



**cme**c

Council of  
Ministers  
of Education,  
Canada

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

**2011**

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

**2011**

Prepared by the  
CMEC Working Group on Credit Transfer

April 2011

## Table of Contents

<b>2011 CMEC Jurisdictional Updates on Activities Related to Credit Transfer .....</b>	<b>1</b>
Introduction .....	1
Current Status .....	1
<b>Alberta.....</b>	<b>3</b>
Communication of Ministerial Principles .....	3
Adoption of Ministerial Principles.....	3
Three-Year Framework for Action.....	3
Priority Action Areas .....	5
Research.....	5
Working Group.....	6
<b>British Columbia.....</b>	<b>7</b>
Overview .....	7
Communication and Adoption of Ministerial Principles .....	7
2010-11 Priorities and Projects .....	8
Plan of Projects and Activities for 2011-12 .....	13
<b>Manitoba .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Communication and Adoption of Ministerial Principles .....</b>	<b>14</b>
Important Developments, 2010-11.....	14
Priority Areas.....	15
Research.....	15
Working Group.....	16
<b>New Brunswick .....</b>	<b>17</b>
Communication of Ministerial Principles .....	17
Adoption of Ministerial Principles.....	17
Three-Year Framework for Action.....	17
Important Developments, 2010-11.....	17
Priority Areas.....	19
Research.....	19
Working Group.....	19
<b>Newfoundland and Labrador .....</b>	<b>20</b>
Communication of Ministerial Principles .....	20
Adoption of Ministerial Principles.....	20
Three-Year Framework for Action.....	20
Priority Action Areas .....	21
Research.....	21
Working Group.....	21
<b>Northwest Territories.....</b>	<b>22</b>
Communication of Ministerial Principles .....	22
Adoption of Ministerial Principles.....	22
Three-Year Framework for Action.....	22
Priority Action Areas .....	22
Working Group.....	22
<b>Nova Scotia.....</b>	<b>23</b>
Communication of Ministerial Principles .....	23
Adoption of Ministerial Principles.....	23

Three-Year Framework for Action.....	23
Priority Action Areas .....	24
Working Group.....	24
<b>Nunavut.....</b>	<b>25</b>
Communication of Ministerial Principles .....	25
Adoption of Ministerial Principles.....	25
Three-Year Framework for Action.....	25
Research .....	26
Working Group.....	26
<b>Ontario .....</b>	<b>27</b>
Communication and Adoption of Ministerial Principles .....	27
Overview .....	27
Advances in Transfer and Articulation Projects .....	28
Priority Action Areas/Recent Developments .....	28
Research .....	31
Working Group.....	32
<b>Prince Edward Island .....</b>	<b>33</b>
Communication of Ministerial Principles .....	33
Adoption of Ministerial Principles.....	33
Three-Year Framework for Action.....	33
Priority Action Areas .....	33
Research .....	34
Working Group.....	34
<b>Quebec .....</b>	<b>35</b>
Communication of Ministerial Principles .....	35
Adoption of Ministerial Principles.....	35
Priority Action Areas .....	35
Working Group.....	36
<b>Saskatchewan .....</b>	<b>37</b>
Communication of Ministerial Principles .....	37
Adoption of Ministerial Principles.....	37
Three-Year Framework for Action.....	37
Priority Action Areas .....	38
Research .....	38
Working Group.....	38
<b>Yukon .....</b>	<b>39</b>
Communication of Ministerial Principles .....	39
Adoption of Ministerial Principles.....	39
Three-Year Framework for Action.....	39
Priority Action Areas .....	39
Research .....	39
Working Group.....	39

**Appendix: CMEC Ministerial Statement on Credit Transfer in Canada**

## 2011 CMEC Jurisdictional Updates 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.

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 from 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). This statement was reviewed and revised, and received ministerial approval in July 2009.

This is the latest update on jurisdictional activities related to credit transfer since the working group was established. This report provides a summary of the actions undertaken by member jurisdictions of the working group.

### Current Status

Each jurisdiction has reported making progress in its credit-transfer system and in mechanisms within its postsecondary sectors. 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 progress, including such achievements as the implementation or expansion of on-line transfer guides, the 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.

Several members of the Working Group on Credit Transfer attended the Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfer's Annual Meeting, held from June 20 to 22, 2011, in Montreal, Quebec. This meeting provided an appropriate forum to discuss credit-transfer issues and best practices on a national scale. Updates on progress made on credit transfer in provinces and territories were provided to participants.

All jurisdictions have indicated that their work will continue on the issue of credit transfer within the framework of their own priorities, resources, and structures over the next several years. This report is being used to guide changes and new initiatives in credit transfer systems in the provinces and territories.

## Alberta

### Communication of Ministerial Principles

Since its inception in 1974, the role of the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer (ACAT) has been to facilitate collaborative agreements and promote cooperation among postsecondary institutions in order to improve the admissions process and enhance learner pathways.

The revised mission of the ACAT is to be a catalyst for beneficial change and an advocate for learners in the areas of postsecondary admissions and transfer, through the Campus Alberta vision. ACAT is uniquely positioned to further Campus Alberta.

Periodically, ACAT reviews its principles and makes appropriate adjustments to ensure that they are appropriate for the council and that they adhere to pan-Canadian principles. ACAT's principles were most recently reviewed in 2008, to ensure a strong alignment with the council's governance model and to more closely align with Campus Alberta. The revised principles were approved by the council and are published publicly in the *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 abiding by ACAT's principles, policies, and procedures. To maintain ACAT membership, member institutions must also be able to demonstrate that they are in good standing by: continually working to establish transfer agreements with other members of the transfer system to the benefit of Alberta's learners; continually maintaining or developing quality credit-transfer agreements; and actively participating in the stewardship of the Alberta Transfer System.

### 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 council approved the 2010–2013 business plan and presented it to the Minister of Alberta Advanced Education and Technology. Some of the key strategies identified in the 2010–2013 ACAT business plan are to:

- work toward the expansion and enhancement of block-transfer opportunities in Alberta's transfer system;
- develop a collaborative framework for learner outcomes and assessment that may become the cornerstone of Alberta's transfer system in years to come;
- continue to expand the number of articulation committees in Alberta, using a new articulation model and a measured approach to expansion;

- ensure that Albertans have access to quality information by enhancing communication mechanisms and modernizing tools;
- continue best-practices work with stakeholders to further facilitate and support learner mobility;
- enhance ACAT's role in policy development and research to ensure continued improvement of the admissions and transfer system;
- continue the implementation of the provincial Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) Action Plan.

The complete business plan will be available at <http://www.transferalberta.ca>, under Reports and Publications.

ACAT is accountable to the Alberta Department of Advanced Education and Technology (AE&T) and publishes an annual report highlighting the results achieved in the previous year. The 2009-10 annual report is available at <http://www.transferalberta.ca>, under Reports and Publications. The 2010-11 annual report should be available on the same Web site by June 30, 2011.

*Highlights of results achieved in 2010:*

- ACAT has adopted a new governance model to align the council with the requirements of the pending *Alberta Public Agencies Governance Act*. This new competency-based model provides representation from public postsecondary institutions, Aboriginal institutions, the public, and students.
- ACAT has also developed a document on mandate and roles as well as a code of conduct. A Ministerial Order was signed in November 2010.
- Work has continued with Alberta Education to ensure that high-school students make smooth transitions from secondary to postsecondary studies and that there are improved opportunities for admission to postsecondary programs.
- The efforts of ACAT's network of postsecondary contact persons have been recognized and the number of transfer agreements in Alberta has increased. ACAT communication and training have been provided to partners.
- The Learner Progression Best Practices Research Project was conducted, tabled with council, and shared with stakeholders.
- Improvements were made to the ACAT Web site and the *On-Line Transfer Guide* to make admissions and transfer information more user-friendly. Alberta's *On-Line Transfer Guide* is the official record of transfer agreements, and the ACAT Secretariat continues to promote this guide and respond to learner and institution enquiries. Public information is available about transfer agreements dating back to 1993-94.

