

Program Development and Change

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Category:	Education
Approving Body:	Board of Governors
Executive Division:	Education
Department Responsible:	Education Council
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Policy Statement

As authorized by the *BC College and Institute Act*, BCIT offers a wide variety of programs.

This policy reflects the Institute’s intent to balance the need to be responsive to those involved in program development and change, while meeting stakeholders’ expectations for quality programming.

BCIT sets standards and criteria regarding how it awards credentials, in order to:

- Ensure high quality programming
- Ensure BCIT’s credentials meet the needs of its diverse stakeholders
- Ensure BCIT’s credentials are recognized and well regarded
- Ensure BCIT’s credentials are consistent and of appropriate rigour

Purpose of Policy

This policy acts in support of the Institute’s Strategic Plan, enabling BCIT to achieve its goals and objectives—sustaining quality of education and the ultimate success of its students.

The purposes of this policy are to:

- Communicate the criteria for BCIT credentials
- Establish and communicate educational standards
- Improve student mobility and laddering through recognized and well regarded credentials
- Establish the duties and responsibilities of the various BCIT employees involved in program development and change
- Guide the development of new programs and the revisions (major and minor) of existing programs.

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Application of this Policy

This policy applies to BCIT employees involved in the development and approval of BCIT programs and credentials.

Related Documents and Legislation

BC Ministry of Advanced Education:

- *BC Colleges and Institutes Act*
- BC Degree Quality Assessment Board Guidelines and Criteria

BCIT:

- Education Council bylaws
- BCIT program approval timelines
- BCIT Program Change Form database
- BCIT Learning and Teaching Centre guidelines
- Education Council-approved proposal templates

Definitions

Definitions that apply to Education Council policies are contained in Policy 5100, Glossary of Educational Policy Terms.

Guiding Principles

- Programs serve a defined need within the provincial economy
- Programs are viable and sustainable
- Programs reflect current and emerging technologies and industry practice
- Programs are developed and adapted to address changing career opportunities
- Programs are developed through a supportive, collaborative process
- Programs reflect innovative, quality program development that addresses changing environmental trends, incorporates interdisciplinary programming, fosters a world view, and produces graduates who excel in their roles as practitioners, leaders, and citizens.

Credentialing of BCIT Programs

BCIT credentials represent learning outcomes (standards) as described in this policy and accompanying procedure. The table below contains a complete list of BCIT credential types, and provides guidance on the criteria for these credentials. Its use helps program developers to achieve consistency in educational standards, and improves student mobility.

Changes to credential types offered, and changes to learning criteria associated with the credentials are approved by Education Council.

For BCIT-delivered programs that do not receive BCIT credentials, decisions regarding which programs to offer are made by the relevant dean in consultation with the VP Education, Research and International. (Examples include industry credentials, custom training, sectoral partnership training, non-credit programs, programs offered under service contract, etc.)

Credential Types and Credits

Credential Type	Credits (minimum)	Entrance Requirements (minimum) ¹	Equivalent Duration (terms) ²	Rigour/level of study ³	Final Internal Approval ⁴
Industry Partnership Certificate	15	Policy 5003 Admissions	variable	variable	VP Education, Research & International
Associate Certificate	21	Policy 5003 Admissions	One	First year post-secondary	Education Council and Board of Governors
Certificate	45	High School or equivalent	Two	First year post-secondary	Education Council and Board of Governors
Diploma	110	High School or equivalent	Four	First and second year post-secondary or higher	Education Council and Board of Governors
Advanced Certificate	24	Diploma or degree or equivalent	One or more	Third year post-secondary or higher	Education Council and Board of Governors
Advanced Diploma	45	Diploma or degree or equivalent	Two or more	Third year post-secondary or higher	Education Council and Board of Governors
Bachelor's Degree (Business Administration, Engineering, Science, Science in Nursing, Technology)	Diploma equivalent + 60 upper level credits	High school Degree completion programs require diploma or degree or equivalent.	Eight Degree completion programs are four terms.	First through fourth year post-secondary. Degree completion programs are at third and fourth year post-secondary.	Education Council and Board of Governors
Graduate Certificate	15	Bachelor's degree	One or more	Graduate level	Education Council and Board of Governors
Master's Degree	30	Bachelor's degree	Two or more	Graduate level	Education Council and Board of Governors

