

**Adult Special Education (ASE)**

**Program-Specific Transfer Guide Project**

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## **Introduction:**

In British Columbia's public post-secondary institutions, Adult Special Education (ASE) programs respond to the needs of a diverse group of learners. Individuals with disabilities, or with a combination of barriers to education, employment or independence, as described in Appendix A, are eligible to enroll in these programs/courses in accordance with each institution's guidelines (Douglas College, 2009). ASE programs respond to industry and community needs, and relate directly to local labour market trends. 15 BC post-secondary institutions recognize or offer ASE courses and programs.

The topics in ASE programs and courses include, but are not limited to, skills for independence, literacy and numeracy, computer literacy, employment transition, and career readiness. ASE programs and courses may also include targeted vocational skills training and work placements. Learning is enhanced by the use of student-centered best practices. ASE programs and courses emphasize skill development for the workplace, and promote independence, community inclusion, and lifelong learning.

The purpose of the ASE Program-Specific Transfer Guide is to provide information to learners, parents, caregivers, instructors, employers, community agencies and counselors throughout British Columbia. The Guide will help its users identify transferability among ASE courses, many of which are not eligible for inclusion in the BC Transfer Guide because they are categorized as developmental or preparatory courses. The creation of the Program-Specific Transfer Guide is also intended to encourage participating institutions to articulate their current offerings, to identify potential learner pathways, and to identify areas for the development of new programs and courses.

## **HISTORY OF ADULT SPECIAL EDUCATION IN BRITISH COLUMBIA'S PUBLIC POST-SECONDARY SYSTEM**

Adult Special Education (ASE) in British Columbia has a long history of supporting individuals with disabilities, or with a combination of barriers to education, employment or independence. Over the years, considerable emphasis has been placed on transitioning individuals from the community and the K-12 education system into programs at post-secondary institutions. Specialized programs were developed for self-development, employment training, skills development for career readiness, and lifelong learning. In the 1960s and 1970s, ASE was primarily based in sheltered community workshops focusing on day activities, with minimal expectations. This model evolved into quasi-industrial programs promoting self-help, life skills training, and introduction into employment. ASE has since transformed into the diverse set of programs offered today in post-secondary institutions across British Columbia.

Currently, 15 BC institutions offer ASE programs or courses. These have prescribed outcomes ranging from skills for independence, literacy and numeracy, computer literacy, employment transition, and career readiness to targeted vocational skills training and work placements. These programs and courses are presented in several diverse learning formats.

The following table provides a chronological summary of historical events influencing the development of Adult Special Education programming in British Columbia's post-secondary education system.

**Table 1: History of Adult Special Education in the BC Post-Secondary System**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Event</b>
<b>1960</b>	The federal government passes the Technical and Vocational Training Assistance Act (Lyons, 2002). This enables the federal and provincial governments to jointly fund capital costs for vocational training facilities.
<b>1963</b>	The BC government amends the <i>Public Schools Act</i> (Dennison, 1971) and establishes regional post-secondary colleges.
<b>1967</b>	The federal government introduces the <i>Adult Occupational Training Act</i> (House of Commons, n.d.) to provide short-term retraining for unemployed and underemployed workers. The initial review leading to the Act identified a need for this population sector to be provided with basic academic skills and vocational training to improve their employability.
<b>1973</b>	The federal government funds the <i>Basic Training and Skills Development</i> (BTSD) program, for students to gain prerequisites for vocational training through academic upgrading, and the <i>Basic Job Readiness Training</i> (BJRT) programs to help adult learners requiring extended training programs to gain literacy and life skills, job search techniques, and work experience leading to employment.
<b>1979</b>	The first Career Readiness programs are offered in the BC post-secondary system.
<b>1982</b>	The BC Ministry of Education implements a policy recognizing the need for students with a disability to have reasonable access to appropriate learning opportunities in the public post-secondary system. The policy encourages "[a] wide range of educational opportunities for disabled adults throughout BC. Each institution will be encouraged to provide disabled adults.... with access into existing programs, and specifically designed programs ..."
<b>1985</b>	The United Nations ' <i>Decade of Disabled Persons</i> declaration outlines full

