



PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEES PROCEDURE

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PROCEDURE STATEMENT:

Program Advisory Committees (PACs) provide the necessary link between Conestoga and the community it serves. PACs operate in an advisory capacity to Conestoga administration with the objective to keep Conestoga responsive to current and future workforce needs, trends and workplace/industry expectations.

The system of PACs connect the community with Conestoga administration, faculty and students. Advice from PACs is critical for the administration of Conestoga to make decisions which uphold Conestoga's mission and commitment to career-oriented programming.

SCOPE:

All post-secondary education programs of study at Conestoga, both full-time and part-time, which lead to an employment related credential, or are approved by the Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCU), will be associated with a PAC.

DEFINITIONS:

Academic Coordinating Committee (ACC)

This senior academic committee provides a forum for academic planning and operations within the framework of the strategic plan, and other goals and initiatives identified by the senior management and the Board of Governors. The committee is responsible for this in context of Conestoga's overall and academic quality. The committee also provides necessary interface with Conestoga's other committees, departments and offices.

Advisory Committee on Academic and Student Affairs (ACASA)

This sub-committee of the Board of Governors has the responsibility to examine and discuss all program proposals approved by the Academic Coordinating Committee (ACC) and make a recommendation to the Board of Governors and to receive information and updates on key initiatives within Conestoga which affect the quality of its academic operations.

Board of Governors

The Board of Governors has the responsibility to establish the overall goals, objectives and strategic direction of Conestoga and to ensure Conestoga operates efficiently and effectively and is developing in ways that are congruent with the stated goals, objectives and strategic direction.

Credential

Recognition awarded upon completion of a program of study as set out by the Ministry.

Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCU)

The MCU has the function of assessing all program proposals for determination of appropriate code classification, funding weights and parameters, and program titling.

PAC Membership Grid

A list of all members of a PAC which identifies the cross-section of industry experience and other pertinent information such as: designations, which relate to the program and Conestoga.

Program

A planned and coordinated selection of courses delivered to an identified student body leading to a certificate, diploma, degree or other credential awarded by the Board of Governors.

Program Advisory Committee (PAC)

The Program Advisory Committee provides advice on academic program development, review and effectiveness, changes/trends in business and industry affecting programs, students and graduates, technological implications of changes/trends, employment prospects, etc.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Specific duties for the majority of roles below are further outlined in the PAC Resource Guide.

External Members

PAC members:

The PAC members provide advice related to the three essential areas:

- Workforce/industry/business trends
- Curriculum relevance and enhancing the learning experience
 - Through regular PAC meetings and the program review process
- Student/graduate success and continuing professional learning.

This includes new or existing post-secondary education programs of study. They are encouraged to participate in opportunities to connect with students, be ambassadors of the program and Conestoga, consider work integrated learning opportunities (e.g. projects, Co-op, internships, etc.) as well as support fundraising for student awards.

PAC chair:

The PAC chair is elected or appointed. The PAC chair and the program chair guide the committee's role(s), goals and objectives. They ensure there are discussions and input from all members, as per the standardized agenda, that relate to the three essential areas noted above.

The PAC chair may recommend extensions or termination of membership for individual members according to member responsibilities. The chair provides advice to the program chair regarding the meeting process (including agenda, meetings, etc.), chairs all scheduled meetings and acts as an ambassador of the program, students and Conestoga. It is discretionary to have the role of a vice-chair. The vice-chair would act as a designate to the chair in their absence.

Conestoga Resource Persons (Non-voting)

Academic Administration: Academic Administration is responsible for the overall administration of the PACs. The office will receive and address questions, suggestions and/or concerns related to the operation of all PACs. Ongoing evaluation of PAC management will be evaluated in collaboration with the schools via the Program Review/PAC sub-committee.

Board of Governors: The Board of Governors ensures advisory groups are established, and that the structure, terms of reference and procedures are in place, as outlined in the MCU Minister's Binding Policy Directive –Framework for Programs of Instruction.

Executive dean/dean or designate: The executive dean/dean or designate responsible for the school, institute, and/or department ensures PACs are in place for their programs, and through their program chair ensures regular meetings and engagement in the program review process occurs.

PAC assistant: The PAC assistant is responsible for coordination and related administration of assigned PACs.

Program chair or designate: The program chair and/or designate works in close partnership with the PAC chair to follow Conestoga's Program Advisory Committees Policy, PAC Resource Guide and Terms of Reference. This includes but is not limited to:

- following committee goals, objectives and agendas as per the templates,
- confirming that there are student representatives,
- establishing PAC participation in program review, and as required, new program development, providing follow-up on items arising from meetings,
- ensuring the suitability of PAC members, and
- ensuring the executive dean/dean or designate is kept informed of proceedings.

Program coordinator: The program coordinator, a faculty member at Conestoga, will participate in the preparation of meetings, discussion of PAC goals/objectives and will prepare program reports in consultation with the program chair.

