

## Background and Rationale

Post-secondary institutions – through learning environment factors like program and course design, curriculum, assessment, physical spaces, and instructor themselves – can impact students’ stress levels, sense of connection, and meaningful engagement in their educational experience<sup>1</sup> (Stanton, 2019).



Supporting faculty and staff to proactively consider the interconnections between Indigenization, inclusion, diversity, equity, accessibility, sustainability, and student well-being (IDEAS) in program development/change and review enhances the overall experience for both instructors and learners. This approach of meeting students where they are already at (in the classroom) fosters enhanced retention, learning, and satisfaction.

## Purpose

To provide guiding questions and examples for Self-Study Teams to consider how Indigenization, student well-being, equity, universal accessibility, and sustainability are currently reflected in the program or proposed program, and create recommendations for how changes could be made to the program that would champion these aspects.

**Note: Relevant guiding questions and examples for curriculum review will be specified with an asterisk (\*).** This approach recognizes potential synergies and facilitates a comprehensive approach to overlapping elements.

## Icon Legend and Key Terms

Icon	Description
	The Copper Shield indicates guiding questions and examples that align with <a href="#">BCIT’s Indigenous Vision</a> and address the <a href="#">Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) Calls to Action</a>
	The globe indicates guiding questions and examples that align with the <a href="#">BCIT Sustainability Vision</a> . BCIT defines sustainability as “enabling people to lead socially just lives within ecological limits”.

**Equity-deserving groups** refers to individuals from communities that have and continue to experience significant barriers to full participation. For the purposes of this document, these

groups may include people with disabilities, individuals from racialized communities, international students, women and gender diverse people, and 2SLGBTQI+ folks.

## Scope

It is acknowledged that BCIT provides high quality, recognized, and appropriately rigorous programming to meet the needs of our diverse stakeholders. This document should be interpreted and implemented in alignment with Ministry guidelines, existing policies, and resources.

It is not expected that any one program addresses **every** one of the guiding questions and examples below in a single program review, change, or development. The goal is to contribute to a supportive institutional environment.

Based on BCIT’s Sustainability Vision, programs are encouraged to prioritize Indigenization and equity efforts before delving into broader aspects of sustainability (i.e. fair and equitable access to resources, distribution of costs and benefits associated with economic activities, and protection of natural habitat including climate stability and ecosystem regeneration).

## Alignment with BCIT’s Strategic Commitments

These considerations align with BCIT’s commitment to support learner success as outlined in the Strategic Plan and three of BCIT’s values: championing diversity and inclusion, engaging with respect and pursuing collaboration. They also align with the [Learning and Teaching Framework](#); [Indigenous Vision](#), [Anti-Racism Framework](#), and [Sustainability Vision](#). This document supports inclusive and accessible guiding principles in Policy 5401 – Program Development and Credentials, fostering student agency and well-being.

## Land Acknowledgement

This document was created on the unceded traditional territories of the Coast Salish Nations of [xwməθkwəy̓əm](#) (Musqueam), [Skwxwú7mesh](#) (Squamish), and [səlilwətaʔ](#) (Tseil-Waututh). As this guiding document discusses aspects of the teaching and learning experience, we must responsibly consider how program structures can be decolonized and intentionally include Indigenous ways of knowing.

<sup>1</sup> Stanton, A. (2019). *Rationale for Well-being in Learning Environments*. Retrieved from <https://www.sfu.ca/healthycommunity/learningenvironments/rationale.html>

