



Council of Ministers of Education, Canada
Conseil des ministres de l'Éducation (Canada)

**Report of the CMEC Working Group on
Credit Transfer**

2007

2007 CMEC Jurisdictional Update on Activities Related to Credit Transfer

Introduction

In October 2001, the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) revisited the issue of credit transfer between colleges and universities and among provinces and territories. In April 2002, ministers established the CMEC Working Group on Credit Transfer to develop pan-Canadian strategies. This is the second update on jurisdictional activities related to credit transfer since the working group was established.

Recommended Strategy

In October 2002, CMEC approved a strategy to improve credit transfer across Canada. Given the substantial differences in credit transfer systems and postsecondary structures among provinces and territories, it was agreed that a pan-Canadian system of credit transfer should be built up over time, through an initial focus on developing and enhancing strong provincial/territorial transfer systems. Each province/territory committed to reviewing its current transfer arrangements and to developing a framework for action to enhance its credit transfer system according to its own priorities over the period 2002 to 2005.

As part of the strategy, CMEC endorsed and released a *Ministerial Statement on Credit Transfer in Canada* that sets out expectations for credit transfers to guide institutions, students, and governments (Appendix I).

This report provides a summary of the actions undertaken by working group member jurisdictions.

Current Status

A key attribute of the approved recommendations was the setting of provincial/territorial objectives built upon jurisdictional priorities, finances, and postsecondary system structures. While recognizing the right of each jurisdiction to determine the objectives of its postsecondary education systems, CMEC urged provinces and territories to consider giving priority to strategies to improve movement between postsecondary sectors and to expand clear pathways for students by providing timely and accurate information.

Each jurisdiction has reported making progress in its credit transfer systems and mechanisms within its postsecondary sectors. Those jurisdictions that had well-developed transfer systems when this initiative began have continued to expand and enhance those systems. Others with less-developed credit transfer strategies have made either modest or significant progress, including such achievements as the implementation or expansion of on-line transfer guides, establishment of provincial working groups and/or articulation committees, increasing the number of agreements in targeted program areas, and broader acceptance of credit transfer opportunities as a component of an accessible postsecondary education system.

Future Directions

All jurisdictions have indicated their work will continue on the credit transfer issue within their own priorities, resources, and structures over the next several years.

Alberta

Overview

For over 30 years, Alberta's postsecondary institutions have been strongly committed to Alberta's transfer system, whose basic principle is that a student should not be required to repeat previous learning experiences in which competence has been demonstrated. Council's work revolves around matters that will assist learners in their quest for lifelong learning.

Admission to the Alberta Transfer System

The Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer (ACAT) principles on credit transfer are consistent with those of CMEC. Any institution that becomes a member of Alberta's Transfer System must agree to the principles, policies, and procedures of ACAT (http://www.acat.gov.ab.ca/acat_information/PPP.pdf).

Online Alberta Transfer Guide

Students within the province can transfer between institutions with relative ease. The *Online Alberta Transfer Guide* and its printed version (published annually) provide learners with admissions and transfer information.

Maintenance of existing transfer agreements and negotiation of new agreements happen on a continual basis. Learners can access transfer agreements on-line, back to 1993–94. Agreements on-line are also updated on a weekly basis.

The 2005–06 academic year marked the 30th anniversary edition of the *Alberta Transfer Guide* and showcases Alberta postsecondary institutions' willingness to cooperate and collaborate for the benefit of the learner.

Activities Undertaken April 2005–June 2006

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)

ACAT hosted A Forum on PLAR: *Alberta Recognizes Learning* in June 2006. The forum brought together nearly 200 stakeholders from across Alberta to engage in discussions to identify key issues surrounding the implementation of PLAR, possible solutions to overcome barriers, and next steps for all stakeholders in working toward those solutions. Over the course of the two days, participants heard from key speakers in the field of PLAR from Alberta and across Canada and participated in facilitated group discussions. The group discussions produced recommendations that are outlined in the final report (www.acat.gov.ab.ca/forum).

Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfer (PCCAT)

In June 2006, ACAT hosted a meeting with representatives from several jurisdictions to discuss credit transfer success, issues, and challenges. The major outcome of the meeting was the establishment of the Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfer (PCCAT), a professional networking mechanism that allows the participants to regularly share issues, resolutions, and best practices and to build momentum for a pan-Canadian network for professionals working in credit transfer.

PCCAT is co-chaired by Frank Gelin (executive director and co-chair, BCCAT) and Lucille Walter (chair, ACAT) and will include representatives from postsecondary institutions and provincial, territorial, and federal stakeholder groups.

Alberta–British Columbia MOU and the Supporting ACAT/BCCAT Protocol on Credit Transfer

The ministers of advanced education of British Columbia and Alberta signed a memorandum of understanding on April 28, 2006, to establish a cooperative framework between the provinces to facilitate the pursuit of postsecondary education initiatives of mutual interest and benefit, including credit transfer.