Student representative: At regularly scheduled meetings, the student representatives share program insights on behalf of their fellow students within their program year.

PROCEDURES:

1. The Board of Governors ensures PACs are established and there are procedures to support their operation.
2. Conestoga's standard is that PACs will conduct two meetings per year, with documentation of meetings and follow-up of PAC recommendations according to Conestoga procedures.
3. Process guidelines for establishing a PAC for a new program, a group of related programs, or the reinstatement of a suspended program are further detailed in the PAC Resource Guide (as per the Minister's Binding Policy Directive –Framework for Programs of Instruction).
4. Membership management:
 - a. Through program chairs, schools are responsible for ensuring the suitability of the candidate and have the right to appoint or terminate member.
 - b. Approval: members are approved by the ACC and reviewed by the ACASA for information purposes.
 - c. Membership lists: a list of all voting and non-voting members, as well as the PAC Membership Grid, will be kept up to date by the PAC assistants in a shared database.
 - d. Orientation: as new or reappointed members join they will receive the Welcome Package and orientation from either the PAC assistant or the program chair/designate.
 - e. Terms: membership terms are typically three years (they may be extended) and are reviewed annually based on participation and program needs. Process guidelines for electing the PAC chair are further detailed in the PAC Resource Guide.
 - f. Recognition: refer to the PAC Resource Guide for methods to show appreciation for contributions to Conestoga and their students through the PAC.
5. PAC management:
 - a. Meetings: the Conestoga standard is that PACs will conduct two meetings per year. They can be held in person, via teleconference or virtual meetings, or a blend of those listed. Minutes will be recorded regardless of the format of the meeting. Quorum is 50% of voting members plus one as per the PAC database.
 - b. Document management: approved templates and documents are provided for the consistent operation of PACs. The templates must be used as outlined to support consistency and information sharing at Conestoga. For more information, including a list of PAC templates, refer to the PAC Resource Guide.
 - c. Reports: will be provided to the members prior to or during the meeting. All documents are considered confidential unless otherwise noted.

- d. File management: all PAC assistants will save and manage files as required and outlined in the PAC Resource Guide. Files are required to be kept for a minimum of 5 years.
 - e. Ad hoc/standing subcommittees: the formation of a subcommittee, its purpose, and approximate conclusion date should be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which it is formed. The guidelines for running subcommittee meetings are further detailed in the PAC Resource Guide.
 - f. The executive dean/dean or designate responsible for the school, institute, and/or department will confirm PACs are operating as per Conestoga's Program Advisory Committees Policy and Procedure to Academic Administration, on no less than an annual basis.
 - g. The vice president Academic Administration/ Student Affairs & Human Resources (or designate) will collaborate with the executive dean/dean or designate responsible for the school, institute, and/or department to uphold the Conestoga's Program Advisory Committees Policy and Procedures and provide an annual report to the ACC.
6. PAC involvement:
- a. Program reviews: members will contribute to continuous quality improvement at Conestoga through input during applicable program reviews, as defined in Conestoga's Program Review policies and procedures. PACs will contribute annually through the review of the Fall Program Report and the Winter/Spring Program Report. They also contribute during the Major Program Review process which requires an in-depth review of future needs.
 - b. Major program changes: all major program changes, as they relate to vocational content, will be presented and discussed, and such discussions will be noted in writing through minutes of the meetings or email confirmation.
 - c. New program development: where program affinity exists, the appropriate PAC will be consulted in the concept and development phase of the new program design. The guidelines for PAC involvement in new program development is further detailed in the PAC Resource Guide.
7. Media inquiries: all media inquiries received by members should be directed to Conestoga's director of Corporate Communications and Government Relations.
8. Conflict of interest: to ensure that all PAC business is conducted in a fair and unbiased manner, the following procedures will be followed:
- a. Membership of a PAC will be reviewed to guard against known conflicts of interest through the nomination and review process.
 - b. Should circumstances of a member's employment change during their term and concerns regarding conflict of interest be identified, the executive dean will address this with the PAC chair for further discussion with the member.
9. The appropriate executive dean/dean or designate can recommend the disbanding or suspension of a PAC to the ACC. Process guidelines for disbanding or suspending operations of a PAC are further detailed in the PAC Resource Guide.

10. Questions, suggestions or concerns regarding an individual PAC or the advisory groups in general will be directed to Academic Administration.

REFERENCES:

Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technologies Act, 2002 (OCAAT Act)
Minister's Binding Policy Directive- Framework for Programs of Instruction. July 2009
Ontario College Quality Assurance Service, Program Quality Assurance Process Audit: Orientation Manual, Jan. 2014

Program Advisory Committees Membership Grid
Program Advisory Committees Policy
Program Advisory Committees Resource Guide
Program Advisory Committees Terms of Reference
Program Development Procedure

REVISION LOG:

12/1/2014	Academic Forum
12/8/2014	Policy and Procedure Committee
12/17/2014	Academic Coordinating Committee
11/6/2019	Academic Forum