- Postsecondary-institution site visits to 10 ACAT member institutions were conducted.
- ACAT hosted the October 2010 meeting of the Western Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfer (WestCAT).

### Priority Action Areas

Several key areas that will be priorities for ACAT include:

- expanding articulation work to further the collegial relationships among colleagues within specific disciplines to assist in mitigating barriers to transfer negotiation, through communication;
- implementing recommendations from the *Learner Progressions Best Practices Research Project Final Report*, including further work on block transfer;
- ensuring that learners and other stakeholders have timely and accurate information about admission requirements, course and program transfer opportunities, and transfer policies;
- focusing on system enhancement through research and communication; facilitating collaborative partnerships; and continuing to contribute to the work of the Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfer (PCCAT);
- continuing the implementation of AE&T's *Advancing PLAR in Alberta: an Action Plan*, until at least March 2013. The intent is to increase capacity for PLAR in Alberta's advanced-education system. A PLAR stakeholder committee continues to meet three times per academic year. The goal of the committee is to support the implementation of the PLAR action plan by providing expertise and guidance and by promoting the implementation of the plan within committee members' institutions/organizations. A PLAR manual and a PLAR Web site are being developed to assist institutions in building capacity for PLAR.

### Research

ACAT has expanded research efforts by using data to inform and improve the system. This includes incorporating transfer-specific questions in Alberta Advanced Education and Technology's Graduate Outcomes Survey (see transfer student report at [http://www.acat.gov.ab.ca/pdfs/grad\\_outcomes\\_survey\\_2003\\_04.pdf](http://www.acat.gov.ab.ca/pdfs/grad_outcomes_survey_2003_04.pdf)). According to the *Alberta Graduate Outcomes Survey, Class of 2007-08: Transfer Graduates Report*, the majority of Alberta's postsecondary graduates (91 per cent) were satisfied with the transfer credits they received.

ACAT member institutions report annually on students at their institutions who previously attended other institutions. These annual reports on transfer patterns provide an overview of mobility trends within and into Alberta postsecondary institutions. The *2009 Transfer*

*Patterns Report* is available at <http://alis.alberta.ca/search.html?q=2009+Transfer+Patterns+Report>. The *2010 Transfer Patterns Report* will be posted by fall 2011.

## **Working Group**

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

ACAT is also a participating member of PCCAT and the ACAT chair is the Western co-chair. The purpose of PCCAT is to facilitate the implementation of policies and practices that support student mobility both within and among provinces and territories and the granting of transfer credits in order to improve access to postsecondary education in Canada.

A close working relationship is maintained between ACAT and the British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT). Following the establishment of an interprovincial agreement between the governments of Alberta and British Columbia, a memorandum of understanding was developed and signed by both provinces' councils. In May 2009, ACAT approved a policy allowing degree-granting institutions in British Columbia to apply for ACAT membership. The criteria that ACAT will use to assess proposals from British Columbian postsecondary institutions for inclusion in the Alberta Transfer System are available at [www.transferalberta.ca](http://www.transferalberta.ca), under Reports and Publications. In 2010, Athabasca University was accepted into the British Columbia Transfer System, becoming the first institution with membership in both transfer systems.

ACAT continues to work with Saskatchewan to explore the possibility of developing a protocol with respect to credit-transfer and PLAR systems, as well as to consider other mechanisms to help improve student transferability and mobility between the two provinces.

## British Columbia

This report is a summary of projects and activities completed by the British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT) during the period from April 1, 2010, to March 31, 2011. The purpose of this report is to inform the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC), of the steps taken in British Columbia to improve student mobility and credit transfer in accordance with the principles stipulated in CMEC's Ministerial Statement on Credit Transfer in Canada (2009).

### Overview

The British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer oversees the British Columbia Transfer System, enabling important links between BC postsecondary institutions, education ministries, and public and private education sectors. BCCAT facilitates admission, articulation, and transfer arrangements among BC postsecondary institutions for the benefit of students.<sup>1</sup> This involves:

- providing coordination and support for transfer and articulation throughout the BC system;
- promoting student mobility through system-wide collaboration and extensive research on student movement and credit transfer; and
- developing and managing on-line resources (BCTransferGuide.ca and EducationPlanner.ca) to assist students in their education planning.

Appointed by the minister, members of the council are selected from across the BC postsecondary system to serve the overall best interests of the system. For further information regarding the council, including a list of current members, see [bccat.ca/about/council](http://bccat.ca/about/council).

The council guides the work of five standing committees (see [bccat.ca/about/committees](http://bccat.ca/about/committees)), each devoted to different aspects of the council's mandate. The work of the council and the committees is coordinated by nine staff members (see [bccat.ca/about/staff](http://bccat.ca/about/staff)).

BCCAT is a non-profit, public agency funded by the provincial government, and operates by promoting collaboration among institutions in the BC postsecondary system.

### Communication and Adoption of Ministerial Principles

This year, BCCAT carried out the first comprehensive revision of the *Principles and Guidelines for Transfer* since 1976, with a view to making them more streamlined and

---

<sup>1</sup> For a one-page illustration of the ongoing activities and current projects of BCCAT, see [bccat.ca/pubs/activities.pdf](http://bccat.ca/pubs/activities.pdf).

student-centred. The *Principles and Guidelines for Transfer* continue to affirm CMEC's principles on credit transfer, and form the basis of all credit-transfer arrangements in the BC Transfer System. (See [bccat.ca/system/principles](http://bccat.ca/system/principles) to view the updated version.)

## 2010-11 Priorities and Projects

BCCAT achieves its mandate by focusing largely on five main priorities:

- collaborating with BC's postsecondary partners;
- understanding student mobility and success;
- facilitating admissions, transfer, and articulation;
- supporting students' planning; and
- advancing interprovincial transfer.

The BCCAT work plan is developed annually by identifying projects and activities that evolve in accordance with these priorities. The following are highlights of the work undertaken by the council in 2010-11. This information will be presented more fully in the *2010-11 Annual Review*, which is due for publication in May 2011 and will be posted on the BCCAT Web site at that time.<sup>2</sup>

### 1. Collaborating with BC's Postsecondary Partners<sup>3</sup>

BCCAT interacts with a wide range of organizations and committees in the BC postsecondary system, consulting and advising on issues and projects as appropriate. BCCAT also liaises with ministry contacts to provide updates on council activities and projects and to stay informed on developments within government that intersect and impact upon the work of the council. Two examples of BC-based activities are summarized below:

#### *a. Degree Quality Assessment Board (DQAB)*

Rob Fleming (Executive Director, BCCAT) sits on this board as a non-voting member. He also informs the board of any relevant issues that arise pertaining to the approval of new private institutions that are becoming members of the BC Transfer System or of articulation-related issues that arise between institutions. As well, BCCAT staff members provide commentary on DQAB's annual review of private institutions and seek and provide feedback on issues related to private-public articulation.

---

<sup>2</sup> BCCAT publications and resources are provided on-line at [bccat.ca/publications](http://bccat.ca/publications).

<sup>3</sup> Another important aspect of BCCAT's collaborative work in the BC context is its partnership with the Student Transitions Project, as described in section 2a below.

### ***b. BCcampus***

BCCAT and BCcampus continue to work together as system partners. Staff members from the two organizations meet regularly to discuss technological issues, and BCCAT provides BCcampus access to data from the two BCCAT student-oriented Web sites. The executive directors of both organizations (Rob Fleming and David Porter) meet regularly to discuss matters of overlapping interest. In addition, Devron Gaber (Associate Director, BCCAT) serves as a member of the PASBC<sup>4</sup> Steering Committee.

