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## Membership in the BC Transfer System

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### Context and Purpose

BC public post-secondary institutions are authorized through public acts of the provincial legislature to operate and grant credentials in keeping with their scope and mandate.<sup>1</sup> BC public post-secondary institutions are *de facto* members of the BC Transfer System (BCTS).

The purpose of this policy is to establish the conditions and expectations under which other post-secondary institutions may seek membership in the BCTS. The policy outlines the BC Council on Admissions and Transfer's (BCCAT) parameters and principles for institutional eligibility for membership.

### Scope and Limits

This policy applies to prospective institutional members of the BCTS that are not BC public post-secondary institutions.

There are three categories of post-secondary institutions that are eligible to apply for BCTS membership.

1. Canadian public post-secondary institutions not operating in BC but that have been authorized by their provincial or territorial government to grant degrees in their jurisdiction.
2. Private and out-of-province public institutions that have undergone quality assessment review by BC's Degree Quality Assessment Board (DQAB) and have been authorized by the Minister responsible for advanced education (i.e., given "ministerial consent") to offer a relevant associate or baccalaureate degree program in BC.<sup>2</sup>
3. First Nations mandated as well as Indigenous-controlled and Indigenous-led institutions offering post-secondary programming that is recognized for credit transfer by BC public post-secondary institutions.

Institutions with unique or specific missions, programs offered only at the graduate level, and programs that do not have equivalents within the BC post-secondary system may not be appropriate for membership in the BC Transfer System.

If post-secondary institutions that meet the above criteria are admitted to the BCTS, they may formally articulate agreements pertaining to the curriculum of their approved post-secondary programs .

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/post-secondary-education/institution-resources-administration/degree-authorization/degree-quality-assessment-board>; <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/post-secondary-education/find-a-program-or-institution/find-an-institution>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/post-secondary-education/institution-resources-administration/degree-authorization#degree-authorization>

However, BCTS member institutions are not required to articulate courses or programs from other BCTS member institutions on the basis of both institutions being BCTS members.

## Definitions

<i>Articulation</i>	The process of one institution submitting course or program outlines to another institution and requesting transfer credit through BCCAT's Transfer Credit System. Resulting transfer credit agreements are recorded in the BC Transfer Guide.
<i>BC Transfer Guide (BCTG)</i>	The website ( <a href="https://www.bctransferguide.ca">https://www.bctransferguide.ca</a> ) hosted by BCCAT that provides information on formal course-to-course transfer, block transfer, advanced placement, international baccalaureate transfer, and program-specific transfer agreements.
<i>BC Transfer System (BCTS)</i>	A formal network of member post-secondary institutions, articulation committees, and the post-secondary transfer community and staff. Institutional membership in the BCTS is overseen by BCCAT.
<i>Block Transfer</i>	A group of courses at a sending institution, often in the form of a completed credential, that is assigned a predetermined amount of credit at a receiving institution.
<i>Degree Authorization Act (DAA)</i> <i>Degree Programs</i>	The provincial legislation that enables private institutions or public institutions from other jurisdictions to seek authorization, through consent by the Minister responsible for advanced education, to offer degree programs in BC. For the purpose of membership in the BCTS, these are associate and baccalaureate degree programs.
<i>Degree Quality Assessment Board (DQAB)</i>	A provincial Board appointed by the Minister responsible for advanced education to review applications for degree programs at public and private institutions in BC, and to make recommendations for approval or denial of the program to the Minister. DQAB also conducts regular organizational reviews of private institutions or public institutions from other jurisdictions offering degree programs in BC with the consent of the Minister responsible for advanced education.
<i>First Nations Mandated Institution</i>	An institute in British Columbia that is mandated, by one or more Indigenous governing bodies acting on behalf of one or more First Nations in British Columbia, to provide post-secondary education. <sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> [Bill 20 – 2024: First Nations Mandated Post-Secondary Institutes Act](#)