- 1- Entrance requirements provide guidance on the ability of students entering a program. The formal admission criteria for all BCIT programs are defined in Policy 5003 Admissions.
- 2- A term is equivalent to 15-20 weeks of full-time study. Programs can set the delivery schedule and format that is best suited for the program.
- 3- Please refer to credential standards in procedure 5401-PR1 for more detail and guidance on the expected rigour of BCIT credentials.
- 4- Final approval for Bachelor and Masters degrees is by the Minister of Advanced Education.

International Partnership Credential

An International Partnership Credential results from the modification of an existing BCIT credential such that the credential can be offered in partnership with an international partner. The development of international credentials must follow the approval process for the type of credential being proposed.

Statement of Completion and Statement of Attendance

Statements of completion or attendance are awarded for the completion of a course or group of courses that do not lead to a further level of certification or that comprise no more than 50% of a BCIT credential. A statement of completion is used when the course or group of courses have a formal evaluation procedure in place. A statement of attendance is used when there is no formal evaluation to measure student achievement. All statements of completion and attendance shall be approved by the Dean. All statements shall be signed by the Associate Dean or Dean responsible for the program area or their designate. If an external agency requires the use of a different name for the statement other than completion or attendance in order that it is recognized by that agency, the Dean may approve the use of that alternative name.

Credential Standards

By the end of a BCIT Diploma, Bachelor's Degree, or Master's Degree program, graduates are expected to achieve specific competencies and skills (standards) within the following six areas:

1. Depth and Breadth of Knowledge
2. Knowledge of Methodologies and Research
3. Application of Knowledge
4. Communication Skills
5. Awareness of Limits of Knowledge
6. Professional Capacity / Autonomy

Procedure 5401-PR1 gives the details of these standards for each credential level.

Duties and Responsibilities

See the accompanying procedure 5401-PR1 for the sequence and detailed description of the steps involved in developing new programs or amending existing programs. The primary persons and groups responsible for program development and change are listed below, along with their roles. Their duties are described in greater detail in the procedure.

Board of Governors

The Board of Governors (BOG) is responsible for the final approval of all new programs (except Industry Partnership Certificates, which are approved by the VP Education, Research and International). BOG approval is required before the Degree Quality Assessment Board (DQAB) can recommend final approval of any new degrees, to the Ministry. The BOG also approves concept papers for all new degree programs.

Deans

The school deans appoint members to school working groups, who develop new programs or recommend major changes to existing programs. The groups are appointed on a case-by-case basis.

Deans analyze proposed program and course changes to determine whether any areas of the Institute may be affected by such changes, and must conduct adequate consultation, including bringing forward new programs to the Deans' Council for discussion. Deans may direct the school working groups to halt development or proceed.

Duties and Responsibilities

Deans approve all program and course changes within their school. Deans receive reports from their SQC and either refer the reports to the school working group to make changes, or approve and forward all proposed changes to the Office of the VP Education, Research and International for the next level of approval.

Deans' Council

The Deans' Council reviews the concept paper for new programs, for alignment with BCIT's Strategic Plan, impact on their programming, and to explore opportunities for interdisciplinary programming.

Degree Quality Assessment Board

In the case of master's and bachelor's degree programs, the Office of the VP Education, Research and International submits the full proposal to the Ministry of Education's Degree Quality Assessment Board (DQAB).

The DQAB will review all submissions against specific criteria. Beyond its own review, the DQAB may also choose to establish an expert panel.

