Record of Changes – Handbooks

From 2010 to present

Throughout this record of changes, *italics* indicate an addition and **strike through** a deletion.

- The following was added to the handbooks to reflect the amendments to the *Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act, 2000* (January, 2012 – effective January 2012)
  - *The Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities may refer applications for consent to PEQAB or to another accrediting or quality assurance body (as may be described in regulation), reject an application without referral to PEQAB (or other body) according to prescribed circumstances and policy criteria, consider a prior quality assurance review as satisfying the requirement that the application be referred, and deem approval by such a body as satisfying the requirement that the Minister receive a recommendation.*

- Update to Credit Transfer Criteria under the Admission, Promotion and Graduation standard (July, 2013 – effective July, 2013)
  The following criteria which limit the number of credits awarded for diploma level study were deleted from the *Handbook for Ontario colleges, Handbook for Private Organizations,* and *Handbook for Public Organizations.*
  Where any type of advanced standing into the program is proposed, policies and procedures pertaining to bridging requirements, advanced standing, credit and credential recognition:
  - limit the number of credits that will be awarded for prior diploma level study, with and without affinity, toward the degree program (excluding any work experience/internship requirements) such that the advanced standing to be awarded does not exceed
    - 67% degree level credit for a 3-year degree program from a completed 3-year diploma program
    - 53% degree level credit for a 3-year degree program from a completed 2-year diploma program
    - 65% degree level credit for a 4-year degree program from a completed 3-year diploma program
    - 40% degree level credit for a 4-year degree program from a completed 2-year diploma program.

- New Benchmark under the Capacity to Deliver standard (March, 2014 – effective June, 2014)
  The following benchmark was added to the Capacity to Deliver standard.
  Policies pertaining to faculty:
- fairly and consistently verify the equivalency of international credentials to those similarly named credentials offered by Canadian institutions.

- Clarification to a Benchmark under the Capacity to Deliver standard (May, 2014 – effective June, 2014)
  The following footnote was added under the Capacity to Deliver standard to clarify the criteria for scholarly activity of faculty members.
  *In assessing faculty members’ currency and engagement with scholarship, research, or creative activity, the following may be considered, provided that these contributions are in a form (in a phrase adapted from Boyer) “subject to critical review and allowing use/exchange by other members of the scholarly community.” In all cases, such contributions may take digital form. In general, the Board seeks evidence that faculty are intellectually engaged with developments in their fields, including but not limited to*
  - publishing and/or reviewing professional publications in their fields
  - participation and/or presentations at provincial, national and international conferences, competitions or exhibitions in their fields
  - engagement with the scholarship of pedagogy in their fields
  - participation in regulatory and accrediting association workshops, degree audits or related work in their fields
  - engagement in basic and/or applied research, labour market research, and/or related industry needs assessments
  - application of conceptual knowledge to current practice in their fields, such as reports to industry or consulting work
  - creative contributions to their field through exhibitions or related forms
  - development of case studies in their fields.

- Change and Clarification to Section 5.1 Program Structure and to a Benchmark under the Program Content standard for Ontario Colleges (May, 2014 – effective June, 2014)
  Section 5.1 Program Structure (in the *Handbook for Ontario Colleges*) pertaining to work-integrated learning experiences was revised as follows:
  The Board expects that degree programs in applied areas of study offered by Ontario colleges will be comprised of, at a minimum:
  - eight semesters, or the equivalent, of on-campus studies
  - at least one separate, paid, full-time work term (of no less than 14 consecutive weeks) prior to graduation, related to the professional field of study.¹

  Benchmark 11 (in the *Handbook for Ontario Colleges*) pertaining to work-integrated learning experiences was revised as follows:

  ¹ When a paid work term is not feasible, the Board may consider proposals for a full-time unpaid work term of comparable length to meet this requirement.
11. Work experiences, internships, and field placements: Any work-integrated learning experience
   a) are is appropriate to the field of the program
   b) have has articulated, appropriate learning outcomes
   c) identify an appropriate method for both instructor and employer/supervisor assessment leading to the assignment of a grade is supervised by both a college representative with appropriate academic credentials and an employer/staff member who collaborate to evaluate the student performance
   d) are in blocks of no less than 14 weeks amounts to no less than 14 weeks of full-time equivalent work (420 hours), either in one block, or in multiple cumulative blocks appropriate to achieving the learning outcomes.