<i>Indigenous-Led or Indigenous-Controlled Institution</i>	Institutions that are Métis-led or led by a board with a wide representation of Indigenous people, including unaffiliated (non-status) Indigenous persons. Unlike First Nations-mandated post-secondary institutes, these institutions are typically not on-reserve.
<i>Letter of Assurance</i>	The formal agreement between a non-BC Canadian public or BC private member institution and BCCAT that sets forth expectations for participation in the BCTS, and indicates the commitment of the member institution to uphold the <a href="#">Principles and Guidelines for Transfer</a> , <a href="#">BC Transfer System Member Institution Procedures and Practices</a> , and <a href="#">the norms and standards of the BC Transfer System</a> .
<i>DAA Institutions Operating in BC</i>	Authorization by the Minister responsible for advanced education for a post-secondary institution to offer a degree program in BC. This includes the requirement that courses and programs are delivered, evaluated, and transcribed by the institution granted ministerial consent, not by other institutions through partnership or affiliation agreements.
<i>Transfer Credit</i>	Credit given by a post-secondary institution for equivalent courses or programs successfully completed at another post-secondary institution.
<i>Transfer Credit Contact (TCC)</i>	Designated staff at each BCTS member institution who liaise with BCCAT, act as points of contact with other BCTS institutions, and manage transfer and articulation activity through BCCAT's Transfer Credit System (TCS). Every BCTS member institution is required to designate at least one staff member as a TCC.
<i>Transfer Credit System (TCS)</i>	The software platform used to manage articulation requests and articulations between BCTS member institutions.

## Principles

Institutional membership in the BCTS carries responsibilities. Member institutions abide by the commonly accepted standards and practices of the system as detailed in this policy and in the associated procedures, *Letter of Assurance* that institutions sign upon joining the System, and *Principles and Guidelines for Transfer*. These documents describe the expectations for members of the BCTS.

Determinations to grant BC Transfer System membership to a post-secondary institution require evidence that

- undergraduate programming by the applicant institution is relevant and compatible with programming offered by other BCTS members;
- there is a likelihood that transfer students will move into and out of the applicant institution; and

- the applicant institution has the capacity and ability to meaningfully contribute to the BCTS through participation in articulation activity.

**NB: Ministerial or legislative consent to offer a degree program in BC does not guarantee approval for membership in the BC Transfer System.**

Agreements listed in the BC Transfer Guide constitute transfer credit commitments between institutions. When listings are current, reliable, and respected by both partners, the system is credible. Mutual respect for and accountability to all members of the BCTS ensures the academic integrity of courses and programs. BCTS member institutions are responsible for ensuring that their policies, procedures, and resources support the BCTS.

BCTS member institutions are expected to use the TCS and participate in transfer and articulation following the principles of trust, reciprocity, fairness, and quality. However, a BCTS member institution assigning transfer credit to another institution's courses or programs cannot assume, or represent, that its courses will then be assigned transfer credit by the other institution.

BCCAT will review new members' articulation activities and participation in the BCTS and may suspend an institution's membership in the BCTS for not meeting the expectations.

### Process Information

*Articulation Committee Guide (2023)*

<https://www.bccat.ca/resources/ArticulationCommitteeGuide2023.pdf>

*How to Articulate (2023)*

<https://www.bccat.ca/publication/howtoarticulate/>

### Reference Documents

*Inclusion of British Columbia Institutions in the Alberta Transfer System*

<https://acat.alberta.ca/media/2179/inclusion-of-british-columbia-institutions-in-the-alberta-transfer-system-policy-and-process-v2.pdf>

*BC Degree Authorization Act*

[https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/02024\\_01](https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/02024_01)

### Related Policy

[Policy 3B Listing of Transfer Agreements with Non-Member Institutions in the BC Transfer Guide](#)  
[Policy 3B.2 BC Transfer Guide \(BCTG\) Course Inclusion Policy](#)