



GENERAL EDUCATION POLICY

Approved by: Academic Coordinating Committee

Authorizer: Executive Director, Academic Administration

Reference Code: A15_V2

Effective Date: 4/29/2009

POLICY STATEMENT:

The design, development and delivery of General Education at Conestoga will adhere to the Minister's Binding Policy Directive 3.0 Framework for Programs of instruction, Appendix C: General Education Requirement.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to all College General Education courses (elective and/or specified), and to applicable Ontario College Certificate, Ontario College Diploma, and Ontario College Advanced Diploma programs.

DEFINITIONS:

Course:

A distinct and discrete teaching and learning framework, containing content that has been approved by an expert source, usually structured to be delivered over an identified period of time, with measurable learning outcomes, and formal student valuation.

Credentials Validation Service:

The Credential Validation Service (CVS) provides timely validation of programs of instruction to the colleges. The CVS service is consistent with the Minister of Training, Colleges and University's Binding Policy Directive, Framework for Programs of Instruction.

Curriculum:

A plan for learning that is coordinated and articulated in a manner designed to result in the achievement by students of specific knowledge and skills and the application of this knowledge. Curriculum refers to the content (the material to be learned), the actions and resources involved in teaching and learning, and processes for evaluating the attainment of educational objectives.

General Education Course:

Is a course within the program that engages students in learning that exposes them to at least one of the five themes outside their program of study.

Learning Outcomes:

Represent culminating demonstrations of learning and achievement. In addition, course based learning outcomes are interrelated and cannot be viewed in isolation of one another. As such, they should be viewed as a comprehensive whole for the program. They describe performances that demonstrate that significant integrated learning by graduates of the program has been achieved and verified. – Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities, “Published College Program Standards.” Learning outcomes can also be referred as ‘graduate attributes’, in terms of the knowledge, values, and skills possessed and demonstrated by graduates of degree programs.

MTCU:

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

PLAR:

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition.

Program:

A series of courses, grouped together in some identifiable manner, designed to achieve identified learning outcomes, and approved by the Board of Governors and/or other external bodies.

Specified General Education Course(s):

A specified General Education course(s) must meet, at minimum, one of the 5 themes: Arts in Society, Civic Life, Social and Cultural Understanding, Personal Understanding, and Science and Technology, as designated by MTCU in the Framework for Programs of Instruction, Minister’s Binding Policy Directive and must be outside of the vocational / core field of study in a program but may be designated as a required course in the program.

Vocational Learning Outcomes:

Measurable, definable changes in learner knowledge, skills, or values, as stipulated by the MTCU.

POLICY ELABORATION:

The purpose of General Education in the Ontario college system is to contribute to the development of citizens who are conscious of the diversity, complexity, and richness of the

human experience; who are able to establish meaning through this consciousness; and, who, as a result, are able to contribute thoughtfully, creatively, and positively to the society in which they live and work.

General Education strengthens students' generic skills, such as critical analysis, problem solving, and communication, in the context of an exploration of topics with broad-based personal and/or societal importance.¹ It is understood the discrete courses developed and offered to deliver General Education will include measurable outcomes that provide evidence of student achievement. Typically, students' achievement is demonstrated by their ability to apply these specific learning experiences to a broader understanding of the themes under study.

Compliance with the Policy:

Postsecondary programs at Conestoga College will comply with MTCU and the Ontario College Liberal Arts and Sciences Council policies. These learning opportunities would normally be delivered using a combination of specified and elective requirements as follows:

General Education Requirement	Program Credential				
	Conestoga College Certificate*	Ontario College Certificate*	Ontario College Diploma	Ontario College Advanced Diploma	Ontario College Graduate Certificate
Number of courses required	Not required	Encouraged but not required	3 - 5	3 - 5	Not required
Courses that may be specified	Not required	0	2	2	Not required

*Although it is not required it is recommended for consideration.

Transfer of Academic Credit/PLAR for General Education Courses:

For specified courses, the granting of transfer of credit will be based on the successful prior completion of a course covering the same theme and meeting similar course learning requirements. The course Chair will be responsible for assessing applications for transfer of credit.

Students who apply for transfer of academic credit must still meet the General Education breadth requirements. The General Education courses must cover the number of themes identified for their program credential. If all previous General Education courses have been only

¹ Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Framework: Framework for Programs of Instruction, pp. 21, Revised July 31, 2009.

one theme, the student will be required to take one or more General Education courses to achieve the theme breadth.

REFERENCES:

1. Program Development and Revision Policy/Procedures
2. OCAAT – CVS Credentials Framework: Appendix A in the Minister’s Binding Policy Directive Framework for Programs of Instruction
3. Minister’s Binding Policy Directive 3.0 Framework for Programs of Instruction, Appendix C: General Education Requirement
4. General Education Procedure

REVISION LOG:

Revision Date	Summary of Changes
7 April 2009	Approved – Academic Forum
15 April 2009	Approved – Policies and Procedures Committee
29 April 2009	Approved – Academic Coordinating Committee
27 January 2014	Approved – Academic Forum
4 February 2014	Approved – Policy and Procedure Committee
2 April 2014	Approved – Academic Coordinating Committee

Next Review Date: Academic Year 2015/2016