ACAT and BCCAT will work together to create a protocol that will assure students who transfer from either province that they will receive transfer credit for courses or programs that they have successfully completed where the content/outcomes are demonstrably equivalent to those offered at the institution to which they transfer.

Working Group

ACAT strongly recommends that the CMEC Working Group on Credit Transfer continue its efforts. It is important that jurisdictions continue to work together to ensure that students within their own province/territory and those moving between provinces/territories have their courses and credentials recognized.

British Columbia

Overview

The British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT) was established by the provincial government in 1989. Its mandate is to facilitate admission, articulation, and transfer arrangements among BC postsecondary institutions. Specifically, BCCAT (a) encourages institutions to develop policies and practices regarding the transferability of postsecondary credit courses so that credit granted at one institution can be applied toward credentials at other institutions and (b) examines issues concerning capacity, demand, and student mobility and recommends policies and practices related to the admission process for direct-entry and transfer students. The council has no legislative or regulatory authority and is funded annually by the ministry responsible for postsecondary institutions. Council members are selected from the education system and appointed by the minister. They strive to achieve the council's mandate by serving the overall best interests of the system and do not formally represent any specific institution or constituency with which they are affiliated.

The council carries out its work with the assistance of a number of standing committees, whose members are drawn from the postsecondary system: Transfer and Articulation Committee, Admissions Committee, Institutional Contact Persons Committee, Research Committee, and Education Planner Advisory Committee. Advisory and task-specific groups are established as needed.

More information about the comprehensive work undertaken by BCCAT can be obtained on its three Web sites:

- www.bccat.bc.ca
- www.bctransferguide.ca
- www.educationplanner.bc.ca

Adoption of CMEC *Ministerial Statement on Credit Transfer in Canada*

The *BCCAT Principles and Guidelines for Transfer* are consistent with the CMEC principles on credit transfer. They have been in effect in British Columbia since 1975 (although modified over time) and have formed the basis for all credit transfer arrangements in the BC Transfer System (see bccat.ca/articulation/principles.cfm).

Report on Project and Activities Completed in 2005–06

Each year, BCCAT prepares a detailed work plan and, at the end of the fiscal year, prepares an annual report that summarizes what was achieved. Each annual report is approximately 50 pages and includes reference to completed research reports, newsletters, and related publications. Annual reports and other BCCAT publications can be found at bccat.ca/publications/.

In summary, the following major activities were undertaken and were successfully achieved in 2005–06:

- **Launched BCTransferGuide.ca**, a student-friendly Web resource featuring a searchable on-line guide to transfer throughout the BC Transfer System. The guide lists 92,000 course-to-course articulation agreements as well as 759 block transfer agreements. As well, a Web service was developed to enable institutions to incorporate information from the BC Transfer Guide into their own Web sites.
- **Redesigned the Transfer Credit Evaluation System (TCES)**, a Web-based facility enabling institutions to create and maintain articulation agreements. The new, revised TCES is dynamically linked to BCTransferGuide.ca.
- **Implemented substantial enhancements to Education Planner (EducationPlanner.bc.ca)**, a free student-oriented Web resource providing information on programs offered throughout the BC public postsecondary system. Enhancements included integration with Work Futures (workfutures.bc.ca) to provide information on occupational profiles, creation of an infrastructure to enable personalized access, and more detailed information on outcomes of former graduates.
- **Completed numerous studies examining a wide variety of transfer- and admission-related issues**, including student outcomes, transfer activity, and transfer student profile reports. Reports included (a) a profile report on UBC students between 2000–01 and 2004–05, (b) an analysis of the admission and transfer experiences of transfer students based on the 2005 student outcomes survey, (c) a study on the role of university colleges in BC as destinations for transfer students, (d) an investigation into concerns regarding international and domestic ESL students and university-level English, and (e) an examination of the benefits of the BC Transfer System. (These and other reports are available at bccat.bc.ca/publications.)
- **Made significant gains in research on student mobility.** The council continued to encourage institutions throughout the BC postsecondary system to share registrant and applicant data for research. This research has significantly increased our collective understanding of student mobility into and among our institutions, as well as assisting institutions with their enrolment planning. Much of this research is now undertaken in conjunction with the Student Transitions Project (STP), an initiative of the ministries of Education and Advanced Education and BC public postsecondary institutions. (See aved.gov.bc.ca/student_transitions for details.) BCCAT is represented on the Student Transitions Project (STP) Steering Committee.
- **Launched the first phase of a system-wide consultation process** to examine how best to address increasing changes and complexity in the BC Transfer System by examining current and potential transfer models and possible revisions to the BC Transfer Guide. (The full report, *Recalibrating the BC Transfer System*, is available on-line at bccat.bc.ca/publications.)

- **Authored various publications and resources dealing with a range of issues,** including papers on the history of the transfer system in BC and the accountability framework of the transfer system. BCCAT also published a *How to Articulate* handbook, a practical manual outlining steps involved with the articulation process, based on best practices observed by BCCAT over years of coordinating and administering articulation and transfer in BC. (See bccat.bc.ca/articulation/handbook.)

