

# DEGREE PROGRAM REVIEW

## Quality Assessment Report Workbook

Institution:	_____
Proposed Program:	_____
Quality Assessment Review Panel Member(s):	_____ _____ _____
Date:	_____

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## Degree Program Review – Quality Assessment Report Workbook

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**Degree Program Review – Quality Assessment Report Workbook**

<b>Overall Assessment</b>
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**Program Information:**

*Applicant* \_\_\_\_\_

*Proposed Program Name:* \_\_\_\_\_

**Assessment Summary Table:**

<b>Standard</b>	<b>Fails</b>	<b>Meets</b>	<b>Conditional</b>
<i>1. Executive Summary</i>	N/A	N/A	N/A
<i>2. Degree Level Standard</i>			
<i>3. Credential Recognition and Nomenclature</i>			
<i>4. Curriculum/Program Content</i>			
<i>5. Learning Methodologies/ Program Delivery</i>			
<i>6. Admission and Transfer/Residency</i>			
<i>7. Faculty</i>			
<i>8. Program Resources</i>			
<i>9. Program Consultation</i>			
<i>10. Program Review and Assessment</i>			

**Summary:**

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**Signed:**

Chair of the Quality Assessment Panel:

_____	_____
(Signature)	(Date)
_____	
(Printed Name)	

Quality Assessment Panel Members:

_____	_____
(Signature)	(Date)
_____	
(Printed Name)	

_____	_____
(Signature)	(Date)
_____	
(Printed Name)	

<b>Standards Assessment Worksheets</b>
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**1. Executive Summary**

*The Executive Summary presents, in a succinct manner, the purpose of the proposal and a summary of the key objectives and outcomes of the proposed degree program.*

**2. Degree Level Standard**

**Standard**

*The institution must demonstrate that the proposed program meets or exceeds the proposed degree level standard (refer to Appendix).*

**Determination of Quality Assessment Panel**

The Applicant:

- fails to meet this standard
- meets or exceeds this standard
- meets this standard provided that the following requirements are addressed:

**Rationale for Determination:**

**Criteria for Assessing Satisfaction of Degree Level Standards**

Criteria	Comment
The program meets or exceeds specified learning outcomes (see appendix) and the institution demonstrates how the program meets the standard.	

**3. Credential Recognition and Nomenclature**

**Standard**

*The institution must demonstrate that the program’s learning outcomes and standards are sufficiently clear and at a level that will facilitate recognition of the credential by other post-secondary institutions, professional and licensing bodies and employers. Where appropriate, the program, courses or curricular elements are designed to facilitate credential recognition by other post-secondary institutions and by employers, both within the province and other jurisdictions.*

*The name of a degree should convey long-term meaning; the content of a degree program should be consistent with the name; and the reputation of the institution and of post-secondary education in British Columbia should be enhanced by the quality of the offering. Beyond that is*

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*the value to graduates of having a professional credential recognized by appropriate licensing and accrediting bodies as the basis for entry to practice.*

### Determination of Quality Assessment Panel

The Applicant:

- \_\_\_\_\_ fails to meet this standard
- \_\_\_\_\_ meets or exceeds this standard
- \_\_\_\_\_ meets this standard on the condition that the following requirements are addressed:

### Rationale for Determination:

#### Criteria for Assessing Satisfaction of Credential Recognition and Nomenclature Standard

Criteria	Comment
Evidence that the institution is making provisions for credential recognition and course transfer, and that the institution will advise students of any changes to credential recognition or course transfer in a timely manner.	
Evidence that employers, relevant occupational and professional groups, regulatory bodies and other post-secondary institutions will recognize the credential and their assessment of whether the credential will contribute to the professional advancement of the graduate.	
For programs leading to profession that are subject to government regulation, the learning outcomes and standards and other requirements for graduation take into account the requirements of the relevant regulatory or professional body.	
There is an appropriate fit between the nomenclature of the credential and the content of the degree.	
Degree name is consistent with the Degree Quality Assessment Board's Guidelines on Naming of Degrees (refer to Appendix).	

