



Ontario College Quality Assurance Service

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






QUALITY BREAK

Welcome to the OCQAS Newsletter

Your peek behind the quality scenes with
quality news, updates, resources and more!

Newsletter #20 – December 2023

Brought to you by:

 Karen Belfer  Sylvie Mainville  Jacqueline Macchione
 David Vares  Karan Talreja, and 89 cups of dark brew

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A Message from OCQAS

Quality Assurance for college programming and curriculum involves a commitment to continuous improvement. At OCQAS, we focus on building a culture of quality. Colleges are responsible for ensuring that their programs and curriculum maintain currency and are responsive to the needs of Industry. A good, quality curriculum can assist in providing students with a valuable educational experience and support positive graduate outcomes. Our role at OCQAS is to support and work with, the colleges across the province to ensure standardization, consistency, and transparency of all credentials.

This past year has been a busy time across the college sector in Ontario with almost 200 validations which have included some very creative and innovative programs and the development of the SPIEQAA process and accompanying documentation.

This year, we will also be working on a new Strategic Plan. In 2021 OCQAS developed its first Strategic Plan, with a three-year completion goal. As we approach 2024 and look back at our accomplishments, we realized how much we have done in the last two and a half years. With the same enthusiasm, we embark in the development of our second Strategic Plan and hope that you will work with us to define exciting and ambitious goals that support OCQAS's vision of being acknowledged globally as a leading post-secondary education quality assurance agency in Canada.

We look forward to our continued work together throughout the academic year!