Template Section	Guiding Questions	Examples (Suggested Ideas for Implementation)
<p><b>1. Curriculum</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is Indigenous content embedded into curriculum? * </li> <li>How can we ensure knowledge and skills taught in the program are essential (e.g. “must have” rather than “nice-to-have” elements<sup>2</sup>)?</li> <li>How can for-credit or required courses include content that is relevant for holistic personal and professional success?</li> <li>How can the de-colonization of curriculum be considered throughout the program?<sup>3</sup>* </li> <li>How can program goals and courses address sustainability? * </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examine if program goals and/or specific courses include Indigenous content. Consider what percentage of the curriculum includes Indigenous content, and identify key barriers for inclusion of content (e.g. the Program may not be aware of the location and use of available resources). </li> <li>Ensure program goals are clear and directly tie to all course learning outcomes. *</li> <li>Confirm if the program has a number of credits comparable to other similar programs in the province, and/or be able to explain why it is higher.</li> <li>Establish program goals about equity, inclusion, and well-being and use BCIT educational resources for credit (e.g. <a href="#">Indigenous Awareness</a>, <a href="#">Unconscious Bias</a>, <a href="#">Anti-Racism</a>, <a href="#">Relearning Gender</a>, <a href="#">Sexual Violence Prevention</a>).</li> <li>Examine the diversity of authors, replace outdated materials, and ensure inclusivity of physical ability and neurodiversity considerations throughout the program*.</li> <li>Outline how <a href="#">programs’ activities</a> and industry impacts specific planetary boundaries, such as climate change, chemical pollutants, biodiversity loss, and fresh water use. </li> <li>Articulate how industries or activities related to the Program consider and implement economic considerations for advancing social justice, such as ethically sourcing, fair trade practices, and local self-determination. </li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Admission requirements</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has this program had Indigenous and equity-deserving students in the past? If no, what are some potential reasons and barriers?  </li> <li>Has the program considered whether the admission requirements potentially introduce barriers to Indigenous students? </li> <li>Does the program open for Indigenous student enrolment prior to general open registration? </li> <li>How has your admissions process acknowledged that students have diverse identities, backgrounds, and experiences that may have impacted their previous academic performance?</li> <li>How can students re-enter the program, should they require an extended leave?</li> <li>Are there pathways for students to transfer from other institutions or programs?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore if admission requirements for volunteer hours is perceived to exclude non-formal volunteering, such as cultural settings. </li> <li>Designate priority seating for Indigenous students in the program. </li> <li>Reassess the relevance of program prerequisites and distinguish between essential and optional admission requirements.</li> <li>Consider a holistic approach to the admission process. Create an equitable and inclusive applicant review process, considering special circumstances, achievements and goals.</li> <li>Simplify the process for the Program to assess prior learning and granting recognition for mastered learning outcomes (see <a href="#">Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition</a>).</li> <li>Implement a readiness assessment for foundational skills in the program, and offer bridging courses for those who may need additional support.</li> <li>Verify that the program has courses articulated with other institutions and listed on the <a href="#">BC Transfer Guide</a>.</li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> University of Waterloo, Centre for Teaching Excellence, [Understanding Essential Requirements](#)

<sup>3</sup> BCcampus, [Decolonizing the Engineering Curriculum, Introduction to Colonization](#)

Template Section	Guiding Questions	Examples (Suggested Ideas for Implementation)
<p><b>3. Delivery modes</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there opportunities for the program to be offered in a format (e.g. online, hybrid, or delivered at the Indigenous community) to allow for greater flexibility and access for Indigenous students? 🗳️</li> <li>• How can the Program examine distinct considerations for each delivery mode (online, in-person, hybrid, or hyflex), including factors like the user interface and instructor-student interactions?</li> <li>• As in-person learning may present challenges for students, how can Program courses facilitate alternate forms of asynchronous (e.g. hybrid, online) participation and learning?</li> <li>• How can the Program offer experiential learning opportunities that promote sustainability-informed educational delivery? 🌱</li> <li>• How can the materials, products, or technologies used to deliver the program and implement learning activities either reduce the need for material inputs, or originate from sustainably managed and ethically sourced materials? ♻️</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish Program pathways for students to scaffold credentials, or move nimbly between full-time and flexible learning with minimal impact on learning (for students who may need a reduced course load due to financial or personal circumstances).</li> <li>• When selecting the mode of delivery for Program courses, consider: 1) Key student demographics (age, gender, working, caregiving responsibilities); 2) Preferred teaching approaches; 3) Content and skills to be taught; and 4) Resources available.<sup>4</sup></li> <li>• Build a collaborative repository of open educational materials (videos, audio) for faculty to incorporate into their course content. *</li> <li>• Invest in technology that allows learners to demonstrate and/or practice skills remotely as appropriate.</li> <li>• Leverage BCIT campuses as sustainability <a href="#">living labs</a>, explore nature, visit resource extraction/restoration sites, collaborate with local businesses or communities, or engage in online projects with global communities. 🌐</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methodologies</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do teaching methodologies and assessments consider Indigenous knowledges? 🗳️</li> <li>• Has the program considered whether the number of assessments in each course is reasonable for both effectively measuring learning outcomes and considering student well-being?</li> <li>• How can students be taught and assessed in a manner accessible to those with various learning needs?</li> <li>• How can <a href="#">Universal Design for Learning Guidelines</a> be incorporated in Program processes to demonstrate clear support and commitment?<sup>5</sup></li> <li>• Do teaching, learning and assessment methodologies take advantage of BCIT campuses as living labs for education delivery, self-directed learning, skills development and practice? 🌐</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore ways of engaging that promotes holistic well being and experiential learning. Incorporate circle processes in the classroom to build class community, acknowledge and address misrepresentation stereotypes in texts or teaching materials, note where material is not inclusive, and utilize reflective journals as form of assessment. 🗳️*</li> <li>• Encourage flexibility in the program delivery and assessment of student skills (e.g. video tutorials, modelling tasks, using simulator, having student demonstrate task). *</li> <li>• Provide opportunity for choice on the part of the student (e.g. electives; senior specializations or streams, etc.).</li> <li>• Determine if any Program assessment guidelines and practices could potentially disadvantage equity-deserving students. Encourage the use of methodologies that recognize diverse cultural perspectives and/or lived experiences. 🌐</li> </ul>

