Office Administration-Executive Program Standard

**The approved program standard for Office Administration-Executive program of instruction leading to an Ontario College Diploma delivered by Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology.
(MTCU funding code 52316)**

Permission to Reproduce

Permission is hereby granted to the following institutions to reproduce this document, in whole or in part, in print or by electronic means, for the following specific purposes, subject to the conditions that follow:

1. By an Ontario college of applied arts and technology for the purposes of implementation of the program standard within a college program, including for the purpose of informing students, potential students, program advisory committees or others about programs of study.
2. By an educational institution or school, for the purpose of informing prospective college students about programs of study at Ontario colleges of applied arts and technology.

Conditions:

1. Every reproduction must be marked "© 2015, Queen's Printer for Ontario" at the beginning of the document or any part of it that is reproduced.
2. No other uses may be made of the document.
3. The document may not be reproduced for sale.
4. The Ministry may revoke the permission to reproduce at any time.

For permission to copy this document, in whole or in part, for other purposes or by other institutions, please contact

Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities
Programs Branch, Program Standards and Evaluation Unit

psu@ontario.ca

Inquiries regarding specific Office Administration-Executive programs offered by colleges of applied arts and technology in Ontario should be directed to the relevant college.

Acknowledgements

The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities acknowledges with thanks the significant contribution of the many individuals and organizations who participated in the development of this program standard. In particular, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities would like to acknowledge the important roles of

- all individuals and organizations who participated in the consultations;
- the co-ordinators of Office Administration-Executive programs for their assistance throughout the project, the project officer who led the development of the vocational standard, Christine Foster from Algonquin College and Louise Campagna from La Cité collégiale.

Table of Contents

I. Introduction

This document is the Program Standard for the Office Administration-Executive program of instruction leading to an Ontario College Diploma delivered by Ontario colleges of applied arts and technology (MTCU funding code 52316).

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 a postsecondary program includes the following elements:

- **Vocational standard** (the vocationally specific learning outcomes which apply to the program of instruction in question),
- **Essential employability skills** (the essential employability skills learning outcomes which apply to all programs of instruction); and
- **General education requirement** (the requirement for general education in postsecondary programs of instruction).

Collectively, these elements outline the essential skills and knowledge that a student must reliably demonstrate in order to graduate from the program.

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 Office Administration-Executive 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 email address noted on the inside cover page.

II. Vocational Standard

All graduates of Office Administration - Executive program have achieved the twelve vocational learning outcomes (VLOs) listed in the following pages, in addition to achieving the essential employability skills (EES) learning outcomes and meeting the general education (GE) requirement.

Preamble

The Office Administration – Executive program prepares graduates to manage the administrative tasks that support fast-paced and challenging executive business office settings.

Graduates of the Office Administration – Executive program manage office scheduling and organization, including the coordination of meetings, conferences, special events and travel. Graduates apply advanced skills in office technology and keyboarding to the creation and production of business documents and financial records* to industry standards. Graduates establish and administer records management systems ensuring security and confidentiality of files. Graduates possess strong interpersonal and client service skills which enable them to communicate effectively with diverse audiences both inside and outside the organization.

As members of the office work team, graduates demonstrate leadership skills and professionalism and the ability to adapt to rapidly changing priorities. Graduates apply basic project management principles to support workplace projects and act in accordance with relevant legislation, codes of ethics and the organization's procedures and policies.

Graduates of the Office Administration - Executive program find entry-level jobs as administrative assistants, office coordinators or executive assistants for management positions. Employment opportunities exist in a broad range of office environments in the private and public sectors including corporations, government agencies, educational and financial institutions, insurance agencies and not-for-profit organizations. There are increasing entrepreneurial opportunities for graduates in the office administration field.

There may be opportunities for graduates to pursue further educational qualifications through transfer pathways between colleges and universities or occupational certifications through professional organizations. Graduates should contact individual colleges and professional associations for further information.

Endnote: The Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer (ONCAT) maintains the provincial postsecondary credit transfer portal, ONTransfer.

