

SUBJECT
QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY
BACKGROUND

The Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Act, 2002 provides Ontario's colleges with a mandate to autonomously govern their own programs by adhering to established quality assurance standards. The Act requires:

- Quality assurance at the individual college level; and,
- A self-regulating process at the level of the college system.

Quality assurance processes are essential to College operations and lead to optimal student experiences. Program review activities form a major part of the College's compliance with the Act's requirements.

POLICY

Northern College meets or exceeds the established quality assurance standards and requirements set out in the College Quality Assurance Audit Process (CQAAP) or Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board (PEQAB), as appropriate. Through its regular program review processes, student and other stakeholder feedback, the College engages in continuous improvement to ensure its offerings meet the expectations of our students, community, and industry partners.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all programs leading to an Ontario College credential (certificate, diploma, advanced diploma, and graduate certificate) or degree.

DEFINITIONS:

Accreditation: Accreditation can refer to a status obtained by the College, or an audit process undertaken in order to achieve this status. As a status, accreditation provides public notification that an institution or program meets standards of quality set forth by an accrediting agency.

Audit: Audits evaluate the effectiveness and comprehensiveness of the institution's quality assurance system, expressing some level of confidence, based on the evidence provided, as to whether the institution's system does what it says it is doing.

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Continuous improvement: Continuous improvement is an ongoing, evidence-based process of improving existing processes and practices.

Community: As referenced in the Northern College Board of Governors A-7 Ends Policy, community includes the businesses, local industries, and individuals found in the physical locations that the College serves.

Quality Assurance: Quality assurance is the process of providing assurance that the standards relevant to a program, process or operation are adhered to.

Program Review: Program review is a systematic process to assess the continuous cycle of curriculum review, validation and maintenance. Program reviews are conducted at an annual and comprehensive level, as defined below:

- Annual: Annual program reviews occur yearly and assess program processes in relation to program quality.
- Comprehensive: Comprehensive program reviews assess program quality at a minimum intervals of five (5) years and maximum intervals of seven (7) years (see Program Review Procedure).

Student Feedback: student feedback is gathered each semester through the College's course evaluation process.

Program Viability: Program viability is the ability for a program to continue to be offered given the cost to deliver the program, labour market and industry needs, changing standards of practice and/or a lack of enrolment.

RESPONSIBILITY

Quality assurance is ultimately the responsibility of the Board of Governors and is operationalized by the Senior Vice-President Academic and Student Success.

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APPROVED BY PRESIDENT



March 1, 2024

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Date

REFERENCES

Ontario College Quality Assurance Standards (<https://www.ocqas.org/>)

Framework for Programs of Instruction (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/framework-programs-instruction-colleges-applied-arts-and-technology>)

Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board (<http://www.peqab.ca/>)

Related Procedure(s): VPA-1 PR-3 Quality Assurance, Student Course Feedback

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