



Council of Ministers of Education, Canada
Conseil des ministres de l'Éducation (Canada)

**Report of the CMEC
Working Group on
Credit Transfer**

2008

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Prepared for
The Committee of Postsecondary ADMs (PSADM)
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By

The CMEC Working Group on Credit Transfer

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2008 CMEC Jurisdictional Update on Activities Related to Credit Transfer

Introduction

In October 2001, the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) revisited the issue of credit transfer between colleges and universities and among provinces and territories. In April 2002, ministers established the CMEC Working Group on Credit Transfer to develop pan-Canadian strategies. This is the second update on jurisdictional activities related to credit transfer since the working group was established.

Recommended Strategy

In October 2002, CMEC approved a strategy to improve credit transfer across Canada. Given the substantial differences in credit transfer systems and postsecondary structures among provinces and territories, it was agreed that a pan-Canadian system of credit transfer should be built up over time, through an initial focus on developing and enhancing strong provincial/territorial transfer systems. Each province/territory committed to reviewing its current transfer arrangements and to developing a framework for action to enhance its credit transfer system according to its own priorities over the period 2002 to 2005.

As part of the strategy, CMEC endorsed and released a *Ministerial Statement on Credit Transfer in Canada* that sets out expectations for credit transfers to guide institutions, students, and governments (Appendix I). On the recommendation of members of the Committee of Postsecondary ADMs, this statement has recently be reviewed and revised and will be resubmitted for ministerial approval.

This report provides a summary of the actions undertaken by working group member jurisdictions.

Current Status

A key attribute of the approved recommendations was the setting of provincial/territorial objectives built upon jurisdictional priorities, finances, and postsecondary system structures. While recognizing the right of each jurisdiction to determine the objectives of its postsecondary education systems, CMEC urged provinces and territories to consider giving priority to strategies to improve movement between postsecondary sectors and to expand clear pathways for students by providing timely and accurate information.

Each jurisdiction has reported making progress in its credit transfer systems and mechanisms within its postsecondary sectors. One jurisdiction was able to formalize its credit transfer mechanism. Those jurisdictions that had well-developed transfer systems when this initiative began have continued to expand and enhance those systems. Others with less-developed credit transfer strategies have made either modest or significant

progress, including such achievements as the implementation or expansion of on-line transfer guides, establishment of provincial working groups and/or articulation committees, increasing the number of agreements in targeted program areas, and broader acceptance of credit transfer opportunities as a component of an accessible postsecondary education system.

Future Directions

All jurisdictions have indicated their work will continue on the credit transfer issue within their own priorities, resources, and structures over the next several years.

Alberta

Communication of Ministerial Principles

The Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer (ACAT) reviewed its principles in 2005 and made appropriate adjustments to ensure that they adhere to the pan-Canadian principles. The revised principles were approved by the council and are published publicly through the its *Policies, Principles and Procedures* document available at <http://www.acat.gov.ab.ca/pdfs/PPP.pdf>.

Adoption of Ministerial Principles

Postsecondary institutions that are members of the Alberta Transfer System commit to upholding the principles, policies, and procedures of ACAT as outlined in the document linked above.

Three-Year Framework for Action

ACAT publishes an annual three-year business plan that highlights priority areas for action to improve the Alberta Transfer System. The most recent business plan was informed through a stakeholder consultation in March 2007 on assessing and defining the role of ACAT. Council approved the 2007-10 plan that highlights five strategic priorities: enhancing learner transitions into postsecondary studies, enhancing national and international leadership, raising the profile of ACAT, developing strategies to promote the recognition of prior learning, and improving research to develop a better understanding of the transfer experience. The complete business plan may be viewed at <http://www.acat.gov.ab.ca/pdfs/BusinessPlan.pdf>.

ACAT is accountable to Alberta Advanced Education and Technology and publishes an annual report highlighting the results achieved in the previous fiscal year. The current annual report is available at <http://www.acat.gov.ab.ca/pdfs/AnnualReport.pdf>.

Highlights of Recent Results Achieved

- streamlining the process whereby institutions exchange credit transfer requests, developing a user manual and training sessions, and enhancing communication
- continually improving and enhancing the ACAT Web site and the Online Transfer Guide to make admission and transfer information more attractive and user-friendly — in 2006-07, there were approximately 5 million hits to the ACAT public Web site
- adding a First Nations postsecondary institution representative to council
- continuing with postsecondary-to-postsecondary articulation meetings in the areas of engineering, education, and biological sciences and establishing articulation in computing science and Cree language

- raising the profile of the transfer system and its benefits to learners by presenting at numerous conferences and workshops
- along with the department of AE&T, raising the awareness of prior learning assessment and recognition (PLAR) by sponsoring PLAR forums and supporting the development of a provincial PLAR framework
- revising the criteria and procedures for admission of new postsecondary institution members to the Alberta Transfer System, as well as developing processes to promote continued active membership in the system

Priority Action Areas

Several key areas that will be a priority focus for ACAT include

- enhancing the work of ACAT around admissions in partnership with institutions, and looking at opportunities for the development of common admission terminology, practices, and policies
- strengthening policies that will expand block transfer for the transfer system
- taking a leadership role in implementation of the Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition Framework
- reconsidering the notion of defining institutions as sending or receiving, given the changing roles of the postsecondary institutions and how they interact
- focusing on system enhancement through research, communication, facilitating collaborative partnerships, and establishing policies and models of best practices to guide educational institutions

ACAT also maintains the *Alberta Transfer Guide* (published annually) and the ACAT Web site, which provides learners with information on admissions and transfer. Included in the on-line and printed guides are all active transfer agreements dating back to 1993-94.

