Real Estate Council Alberta

reca.ca

# Choosing a Course Provider

Are you starting out or progressing in your career in real estate, mortgage brokerage, property management or condominium management? Set yourself up for success by choosing the course provider that best suits your needs.

## Determine your learning preferences

You have unique learning needs and preferences. Take a minute to reflect on your past education experiences, both formal and informal.

- **Do you like or need a more flexible or structured schedule?** Take into consideration your ability to prioritize your education, and the impact of your current job and family obligations
- **Do you prefer individual or group learning environments?** You might prefer to be in a classroom setting or maybe you want the option to complete the course when you have time between other responsibilities. Course providers may offer courses virtually, in person, or self-directed online. Find the option that works best for you.
- **Do you need accommodations due to a condition or disability—**learning, physical, mental?
- **Do you have any other learning or access needs you should consider?**

## Research course providers and courses for your learning preferences

Once you've evaluated your learning preferences, keep them in mind as you review the available courses.

Look for the following:

- whether you will work through the course on your own or with a group of other prospective licensees
- if you are interested in learning and discussing with others, how the interactions with your fellow learners will take place (i.e., physical or virtual classroom vs. eLearning component with discussion periods (written or virtual discussions))
- how long you will have to complete the course
- size of the class
- required technology: computer, headphones, internet access
- available tutorials or administrative support
- the education experience of the course provider (do they have experience with regulatory education, similar education for other jurisdictions, etc.)

## Understand the course recognition process

Understanding RECA's course provider recognition process will help you determine how to research different course providers and courses before making a selection.

Recognized course providers are required to attest their courses cover required industry approved competencies for real estate, mortgage brokerage, property management, and condominium management licensees. RECA's recognition process does not regulate:

- course quality
- course assignments or assessments
- hours of instruction
- price or related fees (some courses may have fees unrelated to the course price)
- course completion time

If course quality or other course attributes are important to you, you need to ensure you research the course provider and the course to be able to protect yourself and make an informed decision that is right for you. Ensuring the course provider and course will provide you with the knowledge needed to pass the subsequent licensing examination is an important consideration.

## Research course quality

To assist prospective licensees, RECA will provide licensing exam pass rates and average passing grades by provider. This will enable you to determine how the various courses prepare learners to successfully complete the licensing exam. The exam is specifically designed to test whether learners have developed the competencies required to provide competent service and to protect the public.

As new courses are introduced the examination success rate and average exam grades will not be available until there is a history of students completing the new courses and challenging the exams.

You should be able to obtain much of the information below from the recognized course provider website. Recognized course providers are required to maintain websites that are transparent, complete, and enable learners to make informed decisions regarding selecting a course to meet their education goals. Other factors that determine how well a course prepares learners to successfully complete the exam and enable you to provide competent service and to protect the public are as follows:

1. **Review the course syllabus**— Does the order of topics make sense to you?
2. **Engagement opportunities to enable you to determine whether you have mastered the material** - Will you be able to demonstrate and measure your learning success through a variety of assignments and exams?
3. **Explore the available learner supports**—Does the course provider offer the necessary supports such as: tutors, extra resources, or add-on courses to expand required education or technical support? Do they offer accommodations for disabilities (if needed)? Is there a learner support team available?

4. **Research potential instructors**— This applies if you are considering classroom instructions or offerings that contain an instruction or discussion component. Do they have sufficient experience in the industry? How about experience as an adult learning instructor or discussion facilitator?
5. **Consider the feedback of previous learners** - Search reviews to determine quality instructors and course providers. Look for real testimonials from learners who go into detail about the quality of the course.
6. **Course duration -** Is the course length appropriate for the content that needs to be covered (is it shorter in terms of hours or days? Are they covering the required material?)
7. **Course Provider Guarantees -** Does the course provider offer a guarantee of success? What are the requirements that you will need to fulfil to act on the guarantee?
8. **Training environment facilities** – Whether in class or virtually, what resources or environments does the course provider offer? Are you able to tour the physical space or view the virtual platform before registering? Do digital environments require minimum IT resources from students (and are you able to meet these)?
9. **Quality and cost of resources** – Are print, technological, web, and support resources high quality, up to date, readily available (and at what hours), and included in the fees quoted?

Weigh these factors against course fees and other considerations. A careful analysis of course options and choosing the one that's right for you can help you successfully start your career.

## Is the course you're considering recognized by RECA?

To be eligible to write RECA's pre-licensing exam(s), you will need to take a corresponding recognized course.

Recognized course providers and courses are available at reca.ca. The courses are broken down by industry—real estate, mortgage, property management, and condominium management.