A discussion paper, *Recognition of Degrees from Non-AUCC Member Institutions: A Review of Issues*, was also published in June 2006. Owing to the recent expansion of degree opportunities offered by colleges and institutes in BC, Alberta, and Ontario, an issue had arisen concerning credential recognition for students who had completed undergraduate degrees but were not being considered for admission to certain graduate or professional schools in Ontario. BCCAT took a lead role in facilitating dialogue across the system. (For more information on these and other publications, check out bccat.bc.ca/publications.)

- **Reprinted and redistributed BC Transfer TIPS** (second edition, revised), a comprehensive guide to transfer designed for students. (bccat.bc.ca/tips). The revised second edition of the *TIPS Facilitation Guide* is also available on the BCCAT Web site for reference by career and personal planning teachers, career guidance professionals, and high school counsellors.
- **Provided ongoing facilitation of 70 provincial articulation committees and coordination of Transfer Innovation (TI) & Transfer & Articulation (TAP) Projects.** These projects are carried out by articulation committees with funding from BCCAT. They focus on specific programs or disciplines with the aim of improving transfer, recommending innovative approaches to transfer, or providing better information on transfer options and pathways within particular subject areas. The year 2006 was a milestone, bringing the total of TI & TAP projects undertaken to date to 40.
- **Continued to address issues concerning public/private articulation** by investigating the question of charging for articulation. (The report is available on-line at bccat.bc.ca/publications.) In addition, the council continued to monitor and exercise its policy regarding articulation with degree-granting private institutions. Eight new programs from three private institutions were approved for articulation within the BC Transfer System.
- **Carried out a comprehensive review of BCCAT communications** to determine how best to reach students and other key audiences with vital transfer information. Findings of the review recommended integration of BCCAT Web resources (bccat.ca, bctransferguide.ca, and educationplanner.bc.ca) and a more uniform look and feel for all services and publications to increase recognition and improve accessibility.

Projects and Activities for 2006–07

Each year, BCCAT completes a comprehensive work plan that is tightly linked with what was achieved or not achieved in the previous year and that reflects revised priorities to address emerging issues. In summary, the plan for 2006–07 includes the following major projects and activities:

- We will continue research activities on the issue of student mobility into and among postsecondary institutions, in conjunction with the Student Transitions Project (STP). This will involve actively supporting the provisions of Personal Education Numbers (PENs) to all applicants and registrants and encouraging data-sharing throughout the postsecondary system to address critical questions from a system-wide perspective. The goal is to provide institutions and government with systematic reporting of reliable data at predictable times for planning purposes.
- We will finalize and process the results of the consultation on examining transfer models in the BC system and seek input to determine next steps based on the recommendations of the report. One major recommendation calls for our transfer system to move toward a multidirectional model.
- We will investigate whether there are discernable, significant, or meaningful differences between the levels of engagement of BC transfer students and those who entered the University of British Columbia directly from secondary schools, and compared to the survey population as a whole. This study will be based on the Student Engagement Survey conducted for all UBC arts and science undergraduates.
- We will prepare a discussion paper on degree partnership to encourage discussion among BC postsecondary institutions to consider suitable models for implementation. We will also publish and distribute a discussion paper on the issue of recognition of degrees from non-AUCC member institutions and continue to facilitate national dialogue on this issue.
- We will continue to address issues regarding public/private articulation; in particular, we will review BCCAT's *Policy under which a new private institution articulates within the BC Transfer System* and develop a "framework" handbook for new private institutions as they undergo the degree quality assurance process prior to admission to the BC Transfer System.
- We will redesign the *Articulation Committee Handbook* based on the new BCCAT look and feel and promote its usage by articulation committees as a companion piece with the *How to Articulate* handbook.
- We will host a seminar in conjunction with the BC Associate Registrars' and Managers' Association to share best practices in transfer-credit administration.
- We will integrate our print and Web resources to make them more readily recognizable and so accessible to students, in accordance with the findings of the communications review carried out in 2005–06. We will redevelop BCCAT.bc.ca to make it more user-

friendly and to better reflect its relation to our student Web sites, EducationPlanner.bc.ca, and BCTransferGuide.ca. We will also continue to develop strategies and seek out fresh opportunities to better reach students with information about transfer in BC.

- We will make significant further enhancements to EducationPlanner.bc.ca and BCTransferGuide.ca to enable personalized access to the sites and the ability to save education plans.
- We will continue to provide a lead role in advancing transferability initiatives within Canada. This will involve (a) assisting other provinces/territories as they establish their own mechanisms to achieve the 2002 *Ministerial Statement on Credit Transfer in Canada*, (b) encouraging initiatives that contribute to improved student mobility across Canada, and (c) interacting with other key jurisdictions to share valuable transfer information and experience. In particular, we will meet with the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer (ACAT) to discuss potential initiatives for improving interjurisdictional student mobility and transfer, in accordance with a memorandum of understanding signed between the two provinces in April 2006.

