

**ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT**

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| **CURRICULUM MODIFICATION GUIDELINES** |

**Preamble**

Algonquin College is dedicated to ensuring the integrity of curriculum and adherence to applicable Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) Minister’s Binding Policy Directives. The Curriculum Modification Guidelines are intended to provide direction to staff regarding the processes that relate to program changes. Curriculum modifications include changes to the:

* program title;
* vocational learning outcomes;
* program of study/program duration; and
* individual courses.

The Curriculum Modification Guidelines address common questions associated with program changes. For other inquires contact Academic Development for assistance.

**Program Title**

Several factors must be taken into account when considering a program title change. Most notably, titling of Ontario College (OC) Credential programs falls within the mandate of the Credentials Validation Service (CVS). The credentials included in the CVS’ mandate are:

* OC Certificate
* OC Diploma
* OC Advanced Diploma
* OC Graduate Certificate

All OC program title modifications must be made in accordance with system titling and nomenclature principles and will require the approval of the Curriculum Review Committee (CRC), Deans Council (DC), the President’s Executive Committee (PEC), and the Board of Governors (BoG) prior to forwarding a title change request to the Credentials Validation Service (CVS). Note that the use of approved titles is restricted to the applicable credential as titles are closely aligned with MTCU program classification. For programs with a Provincial Program Standard, titles are primarily determined by the Program Standard. The following are general titling policies identified by the CVS:

* *Titles should reflect a field of study, primarily, and not a job title or specific employment-related position a graduate may secure.*
* *Programs with similar outcomes should have similar titles.*
* *Modifiers attached to approved program titles must be supported by appropriate and substantial additional vocational learning outcomes.*
* *Approved titles must appear on the final credential conferred by the college.*
* *Non-approved titles and other descriptions of programs may be used in the advertising of a program of instruction as long as there is a clear indication of the approved title included. 1*

1. Credentials Validation Service - Program Modification Document

The process for requesting a title change is outlined below:

1. Ensure that you have a rationale for requesting a title change, such as an industry driven need.
2. Contact the Curriculum Administrator to determine if the revised title being considered will adhere to system titling and nomenclature principles.
3. For OC programs a title change request must be vetted and supported by the program advisory committee.
4. For programs where a Program Standard exists, the title change must also be vetted by the pertinent colleges ‘Heads of’ reporting group for specified disciplines.
5. Complete the sections of the Program Modification Template required for a title change.
6. Contact the Vice President Academic’s Office (VPAO) and ask to present the title change request to the CRC. You will be required to submit the completed Program Modification Template to the VPAO one week prior to the scheduled CRC meeting date.
7. Following receipt of a recommendation for title change approval from CRC:
   1. The VPAO will guide you in the completion of DC, PEC and BoG presentation templates. The title change request is to be presented by the Dean and/or designate(s).
   2. Contact the Curriculum Administrator regarding the Program of Study Creation/Update Form (PUF) completion/submission.
8. Once approved by the BoG the title change request will be forwarded to the CVS by the Curriculum Administrator.
9. Publication and advertising of the new program title is permitted following Board approval.
10. Confirmation of CVS validation of the program title change will be communicated by the Curriculum Administrator to the pertinent College staff.

**Vocational Learning Outcomes (VLOs)**

During the Annual Curriculum Review or Program Quality Review processes programs may identify the need for modifications to VLOs to ensure that programs remain current. The procedure for modifying VLOs is dependent on whether or not an established Provincial Program Standard exists. Therefore, explanations for two processes follow:

1. **Program with a Provincial Program Standard**

A formal MTCU Program Standard cyclical review process is established whereby provincial program standards are periodically scheduled for a province-wide VLOs review. Should there be a need to expedite the review of a Program Standard, this request must be communicated in writing to the Vice President Academic’s Office (VPAO), such that the program may be identified as needing an accelerated scheduling of a Provincial Program Standard review by the MTCU. Established Provincial Program Standard VLOs must be met or exceeded without exception. As VLOs are broad performance statements, it is possible that editing of the College VLOs may address immediate concerns while continuing to align with the VLOs articulated in the relevant Provincial Program Standard. Contact Academic Development when considering revisions to VLOs. Referral to a curriculum consultant will be arranged to guide the revision.

1. **Program without a Provincial Program Standard**

Modifications to VLOs may be undertaken to the extent that they do not change the program’s focus. If the program’s focus changes then a new program proposal must be submitted. Where modifications to VLOs are being considered, Academic Development should be contacted for assistance and referral to a curriculum consultant. The curriculum consultant will work with the program designate(s) to guide revisions to VLOs and ensure that associated program re-mapping is concurrently addressed. The curriculum consultant in consultation with the program designate(s) will assess whether the changes are substantive enough to warrant review and approval of the VLOs modifications by the CRC. Historically the majority of changes to program VLOs following Annual Curriculum Review do not necessitate CRC review. The curriculum consultant in consultation with the Academic Development office will also assess if the revisions are significant enough to be forwarded to the CVS and the MTCU, solely for information purposes.

In some instances a program may have no established VLOs, for example, College Certificates approved prior to 2004. In these cases, the definition of the VLOs is managed as for modifications to VLOs for programs without a provincial program standard (#2 above), with the addition that Template #5 (Vocational Learning Outcomes Development) must be filled, and the VLOs reviewed and approved by the CRC prior to adoption.

**Program of Study/Program Duration**

Modifications to a program of study that do not substantially impact the overall curriculum (normally less than 25% of the overall program hours) may be undertaken without bringing forth the program changes to CRC. Modifications that substantially impact the overall curriculum (normally a change greater than 25% of the overall program hours) must be reviewed by CRC. As an example, a program delivery change to a Non-Semester Diploma Program (NSDP) is considered a substantial modification.

To ensure alignment and/or compliance with VLOs, Essential Employability Skills (EES) and General Education requirements, program of study changes must be accompanied by a program re-mapping exercise. Program of study delivery modifications to offer co-op or fully online need not be reviewed by CRC. However, a Program Creation/Update Form must be completed and submitted to the Curriculum Administrator. In each of these cases, when contemplating curriculum changes, it is recommended that Academic Development be contacted for guidance and consideration for assignment of a curriculum consultant. Completion of a Program Modification Template will be required in instances when the program changes must be reviewed by CRC and approved by Deans Council.

**Note:** Modifications to Apprenticeship programs are Ministry initiated and are therefore presented to CRC for information purposes only. A Program Creation/Update Form, as well as a Program of Study Creation/Update Form (found on the Registrar’s Office website under Forms) is required in order to update GeneSIS accordingly.

**Courses**

Course modifications typically occur on an as needed basis following the program’s Annual Curriculum or Program Quality Review. A new course number need only be requested when there is a substantive change to course content (normally either a 25% increase to the normative course hours or a 35% decrease in the normative course hours). When substantive changes are made in a course necessitating a new course number, a revised course description and revised course learning requirements will be necessary as well. Contact your departmental course loader to request a new course number.