Education Council

Education Council approves major changes to existing programs, and all new program proposals (except Industry Partnership Certificates, which are approved by the VP Education, Research and International). After Education Council approval, new programs are forwarded to the Board of Governors for final approval. All degrees must also be approved by the Ministry of Advanced Education by way of the DQAB.

Education Council Programming Committee

The Education Council Programming Committee makes approval recommendations to Education Council for major changes to existing programs and all new program proposals (except Industry Partnership Certificates, which are approved by the VP Education, Research and International).

External Review Panel

The External Review Panel, established by the Office of the VP Education, Research and International, makes an independent, third-party assessment of the proposed degree program. Panel membership includes representatives from outside of BCIT with relevant expertise, including external educators, industry representatives, and two internal educators who are familiar with the program development process.

Internal Review Panel

The Internal Review Panel, appointed by the Office of the VP Education, Research and International, and composed of qualified BCIT personnel, provides a critical review of the full degree proposal before it is sent to the Office of the VP Education, Research and International. This panel may send a proposal back to the school working group for further refinement or major revisions.

Learning and Teaching Centre

The Learning and Teaching Centre is responsible for maintaining curriculum guidelines and proposal templates for new program development and program changes. Working with the schools, Instructional Development Consultants provide educational consultation on program design and guide the development of proposals.

Ministry of Advanced Education

The Ministry of Advanced Education has overall responsibility for post-secondary education in the province of British Columbia, and is guided by the *University Act, College and Institute Act*,

Duties and Responsibilities

and *Degree Authorization Act*, among others. With respect to program approval, the Ministry has delegated responsibility to the Institute's BOG for all non-degree programs, and to the DQAB for all degree programs.

Office of the VP Education, Research, and International

The Office of the VP Education, Research and International, facilitates and supports the development and approval of all new program proposals through the various review bodies at BCIT and the Ministry of Advanced Education as appropriate. The Office is the key liaison between the program area and the Ministry of Advanced Education. This role also provides advice to the Internal Review Panel, and facilitates the External Review Panel as appropriate.

Furthermore, the Office of the VP Education, Research and International:

- Approves all major program changes and all new programs for submission to Education Council;
- Approves all minor program changes;
- Solicits input from the Stakeholders and Operational and Service Groups to identify and resolve potential operational and implementation issues with new program proposals;
- Cooperates with the school working group to post the full proposal (excluding appendices) for 30 days on the Ministry's Post-Secondary Institutional Proposal System (PSIPS) website for peer review by other post-secondary institutions in BC. The program area is required to respond to all comments on-line following the 30-day posting.

Operational and Service Groups

The Office of the VP Education, Research, and International organizes and facilitates the Operational and Service Groups meeting to review the program proposal. Here, the operational and service groups access the detailed information they need to assist in the implementation of the program. This meeting also provides an opportunity for these groups to raise issues or ask questions. The school program champion provides follow-up in answer to any such concerns. The operational and service groups also review proposed major changes to existing programs.

School Quality Committee

Each school quality committee (SQC) reviews proposals for new program development and any major program changes within its school, and makes recommendations to the dean in a report.

School Working Groups

School working groups are responsible for program development, on behalf of their respective schools. For each school, the goals stated in the school's operational plan guide the work of this group. See procedure for the composition of the group, and related roles. See Learning and Teaching Centre guidelines and Education Council templates for additional reference.

Stakeholders' Group

The Office of the VP Education, Research and International invites stakeholders from within the BCIT community to an information meeting related to the development of a new program. Stakeholders from other schools, from operational groups, and service departments of BCIT have an opportunity to hear further detail about the proposed program, its intent, general content, and its proposed implementation schedule. The stakeholders assist in resolving any potential operational and implementation issues.

Procedures Associated With This Policy

5401-PR1, Program Development and Change Process

Amendment History

Policy 5004 was retired in 2011; this Policy 5401 is one of a series of policies and procedures created to replace it.

1. Created 2011 Nov 22

Scheduled Review Date

2016 Nov 1