*Best,
Karen & Sylvie*

Annual CVS Report Highlights

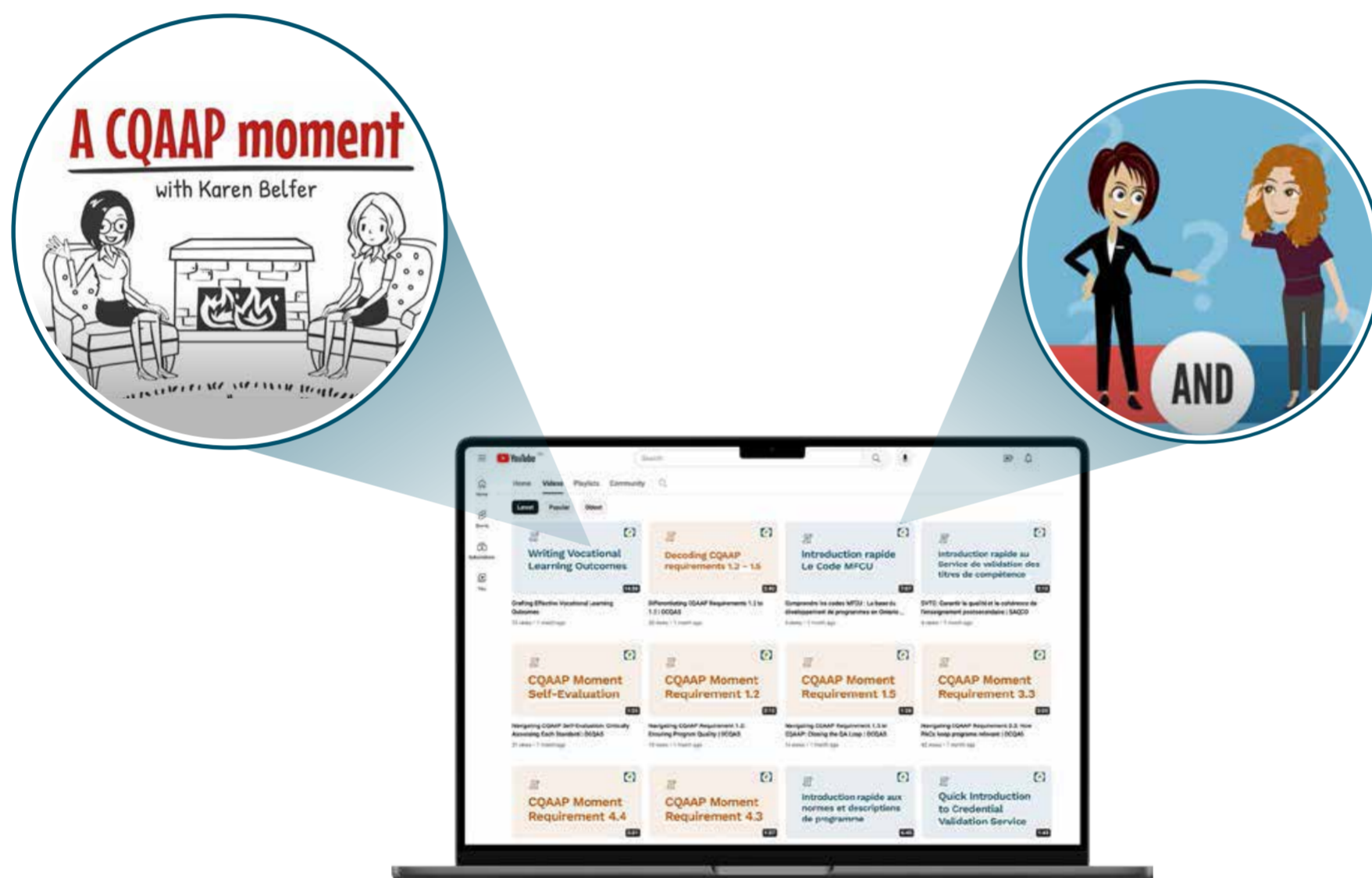


The Credential Validation Service Annual Report (2022/2023) was published earlier this Fall. This is an excellent resource for colleges to review to learn about current CVS activity, specifically the validation of College Program Proposals. The report highlights validations by college, by funding type, and by credential level. Did you know that the total number of validations for 2022/2023 was 197? Did you know the highest proportion of proposals and validations have been for the Ontario College Graduate Certificate credential? Interested in learning more? [Click here](#)

Resource Spotlight

New Videos on YouTube

CVS has been working on developing a suite of videos providing colleges with additional resources to assist in both the CQAAP and CVS processes. These short, animated videos are intended to present and share information to common questions in an accessible and memorable way! We invite you to check these out on [our Youtube channel](#).



Our new videos detailing CQAAP requirements include:

