



State Council of
Higher Education for Virginia

How to Always be Audit Ready

By Art Wells

Compliance Investigator

Private and Out-of-State Postsecondary Education (POPE)



Who are your Auditors?

- Susan Yale
 - susanyale@schev.edu
 - (804) 225-2620
- Art Wells
 - alfonsowells@schev.edu
 - (804) 786-1448

Compliance Audit – Who is audited?

All postsecondary schools in the Commonwealth of Virginia certified to operate by SCHEV

- ✓ Institutions of Higher Education
- ✓ Career Technical Schools



Compliance Audit – When are schools audited?

- Schools are randomly audited
- Or, a school can be audited for various reasons:
 - Complaints
 - Accreditation Issues
 - Department of Education Issues
 - Negative Publicity



Compliance Audit – Why are schools audited?

- Review, inspect and investigate compliance with:

- Statutory Authority:

- § 23-276.1 - § 23-276.1 6 of the Code of Virginia

- Title of Regulations: 8 VAC 40-31 et.seq.

Compliance Audit – What is the audit process?

Initiate

- SCHEV Develops Quarterly Audit Schedule
- Contacted by compliance investigator and reserve a visit date.

Prepare

- Receive an itinerary which outlines upcoming visit
- Send requested items for pre-audit to SCHEV
- Prepare materials & room for audit

Conduct

- Opening meeting
- Compliance Investigator conducts audit
- Closing meeting

Finalize

- Receive audit report
- Respond to report
- Receive closure letter



Audit Focus

- 8VAC40-31-140. Certification Criteria for Institutions of Higher Education.
- 8VAC40-31-150. Certification Criteria for Career-Technical Schools.
- 8VAC40-31-160. Certification Criteria for All Postsecondary Schools.

Audit Notification Process

- Letter and Itinerary mailed
- Date and Time
- Specific information requested
- E-mail
- Phone calls



Suggested Preparation

- ❖ Review Code and Regulations
- ❖ Contact other Locations
- ❖ Communicate with POPE



Audit Focus

- **Faculty Credentials**
 - Higher Education
 - Career/Technical School

- **Administrator Files**
 - Background
 - Work experience
 - Accomplishments

- **Student Files**
 - Financial
 - Academic
 - Admissions

8VAC40-31-140. Certification Criteria for Institutions of Higher Education.

If teaching in a terminal occupational or technical program leading to the A.A.S. or A.O.S. degree:

- ✓ If teaching general education courses, hold a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university, plus at least 18 graduate credit hours in the discipline being taught.
- ✓ If teaching occupational/technical courses, hold an associate degree from an accredited college or university in the discipline being taught or qualify for a faculty appointment by virtue of scholarly or professional achievements.



8VAC40-31-150. Certification Criteria for Career-Technical Schools.

Faculty, if teaching technical courses for career-technical programs not leading to a degree and not offered as degree credit, must:

- hold an associate degree from an accredited college or university in the discipline being taught, or
- possess a minimum of two years of technical/occupational experience in the area of teaching responsibility or a related area.
- hold the appropriate certificate or license in the field, if certification or licensure is required to work in the field.



Faculty Files 8 VAC 40-31 (D)

If teaching in a college-transfer program at the associate level:

- If teaching general education courses or in programs in the liberal arts and sciences, hold a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university, plus at least 18 graduate credit hours in the discipline being taught.
- If teaching occupational/technical courses, hold a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university in the discipline being taught or qualify by virtue of professional or scholarly achievement.
 - hold an associate degree from an accredited college or university in the discipline being taught, or
 - possess a minimum of two years of technical/occupational experience in the area of teaching responsibility or a related area.
 - hold the appropriate certificate or license in the field, if certification or licensure is required to work in the field.



Faculty Files 8 VAC 40-31 (D)

Faculty members who teach in programs at the baccalaureate level shall:

- Hold a master's degree in the discipline being taught or hold a master's degree in an area other than that being taught with at least 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline from an accredited college or university.
- Exception to academic preparation requirements for instructional faculty may be made in instances where substantial documentation of professional and scholarly achievements and/or demonstrated competences in the discipline can be shown. The institution must document and justify any such exception.
- If teaching in a program at the master's level or higher shall hold a doctoral or other terminal degree in the discipline being taught from an accredited college or university. Exception to academic preparation may be where substantial documentation of professional and scholarly achievements and/or demonstrated competences in the discipline can be shown. The institution must document and justify any such exception.