## **2. Understanding Student Mobility and Success**

### ***a. Student Mobility and the Student Transitions Project (STP)***

The council's work on student-mobility research is conducted in close partnership with the Student Transitions Project (STP). The STP is a collaborative effort between BC's education ministries and public postsecondary institutions to link data on students in the K–12 and postsecondary systems to answer questions about student transitions. Devron Gaber (Associate Director, BCCAT) chairs the STP Steering Committee and the STP Manager, Joanne Heslop, is seconded by BCCAT from Simon Fraser University.

Several BCCAT projects on student mobility, under the auspices of its admissions committee, are conducted through the STP using STP data, including research on the movement of all students among public postsecondary institutions. BCCAT is broadening its view of the transfer system, which has historically involved traditional transfer students moving from colleges to universities, to a credit- and student-mobility system, which focuses on students moving between institutions in multiple directions.

A recent STP publication focusing on both the movement of all students and the movement of traditional transfer students in BC is available on the STP Web site, [www.aved.gov.bc.ca/student\\_transitions](http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/student_transitions). BCCAT also published two reports: one on students who leave research universities to attend other postsecondary institutions in BC and the other on a cohort of eligible transfer students from 2003 to 2009.

### ***b. Credits to Graduation***

This report outlines a study comparing the number of credits undertaken toward degree completion by students admitted on the basis of secondary-school graduation and those admitted as BC transfer students to the four research universities (Simon Fraser

---

<sup>4</sup> Post-Secondary Application Service of British Columbia

University [SFU], University of British Columbia [UBC], University of Victoria [UVic], and University of Northern British Columbia [UNBC]). The study found that the transfer option does not disadvantage students. In fact, transfer students are able to graduate with approximately the same number of credits as secondary-school graduates. This takes into account credits awarded plus credits earned at the four universities. UBC also includes all previous credits completed at other institutions.

The report also shows that transfer graduates perform as well academically as secondary-school graduates, with very small variations in grade point average (GPA) by university and program. This study contributes to a growing body of research that underscores the success of the transfer system in BC.

Full report: [bccat.ca/pubs/creditstograduation.pdf](http://bccat.ca/pubs/creditstograduation.pdf)

Newsletter: [bccat.ca/pubs/rr\\_dec10.pdf](http://bccat.ca/pubs/rr_dec10.pdf)

### **3. Facilitating Admissions, Transfer, and Articulation**

#### ***a. Overview of Admissions Practices in BC***

This new resource is intended as a reference for postsecondary personnel and anyone who has an interest in admissions practices. It presents an overview of a wide range of admissions policies and practices at BC postsecondary institutions. The overview is due for publication shortly, at which time it will be posted on the BCCAT Web site.

#### ***b. English-Proficiency Requirements at BC's Postsecondary Institutions***

The findings from this project have been summarized in a newsletter. This publication presents key observations from a review of BC postsecondary institutions' Web sites undertaken to assess differences in admission requirements for entry into standard first-year English courses and in institutional admission requirements with regard to English proficiency. Recommendations are made on possible actions that could be taken to clarify English-proficiency requirements for the benefit of students (see [bccat.ca/pubs/englishproficiency.pdf](http://bccat.ca/pubs/englishproficiency.pdf)).

#### ***c. New Members' Resource Book***

An important aspect of BCCAT's work is assisting new member institutions as they seek to build transfer and articulation relationships with other institutions. The New Members' Resource Book is a reference for new member institutions, which are private institutions admitted to the BC Transfer System as a result of having one or more programs reviewed by the Degree Quality Assessment Board and given Minister's Consent. It describes the culture and norms of the BC Transfer System and the rights

and obligations of membership; an overview of articulation tools, resources, and processes is also included (see [bccat.ca/pubs/newmembersbook.pdf](http://bccat.ca/pubs/newmembersbook.pdf)).

#### **d. Articulation Committee Support**

##### *i) Joint Annual Meeting*

On Friday, November 5, 2010, BCCAT hosted the Joint Annual Meeting of articulation chairs, system liaison persons, and institution contact persons. This event brought together groups from the administrative and academic sides of the articulation process to raise awareness, promote understanding, and encourage dialogue on matters of mutual interest (see [bccat.ca/articulation/jam/](http://bccat.ca/articulation/jam/)).

##### *ii) Articulation Committee Companion (2011 edition)*

The *Articulation Committee Companion* is designed to serve as both an introductory resource for new Articulation Committee members and as an ongoing reference for committees. The companion includes a brief overview of the province's articulation committees and their essential role in the postsecondary system. In addition, it outlines key roles and responsibilities of Articulation Committee members and suggests best practices for Articulation Committee meetings and activities.

##### *iii) Transfer Innovation Projects*

BCCAT continued to support Flexible Pre-Majors (FPM) as a supplement to course-to-course and block-transfer agreements with FPM projects in computer education, English, psychology, and economics. BCCAT also supported: block transfer in areas such as tourism management; the development of transfer grids and matrices in areas such as early-childhood education, drafting technologies, and medical office-assistant programs; and the use of Canadian language benchmarks for English as a second language.

#### **4. Supporting Students' Planning**

##### **a. BCCAT Web Resources**

The development and improvement of BCCAT Web resources is an ongoing process. This year, we refreshed the three BCCAT Web sites: [bccat.ca](http://bccat.ca), [EducationPlanner.ca](http://EducationPlanner.ca), and [BCTransferGuide.ca](http://BCTransferGuide.ca). The updated sites offer more streamlined and accessible content in a new visual format.

BCTransferGuide.ca was expanded to enable BC's four research universities (UBC, UNBC, UVic, and SFU) to begin functioning as both "receivers" and "senders" in the

course-to-course database. This is an important step toward enabling *all* institutions to be senders or receivers, as appropriate. BCCAT also made further improvements to the Transfer Credit Evaluation System (TCES).

EducationPlanner.ca continues to be highly used and is a well-regarded resource for students exploring programs in BC. This year saw improvements to the search functionality, the addition of trades programs, and the creation of videos to help introduce users to different aspects of the site.

### ***b. Marketing and Communications***

BCCAT makes it a priority to increase awareness of BCCAT Web resources to assist and encourage students in their postsecondary planning. This year, we launched a new transit ad campaign to promote our student-focused sites, EducationPlanner.ca and BCTransferGuide.ca. This campaign began during the 2010 Olympics and is ongoing throughout the current fiscal year. The ads are displayed on the SkyTrain, Canada Line, and buses throughout the Lower Mainland and the rest of the province.

In addition, we also undertook a number of other advertising initiatives, participated at career and education fairs, and delivered presentations and demonstrations to assist students, counsellors, and career practitioners in the use of BCCAT Web resources.

As part of these efforts, we designed a brochure to provide an overview of the BC Transfer System and BCCAT on-line planning tools, for distribution to students (see [bccat.ca/pubs/brochure.pdf](http://bccat.ca/pubs/brochure.pdf)). It is possible that the brochure may be translated in the future for international recruitment purposes.

## **5. Advancing Interprovincial Transfer**

BCCAT works in collaboration with provincial and pan-Canadian postsecondary partners to improve transfer and student mobility within and across provincial borders. Two examples are provided below.<sup>5</sup>

### ***a. Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfer (PCCAT)***

The 2010 PCCAT Annual Meeting was hosted by BCCAT staff in Vancouver on June 23–25, 2010. This year’s theme was “Best Practices in Student Mobility: Transforming Higher Education in Canada” (details are available at [pccat.ca](http://pccat.ca)). PCCAT

---

<sup>5</sup> The participation of Rob Fleming (Executive Director, BCCAT) on the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada’s (CMEC’s) Working Group on Credit Transfer is an important component of BCCAT’s interprovincial activity.

seeks to facilitate the implementation of policies and practices that support student mobility both within and among provinces and territories to improve access to postsecondary education in Canada.

