

PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES FOR TRANSFER

Purpose

Credit transfer provides efficient, cost-effective access to post-secondary education and limits geographical barriers for students. The BC Transfer System includes public and recognized private and out-of-province institutions, facilitates student mobility, supports system quality and ensures the portability and applicability of credit by providing dependable, accurate resources to students and institutions. Key system values are those of transparency, fairness, autonomy, predictability and accountability, built upon trust between system partners.

The BC Council on Admissions and Transfer as manager of the BC Transfer System and on behalf of its members adopted this revised set of Principles and Guidelines in May 2010. Originally approved by all members, they have been revised and updated to reflect the changing BC post-secondary system.

Principles and Guidelines

In the BC Transfer System:

1. Students earn transfer credit for equivalent learning and can apply that credit to fulfill credential requirements.

- A. Formal transfer credit agreements recorded in the BC Transfer Guide constitute a guarantee to students.
- B. Students should not be required to retake courses successfully completed elsewhere, nor should they expect to receive duplicate credit for equivalent courses.
- C. To support and encourage planning, students must have access to information on course equivalencies, program prerequisites, and levels of achievement on which admission and transfer credit will be awarded.
- D. Students are responsible for informing themselves about transfer processes.

2. Students can expect to be treated equitably by all member institutions.

- A. Where an institution defines a basis of admission for transfer students, the institution should specify the minimum cumulative GPA and the minimum number of credits required.
- B. Where an assessment of previous academic performance forms part of an admission decision, a transfer student's post-secondary academic record should be the primary consideration, rather than performance in secondary school.
- C. The minimum grade for individual course transfer is normally a passing grade, as defined by the institution awarding the original credit. A higher course grade should not be required by the receiving institution unless the same requirement applies to the equivalent internal course.
- D. Students should have access to avenues of appeal for transfer credit decisions.
- E. Students should not be disadvantaged by changes made to transfer arrangements while courses are in progress.

3. All members acknowledge and respect the primary jurisdiction of each institution for transfer policy and academic integrity.

- A. Each institution in the BC Transfer System should plan for and accept transferring students using clearly stated policies and procedures to govern the awarding of transfer credit.
- B. Institutions may limit admission to programs based on space availability or on criteria pertinent to the program.
- C. Variations in institutional programs that reflect differing missions, context, expertise, and modes of delivery should be respected and accommodated: accommodation strategies may include institutions setting flexible course or credit requirements for transfer students.
- D. Given system norms and expectations regarding appropriate qualifications for instructors of transferable courses, institutions should be prepared to provide information on their instructor qualification policies upon request.

4. Transfer agreements are based on rigorous articulation processes and transparent communication.

- A. Institutions should allocate appropriate resources to transfer administration, including sending a representative to the relevant articulation committees.
- B. Institutions should respond to articulation requests in a timely manner, preferably within two months of the receipt of the request.
- C. All articulation shall be based on an assessment of equivalence that recognizes that effective learning can occur under a variety of arrangements and conditions. Assessment may include (but not be limited to) comparisons of learning outcomes, scope and level of content, assessment strategies, hours of instruction, student success in subsequent courses, program accreditation and provincial or national certification requirements.
- D. The institution seeking transfer credit should provide course or program outlines that contain all the elements necessary for the assessment of equivalence.
- E. Institutions should provide a rationale for a denial of an articulation request.
- F. It is the responsibility of all institutions to maintain the standard of content, outcomes and instruction upon which an original transfer agreement was based, to re-articulate when necessary and to provide adequate notice of curricular changes affecting established transfer agreements.
- G. An award of transfer credit should confer certainty: it should be clear what credit is being awarded as well as the number of credits awarded (normally the same number of credits as for the equivalent course).

5. Evaluation of the BC Transfer System is focussed on assessing its effectiveness for students.

- A. Members of the BC Transfer System are expected to submit data regularly to the relevant system repositories.
- B. Institutions are encouraged to review research on the effectiveness of the BC Transfer System and to adjust their policies, practices or standards where advisable.
- C. Institutions should be advised by student mobility research when assessing the business case for articulation for their institution, courses or programs.

Definitions

Credit Transfer

Credit transfer consists of the granting of credit by one institution for equivalent courses completed at another. Once transfer credit is granted, the course is accepted in lieu of an internal course and can be applied in the same way as the internal course to fulfill general or specific credential requirements. Block transfer may also be granted for completed programs. Course and program equivalencies that have been articulated (i.e. assessed for equivalence and awarded credit through a formal inter-institutional request process) are recorded as transfer agreements in the BC Transfer Guide. Non-articulated courses are assessed and credit is awarded on a case-by-case basis.

Transfer Student

Some institutions formally define a basis of admission for transfer students and specify criteria for that admission category, but the term *transfer student* is also used more broadly to refer to any student who wishes to transfer credit from one institution to another.