#### 4. Curriculum/Program Content

##### Standard

*The management structures and methods of the program are well defined and permit delivery of the quality of education necessary for students to attain the learning outcomes. The institution must demonstrate that the program in both subject matter and learning outcome standards, offers an education of sufficient breadth and rigour to be comparable to similar programs at the proposed degree level offered by recognized provincial, national and international post-*

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*secondary institutions. The curriculum must be current and reflect the state of knowledge in the field, or fields in the case of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary programs.*

**Determination of Quality Assessment Panel**

The Applicant:

- fails to meet this standard
- meets or exceeds this standard
- meets this standard on the condition that the following requirements are addressed:

**Rationale for Determination:**

**Criteria for Assessing Satisfaction of Curriculum/Program Content Standard**

Criteria	Comment
Approval by the institution’s senior academic governance body (i.e., Senate, Education Council, or equivalent), or an academic planning and priorities committee to which it has delegated authority and which has sufficient qualifications to ensure that the curriculum is current and reflects the state of knowledge in the field and the needs of the field in practice.  If an external review is undertaken before submission of the degree proposal, the external review committee’s report is included in an appendix.	
Learning outcomes and standards for the program demonstrate how graduates will be prepared with a sound basis in theory, as well as the intellectual, communications and other skills necessary to be effective in the workplace upon graduation, and to remain current in their field.	
Courses provide exposure to increasingly complex theory, and in programs with an applied or professional focus, the application of that theory to practice in the field.	
The program has sufficient breadth (i.e. courses outside the professional or main field of studies, some of which are free electives) and/or an appropriate balance of professional and liberal studies.	
Time allotments assigned to the program as a whole, and to components in the program, are appropriate to the stated learning outcomes.	
The type and frequency of evaluations of student learning are commensurate with the stated learning outcomes and provide appropriate information to	

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students about their achievement levels.	
Levels of student achievement for successful course completion and the graduation requirements for the proposed program are appropriate to the learning outcome goals and degree level standard and allow for confirmation that a student is progressing normally through the program.	
For degrees with an applied or professional focus – work experiences, field placements etc., have appropriate articulated learning outcome goals and a method for joint instructor and employer evaluation leading to the assignment of a grade.	

**5. Learning Methodologies/Program Delivery**

**Standard**

*Learning methodologies are the methods of delivery that will be used to achieve the desired learning outcomes at the degree level standard and at an acceptable level of quality. The institution must demonstrate that it has the expertise and resources to support the proposed method of delivery and ensure its effectiveness. In some cases, it may be more appropriate for the institution to demonstrate that it has a realistic plan to put the necessary expertise and resources in place.*

**Determination of Quality Assessment Panel**

The Applicant:

- fails to meet this standard
- meets or exceeds this standard
- meets this standard on the condition that the following requirements are addressed:

**Rationale for Determination:**

**Criteria for Assessing Satisfaction of Learning Methodologies/Program Delivery Standard**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The delivery method(s) and quality assurance policies are appropriate to course content, the students involved and the proposed learning outcomes.	
Evidence that the institution has the expertise and resources to support the proposed method of delivery (both human and material that support the program and its students and provides processes for students' feedback); and ensures its effectiveness or demonstrates a viable plan to put the necessary expertise and resources in place.	

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<p>Where applicable, policies pertaining to technology-based, computer-based and web-based learning and modes of delivery ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ student and faculty preparation and orientation;</li> <li>➤ reliable, and sufficient course management systems;</li> <li>➤ accessible technical assistance for students and faculty;</li> <li>➤ appropriate hardware, software and other technological resources and media; and,</li> <li>➤ well-maintained and current technology and equipment.</li> </ul>	
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### 6. Admission and Transfer/Residency

#### Standard

*The institution should demonstrate that the program is designed to provide flexible admission and transfer arrangements. Where appropriate, the program, courses or curricular elements are designed to facilitate credit transfer by other post-secondary institutions both within the province and other jurisdictions<sup>1</sup>.*

#### Determination of Quality Assessment Panel

The Applicant:

- fails to meet this standard  
 meets or exceeds this standard  
 meets this standard on the condition that the following requirements are addressed:

#### Rationale for Determination:

#### Criteria for Assessing Satisfaction of Admission and Transfer/Residency Standard

Criteria	Comment
Evidence that the institution has clearly established policies and procedures on admissions consistent with the level of the degree program (including policies on direct entry and mature students) and will inform students of these provisions and any changes to these provisions.	

<sup>1</sup> The British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer administers the *British Columbia Online Transfer Guide* that provides information on course or program articulation agreements between institutions. Institutions are encouraged to contact the British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer early in the development of new degree program proposals for information on admissions and transfer in British Columbia.

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The institution has admission requirements for the proposed program are consistent with the post-secondary character of degree-granting organizations and where appropriate ensure appropriate forms of assessment of prior learning for admission to programs.	
Evidence that the institution has clearly established policies and procedures on transfer consistent with the level of the degree program and will inform students of these provisions and any changes to these provisions.	
The institution’s policy on admissions and transfer indicates a willingness to consider applicants applying to undergraduate, graduate and professional programs from any post-secondary institutions.	
Appropriate residency requirements.	