BCCAT also continues its involvement with the PCCAT Research Subcommittee. Devron Gaber (Associate Director, BCCAT) serves as the subcommittee's chair. The following project was completed this year, under the auspices of the subcommittee: *A Profile of Out-of Province Transfer Students Admitted to Four Universities: the University of Alberta, the University of British Columbia, the University of Saskatchewan and York University 2004-05 to 2008-09* (produced by Nick Heath, funded by BCCAT, [pccat.ca/files/pccat-2010/](http://pccat.ca/files/pccat-2010/)).

#### ***b. Western Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfer (WestCAT)***

Representatives from the four western provinces (BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba) have formed a group called the Western Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfer (WestCAT). WestCAT is a voluntary consortium established to encourage and facilitate interprovincial access, mobility, and transfer of credits for students moving among British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba.

The group met in fall 2010 in Edmonton with BCCAT staff members, Rob Fleming (Executive Director) and Devron Gaber (Associate Director, Admissions and Research), representing the BC Transfer System. Since then, the terms of reference have been finalized, and members are exploring the potential posting of interprovincial transfer information on their respective Web sites.

BCCAT will continue to play a key role on the national scene by promoting the importance of achieving a pan-Canadian system of student mobility and transfer. Our work will focus on providing advice and support to Canadian provinces that seek to develop and implement their own transfer systems, and encouraging support for such activities at the ministerial level.

#### **Plan of Projects and Activities for 2011-12**

Each year, BCCAT completes a comprehensive work plan comprising projects and activities arising from the prior year and reflecting revised priorities to address emerging issues. The work plan for 2011-12 is currently in progress and will be presented to council for consideration at the June 2011 meeting.

## Manitoba

The government agency with primary responsibility for coordinating the credit-transfer system is the Council on Post-Secondary Education (COPSE). The council acts as an intermediary between postsecondary institutions and the government, and is composed of 11 members, including a chair. Reporting to the council is a staff secretariat of 13 civil servants; the secretariat undertakes activities and projects designed to fulfill the mandate of the council and to meet the goals established by the council and by Manitoba Advanced Education and Literacy. The secretariat also works in consultation with universities and colleges to support council members in the development of policy and financial accountability.

The province's public postsecondary system includes the University of Manitoba, the University of Winnipeg, Brandon University, Red River College, Assiniboine Community College, University College of the North, and the *Collège universitaire de Saint-Boniface*, which includes the *École technique et professionnelle*.

In accordance with *The Council on Post-Secondary Education Act*, the council's mandate is to plan and coordinate the development of a postsecondary system that promises excellence in and accessibility to education, supports coordination and integration of services and facilities, and promotes fiscal responsibility. Among its duties and powers, and in carrying out its mandate, the council serves to facilitate the implementation of appropriate credit-transfer arrangements between universities and colleges.

### Communication and Adoption of Ministerial Principles

The ministerial principles have been endorsed by COPSE and informally adopted by the public postsecondary institutions.

### Important Developments, 2010-11

- Established in the late 1970s to provide articulated university credit courses to learners residing above the 53<sup>rd</sup> parallel (courses which then qualify for mutual recognition at all Manitoba universities), Inter-Universities Services (IUS) continues to provide such opportunities pending the finalization of the IUS mandate by 2013. The University of Manitoba, the University of Winnipeg, Brandon University, University College of the North, and IUS are collaborating on a credit-transfer project to find a transfer model that will protect existing credit-transfer agreements within IUS and that will also be amenable to the partner institutions.
- The University of Winnipeg established a new credit-transfer process for Officer Professional Military Education courses through Royal Military College's continuing studies, as part of its efforts to increase access for serving military personnel and

veterans, with a particular view to aiding military pilots enrolling in the university's Aviation Management stream in the Faculty of Business and Economics.

- Manitoba continues to focus on facilitating recognition of professional education and credentials obtained in other countries. Examples of initiatives that provide credit-transfer and recognition opportunities to foreign-trained and internationally educated professionals include the Internationally Educated Engineers Qualification Program introduced at the University of Manitoba in 2003, the Internationally Educated Teachers Pilot Program introduced at the University of Manitoba in 2005, and the Internationally Educated Nursing Pilot Program introduced at Red River College in 2007. To further the goal of foreign-credential recognition, Manitoba has continued its participation in the federally funded Partnerships for Labour-Market-Driven Bridge Programs in Manitoba's Post-Secondary Institutions, as well as the pan-Canadian Foreign Qualifications Recognition Working Group.
- In a continuing effort to promote recognition of credit between nursing programs, COPSE continues to work with all nursing programs to ensure advanced credit standings between Practical Nursing and Baccalaureate Nursing programs. In April 2011, COPSE will work with the *Collège universitaire de Saint-Boniface* to ensure that its proposed francophone Practical Nursing curriculum provides advanced standings in all Baccalaureate Nursing programs offered in Manitoba.
- Course-credit transfers continue to expand among the postsecondary institutions participating in Campus Manitoba — a collaborative mechanism through which the province's colleges and universities provide courses to students residing in rural and northern Manitoba through the use of a broad range of learning technologies.

### **Priority Areas**

While college-university transfer and articulation, foreign-credential recognition, and general efforts to create a more seamless postsecondary continuum will remain priorities, Manitoba will also focus over the next year on establishing an institutional stakeholder working group to explore more formalized transfer and credit arrangements.

### **Research**

Research on credit transfer and articulation, including best practices in other jurisdictions and the relationship between transfer and articulation and quality assurance, is ongoing, and Manitoba remains interested in partnering with other provinces in these areas.

## **Working Group**

Manitoba supports the continuation of CMEC's Working Group on Credit Transfer and endorses the support and attention awarded by CMEC to credit transfer in postsecondary education.

Manitoba is also a participating member of the Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfer and will continue to work closely with its neighbouring western provinces to further develop a more formalized credit-transfer system.

## **WestCAT**

In fall 2010, Manitoba attended, as a new member, the annual meeting of the Western Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfer (WestCAT), a pan-western consortium comprised of the British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer, the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer, the Saskatchewan Council for Admissions and Transfer (now dissolved), and Manitoba. While Manitoba has not yet formalized credit-transfer arrangements among colleges and universities, the province expects to learn much from the well-developed systems operating in British Columbia and Alberta. Manitoba will host the fall 2011 WestCAT meeting.

## **New Brunswick**

### **Communication of Ministerial Principles**

The implementation of various initiatives from the *Action Plan to Transform Post-Secondary Education in New Brunswick* has been under way, including credit transfer and prior learning assessment and recognition (PLAR).

The New Brunswick Post-Secondary Education Advisory Forum, comprising university and community-college presidents, as well as the deputy minister responsible for postsecondary education, was established to oversee progress on selected action plan initiatives and to foster collaboration.

### **Adoption of Ministerial Principles**

The proposed long-term operational plan for the New Brunswick Council on Articulations and Transfer (NBCAT), developed in 2009-10, was endorsed by the participating institutions and the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour (PETL), and implemented in 2010-11.

### **Three-Year Framework for Action**

NBCAT is a participatory council of PETL composed of institutional representatives at the academic vice-president level. NBCAT serves as a body through which stakeholders work cooperatively for the benefit of learners to ensure smooth inter-institutional transitions and effective transferability of courses and/or programs. In addition, NBCAT promotes the appropriate and effective use of PLAR, with a link to international credential and competency assessment to support learners in their postsecondary experiences and labour-market integration.