- Change and Clarification to Benchmarks under the Capacity to Deliver standard (May, 2014 – effective June, 2014)

Benmarks pertaining to faculty with terminal credentials under the Capacity to Deliver standard were revised as follows:

Benchmark 9 for Ontario colleges, benchmark 10 for private institutions, and benchmark 13 for public, out-of-province institutions:

- No fewer than 50% of all faculty teaching in the professional or main field of study and where appropriate, acting as thesis supervisors and/or members of examining committees, hold the terminal academic credential in the field or in a closely related field/discipline.2

- At least 50% of the students’ experience in the professional or main field of study is in courses taught by a faculty member holding the terminal academic credential in the field or in a closely related field/discipline.3, 4

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2 The doctorate is normally the terminal academic credential in all fields or disciplines where a master’s degree in the field/discipline is more typical. The Board expects that the faculty will hold the terminal academic credential
   a) in the same field/discipline area as the proposed program area
   b) in a field/discipline which can be shown to be loosely related in content
   c) with a graduate level specialty in the same field/discipline.

3 Generally and in the context of a practicable schedule of teaching assignments, the percentage can be achieved if 50% of all faculty teaching core courses in the program hold the terminal academic credential in the field or in a closely related field/discipline or if 50% of all core courses or all hours in core courses in the program are taught by faculty with a terminal academic credential in the field or in a closely related field/discipline.

4 The doctorate is normally the terminal academic credential in all fields or disciplines with the exception of certain fields where a master degree in the field/discipline is more typical. The Board expects that the faculty will hold the terminal academic credential
   a) in the same field/discipline area as the proposed program area
   b) in a field/discipline that can be shown to be closely related in content
   c) with a graduate level specialty in the same field/discipline.
Benchmark 11 for Ontario colleges, benchmark 12 for private institutions, and benchmark 15 for public, out-of-province institutions:

No fewer than 50% of all faculty teaching non-core courses hold the terminal academic credential in the field or in a closely related field/discipline.

At least 50% of the students’ experience in the non-core areas is in courses taught by a faculty member holding the terminal academic credential in the field or in a closely related field/discipline. \(^5\,^6\)

- Revision to Footnote under the Nomenclature standard (November, 2014 – effective June 2015)

The footnotes accompanying Benchmark 1b) under the Nomenclature standard were changed as follows:

- In the Handbook for Ontario Colleges

\(^21\) There is a variety of ways to connote with nomenclature whether a degree is applied/professional or research-oriented. With the exception of Bachelor of Applied Science, which connotes research-oriented degrees, research-oriented degrees are normally of the form: Bachelor of Faculty (Subject), for example, Bachelor of Arts (Psychology) or Bachelor of Science (Chemistry). The level of study at the bachelor level can be further differentiated as “Honours” for research-oriented degrees. Because colleges are enabled by the Act to offer only degrees in applied areas, research-oriented nomenclatures (e.g., Bachelor of Arts/Science/Applied Science), and the term “honours”, are not available for designating college degrees.

The typical approaches to nomenclature for bachelor degrees in applied areas, available for designating college degrees, are

a) Bachelor of Faculty (Subject), for example, Bachelor of Technology (Information Technology)

b) (With the exception of Applied Science) Bachelor of Applied Faculty (Subject), for example, Bachelor of Applied Arts (Justice Studies)

c) Bachelor of Subject, for example, Bachelor of Interior Design.

- In the Handbook for Private and Public Organizations

\(^22\) There is a variety of ways to connote with nomenclature whether a degree is applied/professional or research-oriented. With the exceptions of Bachelor and Master of Applied Science, which connote research-oriented degrees, research-oriented degrees at the bachelor and master’s level are normally of the form: Bachelor/Master of [Faculty

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\(^5\) Generally and in the context of a practicable schedule of teaching assignments, the percentage can be achieved if 50% of all faculty teaching non-core courses in the program hold the terminal academic credential in the field or in a closely related field/discipline or if 50% of all non-core courses or all hours in core courses in the program are taught by faculty with a terminal academic credential in the field or in a closely related field/discipline.

