



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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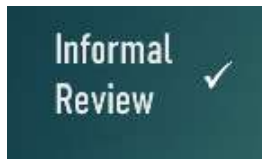
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CVS Communications/ OCQAS Opportunities

When contacting CVS via email please send the email to the common CVS email address to ensure that emails are received by all CVS staff regardless of who is working that day. The new common email address is cvs@ocqas.org.

Secondments are available to anyone working in the Ontario College system who is interested in learning more about OCQAS' operations. They are awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Individuals interested in being seconded with OCQAS should apply by sending an email to belfer@ocqsa.org by no later than June 12th, 2021. OCQAS will consider flexible schedules for appointments (e.g. two days a week or more, six months or a year). The next secondment period is scheduled to start on July 1st, Aug 1st, or Sep 1st.

In your application, describe the appointment schedule and starting date that would work best for you.



Canadian Context and the Two-year Non-funded Graduate Certificate

CVS is supporting the colleges in developing non-funded two-year graduate certificates for the international market. The Ontario Qualifications Framework (OQF) does not allow for a two-year graduate certificate. Consequently, to maintain the integrity of the OCGC some additional requirements are necessary to justify the two-year duration:

1. The VLOs of the proposed graduate certificate should be achievable by domestic students in the equivalent time stated on the APS table for that MTCU code, normally, one year of study or two semesters (S002).
2. The second year should be built on the one-year credential's VLOs, but must include additional VLOs that support both Canadian context and a work integrated learning (WIL) component (if these don't already exist in the selected MTCU code).

3. The Canadian context must be evident in the VLOs and in the course titles and/or descriptions. The relevant courses should equal a semester's worth of learning – according to the OQF approximately 300 hours. This translates to **approximately six courses** (depending on the hours), which can be distributed across all semesters of the program.
4. The WIL component should also equal a semester of study and be approximately 300 hours – 420 hours if it's a co-op.

Provided these criteria are satisfied, proposals will be well positioned for validation.



Informal Review

The Informal Review Template

In April of this year, CVS released a new template to ensure that all of the necessary information is provided during the informal review process via email. This allows for a robust review that can be carried on into the formal program submission within the CVS Anytime/Anywhere Tool.

Informal reviews help to reduce the number of transactions between the college and CVS in the tool, and may be used to solicit feedback about mapping to the correct MTCU code, choosing an appropriate title, or developing sound VLOs.

The template includes the following mandatory sections:

- A. *The type of feedback being requested* – This is self-explanatory. Tell us what you need!
- B. *Base MTCU code and title* – Choosing an MTCU code is the starting point for all of the other elements of the proposal. Providing this information enables us to verify it is the appropriate code, or to suggest another, if necessary, based on the other elements in the proposal.
- C. *Proposed program title* – Titles must follow the [CVS Titling Protocols](#). Providing us with a proposed title helps us determine if the selected MTCU code is appropriate. We may also be able to provide suggestions for other titles that might be better suited to the chosen code.
- D. *Program purpose* – This helps give us context. The detail you provide here can be very useful in helping us understand the choices being made regarding the proposed MTCU code, title and VLOs.
- E. *Vocational Learning Outcomes (VLOs)* – A three-columned chart is included to help us see your proposed outcomes as they align (or map) to the base VLOs of the chosen MTCU code. It provides a place for you to explain changes to, or omissions of, base VLOs, and enables us to provide specific feedback about how the VLOs are written, or how they align to the themes and dimensions of the base VLOs.

With all of this information in one place, the CVS team can work more effectively with the colleges to ensure that consistent feedback is provided and documented. After this process, users are asked to include the last date feedback was received from CVS in the program submission comments in the tool. This enables us to compare the formal submission to what was agreed upon during the informal review, and align with the established timeline of validation within three months upon agreement.

Please remember, if feedback received in the informal review is not addressed or commented on in the program submission in the tool, or if significant changes are made to what was originally submitted for review, additional feedback may be given to the college.

The template can be found on the [CVS Resources](#) page of the website.

MTCU Codes

Unravelling the MTCU Code

The MTCU code provides the basis of any new program proposal. It is the first and most important step because it creates the framework for all aspects of the program. Understanding each component will help make starting a new program proposal a more straight-forward process.

Program Titles

Program titles must follow the [CVS Titling Protocols](#). A suggested title should align with the existing titles in the same MTCU code family. The MTCU's APS Table is a good source for this information. If an MTCU code has a Program Standard, the program title must be the same as that of the Standard (unless you are proposing a modifier, which must be supported by additional VLOs). MTCU codes with Program Descriptions are more flexible, but the title should be reflective of the program focus and should align with the titles of the other programs in that MTCU code, or at minimum with the title of the MTCU code family.

