Ontario

Educational Support Program Standard

The approved program standard for the Educational Support program of instruction leading to an Ontario College Diploma delivered by Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology (MCU funding code 51228).

Ministry of Colleges and Universities
January 2024

Acknowledgements

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

- all individuals and organizations which participated in the consultations
- the faculty, coordinators and deans of the Educational Support (Ontario College Diploma) program for their assistance throughout the project
- Charlene Kloss, the Project Officer who led the English review
- Isabelle Guérin, the Project Officer who led the French review

Contents

Introduction

This document is the Program Standard for the Educational Support program of instruction leading to an Ontario College Diploma delivered by Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology (MCU funding code 51228).

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 Unit of the Ministry of Colleges and Universities has 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 of Applied Arts and Technology across the province of Ontario. 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 from 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 of Ontario 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 Colleges and Universities will undertake regular reviews of the vocational learning outcomes for this program to ensure that the Educational Support 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 Colleges and Universities](#).

Vocational standard

All graduates of the Educational Support program have achieved the [eight vocational learning outcomes (VLOs)](#), in addition to achieving the essential employability outcomes and meeting the general education (GE) requirement.

Preamble

The Educational Support program provides integrated, practical learning experiences and a body of **evidence-based** principles and practices that equip graduates to work competently, effectively, and safely in a variety of **educational settings** as they help learners build capacity and reach their learning potential.

Educational Support graduates primarily assist **learners with exceptionalities** with differentiated instructional support, finding and implementing ways to help students access curriculum and engage in learning activities, as well as many other tasks and activities such as behaviour management, restorative practices, and crisis intervention. Working within the scope of Educational Support, graduates carry out personal care duties such as assisting with administering required medication; attending to basic physical needs (e.g., toileting, feeding, mobility, etc.); providing assistance with daily living activities that promote independent living (e.g., phone use, managing money, transit training, preparing food, etc.); implementing practice activities designed by speech and language pathologists; and performing physio-/occupational therapy general maintenance exercises as authorized by qualified therapists. Other duties include facilitating the use of **assistive technology** and **daily living aids**.

Graduates of the Educational Support program must be familiar with pertinent legislation, workplace policies, and curriculum frameworks, and how these inform the various roles that educational support personnel can be expected to perform. They are prepared to advocate for diverse students and promote **inclusive** educational communities. Graduates are ready to collaborate with **multi-disciplinary team** members in developing and implementing individual education, safety, support, and behaviour plans for **learners with exceptionalities** and are proficient at monitoring, documenting, and reporting on the behaviour, performance, and progress of learners.

[See Glossary](#)

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

Synopsis of the vocational learning outcomes
Educational Support (Ontario College Diploma)

The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to:

1. Comply with legislation, standards, regulations, policies, practices, and procedures in the provision of educational support.

2. Support learner development with **evidence-based** behaviour and mental health strategies with a focus on **self-regulation**.

3. Collaborate as part of a **multi-disciplinary** team to design and implement **evidence-based** educational support strategies, practices, and programs.

4. Model empathetic, positive, and pro-social behaviours to facilitate the development of social competence in all learners and contribute to safe and **equitable** learning communities.

5. Promote independence and/or provide assistance in the performance of routine and **instrumental activities of daily living.**

6. Choose and implement **assistive technologies** and **daily living aids** to build capacity in learners.

7. Monitor, document, and report on the behaviour, performance, and progress of learners.

8. Create strategies for ongoing personal and professional development to enhance performance, maintain currency, and foster **holistic** self-care.

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: comply with legislation, standards, regulations, policies, practices, and procedures in the provision of educational support.