	<p>participation and equality for persons with disabilities, and identifies three guiding principles of equal access, economic integration, and effective participation through enhanced partnerships.</p>
<b>1988</b>	<p>The BC government's <i>Provincial Access Report</i> reaffirms the government's commitment to adults with disabilities with a recommendation relating to increased supports. The <i>Access for All</i> initiative advocates continued pressure on institutions to meet student demand, valuing equity, individual choice and responsibility. Demand for participation and lifelong learning opportunities increases, with emphasis on skill requirements and development. The Adult Special Education Articulation Committee is established through the BC Centre for Curriculum and Professional Development.</p>
<b>1989</b>	<p>The Ontario Human Rights Commission publishes guidelines for assessing accommodation, stating that "the needs of persons with disabilities must be accommodated in a manner which respects their dignity, which maximizes their integration and promotes their full participation in society".</p>
<b>1989 - 1991</b>	<p>The BC Ministry of Advanced Education Training and Technology conducts a comprehensive review of all BC programs and services offered to students with a disability (Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology, 1990). The review results in guidelines for Best Practice. This collaborative effort involves several ministries, post-secondary institutions and agencies within BC. Approximately 5% of college and institute students have disabilities even though 13% of BC's population has a disability.</p>
<b>1990</b>	<p>A BC Ministry of Advanced Education Training and Technology's Environmental Scan recognizes the need to improve educational opportunities for those with disabilities, and to meet demands for social equity through post-secondary education and training. The scan identified four Lower Mainland colleges providing programming: Capilano, Kwantlen, Douglas and Vancouver Community College. Funding for specialized programs in ASE increases to support up to 711 full time equivalent seats.</p>
<b>1991</b>	<p>A discussion paper on the "Door to Independence" emphasizes the importance of post-secondary access for students with disabilities, as access directly correlates to economic independence and community membership (Douglas College, 1991). The paper represents a recognition by governments, institutions and communities that educational attainment has been long underestimated, further marginalizing this population, and that changes are needed.</p>

<b>1999</b>	21 BC colleges and post-secondary institutions provide a variety of services to students with disabilities. The size of this group of students is estimated at approximately 5,533, with 400 disclosed students enrolled in ASE programs . Only those that were identified through the support of Centers for Students with Disabilities (CSD) were counted (Ministry of Advanced Education, 1999/2000). (Note: not all students enrolled in ASE programming use CSD services prior to or during attendance; therefore this number is likely an under-estimate.)
<b>2000</b>	Partnerships for Transitions between BC secondary and post-secondary schools develop programs for students in Grade 12 to participate in college-level ASE programs.
<b>2006</b>	A Cohort Study identifies 42 ASE-related programs offered in 15 BC public post-secondary institutions. 73% are employment preparation programs, 56% are vocational skills training programs, 56% are personal access programs, 35% are academic skills development, and 10% are “other”. 54% are full time programs, 25% are part time or full time, and the remainder are part time only. 637 students are enrolled in these programs in the September 2006 semester (Ministry of Education, 2006).
<b>2008</b>	Changes to the <i>University Act</i> create new special purpose teaching universities. The mandate of these new institutions includes programming for Adult Special Education (Province of BC, 2008).
<b>2011</b>	A Resource Directory of ASE Programs and DSS Services for Students with Disabilities in Public Post-Secondary Institutions identifies 15 BC institutions offering more than 40 ASE courses or programs (Ministry of Education, 2009).
<b>2012</b>	Enrollment in ASE programs across BC exceeds 1000 students. Programs are offered in 15 institutions throughout British Columbia's public post-secondary system: Camosun College, Capilano University, College of New Caledonia, College of the Rockies, Douglas College, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, North Island College, Northern Lights College, Northwest Community College, Okanagan College, Selkirk College, Thompson Rivers University, University of the Fraser Valley, Vancouver Community College, and Vancouver Island University.

<b>2013</b>	The ASE Articulation Committee appointed a working group to construct a Program Specific Guide, Generic Learning Outcomes for Employment Readiness Programs, and a Programs/Courses Table of offerings in the 15 participating BC post-secondary institutions.
<b>2014</b>	The first ASE Program Specific Guide was produced, accepted and posted to the BC Council for Articulation and Transfer site.

## The ASE Articulation Process

### The Purpose of Articulation

Articulation provides an opportunity for post-secondary institutions to exchange information on programming and student access, encourages diversity in programming and qualifies courses/programs through the articulation process. This process ensures that learners have access to quality programming with established learning outcomes and facilitates transfer among participating institutions ([bccat.ca](http://bccat.ca)).

