

Principles and Guidelines for Transfer

Version	5
Last revision	2023 Sept 6
Approval date	2023 Oct 4
Sponsor/Committee	TAC
Approval body	Council

Context and Purpose

The BC Transfer System (BCTS) is based on the values of transparency, fairness, autonomy, predictability and accountability, and is built upon trust between its member institutions and other participants.

The *BCCAT Principles and Guidelines for Transfer* were founded upon tenets set forth by the British Columbia Post-Secondary Coordinating Committee and approved by BC university senates and college councils in 1976 and 1977. The *Principles and Guidelines for Transfer* were developed in the early 1990s, after extensive consultation with all public post-secondary institutions, to outline the guiding principles and values of the BC Transfer System.

Since the initial adoption of the *Principles and Guidelines for Transfer* in 1993, the BC Transfer System has grown substantially and now includes public, private and out-of-province member institutions. In keeping with BCCAT Policy Guidelines, the document is regularly reviewed and revised¹ to maintain alignment with the system and with BCCAT’s mission of facilitating student mobility, supporting system quality, and ensuring the portability and applicability of credit.

Definitions

<i>Credit Transfer</i>	Credit transfer consists of the granting of credit by one institution for equivalent courses or programs completed at another institution. Once transfer credit is granted, the course or program is accepted at the receiving institution as equivalent to its own course or program. Course and program equivalencies that have been articulated may be publicly recorded in the BC Transfer Guide.
<i>Receiving Institution</i>	The institution at which transfer credit is being requested.
<i>Sending Institution</i>	The institution requesting transfer credit for its course or program; the institution where a student has acquired credit.
<i>Transfer Student</i>	An admissions category that establishes specific criteria for students applying on the basis of having acquired credits at another institution; a student who wishes to transfer credit from one institution to another.

Principles and Guidelines in the BC Transfer System

1. *Students earn transfer credit for equivalent learning.*
 - A. Formal transfer credit agreements recorded in the BC Transfer Guide are a guarantee to students that specified credit acquired at one institution will be given transfer credit at another institution.

¹ 1995, 2010, 2023.

- B. Students should not be required to retake equivalent courses successfully completed at another institution
 - C. Students should not be given transfer credit for learning they have not acquired.
2. *Students can expect to use transfer credit to fulfill credential or program requirements.*
- A. Students, advisors, administrators, and faculty members must have access to information at other institutions on course equivalencies, program prerequisites, and levels of achievement that determine whether admission and transfer credit will be awarded. This information should also include any limitations on using transfer credit toward credential or program completion.
 - B. Students are responsible for ensuring they are fully and accurately informed about transfer processes.
3. *Students can expect to be treated equitably by all member institutions.*
- A. If an institution defines admission criteria specifically for transfer students, the institution should clearly state the criteria applicable to students applying for admission in that category, such as a minimum cumulative GPA or a minimum number of credits required for the student to qualify for admission in that category.
 - B. Where an assessment of previous academic performance forms part of an admission decision for transfer students, the 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 where the student acquired the course credit. A course grade higher than the grade usually required for course transfer should not be required for admission by the receiving institution, unless the same requirement applies to the use of grades for the equivalent internal course at the receiving institution: for example, fulfilling pre-requisite requirements for other courses.
 - D. Institutions should ensure that a formal appeal procedure is available for students who wish to appeal transfer credit decisions, and that information on how to access the procedure is easily available.
 - E. Students should not be disadvantaged by changes made to articulation agreements while they are taking a course or program they intend to transfer. Any material changes to articulation agreements should be implemented with a start date at least one semester later to ensure equity for prospective transfer students.
4. *All BC Transfer System member institutions acknowledge and respect the primary jurisdiction of each institution for its own transfer policy and academic integrity.*
- A. Each BC Transfer System member institution should have adequate resources, including clearly stated and publicly available policies and procedures, for accepting transferring students and awarding transfer credit.
 - B. Programs offered within the BC Transfer System may have differing missions, context, expertise, and modes of delivery. These differences should be respected and accommodated in sending and receiving transfer credit.

- C. BCTS member institutions may have policies or expectations regarding appropriate qualifications for instructors of transferable courses. Member institutions should be prepared to provide information on their instructor qualification policies upon request.

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

- A. Every BCTS member institution should have a formal transfer credit policy, fully outlining processes for assessing articulation requests and awarding transfer credit, and should make that policy publicly available.
- B. Institutions should allocate appropriate resources to administering transfer activity, including receiving and assessing articulation requests, training and advising evaluators, and creating, sending, and recording its own transfer decisions.
- C. Each BCTS member institution is expected to send a representative to meetings of articulation committees related to subjects in which it offers courses or programs. Private institutions that are BCTS members are required to send representatives to meetings of articulation committees related to the subject of the degree(s) that it has been authorized to offer by the provincial Ministry responsible for post-secondary education.
- D. Receiving institutions should respond to articulation requests in a timely manner, preferably within two months of receiving a request.
- E. Articulation agreements should be based on an assessment of equivalence between courses or programs, while recognizing that knowledge can be acquired under a variety of arrangements and conditions. Assessments of equivalence may include (but not be limited to) comparisons of learning outcomes, scope and level of content, evaluation criteria, or hours of instruction
- F. The institution seeking transfer credit (the sending institution) should provide course or program outlines, and additional information if requested, that contains sufficient information for the receiving institution to assess equivalence.
- G. If an articulation request is denied by a receiving institution, the institution is required to provide a reason for the denial.
- H. All institutions are expected to
 - maintain the standard of content, outcomes and instruction upon which an original transfer agreement was based;
 - re-articulate courses or programs when these change to the extent that their equivalency to courses at other institution may be affected;
 - provide adequate notice to receiving institutions of planned curricular changes that may affect established transfer agreements, and
 - review articulation agreements every five years to ensure currency and accuracy for transfer students.
- I. An award of transfer credit should specify what credit is being awarded, the number of credits awarded, and any conditions that may affect whether a student will receive transfer credit.

Process Documents

[*How to Articulate*](#) (2023)

Reference Documents

Degree Quality Assessment Board, [*Assessment Criteria and Process*](#) (2017)

Related Policies

[*Membership in the BC Transfer System*](#) (2017)