

APPENDICES

Organization Review Self Study Criteria

November 2006

Organization Review Self Study Criteria Appendices

1. Operational Guidelines for the review of Out-of-province Institutions Operating in British Columbia through Branch Operations; and
2. Operational Guidelines for Out-of-Province Institutions Operating in British Columbia through Collaborative Arrangements.

Operational Guidelines for the Review of Out-of-Province Institutions operating in British Columbia through Branch Operations

The Organization Review Criteria state that “For institutions with headquarters in another jurisdiction that wish to operate a satellite or branch location in British Columbia or through a collaborative arrangement with another institution, the organization review will focus on the institution’s operations in British Columbia and will include a review of how these operations vary or are the same as operations in the home jurisdictions. Additionally, the organization review will include a review of how the home jurisdiction will ensure that the branch operation or collaborative arrangement maintains quality.” Unlike collaborative arrangements, the applicant seeking consent to offer degree programs as a branch operation of an out-of-province institution will control directly all aspects of the administration and delivery of the degree program.

In the context of the board’s review, the division of governance, policymaking and administrative authority, and influence over organizational culture, between the branch and central operations need to be understood. As well, assurance of the equivalency of academic standards and coordination of quality assurance mechanisms between branch and central operations is a concern. Drawing on the guidelines for assessing collaborative arrangements, principles for consideration in reviewing the relationship between branch and central operations is provided below.

Main campus

The campus that is responsible for the central administration of a branch campus location.

Branch Campus (Institution seeking consent to offer degree programs in British Columbia)

A branch campus is any location of an institution other than the main, but under the same corporate structure as the main campus, that:

- 1) is permanent in nature;
- 2) has a separate student body;
- 3) has a resident administration;
- 4) normally offers a full program leading to a degree; and,
- 5) is geographically separate from the main campus such that students may not easily avail themselves of educational and administrative services of the main campus.

1. Responsibility for, and equivalence of, academic standards

- a) The academic standards of all degree programs provided through the branch campus are comparable to those of similar programs provided by the institution’s other campuses.
- b) A plan for regular program review consistent with practices of the degree-granting institution’s main operations exists, and encompasses programs offered in British Columbia.
- c) The degree-granting institution can demonstrate that student achievements in programs delivered through branch campuses in British Columbia are comparable to those of students in similar degree programs offered at the degree-granting institution’s main campus.

2. Assuring the quality of programs and degrees

- a) The policies and procedures for quality assurance must be explicit and documented, and must clearly delineate the division of responsibilities and control between the branch campus and the main campus or central administration.
- b) The curriculum and delivery methodologies used for degree programs delivered by a branch campus are substantively the same as those used for similar degree programs at the main campus, and any differences must be clearly identified at the time Ministerial consent is requested.
- c) Where appropriate, consideration has been given to ensure the curriculum demonstrates reasonable levels of Canadian content (e.g. course in history, law, education).

**Operational Guidelines for the Review of Out-of-Province Institutions operating in
British Columbia through Branch Operations**

3. Information for students, staff and faculty

- a) Information given to faculty and staff of branch campuses, and to students registered in its programs, includes directions about the appropriate channels for concerns, complaints and appeals.

4. Publicity and marketing

- a) The branch campus retains effective influence to ensure the accuracy of all public information, publicity and promotional activity relating to the programs and degrees it offers, in particular when the information is published on its behalf. The branch campus must satisfy itself through active means that the public cannot be misled about the nature and standing of the degree programs offered in British Columbia.

5. Policies, procedures and organizational culture

- a) Branch operations are managed in accordance with the formally stated policies of the central administration.
- b) There are measures to ensure that the organizational culture of the main campus is transferred to the branch campus to a sufficient degree to ensure a culture appropriate to an institution offering their specific degree programs.
- c) There must be adequate safeguards against financial temptations that would compromise academic standards.

Operational Guidelines for Out-of-Province Institutions Operating in British Columbia through Collaborative Arrangements

In order to assure that the quality of degree-programming offered in British Columbia through collaborative arrangements is maintained, the Degree Quality Assessment Board, in its assessment of degree program proposals, requests and reviews the collaborative agreements between partners. In reviewing agreements, documents and evidence provided by applicants, the Board is guided by the following guidelines. These guidelines may also assist applicants in preparing their submissions and negotiating collaborative arrangements.

Definitions

Degree-granting institution

The institution that is seeking, or holds the Minister's consent, approval or authorization under an Act of the British Columbia Legislature to provide degree programs, and grant degrees.

Collaboration Partner

An institution that is authorized or accredited by a body that is recognized by the board, has entered into a collaborative arrangement to provide all or part of a degree program, where the degree is conferred by the degree granting institution.

Collaborative Arrangement

An agreement or partnership between a degree-granting institution and a collaboration partner whereby the collaborative partner provides administrative support and/or part of a program leading to a degree conferred by the degree-granting institution.

1. Responsibility for, and equivalence of, academic standards

- a) The degree-granting institution is ultimately and solely responsible for the academic standards of all programs that lead to degrees granted in its name.
- b) The academic standards of all degree programs provided through a collaborative arrangement are equivalent to those of other comparable programs provided by the degree-granting institution.
- c) The degree-granting institution reviews regularly the extent to which programs and/or courses have achieved their intended objectives (i.e., meet the degree-level standards and expected student learning outcomes).
- d) A plan for regular program review consistent with practices of the degree-granting institution's main operations exists, and encompasses programs and/or courses offered in British Columbia through collaborative arrangements.
- e) The degree-granting institution is able to demonstrate that student achievements in programs and/or courses delivered through a collaborative arrangement are comparable to those of students in similar degree programs offered at the degree-granting institution's main campus.