Research

ACAT has expanded upon research efforts by using data to inform and improve the system. This includes incorporating transfer-specific questions in the AE&T Graduate Outcomes Survey (see transfer student report at http://www.acat.gov.ab.ca/pdfs/grad_outcomes_survey_2003_04.pdf).

ACAT member institutions report annually on students at their institution who previously attended another institution. These annual transfer patterns reports provide an overview of mobility trends within and into Alberta postsecondary institutions. The current transfer patterns report is available at http://www.acat.gov.ab.ca/pdfs/Mobility_Tables_ReportNew.pdf.

Student focus groups are under way that will provide insight into student transfer experiences.

Working Group

ACAT strongly recommends that the CMEC Working Group on Credit Transfer continue its efforts, as it provides a valuable forum for jurisdictions to work together toward enhancing transfer opportunities across Canada.

British Columbia

Overview

The British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT) was established by the provincial government in 1989. Its mandate is to facilitate admission, articulation, and transfer arrangements among British Columbia postsecondary institutions. Specifically, the council (a) encourages institutions to develop policies and practices regarding the transferability of postsecondary credit courses so that credit granted at one institution can be applied toward credentials at other institutions and (b) examines issues concerning capacity, demand, and student mobility and recommends policies and practices related to the admission process for direct entry and transfer students. The council has no legislative or regulatory authority and is funded annually by the ministry responsible for postsecondary institutions.

Council members are selected from the education system and appointed by the minister. They strive to achieve the mandate of the council by serving the overall best interests of the system and do not formally represent any specific institution or constituency with which they are affiliated. The council carries out its work with the assistance of a number of standing committees, whose members are drawn from the postsecondary system: Transfer and Articulation Committee; Admissions Committee; Institutional Contact Persons Committee; Research Committee; and Education Planner Advisory Committee. Advisory and task-specific groups are established as needed. More information on the comprehensive work undertaken by BCCAT can be obtained on its three Web sites:

www.bccat.ca
www.bctransferguide.ca
www.educationplanner.ca

Communication/Adoption of Ministerial Principles

The BCCAT Principles and Guidelines for Transfer are consistent with the CMEC principles on credit transfer. They have been in effect in British Columbia since 1975 (although modified over time) and have formed the basis for all credit transfer arrangements in the BC Transfer System. See bccat.ca/articulation/principles.cfm.

Projects and Activities Completed in 2006-07

Each year the BC Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT) prepares a detailed work plan and at the end of the fiscal year prepares an annual report that summarizes what was achieved. Each annual report is approximately 50 pages and includes reference to completed research reports, newsletters, and related publications. Annual reports and other BCCAT publications are available on the BCCAT Web site at bccat.ca/publications.

The major activities of 2006-07 are summarized below.

BCCAT Web sites: Improvements and Harmonisation

- *Launch of new BCCAT Web site* – BCCAT continued to make improvements to its family of Web resources in 2006-07. A thoroughly redesigned organizational Web site was launched in November 2006 (BCCAT.ca). The technologies used to develop the new site were built with the idea of further expansion in the future, to enable BCCAT’s users to customize the site to their needs.
- *Personalization of BCTransferGuide.ca and EducationPlanner.ca* — MyEdPlanner was launched as a new feature in EducationPlanner.ca in November. This facility allows users to create an account, save programs to their profile, and create personal education and financial plans to help map their postsecondary goals. MyEdPlanner was extended to BCTransferGuide.ca in February 2007 to allow users, using the same account, to save their transfer searches and create their own customized BC Transfer Guide.
- *Harmonization of BCCAT Web Resources* — With the launch of the new BCCAT Web site, BCCAT also redesigned its other two Web sites, BCTransferGuide.ca and EducationPlanner.ca, to harmonize the look and feel of all three Web resources. The goal of this project was to better enable users of these Web sites to recognize BCCAT as the service provider and to provide a useful bridge across the sites for students seeking further information or resources. BCCAT continues to see increases in user traffic to these sites.

Campus 2020: BCCAT Submission

BCCAT prepared a submission to *Campus 2020: Thinking Ahead*, a system-wide consultation initiated by the Ministry of Advanced Education. This paper envisioned an optimal postsecondary system in BC and outlined five critical areas, related closely to BCCAT’s mandate, to be addressed in order to achieve that vision. The submission was published in February 2007 as a special report and is available at www.bccat.ca/pubs/BCCAT2020.pdf.

Recalibrating the BC Transfer System: Consultation Report

In 2006-07, BCCAT completed a major phase of its investigations into the question of how best to expand transfer information and determine appropriate models to address the challenges presented by the increasing complexity of the postsecondary system. A system-wide consultation carried out in 2005-06 invited feedback on a discussion paper entitled *Recalibrating the BC Transfer System*,

which explored this issue in detail. The final report is available on the Web at bccat.ca/pubs/recalibration.pdf.

Student Engagement Research

This research was carried out in conjunction with the National Survey of Student Engagement of arts and science students undertaken by the University of British Columbia in 2005. This particular study focused on BC transfer students to assess whether there were discernable, significant, or meaningful differences between the levels of engagement of British Columbia transfer students compared to direct entry students and also compared to the overall survey population.

