



Ontario College Quality Assurance Service

Service de l'assurance de la qualité des
collèges de l'Ontario

COLLEGE QUALITY ASSURANCE AUDIT PROCESS (CQAAP)

AUDIT REPORT

COLLÈGE BORÉAL

DATE OF SITE VISIT: May 26, 2020

PREPARATION DATE: July 16, 2020

SUBMISSION DATE: July 27, 2020

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APPROVAL OF THE AUDIT REPORT


This report represents the findings of the College Quality Assurance Audit Process for **Boréal College**.

This report has been prepared, reviewed, and accepted by all parties to the Audit, including the college President, members of the audit panel, and the Chair of the OCQAS Management Board. The signatures of the representative parties demonstrate their acceptance of the content of this report.




COLLEGE PRESIDENT

Signature: 	Date: October 22, 2020
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CHAIR- OCQAS MANAGEMENT BOARD

Signature: 	Date: November 17, 2020
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AUDIT PANEL MEMBERS

Chair Signature: 	Date: October 21, 2020
Panelist Signature: 	Date: October 21, 2020
Panelist Signature: 	Date: October 21, 2020



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Conclusions

General comments and summary of the findings of the audit panel.

After having held various meetings by teleconference and videoconference between the Audit team and the OCQAS representative, Diane Bergeron, the audit team ruled on its common assessment of the standards and considered all to have been met. The audit team also ruled on the requirements that required additional information from the College prior to the audit's site visit, or to be the subject of targeted questions for specific groups that will be met during the audit's site visit.

As mentioned in sections 3 a) and 1 a) in particular, the provided documentation, the exchanges, as well as the answers obtained to the questions asked during the site visit made it possible to confirm that 80% of the requirements that were considered "partially achieved" before the site visit were indeed achieved.

In general, after having read the Self-Evaluation Report and considering the submitted evidence documents and answers provided by the College to the audit's team questions before the site visit, the Audit team concluded that the documentation provided by the College was relevant and compliant with the requirements of the CQAAP.

Due to the confinement measures put in place by the Government of Ontario because of the COVID 19 pandemic, and by consequence the announcement by OCQAS to postpone the audit site visits scheduled for spring 2020, Boréal College asked OCQAS to assess the possibility of carrying out a "virtual" audit site visit of its college in order to avoid delaying the audit process and allow the College to engage in the implementation of its new Strategic Plan (2020 -2025) which was developed based on the conclusions of its own 2019 self-evaluation exercise.

Once Boréal College had accepted OCQAS' required conditions for conducting virtual site visits, OCQAS, the audit team members and Boréal College agreed on specific dates and on a schedule for the planned virtual meetings. These meetings were held from Tuesday May 26 to Thursday May 28, 2020, via the Zoom videoconferencing system.

The use of the platform Zoom proved to be effective for holding the various group interviews, since each group had its own virtual conference room. However, it must be stated that the virtual approach remains an alternative solution that has its limits, as mentioned in section 2 a).

The audit site visit's concluding meeting was held in a very friendly atmosphere. All participants, including members of the College's Senior Management, OCQAS representatives and Audit team members, were clearly happy to see that the virtual experience went so well.



The virtual approach allowed productive, authentic and transparent exchanges which do not seem to have suffered too much from anticipated restraint expressed by the interviewees who knew that the virtual discussions were recorded, and it helped the audit team members to have a better and more informed understanding and appreciation of the specific reality in which Boréal College operates.

The College has demonstrated an undeniable concern for its quality assurance throughout the organization. The Self-Evaluation Report prepared by the College was very exhaustive, the quality of its evidence was very good and the conclusions reached by the College on its own degree of achievement of the six (6) CQAAP standards were well supported by the College's presented analysis.

Overall, the College has been able to demonstrate the effectiveness of the quality assurance mechanisms that it has developed and refined over the years.

During the concluding meeting, the audit team provided the College with a few indications of the direction of the conclusions that might appear in the final audit report, by presenting a few subjects that could be seen as "caveats", in congruence with the College's own findings stated in their Self-Evaluation Report.

To conclude, the audit team members noted several best practices implemented at Boréal College. They also supported many of the College's claims, like the initiatives aimed at correcting shortcomings or at further improving their quality assurance practices, as presented in the Self-Evaluation Report. Finally, they have issued two official recommendations.