The BC Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT) works to further the aim of transitions for learners. For further information on the work and publications of BCCAT, please visit [bccat.ca](http://bccat.ca)

### The Goals of ASE Articulation

*The goals of ASE articulation are:*

1. To recognize ASE programs and to articulate outcomes that create pathways for students to further education, community involvement and/or employment.
2. To develop generic learning outcomes for program/course levels.
3. To assess equivalent learning outcomes while respecting the autonomy of participating post-secondary institutions, and ensuring quality programming.
4. To facilitate the use of common terminology across participating institutions.
5. To identify educational opportunities for students and to facilitate transfer from one post-secondary institution to another.
6. To exchange relevant information and best practices.
7. To provide a forum for discussion of provincial and program educational issues in ASE.
8. To be a common voice when communicating and collaborating with external bodies.
9. To exchange curriculum resources and explore educational opportunities.

# ARTICULATION GUIDELINES FOR ASE EMPLOYMENT READINESS COURSES

## Goal Statement

The goal of Employment Readiness (ER) programs is to provide post-secondary opportunities for adult learners with a disability/barrier. ER programs provide opportunities to learn workplace skills, to demonstrate employment readiness skills, and to explore opportunities for future learning and employment in a changing and diverse society.

## Generic Topic Learning Outcomes

Employment Readiness (ER) includes a broad range of skill development. It is recognized that the following skill topics represent the scope of programming across BC, and that the exact content of individual courses content may vary. There are a total of 11 Skill topics, and two groups in which ER courses may be classified: Foundation and Level 2.

## Communication Skills - Mandatory for Foundation and Level 2 Courses

The learner will:

1. Recognize and define the elements of communication (sender, message and receiver)
2. Identify barriers to communication and use strategies to overcome barriers
3. Ask for clarification and demonstrate techniques (i.e. paraphrasing, asking questions) to assist communication
4. Display/use effective communications
5. Engage in active listening
6. Differentiate between passive, aggressive and assertive communication
7. Express their needs and ask for assistance
8. Respond to instructions and or feedback

## **Education and Employment Exploration Skills - Mandatory for Foundation and Level 2 Courses**

The learner will:

1. Complete various inventories/assessments related to education and employment, and develop and participate in personal, education and career planning
2. Become familiar with the BC Human Rights Code, BC Employment Standards Act and federal Employment Equity Act and his/her rights as a worker and citizen in BC
3. Identify and describe reasonable education / workplace accommodations/adjustments and support
4. Research job profile and education/training opportunities
5. Participate in goal planning and/or information interview
6. Identify and assess personal skills, abilities, work skills, habits, performance and compatibility with the type of work chosen

## **Employability/Workplace Skills – Mandatory for Foundation and Level 2 Courses**

The learner will:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the behavioral expectations an employer has when looking for a potential employee
2. Participate in verbal and non-verbal feedback
3. Follow instructions and directions, written and verbal
4. Demonstrate good organizational skills and work habits
5. Demonstrate initiative, dependability and reliability on the job
6. Recognize the importance of accepting feedback and criticism
7. Demonstrate positive workplace values
8. Present themselves at job interviews in a professional manner
9. Respond to interview questions by representing their strengths
10. Ask relevant questions of potential employers
11. Respond to different forms of feedback positively, considering the information to support positive changes.
12. Employ appropriate conversational skills with fellow students, coworkers and employers
13. Understand the responsibility of asking for assistance on the job
14. Demonstrate organizational skills (e.g. use planning tools, follow schedules, maintain punctuality and attendance)



## **Work/Training Experience – Optional for Foundation Courses; Mandatory for Level 2 Courses**

The learner will:

1. Identify and demonstrate safe work practices as per WorkSafeBC guidelines
2. Participate in work site training orientation
3. Identify and evaluate safe and unsafe work sites
4. Complete a minimum of one work experience in an identified job, based on interests, skills and abilities when applicable
5. Plan transportation to participate in an interview and work placement, as required
6. Set goals and participate in evaluations
7. Demonstrate good workplace habits and positive attitudes
8. Plan and complete tasks as per instructions

## **Technology Skills – Optional for Fundamental and Level 1 Courses**

The learner will:

1. Access a computer for word processing
1. Demonstrate a basic level of skill in using digital resources
2. Access an email account, compose and reply to messages
3. Understand and use safe internet protocols
4. Construct resumes, cover letters, and thank-you letters
5. Upload resumes to submit a job application online

