i>Integrative Approach</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balances the interests of individuals, groups, institutions, and communities. • Compiles technical knowledge from a variety of sources in creating integrative solutions to problems. • Makes decisions through a consultation process to build consensus. • Interacts within and across communities.
2. TECHNICAL SKILLS¹
<i>Planning</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies key steps, milestones, and critical systems that are needed for the success of business activities, processes, and operational plans • Contributes to the organization/community's strategic planning initiatives including marketing and citizen engagement.

¹ In order to be eligible to write the certification exam, individuals must illustrate that technical skills are being applied within the context of their current employment.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Translates the directives of the employer into appropriate economic development efforts and activities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopts a long-term perspective, especially when considering economic development trends and new services to provide.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fosters inter-jurisdictional relationships.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consults with communities and adapts plans to local circumstances.
<p><i>Economic Development Concepts</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understands the broad concepts, principles, and language associated with economic development.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a working knowledge of key concepts and tools.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gathers, interprets and uses evidence related to outcomes and impact.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critically analyses internal and external factors impacting communities and regions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stays abreast of trends, models, financing vehicles as they emerge in the industry.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies needs, assets, and opportunities using relevant information and evidence.
<p>3. LEADERSHIP</p>
<p><i>Team Leadership</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies common interests, clarifying differences and achieving consensus or compromise.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognizes differences of opinion, bringing them into the open for discussion and negotiating acceptable solutions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports team members in the achievement of organizational goals and objectives.
<p><i>Organizational and Strategic Leadership</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops strategic alliances and partnerships.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implements and manages change in the organization and/or community.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps communities identify a clear, motivating, challenging vision and direction.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puts processes in place to empower and engage communities in implementing their vision.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies and builds up community leaders.
<p>4. COMMUNICATIONS</p>
<p><i>Practical</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively communicates through verbal and written media.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates familiarity with a variety of communication tools, from online/digital to traditional, and tailors them to effectively reach intended audiences.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses computer technology and current software and social media.
<p><i>Strategic</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops and maintains positive networks and relationships with work-related groups and individuals.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understands the audience and their goals, objectives and motivations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is knowledgeable with respect to communications planning and media relations.

1.5 Rights and Privileges

The professional designation recognizes individuals who are fully qualified to work in the profession. Three specific elements are integral to the designation requirements: education, work experience and ongoing commitment to advancing professionalism.

A person who is certified by SEDA/SIEDN will receive an individually numbered certificate. That person may then use the designation “Professional Community and Economic Developer of Saskatchewan” or “PCED.SK” and/or designated wordmark in accordance with established policies, so long as he/she is in good standing with the association.

You are authorized to use the PCED.SK designation in block letters after your name on business cards, personal letterhead, resumes, websites and in your email signature.

A person who is not certified, who has let his/her certification expire, or is not in good dues standing may not use the designations Professional Community and Economic Developer of Saskatchewan” or “PCED.SK” or designated wordmark.

Wordmark

- The designated wordmark is available for use by certified professionals to promote their status and demonstrate their support for the program. The wordmark is provided in both color and black/white in both high and low-resolution jpg files.
- There are no restrictions on the location of the logo in stationary, business card or general communication vehicles. The logo design may not be altered but may be appropriately scaled in size for use.
- The logo can only be used to indicate a person is a PCED.SK or to promote the program itself. *The logo may not be used to indicate that an employer is certified or endorsed by SEDA or SIEDN.*



1.6 Suspension and Revocation of Certification

Certification may be revoked or suspended if an individual:

- A. Provides false information during the application process;
- B. Violates the Code of Ethics;
- C. Does not maintain the required CPE units; and/or
- D. Does not pay the required maintenance fee (if applicable).

1.7 Cancelling Certification

Individuals may cancel their certification at any time with a written and signed letter forwarded to the SEDA office. No refund for any fees associated with certification or membership, partial or full, will be provided to individuals cancelling their certification.

II CERTIFICATION PROCESS

2.1 Criteria

The provincial accreditation process is designed to assess a candidate's depth of experience and competence in the professional practice of community and economic development.