2. Results

a. Audit Results

Standard	Result		
1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
3	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
5	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
6	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Met

Audit Decision: *(select one)*

- Mature Effort
- Organized Effort
- Formal Effort



STIPULATIONS

1. Commendations

Provide clear statements that articulate areas where the college has shown exemplary or leadership in the field of quality assurance and improvement. These are mechanisms that are especially good and may be worthy of emulation by other colleges in the system.

Boréal College provides a bold, continuous and recognized leadership in all spheres of quality assurance since these concepts were introduced into the Ontario CAATs. Its excellent annual results in the KPI surveys have proven this for many years. But, as the College stated, this concern is part of the College's DNA which has been able to instill it in the whole community who, as many have mentioned, constitute the « big Boréal family ».

But the Audit team would like to bring forward certain best practices considered exemplary in terms of quality assurance at Boréal College.

To this end, we note the efforts, supported with various tools, to get student's feedback, and in particular the systematic class visits done by the College's Senior Management which has proven to be quite effective.

The audit team also wants to highlight the care demonstrated by the College to encourage the professional development of its teaching body and of its SAE professionals by inserting specific clauses in their employment contracts to this end, and the consideration taken to put these requirements into the Standard Workload Formulas. Furthermore, the welcoming and integration programs as well as the professional training programs, and the encouragement given to do instructional experimentation with the support of the CLIP are important elements that support these other measures in the path of continuous improvement.

In terms of the delivery done by the SAE, the rigorous statistic recording on the use of their services and the satisfaction expressed by students and graduates who used them is noteworthy; as is the demonstration of the efforts made to offer, in a creative way, access to relatively homogeneous services throughout its vast territory.

In terms of teaching practices, the Audit team greatly appreciated the presentations which demonstrated academic coherence between the VLO, CLO and assessments, as well as the colorful conceptualization of its mapping tables which makes their consultation very efficient and user-friendly. The practices of sharing information, tools and support amongst teachers from various campuses through the use of resources such as SharePoint and BrightSpace are also valuable when it comes to harmonizing the quality of program delivery.

Finally, the audit team wishes to recognize exemplary leadership exercised by Boréal College in its role as an institution supporting the flourishing of the Franco Ontarian culture and community through the adoption and establishment of the D10 and D11 Policies related to the « Aménagement Linguistique » (translated as linguistic planning) and « Compétences



Culturelles » (translated as cultural skills). These exemplary practices are proof of the College's commitment to the sustainability of this community and of the importance to provide it with quality tools in order to live, work and contribute to the socio-economic development of the Ontario society in French and in English, as foreseen in its Mission, Vision and Motto revisited in 2019. Furthermore, they position the College favorably in anticipation of the implementation of the new "Strategic Mandate Agreements" that will bind the Government of Ontario and the CAATS and will be accompanied by "new performance indicators" that will measure the impacts of Colleges on their communities and have a more direct incidence on the College's funding, as evaluated from 2020 to 2025.

2. Affirmations

Provide clear statements that articulate areas where the college itself has found a weakness, identified the weakness, and intends to correct it (a plan of action has already been articulated). In effect, this is affirming the college's judgment and findings of its own self-study.

In its rigorous Self-Evaluation Report, Boréal College has issued a few observations regarding the services and/or practices that deserved special attention in order to continue to evolve in the path of continuous improvement and achieve the standards targeted by the CQAAP and by the College. These findings have, among other things, led it to identify concrete interventions in its new Strategic Plan (2020-2025).

The audit team wishes to recognize the diligence and openness demonstrated by the College in identifying sectors of activity that require specific actions. Recognition of the lack of robustness of certain quality assurance mechanisms and the need to address it is in itself a demanding exercise and was done with an exemplary openness, lucidity and organizational maturity which are to the College's credit.

This is why the audit team affirms, with Boréal College, the relevance of the following priorities that are present in the College's Self-Evaluation Report or in its new Strategic Plan.

The audit team encourages the Education sector to undertake, over the next year, its academic planning and the development of objectives that will enable it to achieve the expected results for the 2020-2025 period.

To this end, the audit team see favorably its confirmed intention within the Self-Evaluation Report to *"recognize the importance of updating its evaluation tools for the PLAR, the College wishes to improve the client experience related to the placement and equivalency assessments (...) to simplify the process, to personalize the student's progress, to ensure punctual and frequent follow-ups with the mature student and to push forward its integration and academic success."* (pp. 51-52, translated from its French content).



