Advertising – Copywriting Program Standard

The approved program standard for Advertising – Copywriting program of instruction leading to an Ontario College Graduate Certificate delivered by Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology (MTCU funding code 72105)

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Acknowledgements

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Table of Contents

I.   Introduction

This document is the Program Standard for the Advertising – Copywriting program of instruction leading to an Ontario College Graduate Certificate delivered by Ontario colleges of applied arts and technology (MTCU funding code 72105).

Development of System-Wide Program Standards

In 1993, the Government of Ontario initiated program standards development with the objectives of bringing a greater degree of consistency to college programming offered across the province, broadening the focus of college programs to ensure graduates have the skills to be flexible and to continue to learn and adapt, and providing public accountability for the quality and relevance of college programs.

The Program Standards and Evaluation Unit of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities have responsibility for the development, review and approval of system-wide standards for programs of instruction at Ontario colleges of applied arts and technology.

Program Standards

Program standards apply to all similar programs of instruction offered by colleges across the province. Each program standard for an Ontario College Graduate Certificate postsecondary program is comprised of a **vocational standard**, the vocationally specific learning outcomes which apply to the program of instruction in question.

Individual colleges of applied arts and technology offering the program of instruction determine the specific program structure, delivery methods and other curriculum matters to be used in assisting students to achieve the outcomes articulated in the standard. Individual colleges also determine whether additional local learning outcomes will be required to reflect specific local needs and/or interests.

The Expression of Program Standards as Vocational Learning Outcomes

Vocational learning outcomes represent culminating demonstrations of learning and achievement. They are not simply a listing of discrete skills, nor broad statements of knowledge and comprehension. In addition, vocational learning outcomes are interrelated and cannot be viewed in isolation of one another. As such, they should be viewed as a comprehensive whole. They describe performances that demonstrate that significant integrated learning by graduates of the program has been achieved and verified.

Expressing standards as vocational learning outcomes ensures consistency in the outcomes for program graduates, while leaving to the discretion of individual colleges curriculum matters such as the specific program structure and delivery methods.

The Presentation of the Vocational Learning Outcomes

The **vocational learning outcome** statements set out the culminating demonstration of learning and achievement that the student must reliably demonstrate before graduation.

The **elements of the performance** for each outcome define and clarify the level and quality of performance necessary to meet the requirements of the vocational learning outcome. However, it is the performance of the vocational learning outcome itself on which students are evaluated. The elements of performance are indicators of the means by which the student may proceed to satisfactory performance of the vocational learning outcome. The elements of performance do not stand alone but rather in reference to the vocational learning outcome of which they form a part.

The Development of a Program Standard

In establishing the standards development initiative, the Government determined that all postsecondary programs of instruction should include vocational skills coupled with a broader set of essential skills. This combination is considered critical to ensuring that college graduates have the skills required to be successful both upon graduation from the college program and throughout their working and personal lives.

A program standard is developed through a broad consultation process involving a range of stakeholders with a direct interest in the program area, including employers, professional associations, universities, secondary schools and program graduates working in the field, in addition to students, faculty and administrators at the colleges themselves. It represents a consensus of participating stakeholders on the essential learning that all program graduates should have achieved.

Updating the Program Standard

The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities will undertake regular reviews of the vocational learning outcomes for this program to ensure that the Advertising – Copywriting Program Standard remains appropriate and relevant to the needs of students and employers across the Province of Ontario. To confirm that this document is the most up-to-date release, please contact the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities at the address or telephone number noted on the inside cover page.

II. Vocational Standard

All graduates of the Advertising – Copywriting program of instruction must have achieved the six vocational learning outcomes listed in the following pages.

Preamble

Graduates of the Advertising - Copywriting program from an Ontario College of Applied Arts and Technology are awarded an Ontario College Graduate Certificate. They are prepared to enter the ever-growing field of advertising and marketing communications*.

Graduates can write, interpret and adhere to creative briefs* and strategic objectives and use persuasive writing skills to create the text for an advertising and marketing communications* message. Copywriters use ideation, drama, visual thinking and emotion to convince people of the benefits of a product or service.

Organizations use advertising and marketing communications* to promote ideas, services, and products. The copywriter is prepared to serve as a partner to an art director, or independently, as an initiator of ideas, and as a liaison between the creative and the business side of marketing communications*. Graduates will be able to write and interpret creative briefs* and strategies in order to produce creative advertising and promotion materials using industry-standard technology.

Graduates are employed in both the private and public sectors, including health care and educational institutions, industries or support groups and not-for-profit organizations and associations within the advertising and marketing communications* field. Opportunities can be found in advertising and marketing communications* agencies/departments, direct response* agencies, interactive and online marketing, creative services and sales promotion organizations.

See the glossary

Synopsis of the Vocational Learning Outcomes
Advertising – Copywriting (Ontario College Graduate Certificate)

The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to

1. **resolve advertising and marketing communications* challenges by developing creative copywriting solutions.**
2. **conceive, write, edit and defend advertising and promotional materials in compliance with Canadian legislation, industry standards and accepted business practices.**
3. **identify and select creative writing techniques relevant and applicable to various media**
4. **implement creative advertising and marketing communications* initiatives to support the proposed communications strategy.**
5. **analyze historical and current issues and emerging trends affecting advertising and marketing communications* to design effective creative campaigns and advertising and marketing communications* plans.**
6. **complete all work in a professional, ethical and timely manner.**

Note: The learning outcomes have been numbered as a point of reference; numbering does not imply prioritization, sequencing, nor weighting of significance.