\(^6\) The doctorate is normally the terminal academic credential in all fields or disciplines with the exception of certain fields where a master degree in the field/discipline is more typical. The Board expects that the faculty will hold the terminal academic credential

a) in the same field/discipline area as the proposed program area

b) in a field/discipline that can be shown to be closely related in content

c) with a graduate level specialty in the same field/discipline.
(Subject)), for example, Master of Arts (Psychology) or Bachelor of Science (Chemistry). The level of study at the bachelor level can be further differentiated as “Honours” for research-oriented degrees. Nomenclature for research-oriented doctoral degrees is normally Doctor of Philosophy.

The typical approaches to nomenclature for bachelor and master’s degrees in applied/professional areas are:

a) Bachelor/Master in [Faculty (Subject)], for example, Bachelor of Technology (Information Technology)
b) Bachelor/Master in [Applied Faculty (Subject)], for example, Bachelor of Applied Arts (Music Production)
c) Bachelor/Master of [Subject], for example, Bachelor of Interior Design, Master of Social Work.

Applied/Professional doctoral degrees are normally of the form: Doctor of [Subject/Profession], for example, Doctor of Business.

- **Revision to Section 2.2 Vision and Guiding Principles (November, 2014 – effective November 2014)**

  Section 2.2 was revised in the Handbooks to reflect the Board’s current vision and values and reads as follows:

  To achieve its vision to inspire excellence in education through leadership in quality assurance and enhancement, the Board embraces as values, being accountable, transparent, impartial, collegial, dedicated to quality and continuous improvement, grounded in research, evidence, and best practice.

- **Change and Clarification to Benchmarks under the Capacity to Deliver standard (January, 2015 – effective June, 2015)**

  Benchmarks pertaining to faculty with terminal credentials under the Capacity to Deliver standard were revised as follows:

  Benchmark 18 for public institutions and 15 for private institutions:

  No fewer than 80% of the faculty teaching in the program hold the terminal academic credential in the field or in a closely related field/discipline.

  At least 80% of the students’ experience in the program is in courses taught by a faculty member holding the terminal academic credential in the field or in a closely related field/discipline.7

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7 Generally and in the context of a practicable schedule of teaching assignments, the percentage can be achieved if 80% of all faculty teaching in the program hold the terminal academic credential in the field or in a closely related field/discipline or if 80% of all courses or all hours in courses in the program are taught by faculty with a terminal academic credential in the field or in a closely related field/discipline.
Change and Clarification to Benchmarks under the Program Content standard (March, 2015 – effective June, 2015)

Benchmarks pertaining to breadth/non-core under the Program Content standard were revised as follows:

Benchmarks 6 to 9 for Ontario colleges, public, and private institutions:

6. All bachelor programs have a breadth requirement that includes coherent and substantive non-core\(^8\) offerings. This requirement informs the design of non-core courses and provides the basis of at least some of the assessment of student outcomes. The non-core curriculum (core and non-core) contributes to the achievement of a)

- critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, written and oral communication skills

b) more than introductory knowledge in the humanities, sciences, social sciences, global cultures, and/or mathematics

b) knowledge of society and culture, and skills relevant to civic engagement.

d) more than introductory knowledge of the distinctive assumptions and modes of analysis of a discipline outside the core field(s) of study.

7. The non-core curriculum provides

a) knowledge in at least two of the following:

i) humanities

ii) sciences

iii) social sciences

iv) global cultures

v) mathematics

b) more than introductory knowledge of the distinctive assumptions and modes of analysis of a discipline outside the core fields of study.

7-8. The curriculum reflects current knowledge in the core field(s).

8-9. The curriculum reflects current knowledge in the fields represented in the non-core/breadth offerings.