Furthermore, the audit team agrees with the College's intention to improve the following elements:

- the elaboration of a communication plan for its new directive, new procedure, templates and initiation guide for the Program Advisory Committee to increase awareness of staff involved (see the College's evaluation of standard 3, points 3).
- the establishment of measures to ensure that the stakeholders be informed of the modifications made to the provincial standards of the program they are associated with, as planned in the new directive and procedure related to the Program Advisory Committees, which provides a standardized template for the meeting agenda, including permanent topics (for example, quality assurance); and further formalize communications with the members of these committees (see evaluation of standard 3, point 4).

Furthermore, the audit team supports the College's initiative to ensure that the CLIP can access SharePoint to get to the documents and information related to the lifecycle of the programs, and that discussions with the IT Service Center continue in order to improve functionality (program evolution) and access; and, in parallel, that the CLIP pursue its reflection about its access to the documents and information, for example in read-only mode, to the benefit of all parties.

The audit team agrees with the College that there is room for improvement in identifying more formal ways to access information related to good practices as well as the improvement of teaching strategies and learning tools. The CLIP's proposed solution of creating a microsite to facilitate the sharing of information, best practices and resources seems promising in this regard (see evaluation of standard 4, point 2).

The same goes for the Corporate Service's initiative to create a page within its Intranet where would be located in one place all of the College's policies, directives and procedures, as well as the intention to launch during the year 2020 a new portal, accessible to all of its staff, where would be centralized all its administrative documents in one place, including the Metapolicy A.20, which sets the timetable for the revision of College documents (see evaluation of standard 5, point 1).

With regards to Human Resource Management, the audit team considers that the initiatives to implement an HR System, assess the efficiency of the new performance evaluation system for the support staff, to revisit this process for its management staff and for its teaching staff in the year 2020-2021, as well as the initiative to proceed to the communication and official launch of its new documents are considered appropriate and likely to improve the quality of HR management (see evaluation of standard 6, points 1 through 4).

Finally, the initiative consisting of elaborating, publishing and establishing directives to guide the budget decisional process is considered extremely welcomed by the audit team (see



evaluation of standard 6, point 6, as well as the following section for more details on the vision of the Audit team on this subject).

Although these last points were not necessarily the subjects of a formal declaration in Boréal College's Self-Evaluation Report, the audit team members wishes to acknowledge the continuous efforts of the College, and indeed continuously required, to standardize its services across its vast territory.

The Audit team has also noted with great interest, during the presentation of the PerfoSTRATEGIK tool, the firm intention to disseminate and generalize the use of this tool across all College's services.

Finally, it has been noted above that the Policies D10 and D11 related to the « Aménagement linguistique » and the « Compétences culturelles » constituted exemplary practices likely to have a positive impact on the quality of its programs and service delivery in a minority context. The audit team saw that there was still room for improvement regarding the valorization of the use of spoken language in the College's daily operations in order to “reflect the value it has in carrying out its Mission and updating its motto” for the perennity of its community, especially since, starting 2011, the “Linguistic Planning” has been the subject of a ministerial policy. In 2010, Boréal College, showing its leadership, had developed such an institutional policy, which was revised in 2016. As mentioned above, new performance indicators that will measure the impact of colleges on their communities and will have a more direct incidence on the college's funding, will be evaluated from 2020 to 2025 under the new “Strategic Mandate Agreements”.

3. Recommendations

Provide clear statements that articulate areas as needing improvement.

Recommendations may also be made in relation to areas of concern identified by the college in its self-study, and for which no plan of action has been articulated by the college.

Recommendation 1 (requirement 1.1):

In a continuous improvement perspective, the audit team issues the following recommendation:

That Boréal College ensures the members of the Board of Governor demonstrate their ability to proactively exercise their role in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of quality assurance mechanisms.

Recommendation 2 (requirement 3.3):

The College ensures that the programs (or its families) have active Program Advisory Committees. The audit team noted, as well as the College, that there remain challenges in terms of the organization, recruitment and renewal of French-speaking or bilingual members,



as well as of the holding of meetings in accordance with the requirements of the Ministry and of the College, due to the occasional absence of quorum.

The audit team issues the following recommendation:

That the College continues its efforts to recruit, train and renew its Program Advisory Committees so that they represent the needs of the community, as provided for in its 2020-2025 Strategic Plan.