[NOTE: A meeting hosted by ACAT in Edmonton in June 2006 with representatives from several provinces/territories led to the establishment of the Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfer (PCCAT), a new national organization charged with developing policies and practices that support the advancement of interjurisdictional admissions and transfer. The consortium is chaired by Frank Gelin (executive director and co-chair of BCCAT) and Lucille Walter (chair of ACAT) and will include representatives from postsecondary institutions and provincial, territorial, and federal stakeholder groups. Meanwhile, BCCAT and ACAT are working together to develop a transfer protocol between the two provincial transfer systems.]

Manitoba

Communication of Ministerial Principles

The ministerial principles were communicated to and accepted by the Council on Post-Secondary Education in Manitoba (COPSE). This is an arm's-length council mandated to oversee all aspects of the postsecondary education system for the Government of Manitoba.

The ministerial principles were also communicated to each of the seven public postsecondary institutions. However, the institutions, while agreeing with the principles, have not necessarily adopted them formally. Progress has been made in enhancing credit transfers generally but is slow in specific areas, particularly in relation to transfers between the college and university sectors.

Adoption of Ministerial Principles

A Working Group on Credit Transfer with senior-level representation from each of the institutions was created in 2003; the group met regularly until 2005. Articulation committees based on areas of study were established with a goal of enhancing credit transfers and articulation agreements between the college and university sectors. This work is ongoing. CMEC credit transfer principles have been adopted informally by the working group and the articulation committees.

Three-Year Framework for Action

In addition to the Working Group on Credit Transfer, three articulation committees have been functioning in the areas of nursing, educational assistants, and environmental studies. The Nursing Articulation Committee has completed its work; the other two continue to meet and make progress. COPSE requires each institution to report on its credit transfers and articulation agreements on an annual basis.

Priority Action Areas

Increased credit transfers have occurred in the field of nursing, and other areas are being considered. Manitoba's newest postsecondary institution, the University College of the North, is developing its new university programming with credit transfer and articulation as an underlying principle between college and university programs.

Information on availability of credit transfers is accessible to the students but not in a consistent or coordinated manner across the institutions. This is one area that the institutions have identified as needing additional resources. A system-wide on-line transfer guide is being considered.

Research

Manitoba would be interested in partnering with other provinces on research related to transfer practices.

Working Group

Manitoba supports the continuation of the Working Group on Credit Transfer and endorses the support and attention awarded by CMEC to credit transfer in postsecondary education. The working group should continue, as there is much to be shared and learned between provinces and territories.

New Brunswick

Communication of Ministerial Principles

New Brunswick and its postsecondary institutions will be informed in the coming months by a comprehensive Commission on Post-Secondary Education launched in January 2007. The province is well aware of the need to enhance the accessibility and affordability of postsecondary education for students and to encourage cooperation among those who provide educational programs and services. This includes enhancing collaboration among postsecondary institutions, including improvements with respect to credit transfer, particularly in the form of block transfers and articulated agreements between the province's public chartered institutions and the New Brunswick Community College/Collège Communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick (NBCC-CCNB).

Adoption of Ministerial Principles

An appropriate process will be put in place following the release of the commission's final report.

Three-Year Framework for Action

New Brunswick's postsecondary institutions have increased the number of articulated agreements between universities and NBCC-CCNB.

The Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour will continue to work to enhance and facilitate these agreements.

Priority Action Areas

Articulated programs with participating institutions have been established, as well as block transfers, individual transfers, and out-of-province agreements (with three Nova Scotia institutions).

NBCC-CCNB has entered into an increasing number of articulated agreements with universities since 2002. In other instances, block transfer agreements have been negotiated. Accurate information is provided to students through the college calendar, college Web site, and other program documents. For current information regarding block transfers and articulated degree programs, see our Web site at <http://www.gnb.ca/0105/credits/e/index-e.asp>.

Also, the Atlantic Provinces Community College Consortium (APCCC) produced a CD called *Guide to Block Transfer Agreements (2006)*. APCCC is an interprovincial mechanism with a mandate to collaborate, coordinate, and share resources to enhance college-level postsecondary education in the Atlantic provinces. This consortium reports annually to the Council of Atlantic Premiers through the Council of Atlantic Ministers of Education and Training. It is officially recognized through a memorandum of understanding signed by the provincial ministers

responsible for community colleges and the presidents of the community colleges in New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island.

One of the cornerstones of the consortium is to provide maximum mobility for students through the portability of learning and credits throughout the postsecondary education system in Atlantic Canada. To advance this agenda, the Atlantic community colleges entered into a *Memorandum of Understanding on Transfer of Credits* in 2000. This *Guide to Block Transfer Agreements* builds on that memorandum. A 2007 version was distributed to Atlantic community colleges in March.