9-10. In undergraduate programs, the balance of core and non-core/breadth studies is normally achieved as follows:

a) no more than 80% of the program hours are in courses in the core or main field(s) of study (all required elements in theory, practice and corollary disciplines) 20% of the program hours are in courses in the non-core curriculum\(^9\)

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\(^8\) Non-core courses are those that contribute to knowledge in fields unrelated to the main field(s) of study. Core courses are those that contribute to the development of knowledge in the main field(s) of study. The main field(s) of study is the field(s) identified in the degree nomenclature. Core courses can be in the main field(s) of study, or in related fields. For example, psychology, history and statistics are different fields of study. Because the field of psychology uses scientific method as one of its methodological approaches, statistics would be a core course in a psychology degree program. Statistics is not related to scholarship in history, however, and would not be a core course in a history degree program.

\(^9\) An applicant may demonstrate through alternative approaches that the degree program meets the breadth/non-core requirements typical of such programs as offered at other postsecondary institutions. For example, undergraduate programs
b) some courses outside the core or main field of study are free electives—at least one non-core course is a free elective.

**Additional footnote for the Nomenclature Standard (January, 2016)**
The Board approve the following footnote 20 in the Handbooks for Public Organizations and Ontario Colleges and footnote 21 in the Handbook for Private Organizations:

20 The title “Doctor” may refer to the credential that results from successful completion of a program of study that meets the standards of either a doctoral degree or a health-related professional degree (e.g., Doctor of Medicine or Doctor of Dental Surgery). The latter professional degrees may or may not be at the doctoral level in terms of academic degree level requirements.

In the context of the delivery of health services, use of the title “Doctor” is regulated in Ontario under the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991. In this context, only members of the specified professions are entitled under the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 to use the title “Doctor”:

a) College of Chiropractors of Ontario
b) College of Optometrists of Ontario
c) College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario
d) College of Psychologists of Ontario
e) Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario
f) College of Naturopaths of Ontario, provided that a Naturopath may only use the title “doctor” in writing if the phrase “naturopathic doctor” immediately follows his or her name (e.g., Dr. Jane Doe, Naturopathic Doctor).

**A new Review Process Section (March 2016)**
The following Section 3.5 has been added to all handbooks to introduce new timelines for assessor reports and applicant responses to the reports as well as a new site visit agenda template:

The Board receives the application, posts it on its web site, gives a deadline for public comment, and strikes an expert panel for the assessment, as appropriate. The college is then informed of the composition of the expert panel(s) and is advised of any site visit. A suggested agenda template for the PEQAB site visit can be found in Appendix 8.1. (Appendix 11.1 for Private Institutions)

The expert panel undertakes the review in accord with the Board’s detailed procedures (as per the Guidelines for Assessors) and typically files its report within 15 days after the site visit. Colleges will normally submit to the Board their formal response to the panel report within 20 business days (4 weeks) of receiving it. College/applicant representatives may notify their PEQAB of the need for an extension on any reasonable basis, including but not limited to, the unavailability of relevant staff to consult on the response, the complexity of the response, or the number of items requiring response.

*associated with accrediting bodies or other industry/professional regulatory bodies may depart from this norm, especially if meeting the 20% non-core benchmark would drive the total program to an extraordinary number of credit hours.*
# PEQAB Site Visit: Suggested Agenda Template

**NAME OF APPLICANT**

**NAME OF PROGRAM - NEW PROGRAM/RENEWAL**

**Site Visit: DATE & LOCATION**

*Quality Assessment Panel Chair:*

*Quality Assessment Panel Subject-matter Expert:*

*PEQAB Representative:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Topics/Areas of Focus/Session</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:00 – 8:30am</td>
<td>Welcome and Coffee</td>
<td></td>
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| 8:30 – 9:00   | Overview of the Agenda, College and School                                                    | ▪ Senior college administration  
▪ Program coordinator and/or chair  
▪ Dean of the relevant faculty  
▪ Program Development and Quality Assurance |
| 9:00 – 10:30  | Academic Program Overview/ Overview of Program Development, Content, Outcomes, and Delivery including e.g., detailed discussion of curriculum, course outlines, work integrated learning experiences and bridge pathways (if applicable), college’s research capacity and academic pathways for degree graduates | ▪ Program coordinator and/or chair, i.e. person(s) responsible for the oversight of the program  
▪ Dean(s)  
▪ Maybe:  
▪ Research Services  
▪ Program Development and Quality Assurance |
| 10:30 – 10:45 | Break                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                             |
| 10:45 – 11:30 | Meeting with current and past Students                                                       | ▪ Opportunity to meet with  
▪ current students and graduates (for program renewals)  
▪ current students and graduates from related programs (for new programs) |

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10 All times and durations are approximate.