Elements of the performance

  a. Comply with pertinent provincial education-related legislation, including but not limited to the Education Amendment Act, 1980 (Bill 82)
  b. Recognize and verify the expectations regarding the implementation of relevant Ontario Ministry of Education policies and programs outlined in **Policy/Program Memoranda**
  c. Protect learners' rights to privacy and confidentiality, including the safe and secure transmittal, storage and disposal of all information, records and files, in accordance with current and applicable legislation, such as the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 1990 (FIPPA); the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act, 2000 (PIPEDA), as well as in compliance with established policies and procedures in **educational settings**
  d. Promote and engage in behaviours that support the dignity and rights of learners and all members of the **school community** in compliance with standards, policies, procedures, and practices covered by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, 1982 (section 15), the Ontario Human Rights Code, 1989 (revised 2000) and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
  e. Act responsibly and be accountable for one's own decisions and actions that affect the wellbeing and safety of learners, oneself, and others in the **school community** in accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1990.
  f. Provide comprehensive educational support (including emotional, behavioural, physical, social, instructional support) in accordance with relevant government, organization and other policies and procedures in **educational settings**
  g. Adhere to established communication policies, procedures and protocols in **educational settings** when interacting with learners and all members of the **school community**
  h. Support the principles and guidelines of **evidence-based** best practices for instructional approaches, such as **Universal Design for Learning**, **differentiated instruction** and the **tiered approach** to prevention and intervention.

See Glossary

2. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to: support learner development with **evidence-based** behaviour and mental health strategies with a focus on **self-regulation**.

Elements of the performance

   a. Research, develop and implement best practices for a healthy and caring **educational setting**.
   b. Determine and use current standards, best practices, and proactive strategies in behaviour management and self-regulation for all learners.
   c. Determine reasonable grounds to suspect when a child is at risk of abuse or neglect, and may be in need of protection, and take appropriate action in reporting these incidences in accordance with the Ontario Child and Family Services Act, 1990 and **educational setting** policy.
   d. Apply **trauma- and violence-informed care** for working with and relating to people impacted by negative experiences.
   e. Recognize signs that a learner may be experiencing a decline in their mental well-being or a mental health crisis and how to respond.
   f. Promote positive self-concept, healthy self-esteem, and self-advocacy in learners to support structured learning environments.

See Glossary

3. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to: collaborate as part of a **multi-disciplinary team** to design and implement **evidence-based** educational support strategies, practice, and programs

Elements of the performance

a. Describe the purpose, reasons for developing and revising, and the information required of the **IEP**/ educational support plan.
b. Collect and share information to aid in developing a common understanding of the strengths, interests and needs of **learners with exceptionalities**.
c. Assist in developing, reviewing, and updating plans, strategies, and programs for **learners with exceptionalities**.
d. Assist in preparing transition plans for **learners with exceptionalities** as they transition from one grade level or course to another, from one school to another, or from one educational support person to another.
e. Assist in preparing transition plans required by the Ontario Regulation 181/98 Identification and Placement of Exceptional Pupils as it relates to the transition of the **learner with exceptionalities** to postsecondary activities such as work, further education, and community living.
f. Assist in implementing **evidence-based** best practices for learning routines and practices that are consistent with personalized and precise learner-centred systems and methods, such as **Universal Design for Learning**, **differentiated instruction** and the **tiered approach** to prevention and intervention.
g. Promote independence and self-reliance in learners to help them achieve their potential.
h. Recognize and respond appropriately to learners' unique patterns of learning.
i. Support learners in the use of a variety of learning strategies for studying, completing school assignments and projects, and test-taking.
j. Support learners in the achievement of appropriate curriculum expectations in a variety of subject areas.
k. Support learners who require accommodations, modifications and/or alternate programs by implementing effective learning support strategies and by using a variety of instructional support methods, techniques and learning aids.
l. Collaborate with members of the **IPRC** and/or **multi-disciplinary team** by assisting in the implementation of curriculum activities that address the learning needs of **learners with exceptionalities**.
m. Support **learners with exceptionalities** in their progress toward achieving learning expectations that are modified from those for the age-appropriate grade level in a particular subject or course for specified subjects.
n. Assist in implementing alternate programming for gifted **learners with exceptionalities** in areas such as critical thinking, problem solving, inquiry/research, and inter- and intrapersonal skills.

See Glossary

4. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to: model empathetic, positive, and pro-social behaviours to facilitate the development of social competence in all learners and contribute to safe and **equitable** learning communities.