Findings revealed that the levels of academic engagement for transfer students were higher than for direct-entry students, although levels of social engagement were not as high. The report and summary are available at bccat.ca/pubs/ubcengagement05.pdf and bccat.ca/pubs/rr_dec06.pdf, respectively.

Private Degree-Granting Institutions: Policy Review

BCCAT carried out a major review of the policy document *Policy and Processes under which a Private Degree-Granting Institution Articulates Approved Degree Programs within the BC Transfer System*, which was originally developed in 2004-05. As a result, the policy underwent substantial revisions. The revised document, retitled *Private Degree-Granting Institutions Policy*, is available on-line at bccat.ca/pubs/private.pdf.

Degree Recognition

In 2006-07, BCCAT continued to address issues pertaining to degree recognition and, in particular, concerns that graduates from British Columbia institutions that have authority to grant baccalaureate degrees but are not members of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) were not being considered for entry to graduate or professional programs by some Ontario universities. BCCAT staff published a discussion paper on this topic, which is available on-line at bccat.ca/pubs/degreerecognition.pdf. Staff members shared drafts of the paper with a variety of people working in postsecondary education inside and outside British Columbia and spoke at a pan-Canadian symposium in Toronto. As a result of this symposium and in light of other discussions on this topic, the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) developed and adopted a formal position intended to address constructively this controversial topic.

Student Mobility Research: Integration with the Student Transitions Project (STP)

BCCAT was able to make good progress in 2006-07 in building a systematic approach to data collection and reporting on student mobility. The work on student mobility research occurred as part of the Admissions Committee Work Plan and in partnership with the Student Transitions Project (STP). The STP is a collaborative effort between the Ministries of Education and Advanced Education and BC public postsecondary institutions to link data about students in the province's public postsecondary and K-12 education systems in order to answer research questions on student transitions. The STP is managed by a Steering Committee with members from the two ministries, postsecondary institutions, and BCCAT. In 2006-07, the projects in the Admissions Committee Work Plan with a focus on student mobility became part of the STP work plan.

One of the projects undertaken as part of the STP work plan represented the first study on the movement of K-12 graduates among public postsecondary institutions over a multi-year period. The project is designed to glean information on graduates, transitions, retention, dropouts, stopouts, and concurrent enrolments.

A second project was the continuation of the work done by BCCAT over the last two years of determining the number of potential transfer students in colleges, university colleges, and institutes in fall 2006 and their subsequent enrolment in 2007 in a university with transfer as the basis of admission.

Several important gains were made this year in developing a systematic approach to mobility research, which is a key long-range goal of BCCAT. First, institutional data for the BCCAT studies were collected for the first time through the regular STP submission process. Second, through the Ministry of Education (MOE), most postsecondary institutions have begun to validate personal education numbers (PENs) for applicants, which is a prerequisite for expanded applicant flow studies in the future. Third, most postsecondary institutions have changed internal processes and are submitting both registrant and applicant data several times a year to MOE for PEN validation. These developments will go a long way to ensuring regular data analysis and reporting on student mobility so that institutions and government can rely on this information for planning purposes.

Articulation Committee Companion

A revised edition of the *Articulation Committee Handbook*, retitled *The Articulation Committee Companion*, was produced in 2006-07, and the articulation section of the BCCAT Web site was completely overhauled, resulting in significantly improved access to resources and information for articulation committees.

Transfer Credit Workshop

At the request of the BC Associate Registrars and Managers Association (BCARMA), BCCAT hosted a day-long workshop on “Best Practice in Transfer Credit Administration.” This workshop was well attended and very successful. It focused on aspects of transfer credit administration of vital interest to institutions but outside the purview of BCCAT, such as transfer of credits earned outside BC.

Participation in the Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions & Transfer (PCCAT)

Since its first meeting, in June 2006, BCCAT staff members have participated in the Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions & Transfer. This body was established to develop policies and practices that promote and facilitate interprovincial admissions and transfer and includes representatives from postsecondary institutions and provincial, territorial, and federal stakeholder groups. In 2006-07, the consortium was co-chaired by Frank Gelin (Executive Director & Co-Chair, BCCAT) and Lucille Walter (Chair, ACAT). See pccat.ca for details.

BC/Alberta Transfer System Protocol

BCCAT maintains a working relationship with the Alberta Council on Admissions & Transfer (ACAT) by sharing information or seeking assistance as appropriate. Following the establishment of an interprovincial agreement between the governments of Alberta and British Columbia, BCCAT collaborated with ACAT to develop and approve a memorandum of understanding entitled the British Columbia/Alberta Transfer System Protocol. The MOU was developed by BCCAT staff and then refined based on consultation between the two agencies. The MOU was signed off by both councils and is available on-line at bccat.ca/pubs/BC-ABprotocol.pdf.