11 Some panels have had good experiences with moving either the meeting with student are the meeting with representatives of the Program Advisory Committee to the working lunch. These options should be discussed with the panel chair.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11:30 – 12:15</td>
<td><strong>Program Currency and Relevance to the Field(s) of Practice</strong></td>
<td>Representatives of the Program Advisory Committee&lt;sup&gt;12&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:15 – 1:00</td>
<td><strong>Working Lunch (panel only)</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1:00 – 1:45</td>
<td><strong>Tour of Campus Facilities</strong></td>
<td>This tour may include a visit to the library, computing facilities, student support services and some classrooms and labs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:45 – 2:45</td>
<td><strong>Program Content and Delivery and Capacity to Deliver</strong></td>
<td>Meeting with Faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30 – 2:45</td>
<td><strong>Break</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 3:00 – 3:45  | **Institutional Support for Program and Program Policies** | Participants may include representatives from ‘enabling areas’/ ‘support areas’ such as  
|             |                                              | ▪ Student Services & College Resources/ Student Affairs  
|             |                                              | ▪ Co-op Education and Career Services  
|             |                                              | ▪ Enrolment Services  
|             |                                              | ▪ Financial Aid and Student Awards  
|             |                                              | ▪ Marketing  
| 3:45-4:15    | **Academic Policy Review**                    | ▪ Program coordinator and/or chair  
|             |                                              | ▪ Dean of the relevant faculty  
|             |                                              | ▪ Program Development and Quality Assurance  
| 4:15 – 4:45  | **Panel Caucus (panel only)**                 |                                                                               |
| 4:45 – 5:00  | **Concluding Meeting/ Exit Interview**        | The same participants as in the 9am session                                   |

**HOW TO USE THE TEMPLATE**

*Please note:* Recently PEQAB Secretariat staff have observed some inconsistencies in the development of site visit agendas including but not limited to  
▪ timing (length and order)  
▪ topics of discussion (in relation to PEQAB standards), and  
▪ attendees in the various discussions throughout the day.

This template, meant as a guide, is an attempt at fostering consistency amongst site visits and ensure site visits are using the time allocated as best as possible. It remains the role of the panel Chair to set the

<sup>12</sup> This meeting may, in some cases, be better situated later during the day to accommodate working professionals.
agenda in close collaboration with the applicant and to lead the site visit. The template is based on the experience of assessors and PEQAB staff and is intended to reflect what worked well during past site visits.

**Suggestions**

- **Content of sessions:** It is suggested to keep the topics/areas of focus.
- **Timing (length and order):** While it is suggested to keep the approximate order and time allotments, the length of various sessions may vary from review to review as each review can raise different difficult issues. The order, apart from the opening and closing sessions, can vary and is often dictated by local needs.
  - Some topics/sessions lend themselves well to being moved, e.g., switching the meeting with the PAC with the one with students, or changing the timeslot of the tour of the facilities.
  - Some topics/sessions are more strategically placed and should not be moved if possible, e.g., the review of institutional support for the program and program policies should remain later in in the day to allow the panel to follow-up with senior management on any questions that may have been raised during the meetings with faculty or students.
- **Samples of student work:** The review of samples of student work is only required for renewals. It is strongly suggested that the applicant distribute samples of student work to the assessor(s) prior to the site visit to allow for a desk review in advance of the site visit. Where that is not possible, a minimum of 60-90 minutes will have to been found somewhere in the agenda for the subject-matter expert(s) to conduct this crucial task.
- **Participant:** Participants noted are suggestions only. It is, however, important that, in addition to the assessment team, only faculty are present during the faculty session and that student sessions are attended by students only. Moreover, it is suggested that the applicant’s administrators be excluded from the meeting with members of the Program Advisory Committee.