The work of the council is carried out by staff provided by PETL, with a standing Contact Persons Committee composed of representatives from participating institutions at the registrar level and a standing Action Group to implement the provincial PLAR coordination plan.

### **Important Developments, 2010-11**

A credit-transfer portal was developed and will be officially launched in spring 2011. The portal will simplify the accessibility of credit-transfer information for institutions and New Brunswickers for the benefits of increased access to both credit transfer and recognition of prior learning. The portal will simplify service provision for institutions while ensuring timely service based on a quality-assurance model.

The development of a second phase of the portal commenced in 2010 and is to be concluded in 2011; this phase will include:

- advanced search features by faculty and full text
- a social-marketing strategy (e.g., Facebook)
- the future integration of transfers from institutions outside NB and the country
- a program-mapping tool

Work continued on exploring articulation and transfer opportunities in the fields of nursing, business, and engineering:

- 1. Nursing:** A needs survey and a gap analysis were completed for both anglophone and francophone Licensed Practical Nursing and Bachelor of Nursing programs in New Brunswick (New Brunswick Community College-University of New Brunswick and *Collège communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick-Université de Moncton*). A report is expected in May 2011. Based on the recommended actions, a decision will be taken regarding next steps.
- 2. Business:** A consultant was hired to do a thorough analysis with the participating faculties and to identify transfer opportunities and any gap-bridging requirements. A final report was completed and will be evaluated in April 2011 to provide recommended actions to NBCAT in order to determine next steps.
- 3. Engineering:** A survey of computer/information-technology students and graduates is presently being conducted to determine whether they would be interested in continuing their education, should such training be available. Based on the results of the survey, NBCAT will determine next steps.

The New Brunswick PLAR Action Group was officially established in May 2010, and the following five priority actions were identified for 2010-11 in accordance with the provincial implementation plan:

- develop a governance model;
- develop PLAR guiding principles and standards;
- expand the Socrates model to a common provincial NB PLAR tool;
- develop custom-made curriculum for PLAR advising and assessment for NB; and
- develop a communications plan to create public awareness, including for employers and regulated professions, about the benefits of PLAR.

## **Priority Areas**

The Atlantic credit-transfer memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed in September 2009 is a commitment to ensure that students receive maximum benefits from postsecondary education.

Acknowledging the importance of articulations and transfer and PLAR, New Brunswick will continue in the direction it has taken with the establishment of NBCAT to facilitate learners' access to postsecondary education through inter-institutional transfer and the recognition of formal and informal learning experiences.

## **Research**

In 2011-12, NBCAT will undertake research that will help inform and shape policy and practice.

New Brunswick will continue to support and participate in the work of the Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfer (PCCAT), with an ongoing interest in partnering and sharing best practices with other jurisdictions for quality assurance at the pan-Canadian level.

## **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 and College of the North Atlantic (CNA) that has existed for more than 20 years. New agreements are signed between our public postsecondary institutions and those in other parts of Canada and around the world on a regular basis. One of the recent agreements at CNA has been with Okanagan College (British Columbia) for graduates of CNA's three-year business management program. Graduates of the CNA program with a minimum grade average of 67 per cent will be eligible for admission to Okanagan College with a full block transfer into the fourth year of the Bachelor of Business Administration program, with a minimum of 30 articulated courses (90 credits).

The latest edition of the *Transfer Guide* for Newfoundland and Labrador is available on-line at [www.ed.gov.nl.ca/edu/postsecondary/transferguide/index.html](http://www.ed.gov.nl.ca/edu/postsecondary/transferguide/index.html). The 17<sup>th</sup> edition is scheduled for print release in spring 2011. The guide provides students with an established course-by-course precedent guide, as well as program/block credit-transfer agreements. The guide also provides information about the public postsecondary system, institutional transfer policies, and programs and courses linked to high schools.

In 2009, Memorial University and CNA joined with other Atlantic colleges and universities in the signing of a memorandum of understanding through the Atlantic Provinces Community College Consortium (APCCC) to strengthen transferability and mobility within Atlantic Canada and to ensure that students receive maximum benefits from postsecondary education in the region. The memorandum of understanding was signed by 22 institutions in Atlantic Canada.

### Adoption of Ministerial Principles

Newfoundland and Labrador supports CMEC's Ministerial Statement on Credit Transfer in Canada, and has shared this statement of principles with Memorial University and College of the North Atlantic.

### Three-Year Framework for Action

In 2005, the government released "Foundations for Success: White Paper on Public Post-Secondary Education." This policy document was commissioned as part of the government's continued commitment to provide affordable and accessible postsecondary education opportunities. This document has resulted in a number of areas of collaboration in the public postsecondary education system, focusing on shared program areas at Memorial University and CNA.

In 2007, the skills task force All the Skills to Succeed was mandated by government to identify future skills requirements and skills gaps, as well as their potential impact on the provincial economy, and to identify and develop strategies to respond to these training and educational needs by maximizing workforce development. This strategic direction has resulted in significant advances in postsecondary education in the province. Government regularly consults with all stakeholders in the implementation of the task force's recommendations. On March 16, 2011, Newfoundland and Labrador held a public forum to follow up on the skills task force that included over 160 student, industry, postsecondary institution, and government representatives.

The department of education is currently developing its 2011–2014 strategic plan.

### **Priority Action Areas**

Priority action areas will be identified by the department of education as part of its strategic planning process, and priority action items regarding credit transfer and articulation continue to be highlighted in the government's policy direction.

### **Research**

Research directions will be determined by the department of education as part of its strategic planning process, and research initiatives are continuing at postsecondary institutions. Memorial University and College of the North Atlantic have autonomy over their research directions and priorities.

### **Working Group**

Newfoundland and Labrador supports the continuation of the CMEC Working Group on Credit Transfer because it provides a valuable forum for jurisdictions to work together toward enhancing credit-transfer opportunities across Canada. Newfoundland and Labrador supports CMEC's efforts in promoting and supporting a pan-Canadian approach to credit transfer and continues to participate in the Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfer (PCCAT).

## **Northwest Territories**

### **Communication of Ministerial Principles**

Although the Department of Education, Culture and Employment supports the principles outlined in the Ministerial Statement on Credit Transfer in Canada, the ministerial principles have not been formally communicated or adopted.

### **Adoption of Ministerial Principles**

Aurora College, the only public postsecondary institution in Northwest Territories, is aware of the principles and agrees with their intent.

### **Three-Year Framework for Action**

Northwest Territories and Aurora College continue to work toward the goal of increased partnerships and credit-transfer agreements with other jurisdictions. Aurora College will continue to articulate its programs as broadly as possible. The college is a member of the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer (ACAT) and attends pan-Canadian articulation meetings through the Association of Canadian Community Colleges. For degree programs, the college works directly with degree-granting institutions. At an international level, the college works with member institutions of the University of the Arctic for transfer credits.

### **Priority Action Areas**

Aurora College's general priority is to ensure that its students are able to transfer to other postsecondary institutions in a seamless manner. The college has an ongoing process of working on articulation agreements. The college's small student population, relative to that of other Canadian jurisdictions, makes it challenging to provide the range of programming possible in larger jurisdictions; partnerships and transfer agreements are thus essential to meet the needs of Northwest Territories residents and employers for postsecondary education.

### **Working Group**

Northwest Territories supports the efforts by CMEC, the provinces and territories, and postsecondary institutions to enhance credit transfer within and among jurisdictions. A pan-Canadian credit transfer system would benefit all concerned. The territorial jurisdictions would stand to benefit from a CMEC-sponsored pan-Canadian protocol on college-university transferability. Northwest Territories would benefit from continuing efforts by CMEC to undertake further research into the effectiveness and fairness of current systems of credit-transfer recognition.

## Nova Scotia

### Communication of Ministerial Principles

Public postsecondary institutions in Nova Scotia are aware of the CMEC Ministerial Statement on Credit Transfer in Canada.