Research

NB fully supports the research agenda strategy developed by the working group. NB remains committed to sharing best practices in credit transfer at the pan-Canadian level.

Working Group

We support the continuation of the CMEC Working Group on Credit Transfer, and we will continue to work to enhance and develop credit transfer agreements in this jurisdiction.

Newfoundland and Labrador

Communication of Ministerial Principles

Newfoundland and Labrador has a credit transfer mechanism between Memorial University (MUN) and College of the North Atlantic (CNA) that has existed for over 20 years. The mechanism is quite progressive, and new agreements are signed between our public postsecondary institutions and those in other parts of Canada and internationally on a regular basis.

The Newfoundland and Labrador Council on Higher Education (CHE) was established in 1992 with members from MUN, Marine Institute (MI), CNA, the provincial government, and the K–12 system. On February 2, 2007, the CHE Act was proclaimed.

2Adoption of Ministerial Principles

The Articulation, Transfer and Admissions Committee (ATAC) will perform a thorough review and compare principles outlined in the CMEC *Ministerial Statement on Credit Transfer in Canada* with CHE's *Principles and Guidelines for Transfer and Admissions*.

Three-Year Framework for Action

The first meeting of this year is scheduled for March 2007, when the ATAC will come together to develop a one-year work plan.

Priority Action Areas

The provincial ATAC through the Council on Higher Education was asked to place a priority on the transfer of postsecondary credits for skilled trades and technology programs.

Research

Newfoundland and Labrador will review the research agenda strategy developed by the transfer working group during its March 14, 2007, meeting.

Working Group

Discussions at a meeting of Canadian transfer credit officials hosted by the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer in June 2006, have led to the launch of a new national organization, the Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfer (PCCAT). Its mandate is to develop policies and practices that support the advancement of interjurisdictional admissions and transfer. PCCAT will include representatives from postsecondary institutions and provincial, territorial, and federal stakeholder groups.

Nova Scotia

Communication of Ministerial Principles

Yes

Adoption of Ministerial Principles

No

Three-Year Framework for Action

In December 2004, Nova Scotia signed a memorandum of understanding on funding and tuition fees with the 11 universities in the province. The MOU guarantees operating funding and limits tuition fee increases. As part of the MOU, the province and the universities agreed to continue to work on a number of initiatives, including credit transfer. An objective will be to clarify and simplify, particularly for students, the policies, agreements, and arrangements around credit transfer. The province will work in collaboration with the college and universities to develop a strategy and process to improve and increase credit transfer arrangements/agreements between the university and the community college systems and among institutions in this province and in other jurisdictions.

Priority Action Areas

Two areas will be given priority in future discussions:

- Clarity around existing credit transfer arrangements
- Development of strategy and process to improve and increase credit transfer arrangements

Credit transfer arrangements and articulated programs exist within the system and among the provinces of the Maritime/Atlantic region. Opportunities for further initiatives are ongoing.

Working Group

Nova Scotia supports the continuation of the CMEC Working Group on Credit Transfer.

Nunavut

Communication of Ministerial Principles

Nunavut is implementing its Adult Learning Strategy that was tabled in the Legislature in November 2006. As part of the work, attention is being paid to ensuring Nunavut's strategies are consistent with the principles arising from CMEC. At this time, Nunavut does not have a credit transfer agency.

Adoption of Ministerial Principles

Nunavut, in its Adult Learning Strategy, has adopted the basic Inuit societal values of Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit, as well as basic tenets arising from the ministerial principles; however, as there is no credit transfer agency, the principles have not been completely vetted within Nunavut. Further, objectives such as seeking to promote greater cooperation and collaboration among agencies involved in education and training in Nunavut, including the development of partnerships that are consistent with the goals established for the development of the territory and fostering and promoting the active involvement of Inuit in developing Nunavut's economy, are foundational to the Adult Learning Strategy and to work on developing a credit transfer approach.

Three-Year Framework for Action

Nunavut has identified many issues associated with the Adult Learning Strategy. Among the strategies proposed to deal with those issues are developing a Nunavut program for PLAR, including a system of credit recognition and transfer, and introducing a Mature High School Graduation Diploma and making it the benchmark for entry into advanced postsecondary and adult programs. This work will be undertaken within the general framework of the Adult Learning Strategy.

Priority Action Areas

Along with the items listed under the Three-Year Framework, the Public Colleges Act is under review in Nunavut. Outcomes of that review led by Nunavut Arctic College may affect the extent to which credit transfer is developed in Nunavut.

Research

Nunavut supports the research agenda for the working group, especially as we look toward developing our credit transfer agency/mechanism.

Working Group

Nunavut supports the need for the Working Group on Credit Transfer. We will be identifying staff who can engage more in this process as we work toward developing our credit transfer mechanisms.