**Other best practices**

**Applicant**

- Presentations by the applicant should be kept at a minimum to allow for maximum amount of time for dialogue and Q&As.
- Some discretionary elements (shaded in grey) are identified, e.g.,
  - the policy review is only required if such review has not occurred at the college for some time (review guidelines will identify this). Generally policy questions can be addressed as part of the Institutional Support for Program and Program Policies session.
- The concluding meeting should be kept short. The panel will give a high level summary of findings and, in addition to strengths, make the applicant aware of any major and minor weakness that will be raised in the report as per ‘no surprises-policy’. The panel will usually also review its request for any additional material to be submitted. PEQAB staff will address the timelines for the remainder of the review process.

**Panel**

- Where possible, the Panel Chair and subject-matter expert(s) are encouraged to submit requests for additional information in advance of the site visit day. It is understood that the panel may see the need to require additional material during and after the site visit.
- It is also suggested that the panel tries to find time to meet face-to-face (e.g., for a working dinner the night before the site visit or for breakfast on the day of the site visit). This may help the panel to focus on key issues to discuss with the institution’s leadership and program staff and to narrow
concerns and emphases.

- The panel may want to consider holding an informal team meeting after the Exit Interview to discuss the next steps, including timelines and the approach to and distribution of responsibilities in writing the report. This meeting could become part of the official agenda if desired.
- For programs that require an assessment of breadth curriculum (usually conducted via desk review), it is suggested that the panel solicit from the breadth reviewer comments or concerns and bring these forward during the suitable sessions at the site visit.

PEQAB Secretariat Staff

PEQAB Secretariat staff are ‘guides from the side’ responsible for

- introducing the assessment panel and applicant
- acting as support to panel and applicant on questions related to PEQAB standards and benchmarks
- keeping track of additional material to be send to the panel after the site visit
- outlining the timelines and further steps in the program review
- time keeping reminders (where necessary).

Clarification around the Confidentiality of Assessor Reports (March 2016)
The following clarification around the confidentiality of assessor reports has been added to Section 3.10 of all handbooks:

In general, the assessor reports are to be treated by the applicant (college) as confidential to the applicant college. This requirement of confidentiality should not be interpreted so as to limit the college’s/applicant’s internal consultations, either as regards the draft stage at which the college’s response is sought, nor at the final stage, at which the college is implementing or revising the degree program in response to a new or renewed consent. Specifically it is PEQAB’s expectation that assessor reports are to be shared with all faculty, staff and administrators involved in the program within the college/institution, so that the most informed response, at the draft stage, and the fullest implementation of conditions and commitments, at the final stage, can be delivered by the college/institution.

Clarification to Prior Learning Assessment Criteria under the Admission, Promotion and Graduation standard (July, 2016)
The Board provided a clarification for benchmark 7 under the Admission, Promotion and Graduation standard:

a) 7. The institution
b) c) does not award advanced standing for more than 50% of the total number of

the credits of the program based on prior learning assessment

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13 In the context of this benchmark, prior learning assessment (PLA) only refers to the assessment of learning gained outside a traditional classroom (through work experience, volunteering, outside study, etc.) and excludes (and therefore allows) transfer credits and transfer agreements which may amount to more than 50% advanced standing.
- **Update to Financial Stability standard for Private Organizations (July, 2016)**
  The Board revised and clarified Benchmark 2 of the Financial Stability standard, in the *Handbook for Private Organizations*:
  2. The applicant’s short- and long-term business plans (at least five years) that address the applicant’s future educational, enrolment, physical and fiscal growth in Ontario
    a) include a best case/worst case scenario
    b) include the organization’s academic, financial, facilities, marketing, and human resource plans and costs broken down by major cost areas, academic salaries, other salaries, equipment, library acquisitions, space, etc.
    d) including two scenarios: most likely and worst case, projected over 5 years—see the Budget Template in the Submission Guidelines
    e) also including a budget narrative, providing context and a rationale for the most likely scenario in the Budget Template—telling the “story” of how the applicant intends to develop the proposed degree program over the next five years
    f) demonstrating the organization’s commitment to academic quality of program content and delivery
    g) being credible.