### Adoption of Ministerial Principles

Nova Scotia supports the adoption of the principles outlined in the CMEC Ministerial Statement on Credit Transfer in Canada.

### Three-Year Framework for Action

All Nova Scotian universities and the Nova Scotia Community College continue to increase the number of institutions recognized (both college and university) and the number of credit equivalencies recognized and accepted. Some institutions have, and others are moving toward, an on-line equivalency list for prospective students to consult. Others are developing articulation agreements with colleges with the intention of promoting 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 (APCCC).

In June 2009, Atlantic-region community colleges and universities signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that allows students to have a more seamless educational experience and improve completion times by encouraging transfer agreements between and among public universities and community colleges in Atlantic Canada. The MOU is endorsed by the Association of Atlantic Universities (AAU) and APCCC and their member institutions. The MOU recognizes that member institutions are responsible for overall evaluation and programming, and will make these decisions based on their institutional standards. The MOU further recognizes that academic integrity is paramount to all institutions and must be protected and preserved. Both AAU and APCCC recognize the participation of Atlantic ministers of education and training in the establishment of the MOU. This support further solidifies the strong working relationship between universities and colleges and the four provincial governments. Nova Scotia supports any actions to increase credit-transfer arrangements/agreements between the university and the community-college systems and among institutions in this province and other jurisdictions.

## **Priority Action Areas**

The New Brunswick-Nova Scotia Partnership Agreement on Regulation and the Economy (PARE) signed by the premiers of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia in February 2009 recognizes the complete transferability of community-college and university credits as an initiative to promote between the two provinces. This agreement may expand to include partnerships with Prince Edward Island and with Newfoundland and Labrador. Credit-transfer arrangements and articulated programs are expanding within the system and in the Maritime/Atlantic region. Opportunities for further initiatives are ongoing.

In the “Policy Options to Consider” section of the *Report on the University System in Nova Scotia* released in September 2010, it was cited that shared course access provides added value to students while offering the potential for increased specialization and decreased redundancy among institutions. While this occurs to a degree in Nova Scotia, greater cooperation could benefit students if it were to yield a more seamless process in terms of credit transfer. Issues such as recognition of prior learning, credit transfer, foreign credentials, and other innovations to enhance system integration and expand participation in higher education will be part of discussions between the universities and the province during 2011.

## **Working Group**

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

## **Nunavut**

### **Communication of Ministerial Principles**

The work of implementing Nunavut's Adult Learning Strategy is proceeding. The strategy 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, we are paying attention to ensure that Nunavut's strategies are consistent with the principles of 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 adopted in Nunavut. Furthermore, certain objectives are foundational to the Adult Learning Strategy and the development of a credit-transfer approach. These objectives include: promoting greater cooperation and collaboration among agencies involved in education and training in Nunavut (e.g., developing 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 prior learning assessment and recognition (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 postsecondary and adult programs. Progress has been made in this area, and Nunavut's only postsecondary institution applies PLAR in assessment and recognition of some programs.

The Nunavut Adult Learning Strategy (NALS) identified multiple barriers to PSE as well as to vocational and apprenticeship training opportunities faced by Nunavummiut: the chief of which was the literacy levels reported in the International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey. The NALS recommended the implementation of PLAR to help increase access to PSE by addressing the literacy question, among others.

So far, steps have been taken by the only postsecondary institution in Nunavut to implement PLAR. The department of education recognizes this as an important step and is engaged in the ongoing process. It is equally important to note that the department of education also recognizes the progress made in other program areas with similar aims, that is, to increase access to PSE, for example, the current project on Mature Student Graduation. Collectively, these various measures address, in part, the recommendations of the NALS and the department's commitment to these outcomes in the longer term.

### **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 CMEC Working Group on Credit Transfer. A senior staff 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 and Adoption of Ministerial Principles

Following the ministers' endorsement of the Ministerial Statement on Credit Transfer in Canada in October 2002, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) distributed the principles to executive heads and presidents of all provincially assisted colleges and universities in Ontario and requested that the statement be circulated widely within each postsecondary educational institution.

### Overview

The College-University Consortium Council (CUCC) was established in 1996 as a joint initiative of the Council of Ontario Universities, Colleges Ontario (formerly known as ACAATO), and MTCU. CUCC's mandate is to facilitate, promote, and coordinate joint education and training ventures that aid in the transfer of students from sector to sector; facilitate the creation of joint programs between colleges and universities; and further the development of a more seamless continuum of postsecondary education in Ontario.

CUCC contributes to the development and enhancement of credit-transfer policies and practices in Ontario through research on credit-transfer frameworks, policies, and practices in other jurisdictions; responding to requests for information from interested stakeholders; and supporting provincial discussions on students' postsecondary pathways.

CUCC also solicits and supervises projects designed to create new transfer pathways and to support student mobility through funds provided by MTCU. Recent projects have focused on the development of transfer pathways from provincial diploma and advanced-diploma programs to high-affinity degree programs and a new General Arts and Science university-transfer framework.

As part of its responsibilities, CUCC also maintains the Ontario College-University Transfer Guide (OCUTG), [www.ocutg.on.ca](http://www.ocutg.on.ca), which provides an on-line searchable database of credit-transfer agreements between Ontario's colleges and universities. CUCC monitors the accuracy and currency of the guide and advises institutions when agreements are close to expiring so that they can be updated in a timely manner to ensure that information provided to prospective transfer students is as accurate as possible.

CUCC also provides support to students and other stakeholders with regard to postsecondary credit transfer in Ontario. CUCC receives frequent questions from students, guidance counsellors, college and university staff, and other interested parties about transfer in Ontario and credit transfer in general. CUCC has responded to general transfer-related enquiries such as

questions from researchers looking for information on transfer-agreement activity over specific periods of time, questions from registrars of other provinces about the Ontario postsecondary credit system, and requests for information and assistance from institutions and other jurisdictions looking for resources to assist with developing college-university partnership arrangements.

### **Advances in Transfer and Articulation Projects**

The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities continues to fund pilot projects and other innovative strategies designed to further college-university collaboration and the establishment of a more seamless postsecondary education system in the province. These projects are managed by CUCC.

#### ***Status of transfer agreements***

- As of October 2010, formal arrangements among postsecondary institutions have increased to 519 (from 19 in 1988). These include 435 college-university degree-completion agreements.
- The majority of the agreements (334) are bilateral (i.e., one college to one university); however, there are 133 multilateral agreements (i.e., more than two institutions involved).

Under the proposed credit-transfer system, the government will be building on the good work that has been done to date by expanding and adding to these agreements to create more transfer opportunities for students in demand areas.

MTCU will continue to support province-wide projects to increase pathways between postsecondary credentials and institutions consistent with the new provincial credit-transfer system. The ministry will also support activities related to the articulation of transfer opportunities from college to college and from university to university.

### **Priority Action Areas/Recent Developments**

On January 17, 2011, the government of Ontario announced that it will invest almost \$74 million over five years to support the implementation of a province-wide credit-transfer system.

This initiative responds to a commitment made in the 2010 provincial budget to introduce a credit-transfer system as part of the Open Ontario Plan.

The investment will help colleges and universities to develop new credit-transfer pathways, provide support services for transfer students, provide better information to students about

transfer opportunities, and, ultimately, help students to complete their studies sooner, without repeating courses.

Ontario's new credit-transfer system will be phased in, beginning in 2011. The initiative is framed by a policy statement that sets out the vision, strategic goals, and overall direction of the system. The policy statement for Ontario's credit-transfer system was released in February 2011 to public colleges and universities and outlines how the plan is structured around five key elements:

- a Credit Transfer Innovation Fund to help develop and expand new credit-transfer pathways;
- a central credit-transfer Web site to give students the timely and accurate information they need to navigate their chosen destinations;
- a coordinating body to oversee the Web site, administer the fund, provide information to students and institutions, and showcase and disseminate successful practices;
- targeted grants to institutions to support activities that are critical for successful implementation;
- accountability measures to monitor progress over time.