Synopsis of the Vocational Learning Outcomes

Office Administration-Executive (Ontario College Diploma)

The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to

1. **conduct oneself professionally and adhere to relevant legislation, standards and codes of ethics.**

2. **manage the scheduling, coordination and organization of administrative tasks and workflow within specific deadlines and according to set priorities.**

3. **coordinate the collection, analysis, distribution and response to communications in the workplace to facilitate the flow of information.**

4. **operate and provide support related to the use, maintenance and procurement of office equipment and technologies.**

5. **evaluate, establish and administer a variety of records management systems* to ensure confidential, secure, accessible and organized electronic and paper records*.**

6. **produce financial documents and reports by identifying and compiling relevant information and using accounting software.**

7. **prepare and produce a variety of business documents using available technologies and applying industry standards.**

8. **use interpersonal, leadership and client service skills to respond to diversity and to support the vision and mission of the organization.**

9. **research, analyze and summarize information on resources and services and prepare summary reports with recommendations.**

10. **select and use information technologies to support communication with internal and external stakeholders and to promote the organization.**

11. **organize and coordinate meetings, conferences, special events and make travel arrangements, including the preparation of related documentation.**

12. **support the implementation of projects by applying basic principles of project management.**

*See Glossary

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

conduct oneself professionally and adhere to relevant legislation, standards and codes of ethics.

Elements of the Performance

- provide and accept feedback in a positive, respectful and professional manner
- act in accordance with relevant legislation, business standards and codes of ethics related to the office administration field
- apply ethical principles to workplace situations, including the handling of confidential information
- maintain confidentiality and security of all personal and organizational information acquired in the course of one's work
- use appropriate judgment, tact and discretion in handling sensitive information
- be self-directed and show initiative
- act responsibly and be accountable for own actions
- organize an office workspace according to a full understanding of the roles and responsibilities assigned and efficiency guidelines
- apply knowledge of ergonomics and health and safety guidelines (i.e., *Occupational Health and Safety Act,1990*)
- identify and seek out professional development activities that lead to the enhancement of work performance and career opportunities
- identify and adapt to changing needs and resources related of the office administration field
- present a professional appearance and demeanour and act as an ambassador for the organization
- act honestly and with integrity

2.   The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to

manage the scheduling, coordination and organization of administrative tasks and workflow within specific deadlines and according to set priorities and procedures.

Elements of the Performance

- establish work priorities and develop a plan to meet deadlines
- adapt to unforeseen circumstances, changing priorities and timelines
- collaboratively plan team tasks and responsibilities
- work independently with minimal supervision
- use and update contacts, calendar and reminder systems
- manage the schedules of others
- coordinate and manage appointments and meetings effectively
- coordinate appropriate facilities, equipment, services and supplies to support meetings and related activities, including the preparation of agendas and minutes and tracking post-meeting follow-up actions
- use critical thinking techniques to develop decision-making and prioritizing skills
- identify and recommend improvements to work processes to enhance productivity and operational efficiency
- multi-task in a fast-paced office environment

3. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to

coordinate the collection, analysis, distribution and response to communications in the workplace to facilitate the flow of information.

Elements of the Performance

- use active listening and analytical skills to accurately summarize and record key information
- prepare, review and edit written communication
- respond to inquiries in a timely fashion
- apply knowledge of communication theories and systems (e.g., telephone, email voicemail) and online collaboration and social media tools to a variety of communication situations
- use business communication writing style and tone for oral, written and electronic communication in a variety of workplace situations
- compose clear and timely messages and business correspondence that conveys succinctness and professionalism
- analyze and prioritize communications received to determine appropriate action and follow-up
- create and complete a variety of forms, including online forms, to record communications and support the flow of information
- apply rules and filters and create necessary folders to organize emails
- contribute to the identification and management of confidential information
- use judgment, tact and discretion in handling confidential and sensitive information in the workplace
- determine appropriate electronic and paper distribution methods for a variety of internal and external communications
- prepare internal and external communications for distribution using appropriate formatting and proofreading techniques to meet quality standards and in accordance with legislative requirements, i.e., Canada's Anti-spam Legislation (CASL), 2014.

4. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to

operate and provide support related to the use, maintenance and procurement of office equipment and technologies.

Elements of the Performance

- provide support within the workplace related to office equipment (e.g., telephones, printers, scanners, fax and photocopy machines, mobile devices)
- respond to information requests related to the use and scope of common software packages being used in the office environment
- liaise with the organization's information technology department as required
- identify processes for reporting and following up with equipment service representatives/suppliers/vendors to maintain office equipment and technologies
- identify and adapt to changing needs and resources related to office equipment and technologies used in the workplace

5.   The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to

evaluate, establish and administer a variety of records management systems* to ensure confidential, secure, accessible and organized electronic and paper records.*

Elements of the Performance

- identify and establish the structure, components, equipment and supplies required for electronic and paper records management systems*
- select and use appropriate storage, transfer and retrieval methods for electronic and paper records*, including cloud-based storage and file sharing and content management systems
- file, retrieve and transfer electronic and paper records* according to industry and organization's records management guidelines
- handle records* in a manner which complies with statutes and regulations governing the confidentiality and privacy of personal information
- establish procedures and provide training to ensure the security, retention and disposal of records* and accessibility of information, in accordance with legislative and organizational requirements
- use and maintain data within database management software
- establish, maintain and evaluate an existing records management system* and make recommendations for improvement
- liaise with information technology professionals as needed to ensure a secure and accessible records management system* in accordance with organizational policies and procedures

*See Glossary

6.   The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to

produce financial documents and reports by identifying and compiling relevant information and using accounting software.

Elements of the Performance

- use correct financial terminology
- apply basic accounting principles to review and produce complete financial documents for the workplace
- maintain a system for handling petty cash expenditures (e.g., spreadsheet)
- establish and maintain electronic and/or hard-copy systems for recording expenditures and reimbursements
- design and use forms to record, compile, summarize and report financial information
- read, analyze and extract information from financial statements and budgets
- select and use accounting software to record and organize financial information
- use and manage spreadsheets and other applications to complete financial tasks
- perform calculations and verify their accuracy
- prepare final-form electronic financial documents and reports within established deadliness

7. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to

prepare and produce a variety of business documents using available technologies and applying industry standards.

Elements of the Performance

- use current business terminology
- identify and use reference sources and materials
- utilize information processing software, including word processing and spreadsheet applications
- meet industry standards for keyboarding speed and accuracy
- review, secure and share documents during the editing process;
- proofread using a variety of techniques
- use correct grammar, syntax, spelling and punctuation
- prepare complex documents, spreadsheets, letters, reports and multi-media presentations using a variety of software and equipment
- design and produce business documents using desktop publishing techniques
- produce documents that comply with industry formatting standards and the organization's branding guidelines
- comply with legislation related to the production of business documents, including the *Canadian Copyright Act,1985* and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*
- convert draft information from electronic and paper sources into final-form business documents
- meet deadlines for the production of documents, spreadsheets, reports and multi-media presentations
- use software to analyze outcomes and contribute to business decisions
- adapt to changing technology

8.   The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to

use interpersonal, leadership and client service skills to respond to diversity and to support the vision and mission of the organization.

Elements of the Performance

- use respectful verbal, nonverbal, written and electronic and communications for a variety of workplace situations
- adapt language and communication style to ensure understanding by a diverse range of people
- work effectively and collaboratively in multi-generational and multi-cultural environments
- apply the principles of client service to both internal and external stakeholders
- identify and manage one's own beliefs recognizing their impact on interpersonal relationships
- identify and manage the impact of personal image on the image of an organization
- identify working and reporting relationships within the organizational structure
- facilitate the solution to a variety of workplace issues applying communication and conflict resolution strategies
- work independently and also as a collaborative team member;
- lead office teams and delegate tasks where appropriate
- perform duties in accordance with workplace rights and responsibilities
- identify one's own role within the structure of workplace organizations
- apply administrative concepts, such as, supervision, motivation and mentorship, to the day-to-day operation of the office environment
- apply leadership skills to promote the organization's vision and mission

9.   The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to

research, analyze and summarize information on resources and services and prepare summary reports with recommendations.