Certification is open to all professionals. However, additional certification and recertification fees apply to individuals carrying a non-voting SEDA membership as well as non-members of the association.

Candidates for accreditation must illustrate the following:

- a. A minimum of two years' experience in the field of community/economic development.
- b. Illustration of technical competencies applied in a current employment role.
- c. Attainment of a minimum of 40 certification points.
- d. Write and pass the certification examination with a minimum score of 75 percent.
- e. Subscribe to the Professional Code of Ethics (see Section 1.3).

a. Experience

Minimum 2 years' experience in the field of community and economic development. Employer contact information or record of employment must be provided as part of the application process. The employer must sign off on the application of technical competencies on the candidate's application (Refer to Certification Application Form).

b. Certification Points Criteria

A minimum of 40 points is required to apply to write the certification examination. Points are accumulated as follows:

SOURCE	NUMBER OF POINTS	CORROBORATING MATERIAL
SEDA/SIEDN Conferences	5 points each <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maximum of 20 points, attended in the past 4 years 	Proof of attendance provided by SEDA/SIEDN offices.
Provincial / Territorial / National/ International Association Conferences in relevant sectors such as tourism, community planning, recreation, chamber of commerce, heritage, FDI.	2 points each <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maximum 10 points, attended in the past 2 years 	Proof of attendance required. The candidate may request credit for conferences in additional sectors/disciplines by contacting the SEDA/SIEDN offices.
Relevant Undergraduate Degree (4 years)	10 points	Proof of completion required.
Relevant Graduate degree	5 points	Proof of completion required.
Relevant post-secondary diploma (2 year program)	5 points	Proof of completion required.
Relevant post-secondary certificate (1 year program)	3 points	Proof of completion required.

Introduction to Community and Economic Development Program (offered by SEDA and SIEDN) SEDA Workshops	5 points each <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to a maximum of 20 points 	Proof of attendance provided by the SEDA office.
Years of paid employment in the field	1 point per year <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum of two years successive experience required occurring within the past five years 	Employer contact information or record of employment required.

2.2 Application

Applications along with the \$210 (includes GST) exam fee must be received at the SEDA office in Saskatoon no later than one month prior to the exam sitting. Current application deadlines will be posted on the application form and the certification page at www.seda.sk.ca.

Application forms may be downloaded from the certification page at www.seda.sk.ca or by contacting the SEDA office. Any application submitted without the appropriate fee will not be processed and will be returned to the applicant. SEDA will advise each applicant in writing of his/her eligibility to sit for the examination.

Applications will be reviewed by the SEDA CEO according to criteria outlined within the Certification Policies. During the application review process, further information may be requested by the applicant. All such requests will be made in writing and all such applications will be identified as pending. Pending applications will not be processed until all requests for additional information are addressed to the satisfaction of the SEDA CEO.

NOTE: All applicants are notified via email on the status of the review at the close of the submission period. Our primary means of communication is through email so please add seda@seda.sk.ca to your personal email contact list.

- If Your Application is Approved*

All approved applicants will receive notification of their application review and instructions for taking the exam.

- If Your Application is Denied*

An application may be denied if it is incomplete, illegible, does not reflect the applicant’s most recent professional experience (i.e., the applicant has not worked in the past 12 months and/or the experience did not take place within the past five years), includes activities or experience not relevant to the meetings industry, or if supporting documentation is not included or is not in English. Careful attention to detail in completing the application process detailed in this document will help avoid these problems.

If your application is denied, SEDA will send notification via email indicating the sections of the application where the minimum requirements were not met. If you choose to reapply you must complete a new application, pay the application submission fee again and submit for the next application deadline.

2.3 Application Appeal Process

An applicant who has been notified of ineligibility has one (1) opportunity within fourteen (14) calendar days of the notice to appeal the application decision. This appeal process is the applicant's opportunity to clarify or provide further explanation of any items that were disallowed or found to not meet requirements by the reviewers.

