



Policy Number: 3.B.2 (NEW)	Policy Dates
Sponsor: Mike Winsemann, Assistant Director	Development or Review Initiation: Fall 2014
Council Committee: Transfer and Articulation (TAC)	Council Approval: June 4, 2015

Listing of Transfer Agreements with Non-Member Institutions in the BC Transfer Guide

CONTEXT AND PURPOSE

In 2007, the Council approved the *Recording Block Transfer Agreements with PCTIA-Accredited Institutions Policy and Process (3.B.1 and 3.B.1a)* to provide advice to public and private institutions intending to enter into articulation agreements. In 2014, the Ministry of Advanced Education announced the forthcoming dissolution of PCTIA, along with their intent to bring the oversight and accreditation function for private non-degree granting institutions within the Ministry at least on a temporary basis until a new entity is developed. As a result the aforementioned policy is no longer relevant and a new one is required to address the current context, which includes Council’s support for facilitating the publication of appropriate agreements between member institutions and other Canadian public and accredited BC private institutions, as well as Aboriginal controlled institutions.

The purpose of this policy is to guide member institutions that wish to have formally articulated courses or blocks with non-member institutions listed in the BC Transfer Guide by providing the steps they should follow, the information they should gather, and the commitments and guarantees that BCCAT would require to consider recording agreements in the BC Transfer Guide.

SCOPE AND LIMITS

The establishment of course or block transfer agreements between an institutional member of the BC Transfer System and another Canadian public or BC private institution or Aboriginal-controlled institution is voluntary for both partners, is limited to academic degree-level credit, and there is no onus on either to agree to articulate its program(s) with the other. However, the Council reminds all institutions of the provisions of the Ministerial Statement on Credit Transfer in Canada (<http://www.cmec.ca>) and the principle of equitable treatment of students.

This policy is intended to ensure that where credit transfer agreements established between member and non-member institutions with the goal of being listed in the BC Transfer Guide for information, appropriate procedure is followed to safeguard the ultimate success of the agreement and the benefit to students.

The documentation of agreements on the BCCAT website is for information sharing purposes only, and limited only to the context of the specified agreement and institutions. The documentation of non-member institutions

on the website in no way implies their inclusion in the BC Transfer system, the broader acceptance of their courses for transfer credit or any form of official quality assurance.

DEFINITIONS

BCCAT: The BC Council on Admissions and Transfer oversees the BC Transfer System. Members of the Council are appointed by the Minister and are selected from across the BC post-secondary system to serve the overall best interests of the system. The Council is supported by a small professional staff.

BC Transfer Guide: website service hosted by BCCAT to help post-secondary students discover their transfer options, and institutions to support students in this process. The site includes formal course-to-course, block transfer, advanced placement, and international baccalaureate agreements along with program specific transfer arrangements.

Block Transfer: occurs when a group of courses, often in the form of a certificate, diploma, or associate degree, is recognized as a whole for a predetermined amount of transfer credit.

Degree Programs: associate degree and baccalaureate degree programs, which are regulated provincially, approved by DQAB, and subject to review.

DQAB: The Degree Quality Assessment Board is a provincial Board appointed by the Minister of Advanced Education for British Columbia. DQAB reviews proposed degree programs at public and private institutions in BC and makes recommendations to the Minister. DQAB conducts both institutional and program reviews.

Education Planner: website service offered by BCCAT to help prospective and current post-secondary students explore their education options.

Home Institution: the institution from which a student transfers.

Institutional Contact Person (ICP)/Transfer Credit Contact (TCC): links between BCCAT and BC Transfer System member institutions. Each institution has at least one staff member serving in these roles and there are often two or more. One person may perform both the ICP and TCC roles, particularly at small institutions.

Letter of Assurance: the formal contract between a new member institution and BCCAT, stating that the institution agrees to uphold the *Principles and Guidelines for Transfer* and the norms and standards of the BC Transfer System.

Member Institution: Any publicly funded post-secondary institution in BC, or private institution with approval to offer at least one or more degree programs from the DQAB. Membership also includes public post-secondary institutions outside of BC that have been approved to articulate within the BC Transfer System by the BC Council on Admissions & Transfer.

Non-Member Institution: Any institution that does not meet the criteria of Member Institution.

TCES: Transfer Credit Evaluation System, the online system used to send and receive formal articulation requests between institutions.

Transfer Credit: the granting of credit by one institution for courses or programs successfully completed at another institution.

Transfer Institution: the institution to which a student transfers.

PRINCIPLES

The Council recognizes that transfer agreements rest on a foundation of mutual trust and quality assurance.

- *Trust* is established and maintained when institutions communicate clearly and honestly with each other and with students, adhere both to the spirit and to the letter of their agreement, and deliver what they promise.
- *Institutional quality* assurance is addressed through membership in another recognized Canadian provincial transfer system, consent by BC Ministry of Advanced Education to offer degree level courses or programs, or accreditation (or equivalent) by a Canadian or International quality assurance body deemed appropriate by BCCAT. At the Council's discretion on a case by case basis, agreements with institutions that fall outside the auspices of these quality assurance processes may be considered for inclusion provided they have a well-established articulation relationship with one or more sponsoring member institutions of the BC Transfer System and that they demonstrate ongoing quality assurance practices to the satisfaction of the Council
- *Program quality* is assured through the due diligence undertaken by the transfer institution which includes the transfer institution's assessment of the program, and can also include recognized industry or professional accreditation or certification.