**7. Faculty**

**Standard**

*The institution must demonstrate that it has the human resources necessary to develop and deliver a quality degree program. In some cases, it may not be feasible for an institution to hire faculty until it receives program approval. In these cases, the institution should provide the specific faculty selection criteria that will be used to ensure new faculty hires have the necessary qualifications for the degree level being offered and program being proposed.*

**Determination of Quality Assessment Panel**

The Applicant:

- fails to meet this standard
- meets or exceeds this standard
- meets this standard on the condition that the following requirements are addressed:

**Rationale for Determination:**

**Criteria for Assessing Satisfaction of Faculty Standard**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Faculty and instructors are in sufficient numbers, and with the appropriate credential to develop and deliver the degree level being offered and program being proposed. Staff resources must be sufficient to ensure the coverage required within the discipline for the proposed program.	
Evidence that the institution’s policies and practices on the type of academic appointment of faculty (e.g. continuing / regular appointments) are appropriate to	

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sustain the degree program.	
The institution has satisfactory policies pertaining to faculty that address issues such as the protection of academic freedom; academic/professional credentials; the regular review of faculty performance; the means of ensuring that faculty knowledge of the field is current; teaching, supervision and student counseling loads; and professional development of faculty.	
Faculty have an appropriate level of scholarly output and/or research or creative activity for the baccalaureate or graduate program involved.	
For degrees with an applied or professional focus, faculty maintain continuing academic and professional competence and accreditation in their discipline or field appropriate to the specific degree program.	
Faculty teaching graduate courses will normally have the terminal academic degree credential in the field in which they are teaching.	
Faculty providing doctoral supervision are expected to have an active research program in their discipline or field of study.	
For any proposal involving human research, a statement that a Research Ethics Board is in place.	
For any proposal involving animal research, a statement that an Animal Care Committee is in place.	

### 8. Program Resources

#### *Standard*

*The institution must demonstrate that it has the physical, learning, and information resources (both start-up and development) needed to assure a program of acceptable quality. These include facilities, equipment, library resources, laboratories, computing facilities, shops, specialized equipment, etc., and cooperative work placements where this is a component of the program. In some cases, an institution may not be able to ensure resources are in place until after it receives program approval. In these cases, the institution may bring forward a proposal based on a realistic plan for putting the appropriate resources in place as an alternative to demonstrating that all resources are in place.*

#### **Determination of Quality Assessment Panel**

The Applicant:

- fails to meet this standard
- meets or exceeds this standard
- meets this standard on the condition that the following requirements are addressed:

#### **Rationale for Determination:**

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### Criteria for Assessing Satisfaction of Program Resources Standard

Criteria	Comment
Evidence that the physical plant, equipment, technology, and support services adequately support the organization's educational and student activities.	
Evidence of reasonable student and faculty access to learning and information resources (such as library, databases, computing, classroom equipment and laboratory facilities) sufficient in scope, quality, currency and type to support students and faculty in the program.	
Evidence of commitment to provide and maintain necessary learning and other resources specific to the program and to supplement them as necessary to meet standards applicable to the field.	
Submission of any agreements with other institutions where resources and services are shared.	

### 9. Program Consultation

*The institution must demonstrate that it has consulted appropriate individuals and organizations in the development of the program proposal.*

#### Determination of Quality Assessment Panel

The Applicant:

\_\_\_\_\_ fails to meet this standard

\_\_\_\_\_ meets or exceeds this standard

\_\_\_\_\_ meets this standard on the condition that the following requirements are addressed:

#### Rationale for Determination:

### Criteria for Assessing Satisfaction of Program Consultation Standard

Criteria	Comment
Evidence that the institution has done due diligence in consulting with employers, students, program advisory committees, other post-secondary institutions, and an external review by academics within British Columbia and other jurisdictions, etc.	
Evidence of support for the program and in cases where consultation feedback results in negative comments, a clear response addressing those comments.	

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**10. Program Review and Assessment**

***Standard***

*In order to ensure the ongoing currency of the program and the quality of its learning outcomes, the institution must show evidence that a program review and assessment procedure is in place.*

**Determination of Quality Assessment Panel**

The Applicant:

- \_\_\_\_\_ fails to meet this standard
- \_\_\_\_\_ meets or exceeds this standard
- \_\_\_\_\_ meets this standard on the condition that the following requirements are addressed:

**Rationale for Determination:**

**Criteria for Assessing Satisfaction of Program Review and Assessment Standard**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<p>Evidence of a formal, institutionally approved policy and procedure for the periodic review of programs (i.e. formative and ongoing reviews and a summative review normally every five years) against published standards that includes the following characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ A self-study undertaken by faculty members and administrators of the program based on evidence relating to program performance, including strengths and weaknesses, desired improvements, and future directions. For example, a self study takes into account:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the continuing appropriateness of the program’s structure, admissions requirements, method of delivery and curriculum for the program’s educational goals and standards;</li> <li>○ the adequacy and effective use of resources (physical, technological, financial and human);</li> <li>○ faculty performance including the quality of teaching and supervision and demonstrable currency in the field of specialization.</li> <li>○ that the learning outcomes achieved by students/graduates meet the program’s stated goals, the degree level standard, and where appropriate, the standards of any related regulatory, accrediting or professional association;</li> <li>○ the continuing adequacy of the methods used for evaluating student progress and achievement to ensure that the degree level standards have been</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