Elements of the Performance

- apply a variety of electronic and paper research techniques
- select and use Internet search engines and online databases for the identification of relevant, current and authoritative information and carry out research effectively and efficiently
- research, compare, and contrast resources and services
- document, compile and organize information while citing sources of information using industry accepted referencing formats
- format and prepare summaries, recommendations and reports for the selection of resources and services using a variety of business software
- apply composing, editing and proofreading techniques to report writing
- prepare and deliver an effective presentation and supporting documentation using presentation software and equipment

10.   The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to

select and use information technologies to support communication with internal and external stakeholders and to promote the organization.

Elements of the Performance

- communicate with internal and external stakeholders to promote business interests locally and globally through the advanced use of email and an online presence
- retrieve specific information from the global community using a variety of Internet search tools
- apply business ethics, business communications style of writing and online etiquette to online communications
- select and use information technologies appropriate to the workplace, including social media, e.g., Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn
- contribute to business social media sites by posting accurate, timely and relevant content
- maintain a business web page
- develop and maintain online resources for stakeholders
- use information technologies appropriately and in accordance with organization's communications and social media use guidelines
- comply with all relevant privacy legislation and the *Canada Anti-Spam Legislation (CASL), 2010* in communication with stakeholders
- identify and adapt to changing needs and resources related to information technologies used in the workplace

11.   The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to

organize and coordinate meetings, conferences, special events and make travel arrangements, including the preparation of related documentation.

Elements of the Performance

- research requirements for meetings, conferences, special events and travel
- research cultural beliefs, practices and protocols of the location for which travel is planned
- organize and coordinate appropriate facilities, equipment, services, catering and supplies for meetings, conferences and special events
- coordinate and distribute supporting material for face-to-face and web-based meetings, including previous minutes, agendas, speaker materials, handouts, etc
- book travel arrangements, including transportation and accommodation, in accordance with organization's policy and procedures related to travel
- process travel claims
- prepare documentation to support and follow-up meetings, conferences, special events and travel
- register participants and monitor overall registration status for conferences and special events

12. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to

support the implementation of projects by applying basic principles of project management.

Elements of the Performance

- work as part of a team to update and distribute project planning documents
- assist in the estimation of the time required to complete project elements or tasks
- manage time to complete assigned project elements or tasks according to project deadlines
- contribute to the maintenance of clear and accurate project related documents
- interpret and use project planning documents

Glossary

Records – Information created, received and maintained by an organization or person for business purposes, legal obligations, or both, regardless of medium or form. Records include a variety of formats and mediums, including textual records (memos, letters, documents, files, reports, contracts etc.), electronic records (emails, databases, intranet data etc.) new communication media (instant messages, wikis, blogs, podcasts etc.), publications (reports, magazines), films, photographs and graphics (adapted from Treasury Board of Canada (2010), Standard for Electronic Documents and Records Management Solutions).

Records management system - A framework or system used to capture, maintain and provide access to evidence over time, as required by the jurisdiction in which it is implemented and in accordance with common business practices. Record keeping systems include both records practitioners, and records users; a set of authorized policies, assigned responsibilities, delegations of authority, procedures and practices; policy statements, procedures manuals, user guidelines and other related documents (adapted from the International Council on Archives (ICA), 2008. Principles and Functional Requirements for Records in Electronic Office Environments).

III. Essential Employability Skills

All graduates of the Office Administration-Executive program of instruction must have reliably demonstrated the essential employability skills learning outcomes listed on the following pages, in addition to achieving the vocational learning outcomes and meeting the general education requirement.

Context

Essential Employability Skills (EES) are skills that, regardless of a student's program or discipline, are critical for success in the workplace, in day-to-day living and for lifelong learning.