The Vocational Learning Outcomes

1. *The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to*

resolve advertising and marketing communications* challenges by developing creative copywriting solutions.

Elements of the Performance

- apply research-based knowledge of the products, target markets/audiences*, consumer behaviour and the client's strategic plan to the development of an integrated advertising and marketing communications* plan
- generate innovative, original ideas to solve advertising and marketing communications* challenges and opportunities, taking into consideration all aspects of the advertising and marketing communications* process, from concept development to campaign execution
- analyze and evaluate alternatives
- select and defend the alternative that optimally supports the strategic marketing plan
- implement an effective communications strategy through a variety of media to support the development of an integrated advertising and marketing communications* campaign

2. *The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to*

conceive, write, edit and defend advertising and promotional materials in compliance with Canadian legislation, industry standards and accepted business practices.

Elements of the Performance

- generate advertising and promotional ideas based on a client's briefing documents or a creative brief*
- write original and persuasive copy
- conceptualize and write ideas for all forms of advertising and promotional materials (e.g. print-based, broadcast-based and web-based, including social forums and other interactive media)
- select and use relevant industry-standard and emerging technologies to match the strategy with the target market
- adhere to Canadian legislation and regulations, and industry standards that affect the advertising marketing communications* industry
- follow corporate writing standards
- identify challenges faced when campaigns compete with international competitors and suggest solutions to compete globally, within the constraints of Canadian legislation and regulations
- provide rationales to support idea development and media selection for all materials

3. *The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to*

identify and select creative writing techniques relevant and applicable to various media.

Elements of the Performance

- write in a style appropriate for the medium selected and for both traditional and emerging media (e.g., write "theatre of the mind" for radio)
- apply language techniques such as rhyme, rhythm, consonance, assonance, alliteration, parallel construction, word play and dynamic verbs
- write in a conversational style
- use voice, talent, music and sound effects to enhance the communication of the message
- use accurate terminology for traditional and emerging media
- use elements of sound and visual techniques to enhance/strengthen the message
- apply tone, manner and brand character statements to a creative concept
- work effectively with production personnel to ensure that traditional and emerging media are executed as envisioned
- use effective strategies to create persuasive communications
- respect cultural diversity in oral and written communications, materials and presentations

4. *The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to*

implement creative advertising and marketing communications* initiatives to support the proposed communications strategy.

Elements of the Performance

- plan, structure and visualize ideas to develop and write copy that supports a strategy provided by a client or the account team.
- work to a strategy that is developed from the product to the consumer and also one that is developed from the consumer to the product
- interpret consumer insights in the development of a strategy
- create advertising and marketing communications* ideas using primary and secondary research findings*
- apply tone, manner and brand character statements to a creative concept
- write for the various components of direct response* such as fundraising, relationship marketing, sweepstakes, broadcast, lists and catalogues

5. *The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to*

analyze historical and current issues and emerging trends affecting advertising and marketing communications* to design effective creative campaigns and marketing communications* plans.

Elements of the Performance

- determine the effects of globalization on the Canadian advertising and marketing communications* industry
- adapt to a changing work environment affected by economic trends, such as agency mergers and client consolidation
- analyze the changes in emerging advertising and marketing communications* channels and strategies, and determine their impact on planning an effective campaign
- assess the impact of market fragmentation* in reaching a target market/audience*
- analyze how changing the media strategies affects reaching the target market/audience* and the implications for developing an effective campaign

6. *The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to*

complete all work in a professional, ethical and timely manner.

Elements of the Performance

- adapt to changes in the advertising and marketing communications* industry
- complete a project from planning through to execution, meeting deadlines as required
- work effectively with related disciplines
- analyze and consider constructive feedback and input provided by others such as client/account/team research, when developing creative materials
- create and maintain a professional portfolio, accruing learning and experience from each project
- use conflict resolution skills to participate effectively in a team environment
- adhere to professional codes of conduct (e.g. the Canadian Code of Advertising Standards) and organizational policies in day-to-day behaviour
- incorporate concepts of social, economic and environmental sustainability* into advertising and marketing communications* and day-to-day operations

Glossary

Creative Brief – a document designed to establish the advertising and marketing communications strategy that is given to a creative team to use as the basis for developing creative ideas and material to meet clients' advertising and marketing communications objectives. It includes the advertising and marketing communications issues, the description of the target market/audience, the results of any research, the benefits of the product or service provided, the reason why the organization needs an advertising and marketing communications plan and the brand characteristics.

Direct Response – the delivery of an advertising and marketing communications message through various media (e.g., mail, radio, television, telephone, Internet, email, website or fax) designed to generate a measurable response.

Market Fragmentation – emergence of new segments (in a previously homogeneous market) which have their own distinct needs, requirements and preferences. These fragments reduce the effectiveness of mass media

Marketing Communications – all messages that an organization directs to its target market/audience, including advertising, public relations, sales promotion, direct marketing, digital marketing and personal selling.

Primary and Secondary Research Findings – primary research findings refer to data observed, recorded and collected on a first-time basis with a view to solve a specific problem. Secondary research findings refer to data compiled and published by impartial sources.

Sustainability – sustainability encompasses the ethical ideal that calls for optimizing the long-term carrying capacity and vitality of three interdependent systems—environmental, social and economic. Sustainability aims to improve the quality of human life, while protecting nature, by engaging in manufacturing processes that are non-polluting, conserve energy and resources and protect ecosystems; benefit employees, consumers and communities; and strengthen enterprises that foster economic growth and prosperity.

Target Market/Audience – a specific segment of the overall potential market that has been analyzed and selected and to whom an advertising and marketing communications message is directed.