Quality Break

Welcome to the OCQAS Newsletter - your triannual peek behind the quality scenes at the OCQAS with quality news, updates, resources and more!
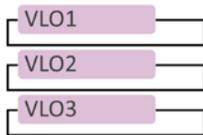
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•Transparency •Accountability •Collaboration •Growth •Potential
Ensuring quality and consistency across the post-secondary education system
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CVS Training

As of May 1st, 2018 CVS requires that anyone submitting Program Proposals have taken/completed the CVS training workshop.

In the last five months, we seen a great number of colleagues retire from the system and many new people come in.

In serving the new comers, we noticed that most of them were oriented on the QA processes of their college, but not on the details of submitting CVS program proposals.

This influx of new program staff at the colleges requires more feedback and on-the-go training for program applications.

Understandably, this is workload represents a significant increase in pressure on CVS.

Therefore, the OCQAS Management Board has stated that individuals responsible for preparing program applications for validation will be required to complete CVS training.

If you are a new Curriculum Developer for an Ontario Public College and/or are trying to get new programs validated, you don't need to struggle, schedule a CVS Training workshop with OCQAS: https://bit.ly/2relBt0 .

CVS Anytime/Anyplace

It is with great satisfaction that we announce the launch of our Credential Validation Service Anytime/Anywhere (CVSAA) online application (https://cvs.ocqas.org).

This application allows colleges to:
- Access Provincial Program Standards;
- Access Provincial Program Descriptions;
- Submit program applications;
- Receive feedback on program applications;
- Modify titles;

- Modify programs;
- Receive and access validation decision letters.

As of May 1st, 2018 all new program validations and title modifications will be submitted through the CVSAA application.
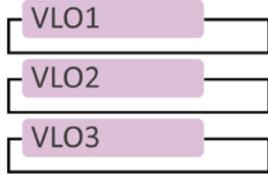
Program Descriptions

In the Ontario college system, there are about 1000 programs across four credentials: Ontario College Certificate, Diploma, Advanced Diploma and Graduate Certificate. Of these programs, approximately 75% are defined by program descriptions with the other 25% defined by provincial program standards.

In 1993, the Government of Ontario initiated program standards development with the following objectives:
- more consistency of college programming offered across the province;
- broader focus of college programs to ensure graduates have the skills (EES and Gen Ed) to be flexible and to continue to learn and adapt;
- public accountability for the quality and relevance of college programs.

Provincial *Program Standards* are developed, reviewed and approved by a unit of the Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board (PEQAB) called the Program Standards Unit (PSU). The process they follow to develop a standard is very comprehensive involving a range of stakeholders with a direct interest in the program area, including employers, employees, regulatory bodies, professional associations and program graduates working in the field, in addition to students, faculty and administrators at the colleges themselves, and universities or secondary schools when required.

When a Provincial *Program Standard* is released, we know that it identifies the essential learnings that all program graduates should achieved.

On the other hand, the responsibility for the development and review of *Program Descriptions* lays in the colleges. Colleges are responsible for ensuring that the program descriptions maintain their currency and relevance.

To this effect, The Minister's Binding Policy Directive requires that all programs have Program Advisory Committee's to advise the college on the essential learning that graduates of a program should achieve.

Through the College Quality Assurance Audit Process (CQAAP) we know that colleges have processes to review programs and collect input from Program Advisory Committees and other stakeholders to update the program vocational learning outcomes to keep them current and relevant.

Unfortunately, we do not have a process in place for the revised vocational learning outcomes to make it back to CVS to keep our database of *Program Descriptions* updated. Therefore, many times when a college needs to develop a new program they do not have access to a current *Program Description*.

Provincial *Program Standards* and *Program Descriptions* are the starting point for program development and review across the college system but working with old versions can be a little complex at times. Therefore, we want to invite all colleges to share their revised *Program Descriptions* through the CVSAA tool.

Please update your *Program Descriptions* in the CVSAA system – and help us keep the credentials from Ontario public colleges fresh and up-to-date!

Titling Protocols

Title Do's:

Consistency:
- Adopt the title of the Program Standard
- Consistent with existing titles in the MAESD code family
- Follow system-wide area titling protocols

Area of practice:
- Describe field of study
- Modifiers are reflected in Vocational Learning Outcomes.

Truth in Advertising:
- Describe Vocational Learning Outcomes (VLOs)
- Use differentiation and marketing words reflected in the program VLOs, description and courses.

Title Don'ts:

Consistency:
- Include the delivery model (hybrid, online)
- Include the language of delivery (FR, ENG)
- Include the mode of delivery (Condensed, Fast-Track)

Area of practice:
- Use a job title of the field of practice

Truth in Advertising:
- Use words that aren't related to the program VLOs, description, and courses.

Non Funded Programs

Ontario College Quality Assurance Service mandate is to ensure that programs of instruction, regardless of funding source, conform to the Credentials Framework.

There seems to be some confusion about how and where non-funded programs and program changes are documented and managed. Unfortunately, because the OCQAS is the only agency that keeps record of both funded and non-funded programs, the communications about Provincial Standard releases have not reached all the necessary audiences.

We are working with MAESD to remediate the gap, and ensure that groups are included in all communications related to the relevant programs of study.

If your college is considering developing, or modifying, a non-funded Ontario College Certificate, Diploma, Advanced Diploma, or Graduate Certificate that uses a Provincial Program Standard, please contact OCQAS. We will make sure you have the appropriate and most current information. Consequently, it will assure that the central database of programs is maintained, provincially.