Elements of the performance

   a. Act in an ethical, respectful, and professional manner in all interactions in **educational settings**.
   b. Recognize and make adjustments as necessary to accommodate the individual verbal and non-verbal communication styles of all learners.
   c. Use confidentiality and encouragement when communicating with all learners to facilitate the development of social competence in **learners with exceptionalities**.
   d. Use effective intervention strategies, such as principles of positive reinforcement, to shape and sustain behavioural changes that are consistent with the expectations of **learners with exceptionalities** in accordance with their **IEPs**, behaviour support plans and/or safety plans.
   e. Use **equitable** and **inclusive** approaches, such as **anti-oppressive** and **strength-based** frameworks, to promote the uniqueness and diversity of children, families, and the community (e.g., family structure, language, values, cultural practices, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, ability, spirituality, gender, age, sexual orientation).
   f. Respect and support the rights and responsibilities of all members of the **school community**.
   g. Incorporate **Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing** into **educational settings** and support.
   h. Use personal protective equipment (PPE) and handle and dispose of hazardous substances and wastes, (including biohazardous substances and human waste products), safely and in compliance with the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) and employer policies and procedures in **educational settings**.
   i. Use best-practices in crisis prevention, non-physical intervention strategies, as well as crisis and emergency intervention strategies (such as behaviour management, non-violent crisis prevention and intervention methods and techniques) to preserve respect, care, safety and security for learners, oneself and others in the **school community**.
   j. Recognize and respond appropriately to unsafe or emergency situations in **educational settings** according to organizational protocols (e.g., lock down, lock in and evacuation).
   k. Recognize and respond appropriately to harassment, violence and bullying in accordance with the policies of the **educational setting** and the Ontario Bill 212, Education Amendment Act (Progressive Discipline and School Safety), 2007, Ontario Bill 157, Education Amendment Act (Keeping Our Kids Safe at School), 2009 and the Ontario Bill 168, Occupational Health and Safety Amendment Act

(Violence and Harassment in the Workplace), 2009 and their regulations and future amendments or replacements.

See Glossary

5. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to: promote independence and/or provide assistance in the performance of routine and **instrumental activities of daily living**.

Elements of the performance

a. Recognize the role and support of external agencies for learners with diverse needs who require assistance in **educational settings,** including nursing, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech-language therapy, and dietetic services.

b. Collaborate with school personnel, professionals, and parents to promote optimal health outcomes of **learners with exceptionalities.**

c. Assist with the personal care and basic health care needs of **learners with exceptionalities** (e.g., lifting, positioning, mobility, feeding and toileting) in a safe, respectful and effective manner in accordance with their **IEPs** and/or as authorized by, and in accordance with, **educational setting** procedures and protocols and ministry directives, including **Policy/Program Memorandum** No. 81 Provision of Health Support Services In School Settings, (Ministry of Education, 1984).

d. Support alternative learning expectations not included in the Ontario curriculum that help **learners with exceptionalities** acquire proficiencies in **ADL**, such as programs in speech remediation, social skills, orientation/mobility training and personal care programs.

e. Support alternative learning expectations not included in the Ontario curriculum that will help **learners with exceptionalities** acquire proficiencies in **IADL** including courses that prepare learners for daily living, such as phone use, managing one's medications, managing money and personal banking, transit training, preparing food, laundering, and housekeeping.

f. Assist in providing general maintenance exercises to facilitate physio/occupational therapy interventions in consultation with, and with oversight by qualified therapists, as authorized by, and in accordance with, school board procedures and protocols, and ministry directives, including **Policy/Program Memorandum** No. 81 (Ministry of Education, 1984).

g. Assist in providing speech correction and remediation in consultation with, and with oversight by qualified therapists and speech and language teachers, as authorized by, and in accordance with, school board procedures and protocols, and ministry directives, including **Policy/Program Memorandum** No. 81 (Ministry of Education, 1984).

h. Monitor the administration of prescription drugs in consultation with, and with oversight by the physician and parent, as authorized by, and in accordance with, school board procedures and protocols, and ministry directives, including **Policy/Program Memorandum** No. 81 (Ministry of Education, 1984).

i. Assist with the administration of medication in a manner that allows for sensitivity and privacy and that encourages learners to take an appropriate level of responsibility for their medication in accordance with **Policy/Program**

Memorandum No. 8 Provision of Health Support Services in School Settings (Ministry of Education, 1984).

j. Collaborate with the **IPRC**, health professionals and medical specialists in the **school community**, and family members in developing and/or implementing a plan to respond appropriately to learners' medical emergencies.

k. Recognize, respond to the learner using the provided documentation (i.e. medical safety plan), and document a learner's reaction to medication therapy including side effects and adverse/allergic reactions to medications.

l. Administer an epinephrine auto-injector or other medication, or supervise a learner while he or she takes prescribed medication in response to an anaphylactic reaction in accordance school board procedures and protocols, and Ministry directives, including the Act to Protect Anaphylactic Pupils: Sabrina's Law, 2005.