Applicants may submit additional supporting information for consideration that supports what has already been submitted. Applicants, however, may not submit the information that was deemed missing from the first application. For instance, if you do not supply the required continuing education information, you will not be permitted to supply it with the appeal.

Appeals must be submitted in writing to the SEDA office and include a cover letter addressed to the Chair of the Certification and Ethics Committee (CEC). Appeals will be accepted via email: seea@seda.sk.ca.

Appeals are not allowed for applications judged ineligible due to missing pages or where information was misrepresented. Applications containing fraudulent or willfully misrepresented qualifications will result in the permanent disqualification of the applicant.

The parties in the appeal process are strictly limited to the applicant, SEDA/SIEDN staff and the CEC Committee. Applicants should refrain from engaging any other parties to write letters of support, make telephone calls or otherwise attempt to influence the appeal process.

2.4 Cancellations

Requests to cancel a certification and examination must be received no less than thirty (30) calendar days prior to the exam date. The application fee will be refunded in its entirety.

SEDA/SIEDN recognizes that serious issues may arise that could prevent a candidate from cancelling their certification application registration within the timeframe prescribed above. There are five (5) acceptable reasons for canceling an exam registration less than thirty (30) calendar days prior to the exam date:

- i) Serious illness or disabling injury, either you or an immediate family member.
- ii) Death in the immediate family (spouse, child, parent, etc.).
- iii) Court appearance or jury duty.
- iv) Civil disobedience or acts of terrorism/war.

A candidate who fails to appear for a scheduled exam appointment due to one of the reasons listed above must submit the reason for failing to appear in writing to SEDA within fourteen (14) calendar days following the scheduled exam date. The written request must be accompanied by meaningful documentation supporting the claim. Upon review of the written request and accompanying documentation, approved requests will be issued a refund less the applicable cancellation fee.

SEDA/SIEDN reserves the right to request further evidence to support the reason for failing to appear. If a reason is accepted, the candidate's exam fee will be refunded via the original method of payment less the applicable cancellation fee. The candidate must re-register and repay the full exam fee for a future exam that occurs within the candidate's remaining eligibility period.

2.5 Weather Emergencies

A scheduled exam appointment will be delayed or canceled only in emergencies. If severe weather or a natural disaster makes the testing center inaccessible or unsafe, the exam appointment will be cancelled. If a testing center has been affected, candidates will be contacted by SEDA via email and/or phone.

2.6 Rescheduling Fee

If the applicant is unable to take the scheduled examination, he/she may request to reschedule the examination. Applicants who request to reschedule an examination more than 30 days prior to the examination date may apply the examination fee to a future exam within the next two years, without incurring the rescheduling fee.

Requests to reschedule an examination less than 30 days' notice prior to an examination date are subject to a rescheduling fee of \$50.00. In some circumstances, this rescheduling fee may be waived. For consideration, petitions must be made in writing to SEDA and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

2.7 Payment of Fees

Certification Fees:

SEDA Members: \$200 + GST = \$210.00

Non-Members: \$550 + GST = \$577.50

Annual Maintenance of Certification (MOC) Fees:

SEDA Members: No recertification fee

Non-Members: \$350 + GST = \$367.50

NOTE: A penalty of \$50.00 will be charged if MOC documentation is not received by the annual deadline of June 30.

Examination Rescheduling Fees

\$50.00 per occasion.

Examination Rewrites

\$100.00 per occasion.

Acceptable forms of payment

MasterCard, Visa, check or cash. All fees must be paid in Canadian dollars; checks must be drawn on a Canadian bank.

III CERTIFICATION EXAM

The examination is designed to assess competence based on the four sets of approved professional competencies outlined in this manual (see Section 1.4).

Each time the exam is offered, it is a different exam comprised of a new selection of:

- 155 multiple choice questions
- 3 questions requiring narrative answers

These questions will be drawn from a database of exam questions that is enhanced annually. Because the exam is designed to measure competency rather than academic excellence, the exam is scored as either Pass or Fail. The exam is offered only in the English language and translation into other languages is not available.

Candidates must attain a 75% or greater grade. A maximum duration of three hours is allowed for the exam.