Plan of Projects and Activities for 2007-08

Each year, BCCAT completes a comprehensive work plan that is tightly linked with what was achieved (or not) in the prior year and that reflects revised priorities to address emerging issues. The plan for 2007-08 includes the following major projects and activities:

Continue with the implementation phase of “Recalibrating the BC Transfer System.” This will include preparing a summary report on what has been accomplished to date and outlining plans to address such issues in 2007-08 as

- *exploring the general issue of university-to-university transfer including a measure of its magnitude and, if substantial, the willingness of our*

universities (particularly UBC and SFU) to formalize and record articulation agreements between themselves

- *investigating the inclusion of out-of-province institutions in the BC Transfer Guide*
- *investigating the need to expand transfer agreements with BCIT*
- *exploring the circumstances under which to extend receiving institution designation to institutions who currently are designated only as sending institutions*

Coordinate articulation between public and private postsecondary institutions by

- *writing a handbook that will inform private degree-granting institutions of the norms and expectations of the BC Transfer System and providing the information they need to participate successfully in the articulation process*
- *developing supporting documentation for BCCAT's recently revised private degree-granting institutions policy*
- *exploring options to record articulation agreements with non-degree-granting private postsecondary institutions*
- *consulting with regard to criteria and processes by which "program member" institutions in the BC Transfer Guide might become full "institutional" members*

Conduct the second phase of a project started in 2006 to examine entry and exit standards for ESL students in first-year English courses

- *This project will bring together experts in ESL and university-level English to establish benchmarks for first-year English.*

Continue research on the mobility of students into and among postsecondary institutions by

- *preparing a report on the work of the Admissions Committee that summarizes accomplishments to date since its inception in 2003*
- *preparing a report on the project initiated in 2006-07 to measure the flow of grade 12 graduates into and among British Columbia postsecondary institutions over a multi-year period*
- *conducting a second similar study, which adds a year's worth of data and includes enhancements and refinements deemed important as a result of observations gleaned from the first study*
- *continuing research on the mobility of potential and eligible transfer students and analyzing trends over a multi-year period utilizing prior research findings*
- *assisting in the development and implementation of an expanded applicant study*

- *publishing a report on the feasibility project initiated in 2006-07 to measure student mobility between private and public postsecondary institutions and following up on recommendations to conduct further research in this area*
- *conducting a survey of high school graduates across British Columbia who do not proceed to a public postsecondary institution in the first year after graduation to determine their reasons for not attending and their future educational plans*
- *conducting a two-phase study to gather and analyze demographic and other relevant information to determine potential postsecondary student demand over the next several years*
- *conducting a study on the mobility of ABE students over a multi-year period in furthering their education and their success in doing so*
- *analyzing available data in the Central Data Warehouse (CDW) to determine the mobility of students among CDW institutions based on the courses they have taken*

Make a number of enhancements to our Web sites and on-line resources, including BCCAT.ca, Education Planner.ca, BCTransferGuide.ca, and the Transfer Credit Evaluation System (TCES).

In addition, BCCAT will arrange for an independent and external review of the efficacy of Education Planner as a Web-based educational planning resource to help identify future improvements.

Anticipate a potential role for BCCAT in support of those recommendations in the Campus 2020 Plan that relate to our mandate and role and that are approved by the ministry for implementation.

Continue to provide a lead role in advancing transferability initiatives within Canada by

- *assisting other provinces as they establish their own mechanisms to achieve the 2002 Ministerial Statement on Credit Transfer in Canada*
- *encouraging initiatives that contribute to improved student mobility across Canada*
- *interacting with other key jurisdictions to share valuable transfer information and experience*

[NOTE: The 2nd Annual Meeting of PCCAT was held in Prince Edward Island in June 2007, where the draft terms of reference were finalized, and David Hinton, Registrar at the University of New Brunswick, was elected to join Frank Gelin (BCCAT Executive Director) as co-chair. BCCAT staff provided considerable administrative support for the organization of this meeting and also headed up other administrative tasks connected with this group throughout the year.]

Manitoba

Communication of Ministerial Principles

As outlined in the 2007 annual report, the ministerial principles were communicated to and accepted by the Council on Post-Secondary Education in Manitoba (COPSE). This is an arm's-length council mandated to oversee all aspects of the postsecondary education system for the Government of Manitoba. The ministerial principles were also communicated to each of the seven public postsecondary institutions. However, the institutions, while agreeing with the principles, have not necessarily adopted them formally. Progress has been made in enhancing credit transfers generally but is slow in specific areas, particularly in relation to transfers between the college and university sectors.

Adoption of Ministerial Principles

A Working Group on Credit Transfer with senior-level representation from each of the institutions was created in 2003; the group met regularly until 2005. Articulation committees based on areas of study were established with the goal of enhancing credit transfers and articulation agreements between the college and university sectors. This work is ongoing. CMEC credit transfer principles have been adopted informally by the working group and the articulation committees.

Three-Year Framework for Action

In addition to the Working Group on Credit Transfer, three articulation committees were established in the areas of nursing, educational assistants, and environmental studies. The Nursing Articulation Committee has completed its work; the other two continue to meet and make progress. COPSE requires each institution to report on its credit transfers and articulation agreements on an annual basis.

Priority Action Areas

Increased credit transfers have occurred in the field of nursing, and other areas are being considered. Manitoba's newest postsecondary institution, the University College of the North, is developing its new university programming with credit transfer and articulation as an underlying principle between college and university programs. Information on availability of credit transfers is accessible to the students but not in a consistent or coordinated manner across the institutions. This is one area that the institutions have identified as needing additional resources. A system-wide on-line transfer guide is being considered.

The Council on Post-secondary Education is also scheduled to establish new, permanent capacity in credit transfer and articulation through the creation of a full-time position on

Council staff. This position will be asked to explore system-wide opportunities, including credit transfer and articulation.