The teaching and attainment of these EES for students in, and graduates from, Ontario's colleges of applied arts and technology are anchored in a set of three fundamental assumptions:

- these skills are important for every adult to function successfully in society today;
- our colleges are well equipped and well positioned to prepare graduates with these skills;
- these skills are equally valuable for all graduates, regardless of the level of their credential, whether they pursue a career path, or they pursue further education.

Skill Categories

To capture these skills, the following six categories define the essential areas where graduates must demonstrate skills and knowledge.

- Communication
- Numeracy
- Critical Thinking & Problem Solving
- Information Management
- Interpersonal
- Personal

Application and Implementation

In each of the six skill categories, there are a number of defining skills, or sub skills, identified to further articulate the requisite skills identified in the main skill categories. The following chart illustrates the relationship between the skill categories, the defining skills within the categories and learning outcomes to be achieved by graduates from all postsecondary programs of instruction that lead to an Ontario College credential.

EES may be embedded in General Education or vocational courses, or developed through discrete courses. However these skills are developed, all graduates with Ontario College credentials must be able to reliably demonstrate the essential skills required in each of the six categories.

SKILL CATEGORY	DEFINING SKILLS: Skill areas to be demonstrated by graduates:	LEARNING OUTCOMES: The levels of achievement required by graduates. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to:
COMMUNICATION	- Reading - Writing - Speaking - Listening - Presenting - Visual literacy	1. communicate clearly, concisely and correctly in the written, spoken and visual form that fulfills the purpose and meets the needs of the audience. 2. respond to written, spoken or visual messages in a manner that ensures effective communication.
NUMERACY	- Understanding and applying mathematical concepts and reasoning - Analyzing and using numerical data - Conceptualizing	1. execute mathematical operations accurately.
CRITICAL THINKING & PROBLEM SOLVING	- Analyzing - Synthesizing - Evaluating - Decision making - Creative and innovative thinking	1. apply a systematic approach to solve problems. 2. use a variety of thinking skills to anticipate and solve problems.

SKILL CATEGORY	DEFINING SKILLS: Skill areas to be demonstrated by graduates:	LEARNING OUTCOMES: The levels of achievement required by graduates. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to:
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT	• Gathering and managing information • Selecting and using appropriate tools and technology for a task or a project • Computer literacy • Internet skills	1. *locate, select, organize and document information using appropriate technology and information systems.* 2. *analyze, evaluate and apply relevant information from a variety of sources.*
INTERPERSONAL	• Teamwork • Relationship management • Conflict resolution • Leadership • Networking	1. *show respect for the diverse opinions, values, belief systems and contributions of others.* 2. *interact with others in groups or teams in ways that contribute to effective working relationships and the achievement of goals.*
PERSONAL	• Managing self • Managing change and being flexible and adaptable • Engaging in reflective practices • Demonstrating personal responsibility	1. *manage the use of time and other resources to complete projects.* 2. *take responsibility for one's own actions, decisions and their consequences.*

IV. General Education Requirement

All graduates of the Office Administration-Executive program must have met the general education requirement described on the following pages, in addition to achieving the vocational and essential employability skills learning outcomes.

Requirement

The General Education Requirement for programs of instruction is stipulated in the Credentials Framework (Appendix A in the Minister's Binding Policy Directive *Framework for Programs of Instruction*).

In programs of instruction leading to either an Ontario College Diploma or an Ontario College Advanced Diploma, it is required that graduates have been engaged in learning that exposes them to at least one discipline outside their main field of study and increases their awareness of the society and culture in which they live and work. This will typically be accomplished by students taking 3 to 5 courses (or the equivalent) designed discretely and separately from vocational learning opportunities.

This general education learning would normally be delivered using a combination of required and elective processes.

Purpose

The purpose of General Education in the Ontario college system is to contribute to the development of citizens who are conscious of the diversity, complexity and richness of the human experience; who are able to establish meaning through this consciousness; and who, as a result, are able to contribute thoughtfully, creatively and positively to the society in which they live and work.