See Glossary

6. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to: choose and implement **assistive technologies** and **daily living aids** to build capacity in learners.

Elements of the performance

a. Research, develop and implement strategies to facilitate the use of **assistive technology** and **daily living aids** to augment the functional capabilities of **learners with exceptionalities**.
b. Research, develop and implement strategies to assist learners in the use of computers and digital media to effectively access information from a variety of sources.
c. Operate and model the proper use of **assistive technology** when working with **learners with exceptionalities**.
d. Operate and perform basic upkeep on standard instructional audiovisual, computer equipment and digital media, as well as assistive devices, equipment, and technologies, in a safe and responsible manner.
e. Identify and select options for **assistive technologies** and **daily living aids** to meet the needs and capabilities of **learners with exceptionalities**.

See Glossary

7. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to: monitor, document and report on the behaviour, performance and progress of learners.

Elements of the performance

a. Observe, verify and record the behaviour, performance and progress of **learners with exceptionalities** to assist in developing, implementing, reviewing and updating their **IEPs**
b. Share requisite information on the behaviour, performance and progress of **learners with exceptionalities** with relevant members of a **multi-disciplinary team** and **school community**
c. Recognize changes in learner behavioural, physical, and mental health, and respond in an appropriate and timely manner by notifying members of the **IPRC** or **multi-disciplinary team** and **school community** who are responsible for the learner's alternate care
d. Collaborate with members of the **IPRC** or **multi-disciplinary team** and the **school community** to assist in determining the effectiveness of interventions and make appropriate modifications to intervention strategies for **learners with exceptionalities**

See Glossary

8. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to: create strategies for ongoing personal and professional development to enhance performance, maintain currency, and foster **holistic** self-care.

Elements of the performance

a. Develop and implement strategies for ongoing self-evaluation to enhance personal and professional development.
b. Solicit and act positively and pragmatically upon constructive feedback, evaluations and recommendations of, for example, one's peers and field placement/practicum supervisor(s).
c. Research current, relevant and **evidence-based** resources for maintaining current knowledge and competence in the education support sector.
d. Keep pace with and adapt to changing workforce demands and trends, as well as advances in educational support best practices and technology.
e. Adapt to changing workforce demands and trends, as well as advances in educational support best practices and technology.
f. Implement strategies that optimize job performance and personal wellness and that minimize the potential for injury, illness, burnout, and compassion fatigue.
g. Research and identify professional associations and organizations in the education support sector.

See Glossary

Glossary

Activities of Daily Living (ADL) – basic self-care tasks such as feeding, hygiene, dressing, and continence.

Anti-oppressive - anti-discriminatory and interdisciplinary approach which takes into account the impact of inequality, power, and oppression for certain groups in society. Systems of oppression includes classism and ableism, colonialism, racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, etc.
Source: [The Anti-Oppressive Framework: A Primer](#)
Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario

Assistive technology - is any piece of technology that helps a student with or without a disability to increase or maintain his/her level of functioning. These often include laptops with specialized programs (like speech to text, text to speech, graphic organizers, and word prediction software), vision and reading aids, hearing and listening aids, speech and augmentative communication aids, writing and keyboarding aids, digital media and computer access aids, cognitive aids, etc.

Source: [Development of Proposed Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K-12) Education Standards – 2021 Initial Recommendations Report](#)
Legislative Reviews, Committees and Councils – Government of Ontario

Daily Living Aids - assistive devices that are used to help maintain or enhance the functional capabilities and quality of life of learners with exceptionalities by enabling them to take care of day-to-day personal care tasks more independently. These devices include clothing and dressing aids, eating and cooking aids, toileting and personal hygiene aids, environmental controls and switches, ergonomic equipment, mobility and ambulatory aids, prosthetics and orthotics, seating and positioning aids, etc.