Research

Manitoba remains interested in partnering with other provinces on research related to transfer practices.

Working Group

Manitoba supports the continuation of the Working Group on Credit Transfer and endorses the support and attention awarded by CMEC to credit transfer in postsecondary education. The working group should continue, as there is much to be shared and learned between provinces and territories.

New Brunswick

Communication of Ministerial Principles

Early in 2007, the Government of New Brunswick launched a comprehensive Commission on Post-Secondary Education. After eight months of consultation and review, *Advantage New Brunswick: a Province Reaches to Fulfill Its Destiny* was released in September 2007. The report recommended establishing an “arm’s-length coordinating agency” with responsibility for [among others] credit transfer. The agency would play an active role in promoting credit transfer and would oversee the process, as well as play a proactive role in collaborating with postsecondary institutions. The report noted the importance of sustained and continuous attention since course and program content is continually changing.

Late in 2007, in response to the report, a working group on postsecondary education was struck, consisting of [public] university presidents and selected community college principals and chaired by the deputy minister of the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Labour and Training. The working group is expected to submit their final recommendations to government regarding their review of the Report of the Commission on Post-Secondary Education in spring 2008.

Adoption of Ministerial Principles

The November 2007 throne speech communicated the government’s expectation to move forward on key pieces of a model for an integrated postsecondary education system, including credit transfer, over the next year.

Three-Year Framework for Action

New Brunswick’s postsecondary institutions have increased the number of articulated agreements between and among universities and NBCC–CCNB but, in the past, it has been largely a bilateral approach, accomplished one institution at a time, course by course and program by program. The Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour will work with provincial postsecondary institutions to coordinate and facilitate agreements through a centralized coordinating body.

Priority Action Areas

Articulated programs with participating institutions have been established, as well as block transfers, individual transfers, and out-of-province agreements. NBCC–CCNB has entered into a number of articulated agreements with universities since 2002. In other instances, block transfer agreements have been negotiated. Accurate information is provided to students through the college calendar, college Web site, and other program documents.

The Atlantic Provinces Community College Consortium (APCCC) produces a CD annually, the *Guide to Block Transfer Agreements*. APCCC is an interprovincial

mechanism with a mandate to collaborate, coordinate, and share resources to enhance college-level postsecondary education in the Atlantic provinces. This consortium reports annually to the Council of Atlantic Premiers through the Council of Atlantic Ministers of Education and Training. It is officially recognized through a memorandum of understanding signed by the provincial ministers responsible for community colleges and the presidents of the community colleges in New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island. One of the cornerstones of the consortium is to provide maximum mobility for students through the portability of learning and credits throughout the postsecondary education system in Atlantic Canada. To advance this agenda, the Atlantic community colleges entered into a *Memorandum of Understanding on Transfer of Credits* in 2000. This *Guide to Block Transfer Agreements* builds on that memorandum.

Research

New Brunswick fully supports the research agenda strategy developed by the CMEC Working Group on Credit Transfer. New Brunswick remains committed to sharing best practices in credit transfer at the pan-Canadian level and supports and participates in the work of the Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfer (PCCAT).

Working Group

We support the continuation of the CMEC Working Group on Credit Transfer and will continue to work to enhance and develop credit transfer agreements in the province of New Brunswick.

Newfoundland and Labrador

Communication of Ministerial Principles

Newfoundland and Labrador has a credit transfer mechanism between Memorial University (Memorial) and College of the North Atlantic (CNA) that has existed for over 20 years. New agreements are signed between our public postsecondary institutions and those in other parts of Canada and internationally on a regular basis. These transfer agreements are published annually in the *Transfer Guide*. The fourteenth edition is now available for the 2007-08 academic year. The *Transfer Guide* lists established course-by-course and program/block transfer of credit precedents available to students in the province. Information is also provided on the public postsecondary system, institutional transfer policies, and programs linked to high school.

The *Transfer Guide* is an annual publication of the Council on Higher Education (the council), which was originally established in 1992. In 2005, the government released *Foundations for Success: White Paper on Public Post-Secondary Education*. This policy document was commissioned as part of government's continued commitment to provide affordable and accessible postsecondary education opportunities. In light of the recommendations put forth in the White Paper, a reconfigured council was recognized in legislation through the *Council on Higher Education Act*, which was proclaimed in January 26, 2007. The Council on Higher Education promotes collaboration in the public postsecondary education system by providing recommendations to Memorial, CNA, and the minister of education on shared program areas.

Adoption of Ministerial Principles

The officer of the Council on Higher Education will perform a thorough review and compare principles outlined in the CMEC *Ministerial Statement on Credit Transfer in Canada* with the council's *Principles and Guidelines for Transfer and Admissions*.

Three-Year Framework for Action

The Council on Higher Education has developed a business plan for 2007-08. The first meeting of the council will occur in 2008, where future directions will be discussed.

Priority Action Areas

Under review.

Research

Newfoundland and Labrador will review the research agenda strategy developed by the Working Group on Credit Transfer during its first meeting.

Working Group

Discussions at a meeting of Canadian credit transfer officials hosted by the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer in June 2006 have led to the launch of a new national organization, the Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfer (PCCAT). Its mandate is to develop policies and practices that support the advancement of interjurisdictional admissions and transfer. PCCAT will include representatives from postsecondary institutions and provincial, territorial, and federal stakeholder groups.