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<p>achieved; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ where appropriate, the graduate employment rates, graduate satisfaction level, employer satisfaction level, advisory board satisfaction level, student satisfaction level, and graduate rate.</li> <li>➤ An assessment conducted by a panel consisting of experts external to the institution that normally includes a site visit; a report of the expert panel assessing program quality and recommending any changes needed to strengthen that quality; and an institutional response to the recommendations in the report.</li> <li>➤ A summary of the conclusions of the evaluation made publicly available.</li> </ul>	
<p>The program review ensures that the program remains consistent with the organization’s current mission, goals and long-range plan.</p>	

## **Appendix: Degree Level Standard**

### **Associate Degrees – British Columbia Public Post-secondary Institutions**

The British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer provides a definition of associate degrees on its website.

Associate degrees offered by British Columbia public post-secondary institutions do not require review of the board or approval of the minister.

### **Associate Degrees (Academic) under the *Degree Authorization Act***

The *Degree Authorization Act* provides a statutory means for private and out-of-province public post-secondary institutions to offer associate degrees. New associate degree programs to be offered by private and out-of-province public post-secondary institutions governed by the Act require ministerial consent.

Currently in British Columbia, an associate degree<sup>2</sup> comprises two years of university level study (60 credit hours) in a variety of academic areas and is granted transfer credit at the following British Columbia public universities: Simon Fraser University (SFU), or The University of British Columbia (UBC), or University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC), or University of Victoria (UVIC). Graduates of an associate degree will have completed a broad range of course offerings balanced with in-depth study in specific disciplines. The requirements of an associate degree are sufficiently flexible to prepare students for “work, citizenship and an enriched life as an educated person, and to lay a solid foundation for further study.”

The British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer provides a definition of and stipulates the requirements for associate degrees on its website.

Private and out-of-province public institutions are encouraged to contact the British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer early in the development of an associate degree regarding the articulation requirements.

<http://www.bccat.bc.ca/pubs/assoc05-00.htm>

The duration of consent for an associate degree offered by an institution governed by the *Degree Authorization Act* will initially be for a period of three years. The board will review at least annually the progress of the institutions towards the goal of offering a minimum of 20 courses (all of which must fulfill requirements for the associate degrees) and each of which must be articulated with at least one of the four public research universities in British Columbia (SFU, UBC, UNBC and UVIC).

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<sup>2</sup> British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer “Requirement for Associate of Arts Degree and Associate of Science Degrees”; <http://www.bccat.bc.ca/pubs/assoc05-00.htm>

## **Degree Categories**

The following descriptions of degree categories are intended to capture the most salient general aspects of the three principal degree levels offered in Canada. They apply to a broad spectrum of disciplines, program types, and program lengths.

## **Degree Level Standards**

The focus of the degree-level standards is on the expectations of graduates at each degree. The standards stipulate the demonstrable transferable learning skills and level of mastery of a body of specialized knowledge in six dimensions:

1. Depth and Breadth of Knowledge;
2. Knowledge of Methodologies;
3. Application of Knowledge;
4. Communication Skills;
5. Awareness of Limits of Knowledge;
6. Professional Capacity/Autonomy.

The shades of distinction between degrees are determined by the capacity of the graduate at each level to act competently, creatively and independently, and by their proximity to the forefront of a discipline and/or profession. Among other things, the degree-level standards are intended:

- (a) to facilitate the assessment of credentials for broad purposes of credit transfer and credential recognition,
- (b) to provide clear learning outcome standards to instructional and program designers,
- (c) as a broad framework for quality assurance purposes.

The standards are intended to be cumulative — each degree level presupposes the accomplishment of an earlier one.

## **BACHELOR'S DEGREE**

### **Degree Category – Bachelor's Degree**

#### *Program Design and Outcome Emphasis*

The credential awarded for the bachelor degree is designed to acquaint the student with the basic conceptual approaches and methodologies of the principal discipline or disciplines that constitute the program of study, to provide some specialized knowledge, and to nurture the capacity for independent work in the discipline/disciplines and field of practice.

All bachelor programs are designed to provide graduates with knowledge and skills that enable them to develop the capacity for independent intellectual work. That capacity may be demonstrated by the preparation, under supervision, of one or more essays, a terminal research paper, thesis, project, exhibition, or other research-based or performance-based exercise that demonstrates methodological competence and capacity for independent and ethical intellectual/creative work and, where relevant, the exercise of professional responsibility in a field of practice.