Source: Educational Support Program Standard, 2012

Differentiated Instruction - an instructional approach that enables educators to respond effectively to the diverse interests, learning styles and readiness to learn of all learners by providing distinct, timely and targeted instructional support to each learner in the classroom.

Source: [Development of Proposed Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K-12) Education Standards – 2021 Initial Recommendations Report](#)
Legislative Reviews, Committees and Councils – Government of Ontario

Educational Setting(s) - the learning environment in which education is provided and where learners in the Educational Support program gain supervised work experience, including publicly and privately funded schools, schools in remote and sparsely-populated regions, home schooling situations and government-approved facilities for care, treatment, custodial or correctional purposes that deliver ministry-approved

educational programs.

Source: Educational Support Program Standard, 2012

Equitable – fair and impartial; just or characterized by fairness or equity. Equitable treatment can be different than same treatment.

Evidence-based - an approach, treatment, resource and/or program that has research evidence to support its effectiveness and practical application of strategies.

Holistic – concerned with or relating to the whole or complete system, not individual parts.

Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) - Regulation 181/98 requires that all school boards set up an Identification, Placement and Review Committee composed of at least three persons, one of whom must be a principal or supervisory officer of the board. The IPRC decide whether or not the student should be identified as exceptional; areas of the student's exceptionality according to the categories and definitions provided by the Ministry of Education; appropriate placement; and review at least once in each school year.

Source: [Development of Proposed Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K-12) Education Standards – 2021 Initial Recommendations Report](#)
Legislative Reviews, Committees and Councils – Government of Ontario

Inclusive – social environments that are accessible and welcoming to all persons, especially those who may have historically been excluded. Respects inherent rights and dignity and appreciates unique differences. Shows respect for the individual and ultimately creates a dynamic multi-dimensional organization.

Source: [Development of Proposed Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K-12) Education Standards – 2021 Initial Recommendations Report](#)
Legislative Reviews, Committees and Councils – Government of Ontario

Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing - Indigenous worldviews see the whole person (physical, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual) as interconnected to land and in relationship to others (family, communities, nations).

Source: [Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Being](#)
BCcapmus Open Publishing

Individual Education Plan (IEP) - a plan containing specific objectives and an outline of special education services that meet the needs of the exceptional pupil. It must be developed for a student, in consultation with the parent.

Source: [Development of Proposed Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K-12) Education Standards – 2021 Initial Recommendations Report](#)

Legislative Reviews, Committees and Councils – Government of Ontario

Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADL) – more complex activities you do every day to take care of yourself and your home to live independently. Requires additional thinking and planning skills than ADL.

Learners with Exceptionalities - in Ontario, exceptionalities are categorized as being either behavioural, communicational, intellectual, physical, or multiple. Includes behaviour, autism, deaf and hard-of-hearing, language impairment, speech impairment, learning disability, giftedness, mild intellectual disability, developmental disability, physical disability, blind and low vision, and multiple exceptionalities.

Source: Educational Support Program Standard, 2012

Multi-disciplinary Team - an approach that includes or combines members from multiple organizations, professional specializations, or academic disciplines to work on a project or solution.

Policy/Program Memoranda (Memorandum) - Ontario Ministry of Education (2022) Policy/Program Memoranda are numbered policy directives that are issued to district school boards and school authorities to outline the Ministry's expectations regarding the implementation of ministry policies and programs.

Source: [Development of Proposed Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K-12) Education Standards – 2021 Initial Recommendations Report](#)
Legislative Reviews, Committees and Councils – Government of Ontario

Restorative Practices – strategies and actions that focus on fostering and restoring a sense of community within classrooms to prevent conflict, and on reacting to misconduct by encouraging students to accept responsibility and rebuild relationships.

Source: [Restorative Practices for School Discipline Explained](#)
FutureEd, and [Restorative Practice Resource Project](#)
Restorative Practice Consortium, Government of Ontario

School Community - may include and is not limited to the relationships that exist among learners and their peers and parents/guardians; school principals, teachers, support staff, school volunteers and others who support learners, such as school bus drivers, custodians and security staff; health care professionals and therapists; and administrators of agencies, facilities and institutional settings that deliver educational and support services.