General Education strengthens students' essential employability skills, such as critical analysis, problem solving and communication, in the context of an exploration of topics with broad-based personal and/or societal importance.

Themes

The themes listed below will be used to provide direction to colleges in the development and identification of courses that are designed to fulfill the General Education Requirement for programs of instructions.

Each theme provides a statement of Rationale and offers suggestions related to more specific topic areas that could be explored within each area. These suggestions are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive. They are included to provide guidance regarding the nature and scope of content that would be judged as meeting the intent and overall goals of General Education.

1.   Arts in Society:

Rationale:

The capacity of a person to recognize and evaluate artistic and creative achievements is useful in many aspects of his/her life. Since artistic expression is a fundamentally human activity, which both reflects and anticipates developments in the larger culture, its study will enhance the student's cultural and self-awareness.

Content:

Courses in this area should provide students with an understanding of the importance of visual and creative arts in human affairs, of the artist's and writer's perceptions of the world and the means by which those perceptions are translated into the language of literature and artistic expression. They will also provide an appreciation of the aesthetic values used in examining works of art and possibly, a direct experience in expressing perceptions in an artistic medium.

2.   Civic Life:

Rationale:

In order for individuals to live responsibly and to reach their potential as individuals and as citizens of society, they need to understand the patterns of human relationships that underlie the orderly interactions of a society's various structural units. Informed people will have knowledge of the meaning of civic life in relation to diverse communities at the local, national and global level and an awareness of international issues and the effects of these on Canada, as well as Canada's place in the international community.

Content:

Courses in this area should provide students with an understanding of the

meaning of freedoms, rights and participation in community and public life, in addition to a working knowledge of the structure and function of various levels of government (municipal, provincial, national) in a Canadian and/or in an international context. They may also provide an historical understanding of major political issues affecting relations between the various levels of government in Canada and their constituents.

3.   Social and Cultural Understanding:

Rationale:

Knowledge of the patterns and precedents of the past provide the means for a person to gain an awareness of his or her place in contemporary culture and society. In addition to this awareness, students will acquire a sense of the main currents of their culture and that of other cultures over an extended period of time in order to link personal history to the broader study of culture.

Content:

Courses in this area are those that deal broadly with major social and cultural themes. These courses may also stress the nature and validity of historical evidence and the variety of historical interpretation of events. Courses will provide the students with a view and understanding of the impact of cultural, social, ethnic or linguistic characteristics.

4.   Personal Understanding:

Rationale:

Educated people are equipped for life-long understanding and development of themselves as integrated physiological and psychological entities. They are aware of the ideal need to be fully functioning persons: mentally, physically, emotionally, socially, spiritually and vocationally.

Content:

Courses in this area will focus on understanding the individual: his or her evolution; situation; relationship with others; place in the environment and universe; achievements and problems; and his or her meaning and purpose. They will also allow students the opportunity to study institutionalized human social behaviour in a systematic way. Courses fulfilling this requirement may be oriented to the study of the individual within a variety of contexts.

5.   Science and Technology:

Rationale:

Matter and energy are universal concepts in science, forming a basis for understanding the interactions that occur in living and non-living systems in our universe. Study in this area provides an understanding of the behaviour of matter that provides a foundation for further scientific study and the creation of broader understanding about natural phenomena

Similarly, the various applications and developments in the area of technology have an increasing impact on all aspects of human endeavour and have numerous social, economic and philosophical implications. For example, the operation of computers to process data at high speed has invoked an interaction between machines and the human mind that is unique in human history. This and other technological developments have a powerful impact on how we deal with many of the complex questions in our society.

Content:

Courses in this area should stress scientific inquiry and deal with basic or fundamental questions of science rather than applied ones. They may be formulated from traditional basic courses in such areas of study as biology, chemistry, physics, astronomy, geology or agriculture. As well, courses related to understanding the role and functions of computers (e.g., data management and information processing) and assorted computer-related technologies should be offered in a non-applied manner to provide students with an opportunity to explore the impact of these concepts and practices on their lives.