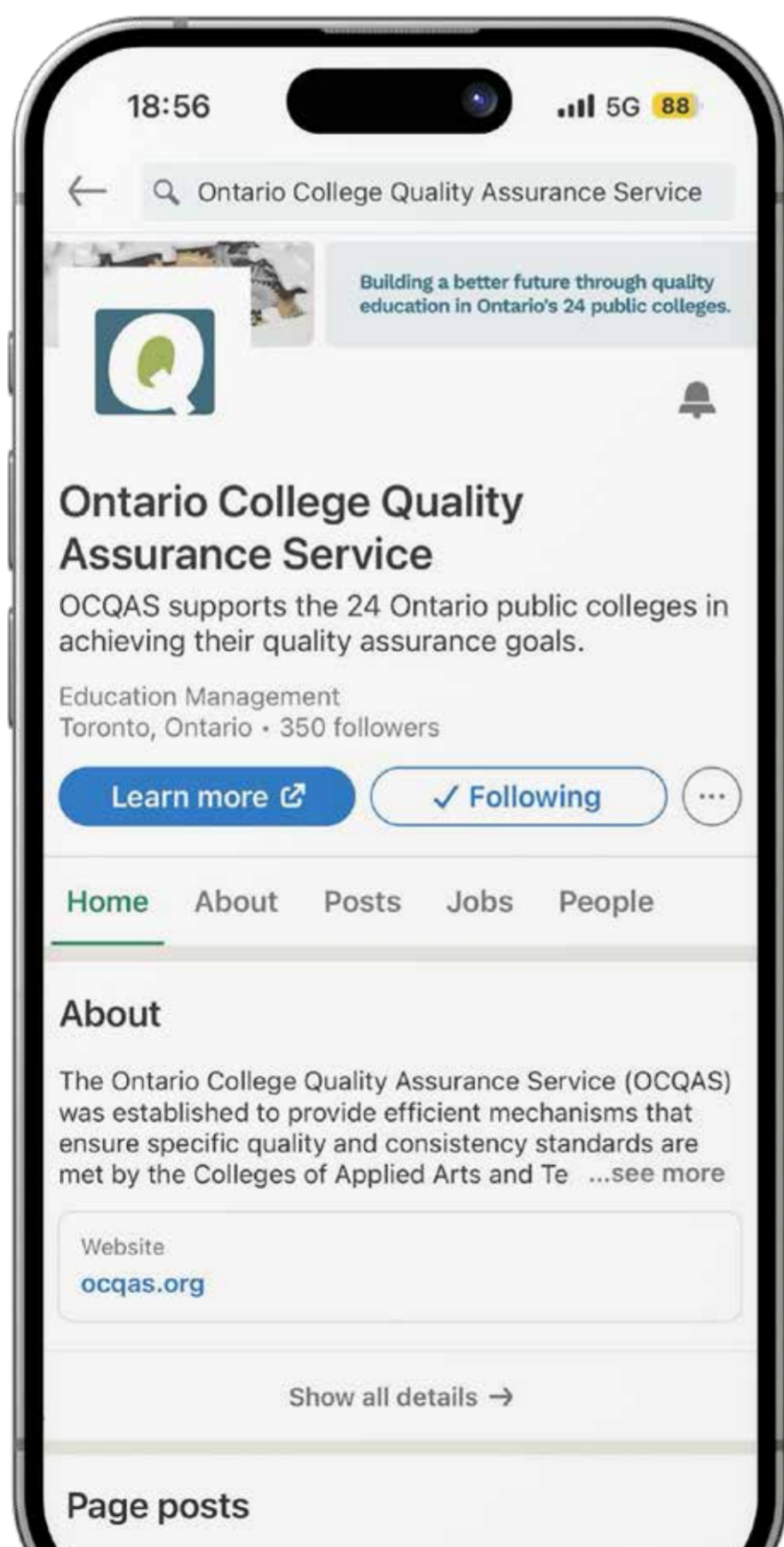
- Navigating CQAAP Requirement 1.2: Ensuring program quality
- Navigating CQAAP Requirement 1.5: Closing the QA loop
- Navigating CQAAP Requirement 3.3: How PACs keep programs relevant
- Navigating CQAAP Requirement 4.3: The essentials of timely & comprehensive feedback
- Navigating CQAAP Requirement 4.4: Ensuring graduates meet VLOs
- Navigating CQAAP self-evaluation: Critically assessing each standard
- Differentiating CQAAP requirements 1.2 to 1.5

And a great video on Vocational Learning Outcomes too!

Quick References

The CVS Working Group requested that OCQAS consider developing quick references, one or 2 pages in length, that would support QA folks in program development. The purpose of these quick references is to share basic rules and guidelines with SMEs and/or curriculum developers that may not have any experience in the academic arena or with CVS submissions. The cut to the chase rules and guidelines would provide a brief overview of common program development parameters. You can find the first 2 new resources, one on [Titling](#) and one on [VLOs](#), on the website in CVS Resources.

Social Media Update



Don't miss out on the latest in quality assurance! Follow OCQAS on LinkedIn for exclusive updates, valuable tips for curriculum developers, and insider knowledge in the education sector. We're actively sharing our expertise and important information that you won't want to miss. Plus, we've got some exciting developments in the pipeline. Stay connected, stay informed.

[FOLLOW US ON LINKEDIN](#)



Research Call Out!

OCQAS will be conducting research on Ontario College Graduate Certificates. Over the last five years OCQAS has been validating Ontario College Graduate Certificates (OCGC) that are 4 semesters in length. This practice started with the goal of supporting the colleges in attracting international students while meeting the student visa requirements. While maintaining the integrity of the credential, and meeting Ministry requirements, the colleges were allowed to add an Experiential Learning opportunity (with a duration of one semester) and Canadian Context courses (with the duration of one semester) to existing OCGCs.

In looking back at that initiative, we recognize that the value of creating 4 semester OCGCs might extend farther or broader than just meeting IRCC requirements, but in helping international students build a foundation and gather experiences that would help them be more successful in school and in their potential work life in Canada.

Is it with this understanding, that we would like to research the implications of the 4 semester OCGC initiative.

Research Questions:

What are the benefits and challenges of including Canadian Context in the curriculum for an OCGC?

What are the benefits and challenges of including Experiential Learning in an OCGC?

What are the benefits and challenges of a program containing both a Canadian Context and an Experiential Learning semester?