While the initial stage of implementation focuses primarily on college-to-university transfers, it is important to note that the plan will gradually extend to university-to-university, college-to-college, as well as university-to-college transfers.

A steering committee and a working group, both chaired by MTCU, were established in spring 2009 to support the work needed on this initiative and to gain the expertise of sector participants. Both the steering committee and the working group include representation from Colleges Ontario, the Council of Ontario Universities, and three student organizations. The working group also included representation from CUCC.

### ***Credit Transfer Innovation Fund***

- A portion of the ministry's five-year, \$73.7-million investment in credit transfer is being directed to a Credit Transfer Innovation Fund (\$23.5 million) to expand and build upon existing agreements and to create more transfer opportunities for students in demand areas.
- In January 2011, this fund was launched through a joint call for participation by MTCU and CUCC, describing potential projects consistent with the new system and policy statement.

### ***Credit-transfer Web site***

- MTCU and CUCC are currently working with colleges, universities, and student organizations to design and develop a new credit-transfer Web site, which is a key part of the planned implementation of Ontario's province-wide credit-transfer system for publicly funded postsecondary institutions.
- The new Web site will increase transparency of information for students and improve students' ability to plan their education paths, reduce duplication of learning, and shorten the time to diploma/degree completion and entry to employment.
- An enhanced search tool will enable postsecondary students to easily understand pathways and opportunities for credit transfer for previous postsecondary learning.
- The site will be developed in a phased approach, with phase 1 targeted for launch in the fall of 2011.

### ***Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer (ONCAT)***

- The government will also fund an arm's-length coordinating body, the Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer (ONCAT), that will be responsible for central coordination of the credit-transfer system.
- ONCAT will support innovation and growth in the number and types of student transfer pathways and consistency across the province for students who transfer between Ontario institutions. It will also help foster the development of effective credit-transfer policies, programs, and agreements based on research and best practices. The council will build on the work done under the current CUCC.

### ***Credit-transfer institutional grants***

- Almost \$40 million in funding for new supports will be provided over five years to colleges and universities so that students will have access to transfer advisors and other services to help them understand their pathway options, navigate the transfer process, and succeed in their new program or institution.

### ***Performance measures***

- Going forward, university and college performance on credit transfer will be included as part of the ongoing, multi-year accountability agreements with institutions. The province will be working with the sector to refine and strengthen performance measures for credit transfer.

## Research

In 2010, a variety of research reports relating to student mobility and credit transfer in Ontario were released.

### ***College University Consortium Council (CUCC)***

CUCC engages in research related to transfer policies and practices in order to identify best practices that may assist institutions in the development of more seamless pathways between the two postsecondary education sectors. In 2005, CUCC implemented a research plan to identify movement of college graduates between Ontario's colleges and universities. CUCC contracted with CCI Research Inc. to compile and analyze data from provincial college student satisfaction and graduate satisfaction surveys, with the goal of better understanding student movement between colleges and universities. The original project used data from 2001 to 2005 for the graduate survey and data from 2001 to 2006 for the student survey.

In 2010, the analysis was revised and updated to include data from additional years to cover 2005 to 2009 for the graduate survey and 2006 to 2010 for the student survey. These new data, combined with the trending information from past years, provide a comprehensive overview of postsecondary student mobility.

Research and analysis indicate that the trend toward increasing participation in education after graduation appears to be continuing, with 26.6 per cent of college graduates in the 2005–2009 combined period furthering their education at college or university after graduation, as compared to 24.4 per cent during the 2001–2005 combined period.

Other findings include:

- In 2008-09, almost 8 per cent of college graduates pursued a university education within six months of graduating, while just over 19 per cent of college graduates continued their education at college.
- In the 2009-10 academic year, 9.3 per cent of students who were enrolled in a college program had previously graduated from a university.
- In general, college graduates who continue their education at university tend to do so in high-affinity programs at institutions located near the graduating college (e.g., business management, accounting/finance).
- Common reasons for college graduates to transfer to a university include: obtaining a diploma/certificate/degree; earning a higher income; and the availability of existing transfer agreements between programs.

The report can be found at [http://www.cucc-ontario.ca/includes/fileGet.cfm?cms\\_document\\_id=95](http://www.cucc-ontario.ca/includes/fileGet.cfm?cms_document_id=95).

### **Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO)**

The Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO) released a report entitled *The Transfer Experience of Ontario College Graduates who Further their Education: An Analysis of Ontario's College Graduate Satisfaction Survey*, which, through analyzing the College Graduate Satisfaction Survey, found that an increasing number of college graduates are returning to school to continue their education in pursuit of higher earnings, interesting and challenging career opportunities, and enhanced status. The report also found that Ontario's college graduates were generally satisfied with their transfer experience, but that gaps still remained in connecting students with available information and in providing effective credit recognition. The report can be found at <http://www.heqco.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/TransferExperienceofOntarioCollegeGraduates.pdf>.

Another HEQCO report, entitled *Forging Pathways: Students Who Transfer Between Ontario Colleges and Universities*, indicates that although Ontario's postsecondary education system was not originally designed for movement between colleges and universities, the number of students who continue their education by transferring between colleges and universities has increased over the last decade, and that the system could further improve through centralized coordination, greater student awareness of existing support services, and an increase in services available.

HEQCO analysis found that 7.7 per cent of college graduates furthered their education in a degree program in 2008-09, up from 5.3 per cent in 2001-02. The percentage of college students who are also university graduates has also increased: 10 per cent in 2009-10 compared to 8 per cent a decade earlier. The report can be found at <http://www.heqco.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/ForgingPathwaysENG.pdf>.

### **Working Group**

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

## Prince Edward Island

### Communication of Ministerial Principles

The ministerial principles have been distributed to the University of Prince Edward Island (UPEI) and Holland College (HC).

### Adoption of Ministerial Principles

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

### Three-Year Framework for Action

We have ongoing meetings as a provincial working group to ensure that UPEI and HC continue to develop processes and procedures to enhance the service between them as well as with institutions across Canada and internationally.

### Priority Action Areas

UPEI and HC continue to work together to provide seamless transfer for students moving between the two institutions. Both institutions continue to provide transfer credits to students; in 2009-10, 30 per cent of HC transfer-credit applications originated from students requesting transfer credit for UPEI courses. The next-highest sending institution was HC itself, with 20 per cent of total transfer-credit applications. UPEI has just released the “Got a Diploma? Get a Degree” brochure, which lists all the diploma-to-degree pathways available to students with the accompanying transfer credits.

Currently, there are 30 articulation agreements between HC and UPEI. Since the last report, HC and UPEI have added new articulation agreements in the following departments:

- HC Child and Youth Care Worker–UPEI Bachelor of Arts
- HC Business, Retail and Accounting–UPEI Bachelor of Arts
- HC Human Services–UPEI Bachelor of Arts
- HC Hotel and Restaurant Management–UPEI Bachelor of Arts
- HC Marketing and Advertising Management–UPEI Bachelor of Arts
- HC Sport and Leisure Management, Golf Club Management and Professional Golf Club Management–UPEI Bachelor of Arts
- HC Tourism and Travel Management–UPEI Bachelor of Arts

In addition, effective September 2011, UPEI and HC will be offering a joint Bachelor of Wildlife Conservation degree program. Eligible students who graduate with a two-year Wildlife

Conservation Technology diploma may now apply for entry into this new program, which combines the practical, theoretical, and analytical strengths provided by both the college and the university.