- **Modifications to Method and Criteria for assessing Distance or Online Education (July, 2016)**
  Benchmark 5 and Benchmarks 7 - 12 in the Program Delivery standard pertaining to the assessment of distance or online education were revised as follows:
  5. The institution has the expertise and resources (*including appropriate technological resources*) to support the proposed delivery methods and to ensure their effectiveness.
  6. The delivery methods contribute to and enhance the creation of academic community among students and between students and faculty. For online learning elements, this includes ensuring that
    a) the program/course design and the course syllabus make appropriate provisions for instructor-student and student-student interaction
    b) the technologies used to achieve interactions among faculty and students (e.g., email, telephone office hours, phone conferences, voicemail, fax, chat rooms, web-based discussions, computer conferences, threaded discussions) are adequate.
  7. The technology used to deliver courses, both pedagogically and administratively, is adequate to facilitate program delivery.
  8. Faculty involved in course delivery are adequately trained for the delivery mode.
  9. There are adequate resources and processes to acquaint faculty, students, and course designers with new software or systems as they are adopted for the delivery mode of the program.
  10. Academic support services are appropriate to the delivery mode of the program.
  11. An institution offering distance courses/programs ensures that there is a sufficient number of faculty qualified to develop, design, and teach the courses/programs.\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{14} NB: this benchmark is only relevant for a program offered exclusively online.
12. Appropriate safeguards assure the authentication of student identity and the integrity of student work for online courses/programs. Policies and procedures assure the verification of student identity for coursework and examinations, and for the control of examinations, including but not limited to security, time limits, and the selection of proctors/invigilators.

The following benchmarks in the Program Delivery and Capacity to Deliver standards were deleted:

**Program Delivery**

**Online-Delivery:**

7. Where a program is offered both in the classroom and online, there is a clear and integral relationship between those responsible for electronically offered courses/programs and the classroom-based academic structure.

8. The responsibility for program quality remains with the college. Accordingly, consortial and other agreements
   
   a) reflect that the college shares responsibility for all aspects of program delivery, including but not limited to
      
      i) ongoing oversight of the curriculum and program design decisions
      
      ii) financial, human, and physical resources
      
      iii) resource upgrading
      
      iv) setting the qualifications and training required of faculty and staff
      
      v) ensuring data integrity
      
      vi) students’ privacy
   
   b) include clearly defined performance expectations concerning all aspects of program delivery, including but not limited to those matters identified in (a)
   
   c) specify the conditions for the termination of the contract between the parties
   
   d) include provisions to ensure quality control of all aspects of program delivery
   
   e) ensure the financial arrangements among the parties to the consortial and other agreements provide for adequate participation and management by the college.

9. Policies pertaining to technology-, computer-, and web-based learning modes of delivery ensure

   a) student and faculty preparation and orientation to existing and new technologies
   
   b) adequate resources and processes to acquaint faculty, students, and course designers with new software or systems as they are adopted
   
   c) regular opportunities for ongoing professional and course development for faculty and others responsible for program development

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15 NB: with some modification, this benchmark has been retained under the proposed amendments noted earlier.
d) reliable, sufficient, and scalable course-management systems to meet current and projected needs, including
   i) a robust and secure technical infrastructure, providing maximum reliability for students and faculty
   ii) emergency backup provisions

e) accessible technical assistance for students and faculty for all hardware, software, and delivery systems specified by the college as required for the program

f) 24 hrs per day, 7 days per week access to secure online databanks for web-delivered courses

g) well-maintained, current, and appropriate hardware, software, and other technological resources and media

h) risk assessment and planning that includes
   i) a disaster recovery plan to ensure consistency of operational capacity
   ii) back-up and storage technology protocols
   iii) a requirement for historical logs and physical documentation of exceptions, breaches, capacity usage, upgrades, workarounds, bolt-ons, etc.