3.1 Preparing for the Exam

The exam evaluates the skills and knowledge of community and economic development professionals. It is not something for which a candidate can study or prepare for at the last minute.

Questions support the four sets of Professional Competencies (Section 1.4) and are drawn from the **SEDA Introduction to Community and Economic Development Program**. This four module series has been offered since 1996 and is now available via online delivery. Electronic copies of the four manuals will be made available to past participants of this program based on verification of enrollment.

We encourage candidates to begin preparing three to four months ahead and dedicate time each week. Forming a study group may also be advantageous.

Here are a few tips to consider prior to beginning the examination:

1. Allow yourself time to answer all questions.
2. Answer the questions you are sure of first, then go back and answer the remaining ones.
3. Answer all questions, even if you are unsure of the answer. An educated guess is better than no guess at all.
4. If you are unsure of an answer, your first instinct is usually the correct one.

3.2 ON EXAM DAY

Reporting Time

Exam times will be posted on the certification page of www.seda.sk.ca and included in the attendee's written acceptance of the application. Each examinee must provide a picture ID such as a driver's license.

You should arrive 30 minutes before the scheduled appointment to allow time for check-in procedures. If you will be driving, SEDA recommends identifying the exact exam location, the best way to get there and where to park prior to the day of the exam.

Exam Check-In Procedure

You will check in with SEDA/SIEDN representatives. You will be required to sign the exam logbook and you will also be required to sign the logbook when taking unscheduled breaks and upon completion of the exam. No one may enter the exam center without pre-registering.

Prohibited Materials

Candidates may not bring aids of any kind. Prohibited aids include:

- Dictionaries
- Books and papers of any kind
- Rulers
- Other materials deemed inappropriate by SEDA/SIEDN staff

Cellular phones, beepers, and other electronic devices must be turned off and secured in personal belongings. Food, beverages, and smoking are not permitted while taking the exam.

3.3 Exam Dates & Delivery Method

There will be a minimum of one pencil and paper exam date per year.

3.4 Exam Oversight and Grading

A minimum of one qualified proctor (must holding an Ec.d or PCED.SK) will manage all exam sittings. A minimum of two qualified examiners (must hold an Ec.d or PCED.SK) will be designated to mark specific blocks of questions on each exam. Each candidate will be notified immediately following marking of the examinations via email or text, with a formal letter to follow.

Unsuccessful candidates will be given the opportunity to discuss their results with a member of the Certification Exam Committee.

A candidate may appeal the results of a certification examination and/or its content by submitting a written appeal to the Certification Exam Committee within 10 business days of receiving the results of their examinations. The candidate should provide reasons why he/she disagrees with the examination result and/or examination content.

3.5 Special Considerations

Any individual who has a physical or cognitive impairment or limitation that prevents him/her from taking the exam under standard testing conditions may request special testing arrangements. The types of accommodations that may be provided include a person to read and/or mark the answer sheet, extended testing time, and/or a separate testing room.

A request for special accommodations must be submitted at the time of your exam registration. Due to the arrangements that must be made to accommodate such requests, no requests submitted to SEDA after the exam registration deadline can be accommodated.

When submitting an exam registration form, include a separate formal letter describing each of the following

- Candidate's disability or special need
- Adaptations the candidate is requesting
- Documentation from a physician or appropriate authority (e.g., psychologist, vocational specialist, etc.) is required to confirm the candidate's special needs and testing adaptation request.

After reviewing requests, SEDA will confirm any special arrangements. SEDA/SIEDN will make every effort to assist with special requests, except when it may alter the exam or results, or if it causes an undue burden on the association. There is no additional charge for special arrangements.

3.6 Examination Security & Confidentiality

The examination, answer sheets, worksheets and/or any other test or test-related materials remain the sole and exclusive property of SEDA/SIEDN. These materials are confidential and are not available for review by any person or agency for any reason.

Examination (pass/fail) results are confidential and will not be disclosed to anyone without candidate consent, unless directed by valid and lawful subpoena or court order. If a candidate would like examination results to be released to a third party, he/she must provide SEDA with a written request that specifically identifies the types of details (e.g., examination date, pass/fail status, etc.) about the examination results that the third-party person or organization should receive.

