



# **NEW AND REVISED PROVINCIAL PROGRAM STANDARDS PROCEDURE**

Approving Authority: Academic Coordinating Committee

Policy Owner: Vice President, Academic

Policy Lead(s): Director, Program Planning and Pathways and Director,  
Institutional Quality Management

Defining Policy: Program Delivery Policy

Effective Date: 2018-11-12

Date of Last Approval: 2024-11-06

## **PROCEDURE STATEMENT:**

This procedure describes the process used to implement a new or revised provincial program standard when issued by the Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCU).

## **DEFINITIONS:**

### **Annual Program Reflection (APR)**

A review process which requires a program team-based discussion and evaluation of the previous academic year. The APR facilitates continuous improvement in the program to support student and program success. Program teams are required to document their reflection in the online APR application to identify planning opportunities for program enhancement for the upcoming academic year.

### **Comprehensive Program Review**

Comprehensive program reviews require program teams to undertake a strategic assessment of their program ensuring continued support of the Conestoga community's needs, and alignment with Ministry and/or accrediting bodies program requirements. Most programs follow a five to seven-year review cycle unless external and/or internal circumstances identified through the annual reflections indicate the need for a revised review cycle. Conestoga's comprehensive program review process includes Major Program Reviews, Degree Consent Renewals, and Program Accreditations.

### **Credential**

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

**Degree Consent Renewal**

A process for degree teams to strategically assess their program's fit, viability and relevance, and identify opportunities for program update or renewal while considering multiple stakeholders' needs and feedback. A degree self-study is completed through this process to support Ministerial renewal of consent to deliver the program, accreditation/re-accreditation of the program, or both. Program teams are required to conduct a strategic assessment of their program and create a plan for update and renewal of the program. The degrees self-study is subject to external quality assurance review to support continuous program quality improvement and student success.

**Major Program Review (MPR)**

A process led by the Institutional Quality Management department which requires applicable non-degree program teams to strategically assess their program's fit, viability and relevance, and identify opportunities for program update or renewal; while considering the Conestoga community's needs and feedback on a 5-7 year cycle.

**Process Feedback Survey**

A tool used by MCU to collect information regarding the process of Program Standard review or development. Completed and submitted by the Vice President, Academic, the survey questions are answered based on information collected from the college team participating in the review and development process.

**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.

**The Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board (PEQAB)**

The Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board is an Ontario agency that makes recommendations to the Minister of Colleges and Universities of Ontario on applications for ministerial consent under the terms of the Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act, 2000.

**Program of Study**

An academic program that leads to issuance of a post-secondary credential or certificate for a particular area of study.

**Program Advisory Committee (PAC)**

The Program Advisory Committee provides advice on academic program development, review and relevance, changes/trends in business and industry affecting programs, students and graduates, technological implications of changes/trends, employment prospects etc. Refer to PAC Guidelines for membership and terms of reference.

**Program Description**

A document produced by the ministry that sets out the program purpose, program goals and the admission requirements. It is also identified by an MTCU code.

## **Program Standard**

A document produced by the ministry that sets out the essential learning a student must achieve before being deemed ready to graduate. A program standard applies to all programs of study with the same program title regardless of the funding source and consists of vocational learning outcomes, essential employability skills outcomes and general education requirements. Prior to graduation, students must achieve all three parts of the program standard.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

### **Academic Schools**

- Participate, when solicited, in the feedback activities initiated by MCU, such as the broad base consultation and program outcomes review, when a standard is revised or developed.
- Consider MPR schedule requirements based on the Ministry program standard review schedule in consultation with Institutional Quality Management (IQM).
- Use information obtained during participation in Ministry feedback activities (online surveys, meetings, etc.) for the review activities during APR and MPR.
- Work with Program Planning and Pathways to complete the process feedback survey within the indicated timeframe.
- Ensure the new or revised provincial program standard is implemented according to the established timelines, or the request for appeal is communicated to Academic Administration inside the established timeframe.

### **Academic Administration**

- Disseminate list of upcoming program standard review schedules from the Ministry to the appropriate stakeholders.
- Disseminate review and process survey communications to stakeholders as they are received from the Ministry.
- Obtain president's signature on the Ministry letter indicating the date the standard will be implemented for the Ministry.
- Forward the Ministry letter indicating the implementation date to the Ministry.

### **Program Planning and Pathways**

- Review the Ministry list of planned provincial program standard review schedule.
- Advise relevant stakeholders of impending program standards review.
- Communicate to relevant stakeholders the applicability of the newly published standard, including program/school chair information.
- Advise relevant academic school chairs of impending program standards review and obtains program contact information.
- Submit program contact information to the Ministry.
- Advise the academic school team of the need to participate in feedback activities (online surveys, meetings, etc.).
- Participate, when solicited, in the program standard review process with the academic school teams.

- Work with the academic school chair to complete the process feedback survey and submit within the indicated timeframe.
- Obtain signed letter from academic school chair indicating the date the standard will be implemented.
- Confirm the agreed upon implementation date to relevant stakeholders, including Institutional Quality Management.

