



Quality Break

Welcome to the OCQAS Newsletter- your triannual peek behind the quality scenes at the OCQAS with quality news, updates, resources and more!

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COP decision on Accreditation (November 2016).



Introducing...

Shahin Akter is the Administrative Assistant brought on board to handle the care and upkeep of the APS and Program Description database. Shahin works at the OCQAS office two days a week.

Please send all requests and new program validations to belfer@ocqas.org.



Quality Webinars

OCQAS and Heads of Quality Management (HQM) Executive have coordinated their efforts to offer a series of webinars designed to showcase best practices identified through the College Quality Assurance Audit Process (CQAAP) as well as quality assurance matters including the good work being accomplished by the various HQM working groups.

Over the coming weeks both OCQAS and HQM will be identifying topics of interest and asking people to share their expertise and experiences. Stay tuned.



Program Standards: Elements of Performance

Author's note: The following article was created in response to questions I get about 'elements of performance'. The following information is not new; it only names things that already exist.

In the system there are two types of Provincial Program Standards:

Type A) those that respond to the expectations of a professional body* (linked to mandatory program accreditation, graduate certification/registration), a regulatory body or arising from a regulation; and Type B) those that respond to the expectations of i.e. industry, graduates and employers.

A) For those Provincial Program Standards that respond to Type A, expectations of professional bodies, the elements of performance embedded in the Vocational Learning Outcomes (VLOs) are binding (required). Therefore, the expectation is that students will meet both the VLOs and elements of performance.

B) For those Provincial Program Standards that respond to the expectation of stakeholders such as industry, graduates and employers, the elements of performance are examples of activities and assessments that exemplify the VLOs. Therefore, only those elements of performance relating to safety, health and security* are binding (required), the other elements of performance are not binding.

*These are currently not identified in the Standard but are mostly known to the faculty in the program.

For Type B, the current documentation does not allow the colleges to distinguish the difference between these two types (required vs examples).

It is our expectation that the Ministry develop a process to identify these in their documentation.



Responding to the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report: How can OCQAS help?

Authors: Liwana S. Bringelson, PhD
Michelle Cole, MA Ed

Introduction and Context

Since the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada released their final report in July 2015, Honouring the Truth Reconciling for the Future (2015) the people and institutions of Canada have been made aware of the 94 Calls to Action for reconciliation with Indigenous people of Canada.

The TRC Calls to Action are organized under the headings of Legacy (five subcategories) and Reconciliation (17 subcategories).

At their presentation at the 2016 Learning Outcomes: Evolution of Assessment symposium, Kahente Horn-Miller and Andrea Thompson from Carleton University provided a useful overview of the Calls to Action which relate directly to institutions of post-secondary education. These Calls to Action (62.ii and 63.iii) are relevant to post-secondary education, of all students:

62. We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments, in consultation and collaboration with Survivors, Aboriginal peoples, and educators, to:

....

- ii. Provide the necessary funding to post-secondary institutions to educate teachers on how to integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into classrooms.

and

63. We call upon the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada to maintain an annual commitment to Aboriginal education issues, including:

- iii. Building student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect.

(Calls to Action, 2015, page 7)

Responding to the TRC report through course learning outcomes and learning activities, provides a scope for engaging all students and all faculty in the process of reconciliation. Dr. Horn-Miller uses the phrase “reconciliation in action” to describe the active nature of reconciliation.

“It is a term I use to characterize what I do in and out of the classroom in terms of building bridges, encouraging critical engagement with what the students are learning, and the ‘doing’ of reconciliation. The Mohawk language is a living language. It is verb based and therefore words are not static. Their meaning connotes action. Take for example a chair. Our word for chair is Anitskwà:ra and it means to sit on something. It’s about the action, not the thing. That said, my use of the term reconciliation in action comes out of that understanding of the world that everything is in motion, living, alive as it were. So, to me, saying reconciliation in action gives it that living forward moving aspect.” (Horn-Miller, Personal communication, 22 November 2016).

In other words, reconciliation in action requires an on-going engagement and awareness building, as individuals, institutions and communities un-learn and re-learn in ways that are inclusive and respectful of Indigenous people in Canada.

This process of re-thinking the impact of residential schools in Canada, and the knowledge, skills and processes of Indigenous people and cultures can enhance the future of all Canadians and the world.

How Can OCQAS Support Ontario Colleges

Ontario colleges currently employ strategies, similar to universities, which may be addressing the TRC Calls to Action. The purpose of these initiatives may vary, including to support the success of Aboriginal students, or to indigenize the curriculum.

In order to support colleges, OCQAS will explore the implementation of a centralized process for gathering Program Vocational Learning Outcomes that support Indigenous knowledge, people and processes, as well as identifying best practices across the college system that support Indigenous students and/or respond to the TRC report and Calls to Action.



Audit reviews at colleges to continue

The colleges' Committee of Presidents voted last month to defer a decision until 2019 on whether the system should move to an accreditation model that would be designed to raise awareness of the high-quality standards followed by colleges.

The authors of this article, identify themselves as settlers who have been educated and who have worked in an educational system in colonized North America. As a step toward reconciliation in action, building relationships, and recognizing the history and impact of colonization, they acknowledge that we are each on our own journey, and are writing from land unceded from Indigenous people:

Liwana Bringelson, writing from lands of the Chippewa Nation (Treaty 18); Michelle Cole, writing from lands of the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation (Treaty 3). With gratitude for the ideas and words from Dr. Kahente Horn-Miller and Andy Thompson, for motivation and to Kahente for providing additional information and review of this article.

Accreditation Decision Deferred to 2019

The accreditation model would build on the quality assurance reviews facilitated by the Ontario College Quality Assurance Service (OCQAS) and would allow OCQAS to award a three-year or five-year accredited status to a college at the end of a successful audit. However, some colleges are concerned the process could become expensive and cumbersome. A number of colleges have participated in the revised audit process and the new time frame will allow all colleges to participate before a final decision regarding accreditation is made.