



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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Admission Requirements

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Introducing...

Lindita Prendi from St. Clair College has been seconded to OCQAS two days a week until the end of June 2020.

At St. Clair College Lindi is a Lead Coordinator of Quality Assurance and Curriculum.

She comes into this position with a wealth of knowledge and skills, and it's looking forward to supporting the Colleges' and the OCQAS team through both the CVS and CQAAP processes.

Lindi can be reached at prendi@ocqas.org.

Admission Requirements

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Admission criteria for programs of instruction offered at Ontario public colleges falls under the 'CAAT Act' (2002). The guiding document that describes these expectations is called the 'Admissions Criteria Minister's Binding Policy Directive'. The two main types of admission requirements coming out of this document are summarized in Table 1.

Admission requirements for new programs of instruction are established, in most cases, as part of the program development stage. In addition to the mandatory admission requirements outlined in the Minister's Binding Policy Directive, when determining program specific admission requirements, it is recommended to take into consideration the following points:

1. Consider the level of educational background the applicant will need to enter the program;
2. Once the Vocational Learning Outcomes (VLOs) are finalized, determine if students will be able to reliably achieve the outcomes based on the admission requirements;
3. Consider the assessment structure that will make it possible to identify the presence of the required skills and knowledge.

Programs submitted for CVS validation must include the relevant system admission requirements based on the credential type by using the same language as per Binding Policy Directive.

Table 1 – Admission Requirements
(Adapted from the Admissions Criteria Minister's Binding Policy Directive, 2004)

System Eligibility Requirements	Program Specific Eligibility Requirements
OCC, OCD, OCAD <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) or equivalent, • mature student status. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are program specific; • are capable of objective demonstration or measurement and are relevant to the program; and • do not include secondary school university preparation courses, or Ontario Academic Courses, with two exceptions (see Binding Directive for more details): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Collaborative college-university programs ➤ College applied degrees
OCGC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ontario College Diploma, Ontario College Advanced Diploma, Degree, or equivalent 	

If program admission requirements are changed by adding more stringent requirements, then an 18 month lead time is recommended for implementation (minimum 12 months).



2019/2020 and 2020/2021 Audits

Last week, an email was sent to the five colleges that are scheduled for audits in 2019/2020 and the four scheduled for 2020/2021. The message of the email was that due to the pandemic all CQAAP activities are paused.

The status of the 2019/2020 audits is different than those scheduled for 2020/2021. Four of the five colleges scheduled for audits this academic year were well underway into their CQAAP activity, with only the site-visit outstanding. While the colleges schedule for the next academic year, are dealing with the reshuffling of their CQAAP plans (resources, timelines, and tasks).

It has been interesting to hear how the decision to pause CQAAP activities affected colleges in different ways. From the ones that are relieved given the strenuous conditions their college is facing to the ones that are disappointed and would like to cautiously continue the process and adjust as needed.

In addition, PEQAB mentioned at the HQM meeting, how to avoid canceling and delaying program approvals, they offered institutions that had scheduled site-visits the opportunity to host it virtually. Some of those institutions jumped at the opportunity and PEQAB shared their experience and successes hosting virtual site-visit meetings.

OCQAS has been approached by one of the 2019/2020 audited colleges, asking for the possibility of having a virtual site-visit at the end of May. We are seriously exploring the options.

OCQAS wants to invite the nine colleges affected more directly by this situation, to approach us and let us know if it is in their plans and preferences to continue with CQAAP work. We will be happy to work with each college on a case by case basis and explore strategies that will best meet the college's needs and at the same time allow progress with CQAAP work.



Update on the Accreditation Decision

CCVPA voted on February, 2020 on these two motions:

1. The College Quality Assurance Audit Process (CQAAP) is now a mature element of the Colleges Ontario system and the colleges wish to adopt the use of "accreditation" terminology to reflect the attainment and their demonstrated quality.

- **CCVPA recommends approval in principle to the COP for the system to adopt an Accreditation terminology and follow up with the Ministry to work at realizing this change.**
- If approved, an Implementation and communication plan would be developed for approval by COP.
- Officially effective when/if government weighs in on how/if this would be legislated/regulated.

2. The current College Quality Assurance Audit Process (CQAAP) process and maturity results are working for the colleges; there is not sufficient value in adopting an "accreditation" terminology.

- **CCVPA recommends approval in principle to the COP for CAATs to continue with the Audit terminology that is currently in use.**
- If approved, a new decision will be brought to the table re: the longevity of this decision. Will this be the last time the Accreditation decision is brought forward to COP, or does COP want to reconsider accreditation again in three, five, ten years or drop the matter indefinitely?

Motion 2 will be recommended to COP as a result from this vote.



Mapping to Same Occupational Field but Different Credential

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When developing programs if you do not find an MTCU Provincial Program Standards or Program Descriptions in a particular code family, look for one in that same family in a different credential.

When mapping to an MTCU Code of a different credential, it is important to demonstrate the proper level of performance for the proposed program VLOs. For example, if the proposed program is an OCGC but the MTCU Code is for an OCD, then new and modified VLOs should reflect the level of an OCGC as outlined in the Framework for Programs of Instruction.

For each Program Description the New Proposed VLOs would be mapped to the dimensions of the VLOs that are equivalent, and leave empty cells for those that do not align. A rationale should be provided for any base VLOs not included or modified.

Things to consider:

1. Title of the proposed program should follow the Titling Protocols and reflect the intended audience.



The **Ontario Qualifications Framework** states the hours for each credential offered at Ontario Colleges. When submitting programs for validation, at a minimum, the hours per semester should not be lower than 270hrs, which represents 10% of the hours stated in the OQF. The +/- 10% rule is applied to hours per semester and not the total program hours. To determine the number of semesters, and where available the number of program hours, that would be acceptable and validated in a proposed program, please refer to the APS MCU Table.

It should also be relevant to industry or occupational area.

2. The purpose of the program should clearly reflect the skills, knowledge and attitudes expected upon graduation, and current industry needs.
3. Use the different credential Program VLOs as the starting point to develop new VLOs for the proposed program. VLOs should have the following components:
 - Performance verb that should align with the credential level
 - Context under which the performance occurs.
 - Criteria for evaluating performance.

Before submitting on the CVS tool for validation, it will be beneficial to submit to CVS for review a Word document with base and proposed VLOs side by side as well as program mapping. This will allow CVS to clearly see alignment of VLOs and program mapping. It will also expedite the CVS validation and funding decision processes.

The OCQAS team is always happy to help, so please reach out to us with any questions.

Program Hours

When a submission is reviewed by the ministry the funding for a program is calculated to reflect the proposed number of hours and instructional settings. Unless a program's hours and/or instructional settings vary significantly from other programs in an MTCU code the submission is recommended. As the funding review may not include the same elements as the validation undertaken by CVS, a program may be assigned to a different MTCU code during the ministry's program approval process.