Ontario

Communication of Ministerial Principles

Following the ministers' endorsement of the *Ministerial Statement on Credit Transfer in Canada* in October 2002, the deputy minister of training, colleges and universities distributed the principles to executive heads and presidents of all provincially assisted colleges and universities in Ontario.

Adoption of Ministerial Principles

In his communication with the postsecondary system in October 2002, the deputy minister asked that the statement be circulated widely within each postsecondary educational institution.

Three-Year Framework for Action

From 2003 to 2005, the ministry was engaged with the college and university sectors in a consultation and strategic development process to establish a plan to promote more credit transfer. An externally facilitated workshop with the vice-presidents, academic, of each college and university or designate was held in May 2004 in Toronto. The workshop identified local and systemic conditions for success to increase collaboration and suggested activities that Ontario could pursue in the short and longer term to support the implementation of these success factors.

In February 2005, the report of Ontario's Postsecondary Education Review recommended that colleges and universities be required to recognize each other's related programming to create clear and efficient pathways for students while maintaining the distinct mandates of each system. The report also recommended that government should consider the use of appropriate financial incentives and disincentives as a way to ensure ever-greater collaboration that would result, by 2007, in a comprehensive approach to Ontario-wide, regional, and institution-to-institution degree-completion and credit-transfer arrangements to guide institutional recognition and admission decisions and student choice.

In May 2005, *Reaching Higher: The McGuinty Plan for Higher Education* announced an additional \$6.2 billion to colleges, universities, and training programs over the next five years. The improvement of pathways for students and increased collaboration between colleges and universities will be important components of the government's commitment to improving the quality of and access to postsecondary education.

In March 2006, the ministry provided a grant of \$1M to the College-University Consortium Council as part of *Reaching Higher's* Quality Improvement Initiative. CUCC issued a call for proposals in fall 2006. The response was very successful, with almost all 24 colleges and 19 universities in partnerships or as consortia submitting 46 proposals or letters of intent requesting a total of \$7.4M. An additional \$1M will be granted to CUCC in 2007 in support of the wide range of innovative proposals received.

In August 2006, CUCC recruited a full-time executive director, Dr. Robin Armstrong, former president of the University of New Brunswick.

The legislation establishing the new Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO) requires it to conduct research on “the means of encouraging collaboration between various postsecondary educational institutions in general and in particular matters relating to the recognition by such institutions of courses and programs of study provided at other institutions.” HEQCO will be providing advice to the minister on how to improve collaboration in Ontario.

Priority Action Areas

In its strategy development, Ontario has identified the same two areas in the CMEC action plan as key priorities, that is, transfer between colleges and universities and ensuring transparency for students. CUCC proposal funding required that colleges and universities work together. Plans are in place to update, expand, and enhance the *Ontario College-University Transfer Guide* (OCUTG) to ensure that learners have as much information about collaborative and transfer opportunities as possible.

Research

Research and studies of enrolment statistics prepared by Colleges Ontario, in partnership with the Council of Ontario Universities (COU), estimate that

- Seven per cent of Ontario’s college students have a university degree (consistent average from 2001 to 2006), which is equivalent to 6,000 university graduates attending colleges at some point after graduating.
- Over 9 per cent of college graduates go on to university within six months of graduating, which is equivalent to over 4,000 college graduates attending university (within six months) annually.
- The 10 college program clusters with the highest percentage of graduates enrolled in university six months after graduation include education, social services, business, justice studies, and general arts and sciences. The percentages range from 9 per cent to 35 per cent.

Data on the level of student demand for more opportunities to move from college to university gathered to date include the following:

- In 2005–06, 25 per cent of Ontario college students were enrolled in their college programs with the main goal of preparing for further college or university study, an increase from 16 per cent in 2000–01.
- About two-thirds of college students have at least some interest in attaining a degree at some point, with about one-third very interested.

- Many report that the likelihood of pursuing a university education is dependent on whether studies are available nearby.
- In 2005, over 9,000 students applied to a first-year undergraduate university program from an Ontario college of applied arts and technology.

Working Group

Discussions at a meeting of Canadian transfer credit officials hosted by the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer in June 2006 have led to the launch of a new national organization, the Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfer (PCCAT). Its mandate is to develop policies and practices that support the advancement of interjurisdictional admissions and transfer. The consortium is chaired by Frank Gelin (executive director and co-chair of BCCAT) and Lucille Walter (chair of ACAT) and will include representatives from postsecondary institutions and provincial, territorial, and federal stakeholder groups. Ontario has three representatives on PCCAT.

Quebec

Communication of Ministerial Principles

Universities in Quebec have full jurisdiction over prior learning assessment. This issue is also dealt with by the *Comité de liaison de l'enseignement supérieur* [Postsecondary Education Liaison Committee], which brings together representatives from cégeps, universities, and the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport [Ministry of Education, Recreation and Sport]. The Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport has communicated these principles to the members of this committee.