<sup>4</sup> BCcampus, [Teaching in a Digital Age – 9.3 Which mode? Student needs](#)







<sup>5</sup> [HEQCO's Dialogues on Universal Design for Learning: Finding Common Ground and Key Recommendations from the Sector – Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario](#)

Template Section	Guiding Questions	Examples (Suggested Ideas for Implementation)
<p><b>5. Faculty/Department</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there opportunities and/or barriers for hiring Indigenous faculty or inviting Indigenous guest speakers? 🗨️</li> <li>• Have all faculty taken opportunities to educate themselves by taking a course or participating in other Professional Development to enhance their Indigenous knowledge? (e.g. <a href="#">Indigenous 101</a>) 🗨️</li> <li>• How can faculty be supported in increasing their collective competency and confidence in: 1) creating an inclusive and respectful learning environment, and 2) responding to early warning signs of mental health concerns?</li> <li>• How is faculty well-being, mental health, and sense of belonging supported or challenged?</li> <li>• Have all faculty taken opportunities to learn more about how sustainability affects, or is affected by, their course content? ♿️</li> <li>• How do the proposed programs and/or curriculum align with existing School or Department-level action plans or objectives related to sustainability and the environment? ♿️</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During Departmental meetings, initiate discussion regarding the integration of the <a href="#">Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action</a> into the program, and/or the development of School or Department level action plan (a Reconciliation Action Plan Template is available for departments to use). 🗨️</li> <li>• Identify opportunities to attract and retain Indigenous faculty. Prioritize reciprocity when inviting guest speakers from Indigenous and equity-deserving groups. 🗨️ ♿️</li> <li>• Provide accessibility, mental health, well-being and equity related resources when onboarding faculty and staff.</li> <li>• Structure approach for faculty and staff to participate in learning opportunities for anti-racism, unconscious bias, universal design, and building mental health literacy during working hours. Refer to the Employee Learning Hub for available courses.</li> <li>• Consider how intersecting identities and workload (including invisible service areas<sup>6</sup>) influences faculty and staff needs. Include well-being, mental health, and equity themes in ongoing meetings, internal communication, and annual review processes.<sup>7</sup></li> </ul>
<p><b>6. Enrolment, Attrition and Graduation Trends</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the Indigenous student enrolment in the program? Can those numbers be improved? 🗨️</li> <li>• Are there any known Indigenous student attrition or graduation patterns to address? 🗨️</li> <li>• How can the program expectations (course availability and accessibility) be streamlined and realistic to take into consideration the other life experiences and obligations students may have while studying?</li> <li>• What is being done to identify barriers to student success, particularly for equity-deserving students? ♿️</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examine if the Program is being marketed to Indigenous communities. Consider featuring Indigenous alumni in your program information posters brochures or website. 🗨️</li> <li>• Develop a plan to identify and address attrition or graduation issues. Assess if faculty are aware of Indigenous resources on campus available to support Indigenous students. 🗨️</li> <li>• Reduce additional expenses and costs (e.g. choosing free or affordable course texts; making field trips free of charge; provide paid employment opportunities tied to the Program of study)</li> <li>• Increase allowable number of absences or opportunities to make up for an absence, except where participation levels are essential. Consider the provision of audio-recording and sharing of class notes to limit the impact of absences<sup>8</sup>.</li> </ul>