10. Appropriate safeguards assure the authentication of student identity and the integrity of student work for online courses/programs. Policies and procedures assure
   a) the security of students’ confidentiality and privacy when conducting assessments and evaluations, and in the dissemination of results
   b) the secure destruction of personal data when it is no longer needed
   c) the verification of student identity for coursework and examinations, and for the control of examinations, including but not limited to security, time limits, the selection of proctors/invigilators and the requirements for, and weighting of, evaluations conducted face to face.

Capacity to Deliver

4. Learning resources are available online to students in online courses/programs. If not all appropriate resources are routinely available online, the institution has made appropriate and adequate arrangements to provide them to online students.

- **Addition under the Program Content standard (September, 2016 – effective August, 2017)**

  The Board clarified Benchmark 7 of the Program Content standard for all applicants:

  7. The non-core curriculum provides
     a) knowledge in at least two of the following:
        i) humanities
        ii) sciences
        iii) social sciences
        iv) global cultures (*including Indigenous cultures*)
        v) mathematics

As per the request of the Minister the Board removed the Economic Need and Non-Duplication standards for Ontario Colleges.

• **Change and Clarification to criteria for work-integrated learning experiences (May, 2017 – effective August, 2017)**

The Board added a clarification under Benchmark 12 of the Program Content standard to allow more flexibility around work-integrated learning experiences criteria for Ontario College degrees:

12. Any work-integrated learning experience, *either full-time or part-time*
   a) is appropriate to the field of the program
   b) has articulated, appropriate learning outcomes
   c) is supervised by both a college representative with appropriate academic credentials and an employer/staff member who collaborate to evaluate the student performance
   d) amounts to no less than 420 hours, either in one block, or in multiple cumulative blocks appropriate to achieving the learning outcomes.

• **Change and Clarification to criteria for work-integrated learning experiences (August, 2017 – effective August, 2017)**

The Board added a footnote under Benchmark 12 of the Program Content standard to allow more flexibility around work-integrated learning experiences criteria for Ontario College degrees:

12. Any work-integrated learning experience, *either full-time or part-time*\(^\text{16}\)
   a) is appropriate to the field of the program
   b) has articulated, appropriate learning outcomes
   c) is supervised by both a college representative with appropriate academic credentials and an employer/staff member who collaborate to evaluate the student performance
   d) amounts to no less than 420 hours, either in one block, or in multiple cumulative blocks appropriate to achieving the learning outcomes.

• **Change and Clarification to Benchmarks under the Program Content standard (August, 2017 – effective August, 2017)**

The Board added two Benchmarks (2b, e) and a footnote to the Program Advisory Committee criteria for all applicants under the Program Content standard:

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\(^{16}\) The normal and expected work-integrated learning experience is one that occurs outside of the academic term (as per section 5.1 of the Board’s Handbook for Ontario Colleges). Colleges may allow part-time work-integrated learning experiences, bearing in mind that any such learning experiences are subject to review upon program renewal and that part-time employment should not compromise the feasibility of academic studies (i.e. part-time employment should not create undue or excessive student workload).
2. The Program Advisory Committee (PAC)\textsuperscript{17}

a) includes experts in the field external to the organization and, for degrees in applied and professional areas of study, employers and representatives from industry and professional associations

b) is engaged and positioned to regularly comment on the currency of the curriculum in relationship to developments in the discipline/field of study as well as the relevant labour market

c) confirms the currency of the curriculum and, as appropriate, its relevance to the field(s) of practice

d) endorses the program as represented in the application

e) strives to achieve best practice.

\textsuperscript{17} It is considered best practice that

- the PAC Chair be an external member of the committee
- the PAC have at least eight members
- the PAC Chair set the agenda
- the PAC meet at least twice a year
- institution/program staff serve as the secretariat to the PAC supporting the PAC with setting up meetings, booking times & spaces etc.
- PAC membership include representation from the relevant labour market and from the discipline/field of study
- PAC meetings be minute
- The PAC formally endorse the curriculum as part of the institutions Self-Study.