Adoption of Ministerial Principles

Section 22 of the College Education Regulation (General and Vocational Colleges Act) governs prior learning assessment by cégeps. The Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial [College Education Evaluation Committee] ensures that cégeps have and apply a prior learning assessment policy. Universities follow the Pan-Canadian Protocol on the Transferability of University Credits and enjoy full autonomy with respect to prior learning assessment.

Three-Year Framework for Action

In May 2002, the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport released its *Politique d'éducation des adultes et de formation continue* [Adult and Continuing Education Policy], which contains many measures to develop a culture of prior learning assessment for all levels of education. The action plan encourages universities to equip themselves with policies for prior learning assessment. The Association canadienne d'éducation des adultes des universités de langue française [Canadian Association for Adult Education in French-Language Universities] has been given a mandate to report on practices in universities in Quebec.

On April 6 and 7, 2005, the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport organized the *Colloque national sur la reconnaissance des acquis et des compétences* [National Symposium on Prior Learning Assessment] to facilitate and promote prior learning assessment. The purpose of this symposium was to mobilize key stakeholders to further develop prior learning assessment, to increase awareness of the efforts that are under way, and to give this wide-scale endeavour a boost.

Priority Action Areas

Increasingly, cégeps and universities are developing bridges between technical programs and university undergraduate programs. While some universities recognize three credits from a technical program, others recognize up to 26 credits for bachelor's degree programs through Diploma of Collegial Studies–Bachelor's Degree Program (DEC-BAC) agreements. In 2002, we reported that nine universities had agreements with between 1 and 42 colleges for the transfer of between 3 and 33 credits. Since then, the number of agreements between universities and colleges has continued to grow. For example, one university now has 94 DEC-BAC agreements.

The ministry's strategy to internationalize higher learning has also given a boost to prior learning assessment. For example, the joint doctoral program created in 1996 by France and Quebec enables doctoral students to study for three terms at a foreign university and earn a joint PhD. Thus, universities recognize doctoral training received at a foreign institution. This type of agreement is being expanded and will include universities in other countries such as Germany, Belgium, and Switzerland. The ministry's short-stay grant program (\$10 M) enables students to pursue accredited training in their program of study at foreign universities. This requires Quebec universities to recognize credits issued by other institutions.

Working Group

The Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport questions the advisability of extending the mandate of the CMEC Working Group on Credit Transfer.

Prince Edward Island

The Prince Edward Island Department of Education has worked in collaboration with the University of Prince Edward Island and Holland College, as both institutions signed articulation agreements with each other. At the same time, they were also signing articulation agreements with institutions across the country.

Holland College has all agreements posted on-line and will be updating the information as new agreements are signed. The college has the articulation agreements icon posted on its home page. As well, each program that has an articulation agreement with another institution has a direct link to the articulation agreements page.

The University of Prince Edward Island has developed a grid of its agreements and is in the process of having the information posted on their Web site.

Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfers (PCCAT)

Discussions at a meeting of Canadian transfer credit officials hosted by the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer in June 2006 have led to the launch of a new national organization, the Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions & Transfer (PCCAT). Its mandate is to develop policies and practices that support the advancement of interjurisdictional admissions and transfer. The consortium is chaired by Frank Gelin (executive director and co-chair of BCCAT) and Lucille Walter (chair of ACAT) and will include representatives from postsecondary institutions and provincial, territorial, and federal stakeholder groups.

Prince Edward Island is a member of the consortium and is hosting the first meeting of PCCAT, June 19 and 20, 2007, in PE.

Saskatchewan

Communication of Ministerial Principles

Following the creation of the Saskatchewan Council for Admissions and Transfer (SaskCAT) in the fall of 2004, the establishment of the council's mission, guiding principles, and goals and their approval by the Campus Saskatchewan Management Board in May 2005, efforts focused on the completion and launch of the SaskCAT Web site (www.saskcat.ca) and the on-line Transfer Credit Guide. The launch of the guide in January 2006 was highlighted by an event at the University of Saskatchewan that was video streamed live across the province. Subsequent to the launch event, collateral materials promoting the guide and the work of SaskCAT were developed and distributed to institutions and the public. Meetings with key individuals from institutions to further the work of the council have been and continue to be held on a regular basis.

Adoption of Ministerial Principles

The guiding principles that govern SaskCAT's work are consistent with the CMEC principles. SaskCAT's guiding principles are as follows:

- SaskCAT will build a culture of transfer in which the practice will be to find reasons to grant rather than deny transfer of credit and provide access to institutions and programs.
- SaskCAT recognizes that while learning experiences are diverse, the learning outcomes may be equivalent in terms of content and standards. Therefore, students should not be required to repeat previous learning.
- SaskCAT will operate with integrity, transparency, and consistency in order to instill confidence in the credit transfer system.
- SaskCAT will provide easy access to accurate, clear, and timely information on credit transfer and processes.
- The members of SaskCAT are representatives from, and not of, their home institution or organization and will work in the interest of the admissions and transfer system.
- SaskCAT recognizes that individual institutions retain the right to determine program and admission requirements.