Institutions not meeting any of the appropriate requirements are ineligible for consideration, unless otherwise determined by Council. At its sole discretion, Council may consider other provincial (or equivalent) program approval and / or quality assurance processes as a criterion for listing articulation agreements in the BC Transfer Guide.

Each agreement listed in the BC Transfer Guide constitutes a guarantee for students. When listings are current, reliable, and respected by both partners, the credit transfer is seen as credible. Respect for and accountability to partner institutions ensures that the academic integrity of courses and programs is protected and preserved. It is the institution's responsibility to ensure that there are established policies, procedures, and resources supportive of efficient and transparent credit transfer processes and decisions.

GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

The following guidelines and procedures should be in place in all non-member institutions whose agreements with a member institution are listed in the BC Transfer Guide:

1. The non-member institution must be a member of another recognized Canadian provincial transfer system, have consent from the BC Ministry of Advanced Education to offer degree level courses or programs, or have accreditation (or equivalent) by a Canadian or International quality assurance body deemed appropriate by BCCAT. In the absence of the above, non-member institutions with well-established articulation relationships with one or more BC Transfer System members will be considered on a case by case basis.
2. On an ongoing basis the non-member institution must provide the latest relevant reports available to the transfer institution (examples of relevant reports include annual report, accreditation or re-accreditation report, program review).
3. The non-member institution's accreditation status or ministerial consent to offer a degree program status should be current and any history of de-registration or de-accreditation must be openly disclosed.

4. Where the norms of the profession require program accreditation, the program at the non-member institution must be accredited by the relevant regulatory, certifying or accrediting body appropriate. The curriculum should be reasonably stable over time, and regularly reviewed for effectiveness and quality.
5. There should be a business case for students transferring, or some evidence of students transferring or wishing to transfer.
6. Agreements normally encompass program-to-program block transfer agreements, such as certificate-to-diploma, or diploma-to-degree, which provide for the progression of students from one level to another. Articulation of block transfer agreements does not confer the right of non-member institutions to articulate on a course by course basis with other BC Transfer System members.
7. Under exceptional circumstances, course-to-course agreements may also be considered for publication in the BC Transfer Guide at the request of the member institution and at the discretion of BCCAT, if there is a demonstrated flow of student mobility, and with the presentation of a sound business case for inclusion. Criteria for a sound business case for inclusion of course-to-course agreements with non-member institutions can be provided by BCCAT upon request.
8. Block transfer agreements will clearly state what credit the student will receive at the transfer institution, towards what program(s), and any prerequisite, grade, or language proficiency requirements.
9. Block transfer agreements should be based on a close assessment of the equivalence of the programs at the partnering institutions. For information on the principle of equivalence, institutions can refer to <http://www.bccat.ca/system/principles> and to: <http://www.bccat.ca/articulate/assess/equivalence>, and for more about block transfer agreements, to: <http://www.bccat.ca/articulate/block>. The transfer institution should undertake a diligent assessment of the quality of the program at the home institution and the “fit” or relevance to its own programs. For a helpful checklist/guide to this process, see <http://www.bccat.ca/articulate/appendix/checklist>.
10. BCCAT recommends that all agreements specify a date whereby the agreement will be reviewed, and updated or cancelled as appropriate.
11. The agreement should provide explicit details regarding the language and graphics to be used when promoting the agreement to students in any print or web publications.
12. Transfer institutions should check all current agreements that are listed against the provisions of this policy. Any current agreement not found to be satisfactory should be cancelled.
13. Transfer institutions may, at their own discretion, charge the home institution for the costs involved in developing the block transfer agreement. It is recommended that any such charges use a cost recovery model.

PUBLICATION OF AGREEMENTS IN THE BC TRANSFER GUIDE

Once an agreement has been finalized, the following steps should be taken:

1. The transfer institution should submit the final agreement electronically using the Block Transfer section of the Transfer Credit Evaluation System (TCES). Any supporting documentation should remain with the articulating institutions. Note: Submission of the agreement to BCCAT through the TCES (or other electronic format) certifies that the transfer institution has undertaken the appropriate assessment, and has satisfied itself as to the suitability of the program at the home institution for this block transfer agreement. Articulation of course to course agreements are

handled separately. Institutions should contact BCCAT for advice on procedures for individual course agreements.

2. Upon receipt of the agreement BCCAT will record the agreement in the BC Transfer Guide.

Cancellation of any agreements established under this policy should:

1. Be based on clear evidence that the agreement is no longer tenable (e.g. curricular change at either institution may negate the equivalence of the two programs, or few or no students may be transferring);
2. Take into account the impact on students currently enrolled, and safeguard their progression through a grand-parenting or sunset clause; and
3. Be immediately communicated to the BCCAT.

ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES

In addition to the above stated policy and procedures, it is the institution's responsibility to ensure that there are established policies, procedures, and resources supportive of the BC Transfer System. For a list of procedures, please review the BCCAT policy on Membership in the BC Transfer System at bccat.ca/pubs/BCTSmembers.pdf.

PROCESS DOCUMENTS

How to Articulate. bccat.ca/articulate

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Ministerial Statement on Credit Transfer cmec.ca/en/

Principles and Guidelines for Transfer bccat.ca/system/principles

Transfer-Friendly Course Outline Form bccat.ca/pubs/CourseOutlineForm.doc

RELATED POLICIES

Membership of Private Institutions in the BC Transfer System: bccat.ca/pubs/privatemembers.pdf

Membership of Alberta Institutions in the BC Transfer System: bccat.ca/pubs/albertainstitutions.pdf

Membership in the BC Transfer System: bccat.ca/pubs/BCTSmembers.pdf