Candidates sitting the examination must sign an agreement not to discuss, debrief or disclose, in any manner, the specific content of examination questions and answers, to any individual.

Any such discussion would be a potential violation of the Certification Application/Renewal Agreement and thus, could affect the status of the credential, up to and including revocation of credential or permanent suspension from any SEDA/SIEDN credential examinations.

3.7 Retaking the Examination

An applicant who wishes to retake the exam due to cancellation or failure must notify SEDA in writing within the two (2) year period of notification of acceptance to sit for the examination.

Candidates requesting to rewrite the exam will be provided the following options:

1. A rewrite fee of \$100 plus gst will apply if the exam is rewritten within a one-year period.

2. Candidates must wait a minimum of 60 days before re-writing the exam. Rewrite timing and location is at the discretion of the Certification Exam Committee.
3. Candidates will be required to take the next examination offering, which may not necessarily contain the same questions as the examination which the candidate undertook previously.

An applicant who has not taken the examination during the 2-year period forfeits his/her eligibility acceptance and must reapply following new applicant procedures, which includes payment of a new application fee.

3.8 Exam Irregularities

All reported irregularities shall be referred to the CEC and shall follow the established disciplinary policies. The exam proctor(s) shall take action when there is a reasonable basis for concluding that a candidate has engaged in any of the following conduct:

- a. Using or attempting to use someone else to take the test.
- b. Failing to provide acceptable personal identification, as outlined on the preceding page.
- c. Having access to or using notes or any prohibited aid related to the test.
- d. Creating a disturbance (disruptive behavior in any form will not be tolerated; the examination proctor has sole discretion in determining whether specific conduct constitutes disruptive behavior).
- e. Communicating, in any manner, with another person other than the examination proctor about the test during the administration, including attempting to give or receive assistance.
- f. Attempting to remove scrap paper from the testing room, or tearing the scrap paper in any way.
- g. Eating or drinking in the testing room.
- h. Leaving the testing room or test center vicinity without permission.
- i. Removing or attempting to remove, examination-related material, or portions of a test in any format from the testing room.
- j. Engaging in any dishonest or unethical conduct, such as cheating.
- k. Taking a test for someone else, having access to test questions before the examination, or using notes or unauthorized aids.

Penalties for Engaging in Examination Irregularities

If the CEC reaches a final determination that the examinee engaged in improprieties, the CEC shall impose any or all of the following penalties in its discretion:

- a. The examinee will not be eligible to take the PCED.SK examination for at least two years from final determination.
- b. A failing grade or “NS-not scored” grade will be reported on all or some of the sections of the examination.
- c. The PCED.SK examination will not be scored or otherwise released.
- d. The report of improprieties will remain in the candidate file for at least five years from the date of the final determination. It will only be expunged at some later point if directed by the CEC.

- e. Additional penalties may be imposed at the discretion of the CEC if they deem it appropriate under the particular circumstance presented.

Repeat Offenses

If an examinee has received a final determination that he or she engaged in improprieties during an examination, and is found to engage in improprieties during a subsequent examination, he or she will be barred from re-taking the PCED.SK examination for a period of 10 years from the most recent final determination

3.9 Exam Appeals Process

A respondent may appeal a decision of the CEC finding a violation by submitting a written appeal to the SEDA Executive Committee within 10 business days of receiving the decision from the CEC. The respondent should provide reasons why the respondent disagrees with the decision and may need to provide additional information for further review.

The Executive Committee will review the appeal as well as the summary report submitted by the CEC. The Chair of the CEC will be engaged in the review process by the Executive Committee but will not participate in any vote taken. The Executive Committee may accept or modify the findings and/or sanction imposed on the respondent. A decision by the Executive Committee will be delivered within 5 business days and their decision will be considered final.