What are the benefits and challenges inherent to the different Experiential Learning opportunities?

Moving forward:

We are interested in collaborating with colleges to answer these questions. We would love to work with you to get surveys out to graduates or to host a focus group, online or at your college. Please reach out with your expression of interest at cvs@ocqas.org.

Reflections from a CVS Seconddee



Jacqueline Macchione

Curriculum Specialist
George Brown College

This past Fall, I had the opportunity to join OCQAS as a Quality Assurance Associate supporting the Credential Validation Service (CVS). This part-time secondment compliments the work I do at my college as a Curriculum Specialist, supporting new program development as well as assisting existing programs with curriculum-related changes and program review recommendations. I wanted to share some reflections of the work I have been engaged with, and to invite others to think about this as a possible opportunity in their own career development supporting Quality Assurance.

One of the primary duties for this secondment position is to review, analyze and validate program submissions for new and revised/modified programs from the college system to ensure programs meet Ministry policy standards. This work involves ensuring proposed programs are aligning to the appropriate MTCU code(s), reviewing program titles and vocational learning outcomes (VLOs), and supporting others by responding to questions to make informed decisions about credentialing, quality and quality assurance processes at their institutions.

Working in QA at the provincial level has been a transformative experience, deepening my understanding of processes and Ministry requirements for quality college programming. It's also enhanced my skills and provided valuable networking opportunities with curriculum and program quality experts across the 24 colleges.

Working closely with Executive Director Karen Belfer and QA Manager Sylvie Mainville has been invaluable. Their collaborative, kind leadership, openness to new ideas, and strengths-based feedback have greatly enhanced our team's success in QA work across Ontario. This experience has enriched my professional growth and enabled me to effectively support my college colleagues.

**Interested in applying for an enriching secondment position with CVS?
Feel free to email belfer@ocqas.org discuss this further!**

Reminders & Updates

- Is your college in the early stages of developing a new program? Feel free to reach out to CVS to receive support in finding an appropriate MTCU code to align to.
- Are you new to program development or a new CVS User? **OCQAS requires completion of CVS Basics & CVS Basics II workshops prior to submitting CVS Validations or Modifications in the AA Tool.** New training workshops will be offered in the New Year. The sessions will be as follows:

Date(s) and Time	Presentation/Workshop
January 12, 2024, 12:30 - 2:00 PM and January 23, 2024, 2:30 - 4:00 PM	CVS Basics This presentation will introduce CVS and where to start for program validations and modifications. This training is directed at new hires, and it is required for everyone who submits applications to CVS for validation.
January 29, 2024 1:00 - 2:00 PM and February 7, 2024 11:30 AM - 12:30	CVS Basics, part 2 This presentation will introduce the CVS AA Tool to participants. It is recommended that participants have completed CVS Basics or have viewed the Meet CVS Video .
February 13, 2024 9:30 - 10:30 AM	Writing and Updating VLOs This workshop will familiarize the participants with Vocational Learning Outcomes (VLOs), their structure, purpose and expectations for development and modification.

**Some sessions happen more than once, please check for dates and times that works best for you.*

How to register

Please reserve your space by emailing your name, college and session selections to the CVS team, at CVS@ocqas.org at least 1 day prior to each session.

Q&A with QA

We invite you to join our Thursday morning drop-in sessions to ask specific questions, meet others across the college sector involved in curriculum development and engage in discussion related to quality assurance.

Every Thursday
From September 21 to January 26
9:00 - 10:00 a.m.

**please email cvs@ocqas.org to be sent an invitation.

Q&A with QA

A drop-in session for the QA and curriculum development communities to ask questions and hold discussions on QA topics.

SPIEQAA

We are happy to share an update that the three colleges who agreed to participate in the pilot project have submitted their audit packages and have completed the audit visits. We will continue to share the progress of this pilot.

Interested in learning more about the International Education Standards of Practice? Just email us for our monthly drop-in sessions.

Every second Friday of the month
December 8
Jan 12
Feb 9
March 8
April 12
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

**please email cvs@ocqas.org to be added to these sessions.

International Education Standards Drop-In

Drop-in sessions to discuss the International Education Standards of Practice and what they mean for your college.

Additionally, these sessions provide participants an opportunity to discuss quality assurance in international education as well as networking for people working with International Standards.