Source: Educational Support Program Standard, 2012

Self-regulation - the ability for an individual to set limits for themselves and manage their own emotions, attention, and behaviour – allows them to develop the emotional

well-being and the habits of mind, such as persistence and curiosity, which are essential for early learning and that set the stage for lifelong learning.

Source: [Development of Proposed Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K-12) Education Standards – 2021 Initial Recommendations Report](#)
Legislative Reviews, Committees and Councils – Government of Ontario

Strength-based – an approach that focuses on the abilities, skills, resources and cultural and life experiences of learners and their families and acknowledges their inherent resiliency.

Tiered approach - an approach to ongoing prevention and intervention that embodies principles of Universal Design for Learning and differentiated instruction and offers a systematic method for the early identification of students who are experiencing particular difficulties. Through ongoing monitoring of their progress, it provides the specific level of support those students need.

Source: [Learning for All – A Guide to Effective Assessment and Instruction for All Students, Kindergarten to Grade 12](#)
Government of Ontario

Trauma and Violence Informed Care – approaches that focus on minimizing the potential for harm and re-traumatization, and to enhance safety, control and resilience for those involved with systems or programs. Safety; Trustworthiness; Choice; Collaboration; and Empowerment are core values.

Source: [Trauma and Violence-Informed Approaches to Policy and Practice](#)
Public Health Agency of Canada

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) - a teaching approach that focuses on using teaching strategies or pedagogical materials designed to meet special needs to enhance learning for all students, regardless of age, skills, or situation. It is an educational framework based on research in the learning sciences, including cognitive neuroscience, which guides the development of flexible learning environments and learning spaces that can accommodate individual learning differences.

Source: [Learning for All – A Guide to Effective Assessment and Instruction for All Students, Kindergarten to Grade 12](#)
Government of Ontario

Essential employability skills

All graduates of the Educational Support program of instruction must have reliably demonstrated the essential employability skills learning outcomes listed below, 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: communication

Defining skills

Skill areas to be demonstrated by graduates:

- reading
- writing
- speaking
- listening
- presenting
- visual literacy

Learning outcomes

The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to:

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.

Skill category: numeracy

Defining skills

Skill areas to be demonstrated by graduates:

- understanding and applying mathematical concepts and reasoning
- analyzing and using numerical data
- conceptualizing

Learning outcomes

The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to:

1. execute mathematical operations accurately

Skill category: critical thinking and problem solving

Defining skills

Skill areas to be demonstrated by graduates:

- analyzing
- synthesizing
- evaluating
- decision making
- creative and innovative thinking

Learning outcomes

The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to:

1. apply a systematic approach to solve problems.
2. use a variety of thinking skills to anticipate and solve problems.

Skill category: information management

Defining skills

Skill areas to be demonstrated by graduates:

- Gathering and managing information
- Selecting and using appropriate tools and technology for a task or a project
- Computer literacy
- Internet skills

Learning outcomes

The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to:

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.

Skill category: interpersonal

Defining skills

Skill areas to be demonstrated by graduates:

- Teamwork
- Relationship management
- Conflict resolution
- Leadership
- Networking

Learning outcomes

The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to:

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.

Skill category: personal

Defining skills

Skill areas to be demonstrated by graduates:

- Managing self
- Managing change and being flexible and adaptable
- Engaging in reflective practices
- Demonstrating personal responsibility

Learning outcomes

The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to:

1. manage the use of time and other resources to complete projects.
2. take responsibility for one's own actions, decisions and their consequences.

General education requirement

All graduates of the Educational Support program must have met the [general education requirement](#) described below, 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](#) 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 Ontario Colleges in the development and identification of courses that are designed to fulfil 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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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 "© 2024, King'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 Colleges and Universities
Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Branch, Program Standards Unit
315 Front Street West
16th floor
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 0B8

Or by email: psu@ontario.ca

Inquiries regarding specific Educational Support programs offered by Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology in Ontario should be directed to the relevant college.

This publication is available on the ministry's website.

© 2024, King's Printer for Ontario

978-1-4868-7452-1 PDF