

Overview of Changes Exempt Status Criteria and Guidelines

To improve clarity and ease of use, and to make the quality assessment process more streamlined, the criteria for Exempt Status have been revised and re-organized.

Submission Format

- Elements of the notice of intent have been incorporated into the full application (as an executive summary) and the full application will be posted on the public web site (excluding proprietary information).
- Guidelines on the handling of proprietary information have been added. This is consistent with similar changes to the Degree Program Review Criteria and Guidelines.
- Additional guidelines regarding organizational overview information have been provided for the Executive Summary and full Application.
- To facilitate review, the application must provide information and discussion in the format that corresponds to the order and headings indicated in the criteria.

What is Exempt Status?

- The eligibility for exempt status has been revised to require that institutions have a history of granting degrees for at least ten years in British Columbia.
- The Degree Quality Assessment Board's policy document *Exempt Status Interpretive Note* has been incorporated in the criteria.
- The process for obtaining minister's consent or approval of new degree programs for institutions with exempt status has been clarified. Institutions with exempt status still require Ministerial consent / approval for each new degree, however, once the institution achieves exempt status, the quality assessment process is expedited, up to the degree level of exemption specified, and proposals are forwarded directly to the Minister for review and consent / approval.
- Changes to the degree program review criteria have been noted regarding transparency of the process and the posting of full program proposals (excluding proprietary information) on the public website. To enhance clarity, the following process documents have been posted:
 - Degree Program Approval Process Workflow for Institutions with Exempt Status,
 - Degree Program Approval Process Workflow for Non-exempt Institutions; and
 - Overview of submission/review process of new degrees.

Submission Criteria

- To better assess organizational capacity, criteria were added concerning the admission and recruitment of students and the evaluation and awarding of academic credit.
- To enhance quality assurance, there are additional criteria regarding internal processes for developing and approving new degree programs.

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- To strengthen accountability there are additional criteria regarding demonstrated policy and processes for peer/external review for the institution and its programs.
- To support the increased interest in partnerships or collaborative arrangements between institutions, related criteria and guidelines have been enhanced.

Conditions for Maintaining Exempt Status

- Additional information regarding the renewal of consent for private and out of province public institutions has been added.