Faculty Credentials

- SCHEV Form
- Signed by Provost, Dean

Administrator Qualifications

Administrators must demonstrate their qualifications for their particular responsibilities

- through educational background
- relevant work experience
- record of accomplishments in previous educational work settings
- be of good reputation and character

Student Files

- Admission
 - Adhered by institution
- Refunds
 - Accrediting body
 - SCHEV Policy

SCHEV Refund Policy

- Schools that obligate the student for a quarter, semester, trimester or other period not exceeding 4-1/2 calendar months;
- Student who withdraws during the add/drop period shall be entitled to 100% refund;
- Withdraws during the first 25% is entitled to a refund of 50%;
- Withdraws after completing 25% but less than 50% is entitled to a refund of 25%;
- Withdraws after completing 50% of the period is not entitled to a refund.

SCHEV Refund Policy

Schools that obligates the student for the entire amount of tuition and fees for the entirety of a program or course:

- withdraws or is terminated during the first 25% is entitled to 75% of the cost of the program
- withdraws more than 25% but less than 50% is entitled to 50% of the cost of the program
- withdraws more than 50% but less than 75% is entitled to 25% of the cost of the program
- withdraws after completing more than 75% is not entitled to a refund

Refunds

A school may require the payment of a reasonable nonrefundable initial fee, not to exceed \$100, to cover expenses in connection with processing a student's enrollment, provided it retains a signed statement in which the parties acknowledge their understanding that the fee is nonrefundable. No other nonrefundable fees shall be allowed prior to enrollment.

Virginia regulations regarding refunds to students make no distinctions to a student's discontinuance from an institution's courses or classes in its requirement of having a refund policy. A student discontinuing attendance from a class, course, and school or considered no longer enrolled is entitled to applicable refunds using a consistent calculation method, that meet regulation requirements to determine the amounts to be refunded.

More on Refunds

- The date of the institution's determination that the student withdrew should be no later than 14 calendar days after the student's last date of attendance as determined by the institution from its attendance records
- The leave of absence does not exceed 180 days in any 12-month period

Online classes & Programs

- ✓ Program are comparable in content, faculty, and resources to residence
- ✓ include regular student-faculty interaction by computer, telephone, mail, and/or face-to-face meetings 40-31-160(L)
- ✓ The for each program or course must be clearly defined 40-31-160(L)(1)
- ✓ Instructional materials and technology methods must be appropriate to meet the stated objectives of the program or course [40-31-160(L)(2)];
- ✓ The school must provide faculty and student training and support services 40-31-160(L)(3)
- ✓ The school must provide for methods for timely interaction between students and faculty 40-31-160(L)(4)

Regulatory Issues

- ✓ A record of all financial transactions by and for each individual student and the Institution
- ✓ Fiscal records must be maintained for a minimum of three years after the student's last date of attendance.
- ✓ When tuition and fees are paid by the student in installments, a clear disclosure of truth-in-lending statement must be provided to and signed by the student.

Internship/Externship

- Monitored by an instructor of record during the entire period of the internship. 40-31-160(P)(1)(b)
- Not be used to provide labor or as replacement for a permanent employee. 40-31-160(P)(1)(c)
- Performed according to a specified schedule of time required for training including an expected completion date. 40-31-160(P)(d)
- The student may not be considered as a graduate or issued a graduation credential until the internship, externship, or completed.
40-31-160(P)(e)
- The school must clearly inform customers that the services are performed by students when receiving compensation for services provided by students as part of their education program by
 - posting a notice in plain view of the public; or
 - requiring students to wear nametags

Regulatory Issues

- Must have Credit Transfer Policy
 - **8VAC40-31-160(D)(1)**
- Must show “Certified to Operate by SCHEV”

For unaccredited and career-tech schools

- Number of students who report employment in field within 6 months & 1 year of graduation
 - **40-31-160 (B)(8)**



Regulatory Issues

School's procedures for handling complaints

40-31-160(F)(7)

- The established grievance process which shall indicate that the students may contact council staff to file a complaint about the school as a last resort.
40-31-160(D)(5)
- The written grievance policy must include a statement indicating the student will not be subject to unfair treatment or adverse actions by the school as a result of initiating a complaint proceeding.
- **40-31-160(D)(5)**



Regulatory Issues

- A plan to provide for interaction between students and faculty

40-31-140(E)(5)

- A written policy that instructional faculty is accessible to students at stated times outside regularly scheduled class hours

40-31-160(J)

Questions