<sup>6</sup> Instructors from equity deserving groups are called upon to do invisible or unrewarded diversity, mentoring and/or service work. For more information, refer to [American Council for Education's Equity-Minded Faculty Workloads: What We Can and Should Do Now](#) (2022)

<sup>7</sup> University of British Columbia, [Activate Well-being Toolkit](#)

<sup>8</sup> Mitchell Stoddard, Centre for Accessible Learning (personal communication, August 24, 2021)





Template Section	Guiding Questions	Examples (Suggested Ideas for Implementation)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create multiple means for students to contact the program with their needs (e.g. connect with Set Reps, invite students to Program Advisory Committees to provide feedback, email, etc.)</li> <li>• Conduct an anonymous survey to identify and remove barriers. Determine a plan to identify and address issues through appropriately resourced actions. </li> </ul>
<b>7. Further Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where further education in the field is possible, are there clear and transparent pathways for how students may continue their education at BCIT or elsewhere?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and communicate the various pathways that a student can pursue further academic or professional certification after graduation.</li> <li>• Facilitate individual or group career mentorship opportunities throughout the Program (e.g. students are connected with upper year peers, industry professionals, or alumni).</li> </ul>
<b>8. Employment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will graduates of the program work with or in Indigenous communities, or make decisions that will affect Indigenous communities? </li> <li>• Are there supports for Indigenous students for transitioning into the workforce? </li> <li>• How are expectations and code of conduct during work-integrated learning (WIL) experiences upheld from the employer and learner?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure graduates are prepared to be successful with knowledge of Indigenous culture. </li> <li>• Provide resources to faculty and/or graduates such as the <a href="#">TRC Calls to Action</a>, <a href="#">Work BC Career Guide for Indigenous People</a>, <a href="#">CERIC (5 key ways to enhance Indigenous student career supports in post-secondary)</a> and <a href="#">Inspire (Navigating Two Worlds: Paths to Indigenous Career Success)</a>. </li> <li>• Provide explicit instruction, policies and procedures that safeguard student well-being before they participate in WIL (e.g. training on rights as employees, systems to support if they are not protected).</li> <li>• Ensure guidelines and expectations for industry partners are accessible to employers and communicated to them before participation (e.g. Website, supervisor guide, etc.).</li> <li>• Design low stakes formative practice and simulations before going into industry. *</li> </ul>
<b>9. Skills Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If graduates will be working with Indigenous communities, are there any additional skills that need to be developed? </li> <li>• How does the program actively address the development and growth of social and emotional learning skills, specifically with a focus on future career success?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schedule courses in the Program to allow students to have more time for:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Industry events and access to Student Services</li> <li>○ Opportunities to study, synthesize concepts, and collaborate with each other during weekdays<sup>9</sup></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Connect program goals to professional ethics, as well as the exploration and application of personal values in the respective field.</li> <li>• Provide and scaffold explicit instruction about self-advocacy, boundary setting, and burnout prevention at the beginning of and throughout the program.</li> </ul>

<sup>9</sup> BCIT Diploma in Medical Laboratory Science (Major Change)