Course Hours, Program Duration & Instructional Settings

Funding for a program is calculated by MCU to reflect the proposed number of hours and instructional settings. Unless a program's hours, duration, and/or instructional settings vary significantly from other programs in the same MTCU code, the submission should be approved. However, the funding review does not include the same elements as the validation done by CVS, and MCU may assign a different MTCU code to a program during its approval process. Existing programs in an MTCU code set the precedent for all new programs in the same code as it relates to titles, program duration, instructional settings, program weight and funding unit.

Tuition Limits

MTCU codes have a 'maximum allowable fee' structure the college has to work within.

Program Weight and Funding Unit

When a program is mapped to two MTCU codes, CVS provides a validation rationale to the Ministry that indicates the percentage of VLOs aligned to each of the two codes so that the Ministry can aggregate the program weight and funding unit accordingly.

Vocational Learning Outcomes (VLOs)

A new program proposal in an MTCU code that has a Program Standard must use the stated VLOs at a minimum. Additional VLOs can be added, especially if there is a proposed title modifier for the program. For MTCU codes with a Program Description, align each proposed VLO to the equivalent VLO in the existing Description. Ensure that the theme/dimension of the existing VLO is considered and captured in the proposed VLO. If an existing VLO is not being used in the new program proposal, a rationale must be provided to justify its exclusion. If a Standard or Description for a credential type doesn't exist in a particular MTCU code family, use one in [the same family for a different credential](#) and be sure to demonstrate the proper level of performance for the proposed credential as outlined in the [Framework for Programs of Instruction](#). We recognize that program development has evolved faster than the maintenance of Program Standards and Descriptions, but they are still the starting point for all program development, regardless of age. In such cases, CVS will work with colleges to provide guidance on how best to proceed with development of a program that meets the needs of the intended program.

Remember, we don't map to programs; we map to MTCU codes. It's important to consult with CVS early in your development process to ensure proper MTCU code selection and alignment for your proposed program.

VLOs

Updating Vocational Learning Outcomes

Regular quality assurance activities may identify a need to update the VLOs for a given program. It is important to understand what constitutes a change that would require a new validation. The rule of thumb is that 25% change to VLOs requires a new validation. In this case, 'change' applies to:

- a change in the intent of the VLO
- a change in the theme/dimension of the VLO

Updating language that does not result in either a change to the intent, theme or dimension of a VLO does not require a new validation; however, CVS supports this activity:

1. Use the informal review template to start the process, whether the Program Description is in the tool or not.
2. Map and update the VLOs, as required, and submit via email to CVS.

3. CVS will provide feedback on the proposed VLOs via email.
4. Upon agreement of the updated VLOs:
 - a. If the Description is in the tool, submit the new VLOs as a Program Modification. State clearly in the tool that the intent of this submission is to update the VLOs and note the date of CVS's agreement on the VLOs. You will receive a letter stating that the VLOs for the program have been updated and the APS number will remain unchanged.
 - b. If the Description is not in the tool, upon agreement, CVS will populate the updated Description in the tool for future use.



Admission Requirements

In alignment with the Standard Terms and Conditions of College Program Funding Approval under the Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Act, 2002, changes to admission requirements for an approved program of instruction must be communicated to the Ministry. OCQAS has been asked to facilitate this as PFAAM is not set up to do so. We are recommending that proposed changes be sent to CVS for review, and CVS will submit them to the Ministry on the college's behalf. OCQAS will consult with Heads of Quality Management at the fall meeting about this process.

To clarify what constitutes a change, here are some guidelines:

Regulatory and professional bodies

Any admissions change to a regulated program should be submitted to CVS and MCU, to ensure alignment with the Regulatory and professional body expectations.

Academic requirements

Lowering program level admission requirements to increase access for students does not require MCU approval. However, increasing those requirements to support student success in meeting program vocational learning outcomes might. Remember, admission requirements exist to provide access and to support student success, but they work as part of program curriculum and should be always be considered within the context of the entire program. If you are unsure of whether or not to submit a change to admission requirements for approval, please contact CVS.

Non-academic requirements

In some cases, the Ministry needs to be made aware of changes to other types of admission requirements. Examples include but are not limited to proof of immunization, criminal record and vulnerable sector checks, etc. Please consult with CVS before proceeding with this type of change.