Nova Scotia

Communication of Ministerial Principles

Yes.

Adoption of Ministerial Principles

No.

Three-Year Framework for Action

All Nova Scotian universities and Nova Scotia Community College have increased the number of institutions recognized (both college and university) and the number of credit equivalencies recognized and accepted over last year. Some institutions have, and others are moving toward, an on-line equivalency list for prospective students to review. Other institutions are developing articulations agreements with colleges with the intention to promote the credits offered for graduates of the respective diploma programs within such institutions. The Nova Scotia Community College continues to follow the *Guide to Block Transfer Agreements* prepared by the Atlantic Provinces Community College Consortium. The province supports any actions that increase credit transfer arrangements/agreements between the university and the community college systems and among institutions in this province and in other jurisdictions.

Priority Action Areas

None at present.

Credit transfer arrangements and articulated programs are expanding as needed within the system and in the Maritime/Atlantic region. Opportunities for further initiatives are ongoing.

Working Group

Nova Scotia supports the continuation of the CMEC Working Group on Credit Transfer.

Nunavut

Communication of Ministerial Principles

Nunavut is implementing its Adult Learning Strategy, which was tabled in the Legislature in November 2006 and jointly released with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated. The strategy contains principles and recommendations that focus on quality assurance and credit transfer. As part of the work, attention is being paid to ensuring that Nunavut's strategies are consistent with the principles arising from CMEC. At this time, Nunavut does not have a credit transfer agency, although terms of reference have been prepared for a territorial coordinating body that will consider, among other issues, credit transfer.

Adoption of Ministerial Principles

Nunavut, in its Adult Learning Strategy, has adopted the basic Inuit societal values of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, as well as basic tenets arising from the ministerial principles; however, as there is no credit transfer agency, the principles have not been completely vetted within Nunavut. Further, certain objectives are foundational to the Adult Learning Strategy and the development of a credit transfer approach. These objectives include the following: promoting greater cooperation and collaboration among agencies involved in education and training in Nunavut (e.g., the development of partnerships that are consistent with the goals established for Nunavut's development) and fostering and promoting the active involvement of Inuit in developing Nunavut's economy.

Three-Year Framework for Action

Nunavut has identified many issues associated with the Adult Learning Strategy. Strategies proposed to deal with those issues include developing a Nunavut program for PLAR, including a system of credit recognition and transfer, and introducing a mature high school graduation diploma, which would become the benchmark for entry into advanced postsecondary and adult programs. This work will be undertaken within the general framework of the Adult Learning Strategy.

Priority Action Areas

Along with the items listed under the Three-Year Framework, Nunavut is reviewing the Education Act and Public Colleges Act and is focusing on building a strong network and process to build quality assurance and support credit transfer. Nunavut is also involved in credit transfer as it relates to the University of the Arctic, a circumpolar institution involving Canada.

Research

Nunavut supports the research agenda for the working group, especially as we look toward developing our credit transfer agency/mechanism.

Working Group

Nunavut supports the need for the Working Group On Credit Transfer. A senior advisor for adult learning will be identified as the working group member. Nunavut is working toward an integrated system that supports credit recognition and transfer.

Ontario

Communication of Ministerial Principles

Following the ministers' endorsement of the *Ministerial Statement on Credit Transfer in Canada* in October 2002, the deputy minister of training, colleges and universities distributed the principles to executive heads and presidents of all provincially assisted colleges and universities in Ontario.

Adoption of Ministerial Principles

In his communication with the postsecondary system in October 2002, the deputy minister asked that the statement be circulated widely within each postsecondary educational institution. If the principles are revised in response to the request from the Committee of Postsecondary ADMs, the new principles will also be circulated. Development of Ontario-focused principles may be part of new work currently being considered within the postsecondary system.

Three-Year Framework for Action

Over the past several years, the ministry has been engaged with the college and university sectors in a consultation and strategic development process to establish a plan to promote more credit transfer and collaboration. These consultations have identified a number of priority areas that Ontario could pursue in both the short- and longer-term to support the expansion and enhancement of postsecondary collaboration.

The improvement of pathways for students and increased collaboration between colleges and universities have recently been identified as high priorities by the provincial government as part of its commitment to improving the quality of, and access to, postsecondary education. A task force has been established by the Council of Ontario Universities and Colleges to consider the best approach. It is anticipated that a three-year action plan will be developed in 2008-09.

Priority Action Areas

In 2006 and 2007, the ministry provided a total of \$3M to the College-University Consortium Council (CUCC) as part of Reaching Higher's Quality Improvement initiative. CUCC issued a call for proposals and, through its selection process, funded 12 projects involving 31 individual colleges and universities in a wide range of program areas.

CUCC has also focused on the improvement of the *Ontario College-University Transfer Guide* (OCUTG) to ensure that learners have as much up-to-date and accurate information about collaborative and transfer opportunities as possible.

Ontario hosted and was part of the planning committee for the June 2008 meeting of the Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfer (PCCAT).