### **Institutional Quality Management**

- Consider the list of upcoming Ministry program standards in the review schedule when collaborating with schools to establish or refine the Master Program Review Schedule.
- Ensure the APR and MPR systems reflect the new/revised program standards to support the program teams review of the compliance and alignment between the program's outcomes and the program standard.
- Review compliance of program standards annually through the APR and MPR and advise if a program is not compliant with the program standard.
- Report on program standards compliance regularly.

### **PROCEDURE:**

1. The Ministry/ Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board (PEQAB) issues a communication stating the intent to review a current provincial program standard or issue a new provincial program standard.
  - 1.1. The letter of intent is received by the Office of Academic Administration for action.
  - 1.2. Program Planning and Pathways reviews the planned standards for creation and/or review and determines which Conestoga programs will be impacted.
  - 1.3. Program Planning and Pathways informs the Academic School and IQM of each program impacted by the list of upcoming standards for creation and/or review.
2. The Ministry/ PEQAB issues a formal request for a college representative to be assigned to the review of each program standard to participate in the broad-based consultation process.
  - 2.1. The request is received by the Office of Academic Administration for action.
  - 2.2. Program Planning and Pathways reviews the requests and confirms which Conestoga programs will be impacted.
  - 2.3. Program Planning and Pathways requests program contacts to participate in the consultation process from the Academic School of each relevant program.
    - 2.3.1. All program standard creation and review processes in which Conestoga is invited to participate will provide at least one contact.
    - 2.3.2. Where multiple Academic Schools oversee programs related to a given standard, each School will be given the opportunity to include a representative.
  - 2.4. The Academic School decides which faculty members participate in the standard review process and invites PAC members to contribute.
    - 2.4.1. Academic Schools communicate the final decision to Program Planning and Pathways by the indicated deadline date. Where the Academic School has not provided an assigned representative by the deadline, Program Planning and

Pathways will notify the Academic School that the Chair will be designated to represent the college.

- 2.5. Program Planning and Pathways communicates to the Ministry/PEQAB the representatives for each applicable standard creation/review consultation process on behalf of the college.
3. The Ministry/PEQAB issues a request to join the broad-based consultation process directly to identified college representatives.
  - 3.1. The Academic School is responsible for communication between these stakeholders and the Ministry during the standard review process.
4. The Ministry issues a request to the Office of Academic Administration for feedback on the program standard development/review process.
  - 4.1. Program Planning and Pathways facilitates the completion of the feedback questions on behalf of the Vice President, Academic in consultation with the Academic School.
  - 4.2. Program Planning and Pathways ensures the Vice President, Academic and the Academic School of the related programs have an opportunity to review responses prior to submission.
  - 4.3. A single Process Feedback Survey is submitted by Conestoga, regardless of the number of individuals involved.
5. The Ministry issues a communication to the Office of the President announcing publication of the new/revised standard and requesting President sign off.
  - 5.1. Program Planning and Pathways coordinates with the Academic School and Institutional Quality Management the following steps in the process:
    - 5.1.1. The completion, signoff and submission of the Ministry letter indicating the implementation date for the standard,
    - 5.1.2. The update in SIS of the new program outcomes resulted from standard adoption for the program version corresponding to the implementation date, and
    - 5.1.3. Determination as to how the change impacts the Master Program Review Schedule.
6. The Academic School ensures all elements of the new/revised provincial program standard (vocational learning outcomes, essential employability skills and general education requirements) are incorporated into the program design and delivery through:
  - 6.1. The Annual Program Reflection (APR) or Major Program Review processes, or
  - 6.2. Where adoption is mandated to occur outside of APR/MPR schedules, Program Planning and Pathways will work with the Chair to revise required elements of the program using the usual mapping and redesign mechanisms, to implement required changes.
    - 6.2.1. Institutional Quality Management will ensure all changes are documented for inclusion in the next scheduled APR or MPR process.
7. The Academic School informs Institutional Quality Management when the Ministry program standard has been implemented so the Master Program Review Schedule can be updated to reflect the incorporation of the new standard. The Academic School communicates the status of the program curriculum to PAC members.

**RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND RELATED DOCUMENTS:**

*Course Revision Procedure MTCU Memorandum, Sept. 10, 2004, Changes to Programs during the Period of Consent*

*MTCU Provincial Program Standards Documents*

*Ontario College Quality Assurance Service (OCQAS) Accreditation Standards*

APR and MPR Online Systems

Course Development Procedure

New Program Approval Process

Program Design Information for New Programs Form

Program Development Policy

Program Development Procedure

Program Mapping templates for APR/MPR

Program Review Policy

Program Review Procedure

Program Suspension and Cancellation Procedure

Proposed Program Curriculum Changes Form

**REVISION LOG:**

2008-11-12	Academic Coordinating Committee
2015-03-10	Academic Forum
2015-03-17	Policy and Procedure Committee
2015-03-18	Academic Coordinating Committee
2019-03-04	Academic Forum
2019-03-20	Academic Coordinating Committee
2024-10-30	Academic Forum
2024-11-06	Academic Coordinating Committee