Some bachelor degree programs are intended to provide a wide exposure to several disciplines, others to provide an in-depth education in one or more disciplines (often as preparation for graduate study), and still others to provide a blend of theory and practice that equips students for entry into an occupation or profession. Despite that diversity, each bachelor degree program must meet a substantial and common set of competency outcomes, as outlined below, to justify use of the bachelor degree label. The range of bachelor programs includes:

- *Programs designed to provide a broad education as an end in itself.* They may also prepare graduates for employment in a variety of fields and or for admission to second entry professional programs. Examples: B. Hum (Humanities); General B.A. and General B.Sc.degrees.
- *Programs designed to provide in-depth study in academic disciplines.* They normally prepare students for graduate study in the discipline(s) and for employment in a variety of fields.
- *Programs with an applied focus.* They blend theory and practice, with content selected to ensure mastery of the field of practice, and prepare students for employment and for advanced study in relevant graduate and professional programs.
- *Programs with a professional focus.* They are designed to prepare graduates to meet admission requirements and to be competent practitioners in the profession. Some of them are first entry programs, others are second entry programs (that is, they require some prior degree-level study or even a degree). They normally require periods of practical experience (apprenticeship, internship, articling, clinical, etc.). The capacity for independent professional work is demonstrated by academic and practical exercises, under supervision, followed by admission tests to the profession. Though considered to be bachelor programs in academic standing, some professional programs yield degrees with other nomenclature—e.g., D.D.S. (Dental Surgery); M.D. (Medicine); LL.B; or J.D. (Juris Doctor).

### *Preparation for Employment and Further Study*

In addition to providing personal and intellectual growth, bachelor programs, in varying degrees, may prepare students for entry into graduate study in the field, second-entry professional degree programs, or employment in one or more fields.

### *Length of Program*

Owing primarily to variations in pre-university studies among the provinces, classroom instruction is typically six to eight semesters or more in duration (normally 90-120 credits, or the equivalent) and may be supplemented by required professional experience (e.g., supervised practica, internships, and work terms).

### *Admission Requirements*

Admission normally requires at a minimum a secondary school and/or university preparatory courses, a minimum grade-point average, and other program-specific requirements. Students lacking these credentials may be admitted on a part-time or probationary basis, with continuation subject to acceptable academic achievement. Second entry programs normally require at least two or three years of completed degree-level studies or in some cases the prior or concurrent completion of another undergraduate degree.

## **Degree Level Standard – Bachelor’s Degree**

### *1. Depth and Breadth of Knowledge*

- (a) Knowledge and critical understanding in a field of study that builds upon their secondary education and includes the key assumptions, methodologies and applications of the discipline and/or field of practice;
- (b) Basic understanding of the range of fields within the discipline/field of practice and of how the discipline may intersect with fields in related disciplines;
- (c) The ability to gather, review, evaluate and interpret information, including new information relevant to the discipline; and to compare the merits of alternate hypotheses or creative options relevant to one or more of the major fields in a discipline;
- (d) The capacity to engage in independent research or practice in a supervised context;
- (e) Critical thinking and analytical skills inside and outside the discipline;
- (f) The ability to apply learning from one or more areas outside the discipline.

### *2. Knowledge of Methodologies and Research*

- (a) An understanding of methods of enquiry or creative activity, or both, in their primary area of study that enables the student to:
  - (i) evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems using well established ideas and techniques;
  - (ii) devise and sustain arguments or solve problems using these methods; and
  - (iii) describe and comment upon particular aspects of current research or equivalent advanced scholarship in the discipline and how these are relevant to the evolution of the discipline.

### 3. *Application of Knowledge*

- (a) The ability to review, present and critically evaluate qualitative and quantitative information to:
  - (i) develop lines of argument;
  - (ii) make sound judgments in accordance with the major theories, concepts and methods of the subject(s) of study;
  - (iii) apply underlying concepts, principles, and techniques of analysis, both within and outside the discipline; and,
  - (iv) where appropriate, use this knowledge in the creative process.
- (b) The ability to use a range of established techniques to:
  - (i) initiate and undertake critical evaluation of arguments, assumptions, abstract concepts and information;
  - (ii) propose solutions;
  - (iii) frame appropriate questions for the purpose of solving a problem; and
  - (iv) solve a problem or create a new work.
- (c) The ability to make critical use of scholarly reviews and primary sources.

### 4. *Communication Skills*

The ability to communicate information, arguments, and analyses accurately and reliably, orally and in writing, to a range of audiences, to specialist and non-specialist audiences, using structured and coherent arguments, and, where appropriate, informed by key concepts and techniques of the discipline.