Research

Several research papers have been released by CUCC over the past year. Some key findings include

- A study of the movement between colleges and universities: about 15,000 college graduates further their education annually (mostly at college, but a growing number go into university); they tend to be younger and female, are from applied arts or business programs, and need to continue for professional designation; 25% of all university transfers are to two Ontario universities, with another 11% transferring to universities outside of Ontario; college graduates transfer to university programs related to their graduating programs and to universities that are within a reasonable proximity to their graduating college.
- A study of the success rates of transfer students at two universities: there is no significant difference between the GPA of college transfer students and direct entry students; college transfer students who receive advanced standing graduate at the same rate; transfer students are receiving more credit and are graduating sooner than a decade ago.
- An evaluation of Ontario's collaborative nursing program after three cohorts found that there are both costs and benefits to collaboration, that successful collaboration takes time, and that it must be built on trust and open communication and should involve joint decision making; shared administrative and information systems can help.

Working Group

Ontario continues to participate fully on the CMEC Working Group on Credit Transfer and the Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions & Transfer (PCCAT).

Quebec

Communication of Ministerial Principles

Universities in Quebec have full jurisdiction over prior learning assessment. This issue is also dealt with by the Comité de liaison de l'enseignement supérieur [Postsecondary Education Liaison Committee], which brings together representatives from cégeps, universities, and the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport [Ministry of Education, Recreation and Sport]. The Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport has communicated these principles to the members of this committee.

Adoption of Ministerial Principles

Section 22 of the College Education Regulation (General and Vocational Colleges Act) governs prior learning assessment by cégeps. The Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial [College Education Evaluation Committee] ensures that cégeps have and apply a prior learning assessment policy. Universities follow the Pan-Canadian Protocol on the Transferability of University Credits and enjoy full autonomy with respect to prior learning assessment.

Three-Year Framework for Action

In May 2002, the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport released its Politique d'éducation des adultes et de formation continue [Adult and Continuing Education Policy], which contains many measures to develop a culture of prior learning assessment for all levels of education. The action plan encourages universities to equip themselves with policies for prior learning assessment. The Association canadienne d'éducation des adultes des universités de langue française [Canadian Association for Adult Education in French-Language Universities] has been given a mandate to report on practices in universities in Quebec.

On April 6 and 7, 2005, the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport organized the Colloque national sur la reconnaissance des acquis et des compétences [National Symposium on Prior Learning Assessment] to facilitate and promote prior learning assessment. The purpose of this symposium was to mobilize key stakeholders to further develop prior learning assessment, to increase awareness of the efforts that are under way, and to give this wide-scale endeavour a boost.

Priority Action Areas

Increasingly, cégeps and universities are developing bridges between technical programs and university undergraduate programs. While some universities recognize three credits from a technical program, others recognize up to 36 credits for bachelor's degree programs through Diploma of Collegial Studies–Bachelor's Degree Program (DEC-BAC) agreements. In 2007, we reported that 14 universities had agreements with

between 1 and 42 colleges for the transfer of between 3 and 36 credits. Since then, the number of agreements between universities and colleges has continued to grow. For example, one university now has about 100 DEC–BAC agreements.

The ministry's strategy to internationalize higher learning has also given a boost to prior learning assessment. For example, the joint doctoral program created in 1996 by France and Quebec enables doctoral students to study for three terms at a foreign university and earn a joint PhD. Thus, universities recognize doctoral training received at a foreign institution. This type of agreement is being expanded and will include universities in other countries such as Germany, Belgium, and Switzerland. The ministry's short-stay grant program (\$10 M) enables students to pursue accredited training in their program of study at foreign universities. This requires Quebec universities to recognize credits issued by other institutions.

Working Group

The Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport questions the advisability of extending the mandate of the CMEC Working Group on Credit Transfer.

Prince Edward Island

Communication of Ministerial Principles

Distributed to University of Prince Edward Island and Holland College.

Adoption of Ministerial Principles

Both provincial postsecondary institutions are aware of the principles and agree with the intent.

Three-Year Framework for Action

Both institutions have numerous articulation agreements between themselves and with other universities/colleges across the country. They will continue to forge partnerships and agreements to respond to the learning needs of their students.

Priority Action Areas

Further advancement of credit transfer agreements.

Working Group

Prince Edward Island is a member of PCCAT and hosted its second annual meeting in June 2007.

Saskatchewan

Communication of Ministerial Principles

Following the creation of the Saskatchewan Council for Admissions and Transfer (SaskCAT) in the fall of 2004, the establishment of the Council's mission, guiding principles, and goals and their approval by the Campus Saskatchewan Management Board in May 2005, efforts focused on the completion and launch of the SaskCAT Web site (www.saskcat.ca) and the on-line Transfer Credit Guide. The launch of the guide in January 2006 was highlighted by an event at the University of Saskatchewan that was video-streamed live across the province. Subsequent to the launch event, material promoting the guide and the work of SaskCAT were developed and distributed to institutions and the public. Meetings with key individuals from institutions to further the work of the Council have been and continue to be held on a regular basis. Recent efforts have been focused on the building of a "culture of transfer" in the province through the establishment of articulation committees and the development of new articulation agreements. To date, five articulation committees have been established, and plans call for a total of 15 to be established by June 2009.

Adoption of Ministerial Principles

The guiding principles that govern SaskCAT's work are consistent with the CMEC principles. SaskCAT's guiding principles are as follow:

- SaskCAT will build a culture of transfer in which the practice will be to find reasons to grant rather than deny transfer of credit and provide access to institutions and programs.
- SaskCAT recognizes that while learning experiences are diverse, the learning outcomes may be equivalent in terms of content and standards. Therefore, students should not be required to repeat previous learning.
- SaskCAT will operate with integrity, transparency, and consistency in order to instill confidence in the credit transfer system.
- SaskCAT will provide easy access to accurate, clear, and timely information on credit transfer and processes.
- The members of SaskCAT are representatives from, and not of, their home institution or organization and will work in the interest of the admissions and transfer system.
- SaskCAT recognizes that individual institutions retain the right to determine program and admission requirements.