Three-Year Framework for Action

The database that supports the on-line Transfer Credit Guide contains all courses from participating institutions and thousands of course equivalencies and program agreements. The primary focus now is the establishment of articulation committees in order to facilitate the development of new transfer agreements. The first two articulation committees met in the fall of

2006. One more committee is planned for the spring of 2007. This effort is expected to continue for the foreseeable future.

Other key areas include developing a research plan and continuing to increase awareness of SaskCAT and the Transfer Credit Guide.

Priority Action Areas

Along with articulation, research, and awareness building, SaskCAT is focusing on interjurisdictional initiatives. These include participation in the Pan-Canadian Consortium for Admissions and Transfer (PCCAT), a new national organization with a mandate to develop policies and practices that support the advancement of interjurisdictional admissions and transfer. The consortium is chaired by Frank Gelin (executive director and co-chair of BCCAT) and Lucille Walter (chair of ACAT) and will include representatives from postsecondary institutions and provincial, territorial, and federal stakeholder groups. Another priority is the development of a proposal to include courses and equivalencies from out-of-province institutions.

Research

As noted above, SaskCAT is currently developing a research plan.

Working Group

Saskatchewan supports the continuation of the CMEC Working Group on Credit Transfer.

Note: The chair of SaskCAT is a new member of this working group.

Yukon

Communication of Ministerial Principles

Yes, the ministerial principles were communicated to the postsecondary institution.

Adoption of Ministerial Principles

Yes, the ministerial principles were adopted by the postsecondary institution.

Three-Year Framework for Action

Yukon College will continue to articulate its programs as broadly as possible. The college sits on the British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT) and attends pan-Canadian articulation meetings through the Association of Canadian Community Colleges.

Priority Action Areas

Yukon has only one postsecondary institution, Yukon College. Its continuing priority is to ensure that its students are able to transfer without difficulty to outside postsecondary institutions. Articulation agreements are an ongoing process for the college.

Research

Yukon College participated in a national Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) research project funded by HRSDC and coordinated by Athabasca University. The final report will be released shortly.

Working Group

The CMEC Working Group on Credit Transfer should be continued.

CMEC Ministerial Statement on Credit Transfer in Canada

Preamble

The primary purpose for establishing credit transfer agreements among institutions of higher education is to increase opportunities for students to access postsecondary education by facilitating student mobility between institutions and sectors.

Students need reasonable assurance that they will be able to continue their studies at other postsecondary institutions to complete their educational plans and be able to obtain appropriate transfer credit for work previously completed.

In addition, by ensuring that learners receive appropriate recognition for learning already achieved, efficiencies in both time and money can be gained by students, institutions, and governments. The ability for learners at all stages of their lives and careers to easily move into, between, and out of postsecondary education is a key component in building a postsecondary education system that makes lifelong learning a reality.

Transfer credit agreements will vary between provinces and territories and may include a variety of approaches to recognizing previous academic achievement including, but not limited to, establishing course-by-course equivalencies, granting unassigned credit, agreeing to grant specified blocks of transfer credit for completed credentials, or the development of prior learning assessment processes.

Credit transfer can occur between public colleges and universities, and between those institutions and private postsecondary institutions. This Statement of Principles may also be applied in situations where a province or territory chooses to facilitate transfer between public and private institutions.

PRINCIPLES

1. Ministers recognize that all credit transfer agreements should be consistent with the academic integrity of programs and the right of postsecondary institutions to determine program design and delivery, to determine academic prerequisites, and to establish admission criteria and certification requirements of academic achievement. Ministers also recognize that the academic integrity and governance autonomy of the individual institutions and programs must be protected and preserved.
2. Postsecondary institutions within each province/territory should be committed to working with other postsecondary institutions, transfer agencies, and governments, as appropriate, to enhance and maintain credit transfer opportunities. Negotiations between institutions regarding equivalency of credit should recognize that the substance of learning experiences may be equivalent in terms of content and rigour, although the learning has occurred in a variety of ways.

3. Transfer students should be made aware that program-specific criteria and other factors, in addition to academic performance, may be used as admission criteria. That is, while possession of academic prerequisites makes an applicant eligible for admission, it does not guarantee admission to a particular program.
4. The effectiveness of transfer agreements in optimizing student mobility requires that students, prior to beginning their studies at another institution, have knowledge of, and current information about, available credit transfer opportunities and limitations. Institutions should be committed to providing current and reliable information about transfer of credit policies and the procedures to be followed to obtain transfer credit in a routine manner.
5. Students and institutions should be satisfied that transfer decisions are considered in a consistent manner. Postsecondary institutions should develop and maintain clearly stated policies and procedures for consideration of transfer of credit. Students should be able to obtain an institution's rationale for a refusal, and institutions should have clear procedures for students to appeal such decisions.
6. Neither transfer students nor direct-entry students should be advantaged or disadvantaged as a result of the credit transfer process