### 5. *Awareness of Limits of Knowledge*

An understanding of the limits to their own knowledge and ability, and an appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits to knowledge and how this might influence analyses and interpretations.

### 6. *Professional Capacity/ Autonomy*

Qualities and transferable skills necessary for further study, employment, community involvement and other activities requiring:

- (i) the exercise of initiative, personal responsibility and accountability in both personal and group contexts;
- (ii) working effectively with others; and
- (iii) behaviour consistent with academic integrity.

## **MASTER'S DEGREE**

### **Degree Category – Master's Degree**

#### *Program Design and Outcome Emphasis*

A master's degree program builds on knowledge and competencies acquired during related undergraduate study, and requires more specialized knowledge and intellectual autonomy than a bachelor degree program. Much of the study undertaken at the master's level will have been at, or informed by, the forefront of an academic or professional discipline. Students will have shown some originality in the application of knowledge, and they will understand how the boundaries of knowledge are advanced through research. They will be able to deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, and they will show independent capacity in addressing issues and problems.

Research-oriented master's programs are typically for graduates of related undergraduate or professional programs in the field or students who have taken bridging studies to equip them for graduate study in the field; the focus is on developing the research, analytical, methodological, interpretive and expository skills necessary for doctoral studies or for leadership in society. Some programs are thesis-based and require the student to develop and demonstrate advanced research skills under supervision. Others are course-based and require students to demonstrate the necessary research, analytical, interpretive, methodological and expository skills in course exercises.

Examples: M.A. programs in the humanities and social sciences; M.Sc. programs.

Profession-oriented master's programs normally admit students holding baccalaureate degrees and provide them with a selection of courses and exercises intended to prepare them for a particular profession or field of practice or, if they are already involved in the profession or field, to extend their knowledge base and skills as professionals/practitioners.

Example: MSW (Social Work).

#### *Preparation for Employment and Further Study*

Graduates will have the qualities needed for either further study in the discipline or for employment in circumstances requiring sound judgment, personal responsibility and initiative, in complex and unpredictable professional environments.

#### *Length of Program*

Master's programs vary typically from two to six semesters in duration, depending on the field and the speed at which individuals progress through requirements.

#### *Admission Requirements*

Normally an undergraduate degree with an appropriate specialization, or an undergraduate degree with relevant bridging studies.

## **Degree Level Standard – Master’s Degree**

### *1. Depth and Breadth of Knowledge*

A systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study, or area of professional practice.

### *2. Knowledge of Methodologies and Research*

A conceptual understanding and methodological competence that enables the graduate to:

- (a) have a working comprehension of how established techniques of research and inquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline;
- (b) have a capacity to evaluate critically current research and advanced research and scholarship in the discipline or area of professional competence; and
- (c) have a capacity to address complex issues and judgments based on established principles and techniques.

On the basis of that competence, has shown at least one of the following:

- (a) the development and support of a sustained argument in written form; or
- (b) originality in the application of knowledge.

### *3. Application of Knowledge*

Competency in the research process by applying an existing body of knowledge in the research and critical analysis of a new question or of a specific problem or issue in a new setting.

### *4. Communication Skills*

The ability to communicate ideas, issues and conclusions clearly and effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences.

### *5. Awareness of Limits of Knowledge*

A cognizance of the complexity of knowledge and of the potential contributions of other interpretations, methods, and disciplines.

### *6. Professional Capacity/ Autonomy*

- (a) The qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:
  - (i) the exercise of initiative and of personal responsibility and accountability; and
  - (ii) decision-making in complex situations, such as employment;
- (b) The intellectual independence required for continuing professional development;
- (c) The ability to appreciate the broader implications of applying knowledge to particular contexts.

## DOCTORAL DEGREES

### Degree Category – Doctoral Degrees

#### *Program Design and Outcome Emphasis*

A doctoral program builds on the knowledge and competencies in a field or discipline acquired during prior study, usually at the graduate level. Study at the doctoral level is at the forefront of an academic or professional discipline.

Holders of the doctoral degree must have demonstrated a high degree of intellectual autonomy, an ability to conceptualize, design and implement projects for the generation of significant new knowledge and/or understanding, and their ability to create and interpret knowledge that extends the forefront of a discipline, usually through original research or creative activity.

Preparation for doctoral work may involve course work of varying lengths aimed at cultivating further conceptual depth or breadth. It may also involve written and oral examinations of knowledge and skills in aspects of the discipline prior to authorization to proceed to work on a dissertation.

Research-oriented doctoral programs focus on the development of the conceptual and methodological knowledge and skills required to do original research and to make an original contribution to knowledge in the form of a dissertation. In some fields an internship or exhibition component may be required, but without diluting the significance of the dissertation as the primary demonstration of mastery. Such programs lead to the award of the Ph.D.