Three-Year Framework for Action

As well as tripling the number of active articulation committees from 5 to 15 over the course of the coming year, SaskCAT is focusing on launching a small research agenda to determine student flow among the province's postsecondary institutions and the

performance of students who utilize formal block transfer agreements. Awareness building is also an ongoing focus.

Priority Action Areas

Along with articulation, research, and awareness building, SaskCAT is focusing on interprovincial initiatives. Our involvement with PCCAT continues, and we are participating in the work of the CMEC Working Group on Credit Transfer.

Research

As noted above, SaskCAT is currently developing and implementing a research plan to determine student flow and transfer student performance.

Working Group

As noted above, Saskatchewan supports the continuation of the CMEC Working Group on Credit Transfer. We are part of the subgroup that is looking at possible updates to the ministerial statement and strategies to reinforce the provincial commitment to the statement.

Yukon

Communication of Ministerial Principles

Yes, the ministerial principles were communicated to the postsecondary institution.

Adoption of Ministerial Principles

Yes, the ministerial principles were adopted by the postsecondary institution.

Three-Year Framework for Action

Yukon College will continue to articulate its programs as broadly as possible. The college sits on the British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT) and attends pan-Canadian articulation meetings through the Association of Canadian Community Colleges. For degree-related programs, the college sits on the Association of Universities and Colleges Canada (AUCC).

Priority Action Areas

Yukon has only one postsecondary institution, Yukon College. Its continuing priority is to ensure that its students are able to transfer without difficulty to outside postsecondary institutions. Articulation agreements are an ongoing process for the college.

Research

Yukon College participated in a national prior learning assessment and recognition (PLAR) research project funded by HRSDC and coordinated by Athabasca University. Recommendations from the report have been implemented by the college.

PLAR is in place for early childhood development programs at the college, and the methodology for PLAR is regularly used to develop other programs as well.

Working Group

The CMEC Working Group on Credit Transfer should be continued.

At the November 1, 2007, meeting of the Committee of the Postsecondary ADMs, Yukon supported

- the reinforcement of established principles from the *2002 CMEC Ministerial Statement on Credit Transfer in Canada* (provided in Appendix I)
- more formal mechanisms in all jurisdictions to reinforce the principles of credit transfer

CMEC Ministerial Statement on Credit Transfer in Canada

Preamble

The primary purpose for establishing credit transfer agreements among institutions of higher education is to increase opportunities for students to access postsecondary education by facilitating student mobility between institutions and sectors.

Students need reasonable assurance that they will be able to continue their studies at other postsecondary institutions to complete their educational plans and be able to obtain appropriate transfer credit for work previously completed.

In addition, by ensuring that learners receive appropriate recognition for learning already achieved, efficiencies in both time and money can be gained by students, institutions, and governments. The ability for learners at all stages of their lives and careers to easily move into, between, and out of postsecondary education is a key component in building a postsecondary education system that makes lifelong learning a reality.

Transfer credit agreements will vary between provinces and territories and may include a variety of approaches to recognizing previous academic achievement including, but not limited to, establishing course-by-course equivalencies, granting unassigned credit, agreeing to grant specified blocks of transfer credit for completed credentials, or the development of prior learning assessment processes.

Credit transfer can occur between public colleges and universities, and between those institutions and private postsecondary institutions. This Statement of Principles may also be applied in situations where a province or territory chooses to facilitate transfer between public and private institutions.

Principles

1. Ministers recognize that all credit transfer agreements should be consistent with the academic integrity of programs and the right of postsecondary institutions to determine program design and delivery, to determine academic prerequisites, and to establish admission criteria and certification requirements of academic achievement. Ministers also recognize that the academic integrity and governance autonomy of the individual institutions and programs must be protected and preserved.
2. Postsecondary institutions within each province/territory should be committed to working with other postsecondary institutions, transfer agencies, and governments, as appropriate, to enhance and maintain credit transfer opportunities. Negotiations between institutions regarding equivalency of credit should recognize that the

substance of learning experiences may be equivalent in terms of content and rigour, although the learning has occurred in a variety of ways.

3. Transfer students should be made aware that program-specific criteria and other factors, in addition to academic performance, may be used as admission criteria. That is, while possession of academic prerequisites makes an applicant eligible for admission, it does not guarantee admission to a particular program.
4. The effectiveness of transfer agreements in optimizing student mobility requires that students, prior to beginning their studies at another institution, have knowledge of, and current information about, available credit transfer opportunities and limitations. Institutions should be committed to providing current and reliable information about transfer of credit policies and the procedures to be followed to obtain transfer credit in a routine manner.
5. Students and institutions should be satisfied that transfer decisions are considered in a consistent manner. Postsecondary institutions should develop and maintain clearly stated policies and procedures for consideration of transfer of credit. Students should be able to obtain an institution's rationale for a refusal, and institutions should have clear procedures for students to appeal such decisions.
6. Neither transfer students nor direct-entry students should be advantaged or disadvantaged as a result of the credit transfer process.