HC and UPEI continue to explore partnerships locally, nationally, and internationally, with articulation agreements and memoranda of understanding for a wide variety of programs with a wide variety of institutional partnerships. HC is exploring new possibilities with schools in New Zealand, Australia, and New England. UPEI is exploring, among other initiatives, new possibilities in Kenya, Korea, and China.

### **Research**

Holland College Admissions/Student Services has developed an action research project, to be implemented in January 2011, focusing on services for potential HC-to-UPEI transfer and articulating students. To better meet the needs of this often underserved group, the Information Officer from HC will work with the Recruitment and Assistant Registrar from UPEI to create and facilitate information sessions, workshops, and tours for HC/future UPEI students. The results of this research will provide support and assistance to the students and provide both institutions with qualitative data regarding what transfer students feel they need to have a successful student-transfer experience. This research project will be completed in September 2011.

### **Working Group**

Prince Edward Island is represented on the CMEC Working Group on Credit Transfer and is a member of the Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfer. This working group continues to meet on an ongoing basis.

## 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 Ministry of Education, Recreation and Sports. The ministry has communicated the ministerial principles to the members of this committee.

### Adoption of Ministerial Principles

Section 22 of the *College Education Regulations (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.

### Priority Action Areas

Increasingly, *cégeps* and universities are developing bridges between technical programs and university undergraduate programs. While some universities recognize only three credits from a technical program, others recognize up to 36 credits for bachelor's-degree programs, through the Diploma of Collegial Studies–Bachelor's Degree Program (DEC-BAC) agreements. In 2007, 14 universities each 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 approximately 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 Ph.D. Thus, universities recognize doctoral training received at a foreign institution. This type of agreement is being expanded to include universities in other countries, such as Germany, Belgium, and Switzerland.

The ministry's short-stay grant program (\$10 million) enables students to pursue accredited training in their program of study at foreign universities or at universities elsewhere in Canada. In either case, students actively participate in choosing the institution. This requires Quebec universities to recognize credits issued by other institutions. The practice is based on each university's degree-granting rights and powers.

Quebec has also facilitated professional-mobility agreements with France and with other Canadian provinces. These agreements do not cover credit transfer between institutions per se, but rather, standard-setting for granting equivalencies for credentials or training. If required, individuals seeking mobility can undertake additional training to acquire the full range of competencies required to practice a profession. Professional governing bodies are therefore involved in adopting and implementing these types of recognition standards.

Lastly, the summary of the Action Plan for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition in Canada, released by the Halifax-based Prior Learning Assessment Centre,<sup>6</sup> mentions three issues within the broad area of prior-learning recognition:

- credit transfer
- assessment of academic and professional credentials
- assessment and recognition of non-formal, informal, or experience-based learning (which can include university credits or credentials)

Quebec believes that the third issue is quite separate from the first two. It should be noted that the *Centre interdisciplinaire de recherche-développement sur l'éducation permanente* [interdisciplinary centre for research/development on lifelong education] of the *Université du Québec à Montréal* participated in drafting the summary.

### **Working Group**

The Ministry of Education, Recreation and Sports considers (1) that the Working Group on Credit Transfer has performed substantial work on the six principles of the Ministerial Statement on Credit Transfer in Canada; (2) that credit transfer between institutions is primarily under the jurisdiction of postsecondary educational institutions; and (3) that the CMEC ministerial statement continues to provide effective guidance to stakeholders in the field.

Issues related to the assessment and recognition of experience-based learning are quite different from those related to credit transfer. If necessary, and if it is deemed that expanding the assessment of experience-based learning were a priority, it might be useful to undertake this work according to activities carried out in the college sector, which often touch on experience-based learning. Strategically, it might be advantageous to set out principles governing the recognition of experience-based learning in a ministerial statement separate from the one governing credit transfer.

---

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.placentre.ns.ca/PDFS/CCL/2008-10-PLAR-Report-ExecSumEN.pdf>

## Saskatchewan

### Communication of Ministerial Principles

A description of and link to the CMEC Ministerial Statement on Credit Transfer in Canada (2009) can be accessed from the Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration Web site, <http://www.aeei.gov.sk.ca/rpl/ct>.

### Adoption of Ministerial Principles

The Honourable Rob Norris, Minister of Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration, approved the amendments to the ministerial statement.

### Three-Year Framework for Action

A formal, three-year credit-transfer framework has not been developed for Saskatchewan. The ministry continues to encourage provincial postsecondary institutions to consider how to enhance student mobility and work toward a more seamless credit-transfer system. The following key actions support this goal:

- Between 2006 and 2010, the ministry invested \$1,270,534 to support credit transfer and prior learning assessment and recognition (PLAR) projects. For a summary of these projects, visit <http://www.aeei.gov.sk.ca/rpl>.
- The Saskatchewan Post-Secondary Online Transfer Guide is available at <http://www.psotg.ca/>.
- Minister Norris and the Honourable Doug Horner, Minister of Advanced Education and Technology (Alberta), signed a letter of intent on September 17, 2009, with the purpose of establishing a cooperative framework to articulate mutually beneficial postsecondary education initiatives. Credit transfer was highlighted as one of three cooperation priorities.
- Saskatchewan representatives participated in discussions with western Canadian credit-transfer partners through the consortium known as WestCAT (Western Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfer). Meetings have been scheduled since 2008 and have included representation from British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. The purpose of the consortium is to share information and resources and to strengthen interprovincial transfer opportunities.

## **Priority Action Areas**

Saskatchewan is in a reflective/planning phase and is looking at best practices in other jurisdictions for strategies to move forward. The province's postsecondary system includes two universities, one technical institution, two Aboriginal institutions, and a number of federated/affiliated colleges. The academic vice-presidents of the three largest public credit-granting institutions have formed a group of senior academic leaders to discuss topics of mutual interest, including credit transfer. All three institutions are interested in more flexible arrangements to accommodate student mobility.

Saskatchewan institutions want information on best practices to engage faculty in credit-transfer processes. The University of Saskatchewan is interested in block-transfer articulation and in using learning outcomes as a basis for course and program design.

Although the Saskatchewan Council for Admissions and Transfer has been dissolved, there is ongoing articulation of courses and programs among institutions. Saskatchewan expects to continue to participate in interprovincial initiatives such as the Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfer (PCCAT) and WestCAT.

## **Research**

In 2010, Saskatchewan did not participate in any credit-transfer research.

## **Working Group**

Saskatchewan supports the continuation of the CMEC Working Group on Credit Transfer. In 2010, Saskatchewan committed to providing a representative to chair the working group.

## **Yukon**

### **Communication of Ministerial Principles**

The ministerial principles were communicated to the postsecondary institution.

### **Adoption of Ministerial Principles**

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 is included in the British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT), and college faculty regularly attend British Columbia provincial postsecondary articulation meetings. The college is an active member of the Association of Canadian Community Colleges. Yukon College is currently applying to become a member of the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer (ACAT).

### **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. Establishing articulation agreements is an ongoing process for the college.

### **Research**

Yukon College participated in a national prior learning assessment and recognition (PLAR) research project funded by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (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.

### **Working Group**

Yukon supports the continuation of the work being completed by the CMEC Working Group on 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 credit transfer 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.

Credit transfer 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 credit transfer for completed credentials, or the development of prior learning assessment and recognition processes.

The following statement of principles recognizes that credit transfer can occur between all different types of postsecondary institutions, public and private.

### Principles

1. 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 credit transfer in a routine manner.
2. 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.

3. 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, rigour, and outcomes although the learning has occurred in a variety of ways.
4. 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 autonomy of the individual institutions and programs must be protected and preserved.
5. Neither transfer students nor direct-entry students should be advantaged or disadvantaged as a result of the credit transfer process.
6. 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.