Examples: Ph.D. (Psychology), Ph.D. (Education), Ph.D. (Music).

Practice-oriented doctoral programs are of a more applied nature, relate to a professional or creative activity and, where there is an internship or exhibition requirement, may also require a dissertation. Doctoral programs with an orientation to practice typically involve more course work than doctoral programs with a more theoretical or disciplinary focus. Such programs lead to the award of a degree designation reflecting the field or discipline.

Examples: Ed.D. (Education), Mus. Doc. (Music), Psy.D. (Psychology).

#### *Preparation for Employment and Further Study*

Holders of doctorates will have the qualities needed for employment requiring the ability to make informed judgements on complex issues in specialist fields, and innovation in tackling and solving problems.

#### *Length of Program*

A doctoral program is typically three to six years in length, depending on the field and the speed at which individuals progress through requirements.

### *Admission Requirements*

Normally a master's degree with an appropriate specialization, or a master's degree with appropriate bridging studies.

### **Degree Level Standards - Doctoral Degree**

#### *1. Depth and Breadth of Knowledge*

A thorough understanding of a substantial body of knowledge that is at the forefront of their academic discipline or area of professional practice.

#### *2. Knowledge of Methodologies and Research*

A conceptual understanding and methodological competence that provides the graduate with the ability to:

- (a) conceptualize, design, and implement research for the generation of new knowledge, applications, or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the research design or methodology in the light of unforeseen problems;
- (b) make informed judgments on complex issues in specialist fields, sometimes requiring new methods; and
- (c) produce original research, or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, and to merit publication.

#### *3. Application of Knowledge*

The capacity to:

- (a) undertake pure and/or applied research at an advanced level; and
- (b) contribute to the development of academic or professional skill, techniques, tools, practices, ideas, theories, approaches, and/or materials.

#### *4. Communication Skills*

The ability to communicate complex and/or ambiguous ideas, issues and conclusions clearly and effectively.

#### *5. Awareness of Limits of Knowledge*

An appreciation of the limitations of one's own work and discipline, of the complexity of knowledge, and of the potential contributions of other interpretations, methods, and disciplines.

#### *6. Professional Capacity/ Autonomy*

- (a) The qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex situations;
- (b) The intellectual independence to be academically and professionally engaged and current;
- (c) The ability to evaluate the broader implications of applying knowledge to particular contexts.

## **Appendix: Guidelines On Naming Of Degrees (April 2004)**

### **I. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE**

The following guidelines have been adopted by the Degree Quality Assessment Board (the “Board”) to assist institutions in determining the name of the credential they will offer when they are proposing new degree programs. Institutions proposing new degree names should provide an indication on what basis a degree name has been selected. This should be determined within the institution’s overall approach to degree nomenclature and reflect historical practice in British Columbia and, where necessary, within the broader Canadian and international context. It should be noted that the guidelines apply only to new degrees; existing degree names are not affected.

### **II. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE NAMING OF DEGREES**

1) Credentials for new academic programs should ordinarily be selected from degree names that are widely used and generally understood. The list of degrees currently offered by British Columbia post-secondary institutions is already very comprehensive and normally should be able to accommodate most proposals for new academic programs.

2) A generic degree name that already incorporates a broad range of academic disciplines or subject areas is preferable to a multitude of specific degree names. Obvious examples include the Bachelor of Arts at the undergraduate level and the Master of Science at the graduate level. In the case of some of the newer and more specialized institutions, such as the technical institutes, the standard credential awarded should be reflective of the overall mission of the institution (e.g., technology, thus leading to a Bachelor of Technology).

3) The name should be descriptive of the general area of study which usually corresponds to a particular faculty or school. While degrees are conferred by a particular post-secondary institution, the degree designation is normally identified with a particular academic unit, ordinarily a faculty or school. The emergence of interdisciplinary studies has led to a number of departures from this practice.

4) The name should be appropriate for adoption by other British Columbia post-secondary institutions that develop similar programs. Comparable, but not necessarily identical, programs should lead to equivalent credentials. To a certain extent the system has already demonstrated its flexibility. The two clearest examples are the degrees of Bachelor of Applied Science and the Bachelor of Engineering as engineering credentials and the Bachelor of Commerce and the Bachelor of Business Administration as business credentials. Occasionally different degree names are simply a reflection of an institutional preference and do not represent a divergence of academic programs. While the degree designations differ, the credentials are seen to be equivalent.

5) In British Columbia, the use of associate degrees is restricted to the Associate of Arts and the Associate of Science degree. Institutions proposing to offer the associate degree must

ensure that the degree is consistent with the British Columbia system-wide definition. (The British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer provides a definition of associate degree on its website: <http://www.bccat.bc.ca/pubs/assoc05-00.htm>.)