## **Interpersonal Skills - Optional for Fundamental and Level 1 Courses**

The learner will:

1. Identify and demonstrate attitudes for success
2. Identify and demonstrate workplace expectations
3. Demonstrate respectful interactions in a diverse multi-cultural learning/work environment
4. Explore multicultural diversity in the workplace
5. Demonstrate cooperative workplace behaviours
6. Identify ways of demonstrating initiative on the job

7. Demonstrate appropriate interpersonal skills with supervisors, coworkers and customers
8. Develop strategies for getting along with others, co-workers, supervisors, customers and other stakeholders
9. Define conflict and demonstrate conflict resolution strategies.
10. Demonstrate problem-solving strategies
11. Give and receive feedback in an effective manner
12. Define and demonstrate ethical behaviors

### **Personal Awareness - Optional for Fundamental and Level 1 Courses**

The learner will:

1. Identify personal learning strategies
2. Describe personal attributes, strengths and challenges
3. Identify supports for educational/vocational success
4. Develop awareness of vocational strengths and challenges
5. Set learning goals, and review and discuss progress
6. Identify common stressors and strategies for stress management
7. Develop personal coping strategies to deal with change
8. Identify ways to build self-esteem
9. Recognize different personal and workplace styles for work settings
10. Understand the responsibility of asking for assistance on the job
11. Understand the relationship between personality, attitudes and actions
12. Identify personal values and how they apply to job satisfaction
13. Develop awareness of community resources and leisure
14. Identify personal-based and social-based resources, including family and friend relationships and spiritual supports

### **Literacy and Numeracy Skills - Optional for Fundamental and Level 1 Courses**

The learner will:

1. Develop knowledge about wages, personal finances and budgeting
2. Identify payroll terms and payroll deductions
3. Demonstrate ability to use calendars, planners, and timetables
4. Recognize, read, write and order numbers
5. Demonstrate the ability to solve real-life problems using basic numbers operations

6. Recognize and count coins and paper money
7. Create and respond to written and digital workplace communications
8. Use basic number operations in daily tasks
9. Identify and use currency in monetary transactions
10. Identify taxes, PST, and GST
11. Recognize typical gratuities expected for certain services
12. Demonstrate an ability to use a calculator for basic calculations (adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing)
13. Demonstrate an ability to prepare a personal budget
14. Read and decode a pay cheque/pay stub
15. Read and decode bills, invoices and receipts

### **Job Search Skills- Optional for Fundamental and Level 1 Courses**

The learner will:

1. Collect all related information to prepare a resume
2. Identify his/her personal job search network
3. Prepare and practice responses to communication skills for interviews
4. Prepare for an interview
5. Participate in role plays
6. Present himself/herself at job interviews in a professional manner
7. Respond to interview questions by representing his / her strengths
8. Ask relevant questions of potential employers
9. Identify local public and private employment agencies
10. Conduct a local job market analysis
11. Describe elements of and create a supported or independent job search plan
12. Identify and outline individual employment support and training needs
13. Demonstrate effective goal setting and time management skills
14. Demonstrate an understanding of the strategies needed to start and maintain a job search
15. Develop appropriate job-targeting cover letters
16. Demonstrate effective job search techniques
17. Identify the pros and cons of when and how to disclose one's disability

## **Health and Wellness - Optional for Fundamental and Level 1 Courses**

The learner will:

1. Describe the inter-relationship of mental, emotional physical and spiritual health
2. Explain the relationship between positive health behaviours and the prevention of injury illness and diseases
3. Describe and demonstrate ways to reduce risks related to unhealthy behaviours and attitudes affecting physical health
4. Demonstrate a practical knowledge of the main areas of health and wellness
5. Identify community resources for health maintenance in independent living
6. Demonstrate a greater understanding of health and/or disability
7. Set goals in area of health management e.g. nutrition, fitness, stress management, leisure

## **Customer Service Skills - Optional for Fundamental and Level 1 Courses**

The learner will:

1. identify the impact and importance of first impressions
2. demonstrate positive customer service skills and an understanding of the importance of excellent customer service skills
3. demonstrate effective customer service communication, including responding to nonverbal communication
4. identify and demonstrate the use of empathetic listening skills when responding to customer needs
5. identify and demonstrate treating customers in a respectful manner
6. identify and demonstrate appropriate responses to customer inquiries
7. identify and demonstrate ways of dealing with challenging customers