2. Assuring the quality of programs and degrees

- a) The degree-granting institution is accountable for the quality and standards of all programs and degrees granted in its name.
- b) The policies and procedures for quality assurance must be explicit and documented, and must clearly delineate the division of responsibilities and control between the degree-granting institution and the collaboration partner.
- c) The curriculum and delivery methodologies used for degree programs delivered by a collaboration partner should be substantively the same as, or of comparable quality to, those used for similar degree programs at the degree-granting institution's main campus, or a sound rationale for any differences must be clearly identified at the time Ministerial consent is requested.

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- d) Where appropriate, consideration has been given to ensure the curriculum demonstrates reasonable levels of Canadian content (e.g. course in history, law, education).
- e) All faculty meet the minimum qualifications established by the degree-granting institution and those requirements must be comparable to the standard used for similar programs at its main campus.
- f) The degree-granting institution retains authority to approve faculty teaching in degree programs delivered through collaborative provision.
- g) There is appropriate provision for staff appointment, induction and development, to meet the requirements of the degree-granting institution for its degree programs.
- h) The degree-granting institution ensures that effective measures exist to review the proficiency of staff and faculty.
- i) The degree-granting institution determines the admission requirements for students entering a program under the collaborative agreement. Particular care needs to be taken with any arrangements for the assessment of prior and experiential learning.
- j) Program resources available for degree programs delivered under a collaborative arrangement must be clearly identified by the degree-granting institution at the time Ministerial consent is requested and must be adequate to achieve the stated desired outcomes of the arrangement.
- k) Any course transfer arrangements made between the partners inside or outside the degree program must be done through a written articulation agreement which outlines policies and procedures are in place to determine equivalency and that there is periodic review of those arrangements.

3. Student assessment requirements

- a) The examination and assessment requirements for programs provided ensure that the academic standards and grading practices are equivalent to the same or comparable programs of the degree-granting institution.
- b) The degree-granting institution must ensure that the partner organization understands and follows the requirements for the conduct of assessments.

4. Degrees and transcripts

- a) The issuing of degrees and transcripts must remain under the control of the degree-granting institution. The words and terms used on the degree certificate should be consistent with those used by the degree-granting institution for the same or comparable programs it provides.

5. Information for students

- a) Information given by the partner organization or an agent to prospective students and to those registered in a program, about the nature of a program, the academic standards to be met and the quality of the program must be approved by the degree-granting institution. Such information clearly defines the nature of the collaborative arrangement and outlines the respective responsibilities of the parties.
- b) Information is monitored regularly by the degree-granting institution and updated as appropriate.
- c) Information includes directions to students about the appropriate channels for concerns, complaints and appeals.
- d) Information given to the student cannot mislead the student as to which institution he or she is enrolled in.

Operational Guidelines for Out-of-Province Institutions Operating in British Columbia through Collaborative Arrangements

6. Publicity and marketing

- a) Effective control over the accuracy of all public information, publicity and promotional activity relating to the programs and degrees for which a degree-granting institution has responsibility must be retained by the degree-granting institution, in particular when the information is published on its behalf. The degree-granting institution must satisfy itself through active means that this control is exercised consistently and fairly and that the public cannot be misled about the collaborative nature or about the nature and standing of the degree programs.

7. Policies, procedures and information

- a) The commitment and support of both the degree-granting institution and the collaboration partner's central authorities must underpin any arrangement.
- b) Collaborative arrangements must be negotiated, agreed upon and managed in accordance with the formally stated policies and procedures of the degree-granting institution.
- c) The degree-granting institution ensures that the financial aspects of the arrangement are satisfactory to the Ministry of Advanced Education and that activities are costed and accounted for accurately and fully.
- d) There are measures to ensure that the organizational culture of the degree granting institution is transferred to the collaborative partner to a sufficient degree to ensure a culture appropriate to an institution offering their specific degree programs.
- e) There must be adequate safeguards against financial temptations to compromise academic standards.

8. Selecting a partner for collaboration

- a) The degree-granting institution provides the rationale for its choice of partner.
- b) The degree-granting institution is satisfied that the partner is in good standing, financially stable, and that the institutional missions of both institutions are compatible with respect to the purposes of collaboration before entering into any agreement.
- c) The legal status of a partner organization and its capacity to contract with the degree-granting institution has been examined, together with its ability to provide the infrastructure and learning resources necessary to ensure the required quality and standard of the degree will be achieved, prior to entering into any agreement.

9. Selecting an agent

- a) Where a degree-granting institution or its partner uses agents to broker or facilitate the collaboration, the degree-granting institution ensures that an agent's interests do not conflict with the institution's interests or that of the students recruited for the programs.
- b) In choosing an agent, the agent's financial standing and reputation should be considered by the degree-granting institution.
- c) There must be written and legally binding contracts with any agents involved with collaborative arrangements.

Operational Guidelines for Out-of-Province Institutions Operating in British Columbia through Collaborative Arrangements

10. Written agreements

- a) There must be a written and legally binding agreement or contract between the degree-granting institution and the partner signed by the appropriate senior official in each organization, including:
 - The relationship between the degree-granting institution and the partner organization; and
 - The arrangements relating to individual degree programs and locations.
- b) The agreement must include termination and arbitration provisions and financial arrangements and must specify the respective responsibilities of the two parties for academic standards and quality. The residual obligations to students on termination of the agreement must be specified.
- c) The agreement must clearly delineate how funds collected from students are collected, dispersed and accounted for between the two parties.