IV MAINTENANCE OF CERTIFICATION

The annual mandatory Maintenance of Certification (MOC) is designed to strengthen the value of the PCED.SK designation for the benefit of practitioners, their employers or clients and the public at large. The program demonstrates the accredited member's continuing training and professional development as well as leadership in community and economic development, ensuring the PCED.SK designation retains its relevancy and value.

Certified practitioners must record or keep track of qualifying activities from three broad categories (training, professional activities and community service). These activities carry a unit value that is described in the MOC program package which is available to download from the certification web page at www.seda.sk.ca.

Once a candidate has 15 units, they note them on the maintenance registration form and submit it to the SEDA office by the annual deadline. A minimum of 15 units is required every year. A penalty of \$50.00 will be levied for failure to file by the deadline.

Participation by non-practicing, retired designation holders is waived.

V CERTIFICATION AND ETHICS OVERSIGHT

5.1 Certification and Ethics Committee (CEC)

A sub-committee of the SEDA Board of Directors, the CEC is responsible for:

1. Carefully reviewing complaints, investigating allegations in regards to a breach of professional ethics and determining sanctions if the allegations are proved in accordance with the policies and procedures outlined in this manual.
2. Addressing challenges and appeals to the professional certification program, should they arise.
3. Overseeing the process, policies, and procedures used for the professional certification program and standards of professional ethics as set out within this manual.

Up to two SIEDN representatives may sit on the CEC.

In case of an actual or apparent conflict of interest, member(s) of the CEC will recuse themselves from participation in the review of the alleged violation(s). If a complaint is brought against a member of the CEC, she/he will not be a part of the review process. The SEDA President or the CEC Chair may appoint an additional SEDA or SIEDN board members to participate in the review and investigation process, on their discretion.

5.2 Certification Program Violations or Appeals

The process for reviewing and evaluating certification appeals or violations is the same process utilized for responding to Ethical Code Violations. Please refer to the following Section 5.3.

5.3 Ethical Code Violations

Review of alleged violations and sanctions will primarily be a peer-review process. Staff support is provided to the committee, as needed.

Filing an Alleged Ethical Violation

Alleged violations can be brought to the attention of SEDA or SIEDN via a number of avenues:

- a. Contacting a board member, the Board President, CEO or the CEC.
- b. Complaints may also be initiated by the CEC on its own initiative or at the request of the President or the CEO of SEDA or SIEDN based on information concerning a potential ethical violation that comes directly to their attention by other means.

The complaint should be submitted in writing with substantial written or electronic documentation to support the allegation. Providing as much documented proof of the alleged violation as possible is strongly encouraged. SEDA/SIEDN ensures the confidentiality of the review process as well as to keep the identity of the person submitting the complaint (the “complainant”) confidential.

Anonymous complaints can be filed; though anonymous testimony is not allowed if the case proceeds to the detailed review phase.

5.4 Review Process for Alleged Violation

Upon receiving a complaint, SEDA/SIEDN will engage in a multi-step process of reviewing the case and determining sanctions, if proved that the allegation(s) occurred. The respondent(s) and complainant(s) will be engaged in each step of the review process. The steps include:

Step I: Due Diligence – Information Review

Upon receiving a complaint, the SEDA CEO will ensure that sufficient information has been provided for the Certification and Ethics Committee (CEC) to review and investigate the case. The information review will be completed and materials provided to the CEC within 10 business days. If the committee determines the need for additional information or documentation in order to proceed, SEDA may contact the complainant(s) to provide additional information, before or during the review process by the CEC.

Step II: Initial Review of the Complaint

The CEC will conduct an initial review of the complaint and information in support of the allegations to determine:

- a) If sufficient information and details have been provided in order to merit a full review, and
- b) Whether the alleged conduct may be a violation of the Certification Program policies and/or Code of Ethics.

CONDITIONS MET: If the CEC determines that BOTH these conditions are met, the Chair of the CEC will inform the respondent(s) within 10 business days that a complaint has been submitted against the individual(s), provide a copy of the complaint, information on specific tenet(s) of the code that is determined by the CEC to be implicated, and that the CEC has decided to undertake a detailed review of the case. The respondent(s) will be allowed 10 business days to provide an initial response regarding the complaint and an additional 10 business days to provide documentation to the committee to respond to the complaint.