## ASE Employment Readiness Programs Transfer Grid

Institution Name	Foundation Level	Level 2
Camosun College		Certificate in Employment Training Level 1
Capilano University		-Discover Employability -Access to Work
College of New Caledonia		-JET (Job Education and Training) -TARGET (Techniques for Access, Reaching Goals, and Employment Training)
College of the Rockies		-Transition to Employment
Douglas College	Transitions to Work	-Consumer and Job Preparation -Career and Employment Preparation Program
Kwantlen Polytechnic University		-Work Exploration Program -Job Preparation Program
North Island College		-Employment Transition Program
Northern Lights College		-Employment Transition Program -Workplace Essential Skills Program
Northwest Community College		-WST Program (Workplace Skills Training)
Okanagan College	Independent Living Skills Program (Basic Academic Skills Certificates Level A & B, & Advanced Skills Certificate -Inclusive Post-Secondary Education	-PACE (Preparing for Access to Careers and Education) Program -SAME (Supported Access to Modified Education) Program
Selkirk College		- Transition Training -Integrated ABE/ASE Program (EDCP 02) -Education/Adult Special Education Program (EDCP 02)
Thompson Rivers University		WST (Work skills Training Program) ESTR (Education and Skills Training Career Exploration)
University of the Fraser Valley		Workplace TASK (Training in Attitudes, Skills and Knowledge)
Vancouver Community College		-Career Awareness - Deaf & Hard of Hearing Job Readiness Program
Vancouver Island University		-WEST (Workplace Essential Skills and Training) Program -Employment and Life Skills Training -Employability Skills Program

The institutions listed in this grid have agreed that the programs listed at each level are equivalent to each other for the purposes of transfer or for meeting pre-requisites for program admission or placement.

- Programs at the Foundation level include 3 core Skill areas (Communication, Education and Employment Exploration Skills, Employability and Workplace Skills) + a minimum of 2 optional areas.
- Level 2 programs include 4 core Skill areas (Communication, Education and Employment Exploration Skills, Employability and Workplace Skills, and Work Training Experience) + a minimum of 4 optional areas.

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## Appendix A

### CATEGORIES OF DISABILITY (Douglas College, 2009)

Typically students in ASE programs are seen to fall within one or more categories:

#### **1. Documented Disabilities**

Individuals have been tested by a registered psychologist or school psychologist in cases of a developmental disability or learning disability, or have been formally assessed by a certified professional related to the area of the disability (e.g., medical doctor for medical/physical disabilities, audiologist for hearing impairments, psychiatrist for mental health disabilities) and have documentation of disability. With the exception of developmental disabilities and brain injuries prior to 18 years, documentation would typically be less than five years old.

#### **2. Undiagnosed or Students Without Documentation of Disability**

Students may have out of date documentation or may have had documentation which is no longer available. Students may clearly have a disability; however they may not have been assessed, do not wish to apply for PWD (Persons with Disabilities) status and / or accept support from Community Living British Columbia (CLBC), or do not wish to be labeled. Many people with learning disabilities or mental illness fall into this category. Individuals may be disabled according to the commonly accepted World Health Organization definition of disability; however they may not meet the Province of British Columbia definition of disability which entitles them to receive PWD benefits. ESL students and aboriginal students with disabilities often fall into this group.

#### **3. Barriers**

Typically consist of two or more of the following: alcohol and drug illness; undiagnosed or undocumented mental illness; undiagnosed FASD; slow learner; at-risk; borderline intelligence (therefore does not qualify for CLBC support); poor academic skills; low self-esteem. A disproportionate number of aboriginal students may be found in this group. The vast majority of ASE students fall within the first two categories; however, there is considerable anecdotal and other evidence that the number of individuals who would be identified as having barriers vs. documented disabilities is growing rapidly. Two examples of this are the doubling of the homeless population in Vancouver over the past three years and the growth in the numbers of individuals (K-12) displaying autistic tendencies and / or other mental health issues. On average, under 20% of the total enrollment in ASE programs would typically be identified as having barriers; however, the complexity of these individuals may be considerable. On the other hand, the outcomes leading to employment are strong. ASE programs appear to be providing an effective balance in addressing the needs of the full spectrum of the disabled and multi-barriered community.