6) The above principles apply to both undergraduate and graduate programs.

### **III. HOW TO INDICATE SPECIALIZATION IN THE DEGREE NAME**

The Board assumes that the principal reason for proposing a distinct degree is to indicate an academic area of specialization. The question then becomes how to achieve this objective, while adhering to the five general principles outlined above. Where appropriate the subject of specialization could be included as part of the degree name leading to a new genus of degrees. Institutions, as a matter of routine, already identify majors and areas of concentration on the transcript. In some instances, honours are shown as part of the degree. In addition, the subject area, or major, is sometimes shown on the parchment as a matter of institutional preference, but that does not mean that that information is incorporated into the name of the degree.

Increasing specialization is the main reason for the existing diversity and continuing expansion of degree names. While there does not appear to be any uniform practice, over time certain models have evolved. One is to include the specialization in the degree name itself (e.g., Bachelor of Science in Agriculture). Another is to indicate the specialization in parentheses after the degree name (e.g., Bachelor of Education (Elementary)). A third is the creation of new generic forms (e.g., Bachelor of Administrative Studies). New degrees, which identify an area of specialization, should fit into one of the following categories:

a) Bachelor of Science in \_\_\_\_\_. This has become a widely accepted method of indicating specialization. There is a clearly identified and specialized field of study which finds its roots in science, but which derives its distinctiveness from being located in a separate academic unit. Examples include: agriculture, dietetics, forestry, kinesiology, nursing and pharmacy. From the examples given, it is clear that there is a strong link to a particular profession. What should be noted is that, while the degree names follow a standard pattern, the degree initials do not. Examples are: B.Sc.(Agr.) and B.S.N. Either format is appropriate and does not appear to lead to confusion.

b) Bachelor of \_\_\_\_\_Science. This approach is similar to the previous method for naming degrees with a significant scientific component. In this instance a descriptive adjective is used to distinguish the branch of science. Examples include: Bachelor of Applied Science and Bachelor of Health Science. Again, recognized academic units offer the degree and there is a connection with a particular profession.

c) Bachelor of Arts in \_\_\_\_\_. While not as common as the comparable degree in science, there are a few instances where this approach has been adopted, e.g. Bachelor of Arts in Child and Youth Care. To warrant a separate degree name, the number of courses required in the field of specialization should exceed that required for a major. There should also be some demonstrated link with a particular profession or occupation.

d) Bachelor of Education (Elementary). This approach to indicating specialization is achieved by showing the specialty in parentheses after the generic degree. In British Columbia it has been used primarily to distinguish various kinds of education degrees. Unlike the previous examples, these degrees are offered by a single faculty. The Education degree is also a professional degree and the designated distinction has obvious implications for employment. Other faculties wishing to develop specialized professional programs should consider this option. An example is the Bachelor of Arts (Criminal Justice).

e) Bachelor of \_\_\_\_\_ Studies. There are an increasing number of degrees with an interdisciplinary focus. As a result there is greater usage of degree names which incorporate the word "studies." This trend is found at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. The word "studies" appears to be used in instances where there is a well-defined academic program but where the course offerings are provided by a number of academic units, often including units from more than one faculty. There is often a tension between choosing a more generic degree (e.g., B.A. (Canadian Studies)) versus Bachelor of Canadian Studies (B.C.S.). The former is more widely recognized and is the recommended approach.

f) Bachelor of Technology (\_\_\_\_\_). With the expansion of the post-secondary system to include a greater variety of academic institutions, generic degrees which reflect the academic orientation of these newer institutions are rapidly emerging. In the case of technological institutes, the academic programs are grounded in the study of the practical application of science in a variety of subject areas. It is recommended that Institutes of Technology adopt the generic form of degree, Bachelor of Technology. The field of specialization, if necessary, can be shown in parentheses following the general degree, similar to the practice in the field of education. Normally this degree designation will be confined to Institutes of Technology.

g) Bachelor of Applied \_\_\_\_\_. Given that the province has encouraged the development of more applied degrees, there has been a gradual increase in requests to use the word "applied" in the title of the credential offered. The dictionary definition of applied is "used in actual practice or to work out practical problems."

With respect to new degree programs which are "applied" in nature, sponsoring institutions should give serious consideration to using a generic degree name such as Bachelor of Applied Arts (name of specialization) or Bachelor of Applied Design (name of specialization) (e.g., Bachelor of Applied Design (Interior Design)). Each designation is sufficiently broad to allow a number of specific programs under a single umbrella. Because the degree, Bachelor of Applied Science, is already identified with engineering, its use should be limited to such programs to avoid confusion. Since engineering programs are accredited by the profession, this additional requirement should be a condition of approval for degrees using the phrase Applied Science.