The detailed review will not be conducted if the respondent(s) admit(s) to the violation(s) in their initial response or if the CEC confirms that the respondent(s) have been found guilty in a court of law for the same conduct. The CEC will then determine sanction(s) based on all the information available. If the respondent(s) do not admit to the violation(s) in their initial response, the CEC will engage in further fact-finding.

CONDITIONS NOT MET: If either of the above conditions is not met, the CEC will communicate with the complainant(s) to advise them that based on the information provided, the CEC cannot determine that the Code of Ethics has been violated and the case will not be further reviewed unless they submit additional relevant information. The complainant(s) will have 10 business days to respond with additional information or the case will be closed.

Step III: Detailed Review of the Complaint

If required, the CEC will undertake a detailed review of the complaint and information provided by the complainant(s) and respondent(s). The review will be conducted in three parts, as described below.

1. Fact-Finding – the CEC will be responsible for investigating the complaint by reviewing the information presented by the complainant(s) and respondent(s), interviewing both parties and additional witnesses at their discretion, as well as gathering information through other independent means to establish whether an ethical violation happened. The CEC will maintain detailed notes of the investigation and may require respondent(s) and complainant(s) to sign statements prepared on the basis of those notes. The CEC will complete its investigation and prepare a report with its findings of fact and recommendations within 45 days. Extensions may be granted by the Chair of the CEC if requested.
2. The decision by CEC – If the CEC determines that a violation has occurred based on the information provided in the fact-finding report, they will decide the sanction(s). The CEC will inform the respondent(s) in writing of the violation(s) determined by the CEC and their intent to impose those sanction(s) and will provide a copy of the findings of fact which support the determination. The respondent(s) will also be advised that they have 10 business days to provide additional information that may alter the decision or the sanction(s) and/or request a hearing or the decision of the CEC will be final.

If additional information is submitted, the CEC will review the submission and inform the respondent(s) in writing whether it has determined to alter the decision or sanction(s). The respondent(s) will also be advised that they have 10 business days to request a hearing, or the decision of the CEC will be final. If a hearing is requested at either stage, the CEC will conduct the hearing in accordance with the procedures set in this manual.

3. Hearings – Upon receiving a request for a hearing from the respondent(s), the CEC will schedule a hearing date allowing at least 10 business days for both parties to assemble materials relevant to the complaint.

The fact-finding report, as well as signed statements(s) from the complainant(s) and respondent(s), will be admissible evidence for the hearing. All witnesses who testify may be questioned by the CEC. Testimony of witnesses may be taken in person or by telephone, provided that a speakerphone or other communications device permits the respondent(s), the CEC and all participants at the hearing to hear the testimony as it is given. Formal rules of evidence will not apply and the CEC may receive all evidence offered, in its discretion, and accord it such weight as the circumstances warrant.

Once the hearing is concluded, if the CEC determines that an ethical violation has occurred, it will decide on the appropriate level of sanction(s) pursuant to the level of violation. The decision of the CEC, including the reason(s) and the sanction(s) if a violation is found, will be communicated in writing to the respondent(s) within 5 business days of completion of the hearing. If a violation is found, the respondent(s) will also be advised that they have 10 business days to appeal.

5.5 Sanctions

No sanctions will go into effect until a decision of the CEC becomes final, including, if applicable, any appeal.

In determining the sanction(s) to be imposed, the following factors may be considered: the nature of the violation, prior violations by the respondent, the harm caused to individuals or the public interest, whether the violation was knowing and intentional, the respondent's professional or public responsibility, mitigating circumstances, and any other factors which bear upon the seriousness of the violation. The nature of sanctions will also consider whether the respondent(s) is/are certified (PCED.SK) or serve on the SEDA or SIEDN Board of Directors.

Sanctions may include public or private censure; suspension or termination of membership; revocation of the PCED.SK or removal from the Board of Directors.

Potential penalties for determination of certification exam irregularities may be referenced in Section 3.8.