Template Section	Guiding Questions	Examples (Suggested Ideas for Implementation)
<p><b>10. Services, Resources and Facilities</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the program aware of the resources and services in place for Indigenous students at BCIT (e.g. the Gathering Place), and does the program help guide and direct Indigenous students to these resources? 🗺️</li> <li>Are there program-specific supports in place for Indigenous and equity-deserving student success and well-being? 🗺️ 🧠</li> <li>Where it is within the control of the program, have well-being, accessibility, and sustainability been taken into consideration when designing learning and working spaces? 🧠</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide information and links to Institute resources to support Indigenous and equity-deserving students on the Program or department website 🗺️ 🧠</li> <li>Consider Program specific supports for Indigenous and equity-deserving students, such as bursaries or grants to offset fees, gifts cards to allow purchase of additional and speciality equipment (e.g. steel toed boots, lab coats, brail or audio books, prescription safety glasses, etc.). 🗺️ 🧠</li> <li>Create opportunities for <a href="#">well-being within the physical environment</a> (e.g. provide restorative or relaxation spaces<sup>10</sup>; nature access indoors; opportunities for activity and exertion).</li> <li>Look for opportunities for the program to enhance and improve <a href="#">universal design of physical spaces that students and faculty use</a> (e.g. access to facilities, printed materials, computers, and electronic resources for people with disabilities; aisles are wide and clear of obstructions).</li> <li>Engage with other BCIT service delivery units to enhance the student learning environment and to leverage campuses as living labs of sustainability. 🧠</li> </ul>
<p><b>11. Program Relationships and Connections</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are there opportunities to partner with Indigenous and equity-deserving communities in the delivery or design of curriculum? * 🗺️ 🧠</li> <li>Is there Indigenous and equity-deserving group representation on the Program Advisory Committee (PAC)? 🗺️ 🧠</li> <li>How can your Program provide opportunities for public demonstrations of competence or program-level takeaways<sup>11</sup>?</li> <li>How can your Program amplify the work of existing campus champions for well-being, equity, and sustainability? 🧠</li> <li>How can your program help students engage with professional communities of practice?</li> <li>How can programs influence well-being, equity, and sustainability among industry and community partners, as well as the broader sector? 🧠</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build relationships and meaningfully partner with Indigenous and equity-deserving communities in the teaching or design of curriculum. * 🗺️ 🧠</li> <li>Invite representation from Indigenous, equity-deserving groups, and sustainability organizations within the industry served by the program on the PAC. 🗺️ 🧠</li> <li>Partner with industry related case competitions, simulations, capstone projects, or other culminating experience that integrates and applies what students have learned.</li> <li>Connect with and determine how to meaningfully amplify current efforts of entry programs for equity-deserving groups, such as Trades Discovery and Trades Discovery for Women Program.</li> <li>Identify professional communities related to your program and encourage students to become involved in the work/activities of such communities.</li> <li>Establish opportunities for interdisciplinary learning activities that will prepare your students to work productively with related disciplines. *</li> </ul>

<sup>10</sup> For example, BCIT Fish, Wildlife and Recreation and Forest and Natural Areas Management Programs have a study/relaxation space that is painted like a log cabin, has a wilderness view, and includes sofas.

<sup>11</sup> [High-Impact Practices | AAC&U \(aacu.org\)](https://www.aacu.org/high-impact-practices)

Template Section	Guiding Questions	Examples (Suggested Ideas for Implementation)
<b>12. General</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the program use land acknowledgments at the beginning of a course? *  </li> <li>How can program review participants self-reflect on the impact of implicit bias in teaching, learning, and assessment?</li> <li>How can program review changes remain student centred, and address faculty concerns?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refer to the BCIT Indigenous Initiatives <a href="#">website</a> or this <a href="#">Native Land resource</a> for the relevant land acknowledgement.  </li> <li>Encourage the Self-Study Team to complete the Unconscious Bias Training (via the <a href="#">Employee Learning Hub</a>) and lead a group reflection.</li> <li>Communicate the thorough evaluation and reasoning behind any course load reductions, such as supporting Indigenization efforts, reducing student burnout, or meeting Accreditation standards.</li> </ul>

**Remember: Consultation with BCIT’s Indigenous Initiatives and Partnerships, Respect, Diversity and Inclusion, Accessibility, Sustainability Office, and/or Student Success team is encouraged, and can help with a program’s self-reflection or intended direction.**

Department	Email
Indigenous Initiatives and Partnerships	<a href="mailto:gathering_place@bcit.ca">gathering_place@bcit.ca</a>
Respect, Diversity, and Inclusion	<a href="mailto:rdi@bcit.ca">rdi@bcit.ca</a>
Accessibility Services	<a href="mailto:accessibility@bcit.ca">accessibility@bcit.ca</a>
Sustainability Office	<a href="mailto:sustainability@bcit.ca">sustainability@bcit.ca</a>
Student Life Office	<a href="mailto:student_life@bcit.ca">student_life@bcit.ca</a>
Learning & Teaching Centre	<a href="mailto:bcit_ltcinfo@bcit.ca">bcit_ltcinfo@bcit.ca</a>

### Acknowledgements

This guide was developed through a collaborative process with Academic Planning and Quality Assurance; Indigenous Initiatives and Partnerships; the Learning and Teaching Centre; Respect, Diversity, and Inclusion; Student Success, and the Sustainability Office. It is a living document that will be modified annually. To provide additions or feedback, please email Yuna Chen at [student\\_life@bcit.ca](mailto:student_life@bcit.ca).

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