



FLEXIBLE LEARNER PATHWAYS BRITISH COLUMBIA ASSOCIATION OF INSTITUTES AND UNIVERSITIES FRAMEWORK

DATED for reference the 16 day of April, 2014

Background

- A. The undersigned (the “**Institutions**”) are the members of the British Columbia Association of Institutes and Universities (“**BCAIU**”).
- B. The Institutions share a common value in working together as institutions of higher learning in British Columbia and responding to the needs of their respective students and communities.
- C. The Institutions want to enhance the opportunities for students to be admitted to multiple Institutions for the purpose of completing learning for transfer credit towards a credential(s) conferred by another member Institution(s) (“Flexible Learner Pathways”).
- D. Among many benefits, Flexible Learner Pathways will enable students to pursue and achieve their educational goals more easily and efficiently, facilitating higher student completion rates and more graduates to meet the social and economic needs of British Columbia.

Memorandum of Understanding

1. The objective of this Framework is to initiate development of procedures and agreements among the Institutions to facilitate Flexible Learner Pathways which ensure the efficiency, quality and integrity of the programs offered by each of the Institutions.
2. This Framework establishes an outline to set planning responsibilities, explore programs and approaches, and coordinate and evaluate the effectiveness of Flexible Learner Pathways.
3. This Framework is not a legally binding agreement, but is an expression of common intention with regard to shared principles and a framework for facilitating Flexible Learner Pathways. It is expected that the Institutions will enter into future binding agreements to implement the principles and practices set out in this Framework.

Principles

4. Multilateral agreements that identify curriculum, (e.g. courses or groups of courses, categories of programs, and / or learning outcomes) amenable to the development of Flexible Learner Pathways will be advantageous to students and institutions because:
 - a) each Institution will identify curriculum for which students may receive credit at other Institutions toward credential completion; and
 - b) each institution will develop complementary guidelines and practices for admission of transfer students and the application of transfer credit toward credential completion.

5. In order to establish guidelines and protocols for Flexible Learner Pathways, significant work is required to identify which and what amount of curriculum can be applied as earned credits for a particular program and credential at a conferring institution.
6. It is acknowledged that while Flexible Learner Pathways are a worthwhile goal, not all curriculum is amenable.
7. It is acknowledged that while Flexible Learner Pathways between BCAIU Institutions can provide students of these institutions with more mobile pathway options, they are not intended to and will not limit but rather supplement pathways that are developed and which will continue to be developed through credit transfer agreements with non-BCAIU institutions.
8. It is acknowledged that British Columbia Council on Admissions & Transfer (“**BCCAT**”) has developed principles, guidelines, and protocols in relation to academic credit transfer that are agreed to by all Transfer System members. Drawing from the expertise of BCCAT and the robust practices concerning credit transfer between BC Transfer System members, the Institutions will undertake the following in planning Flexible Learner Pathways:
 - a) ensure that each Institution’s board of governors, academic governance bodies (e.g. Senates, Education Councils and Faculties), including relevant committees, are consulted and that all necessary approvals are obtained to permit Flexible Learner Pathways;
 - b) determine the types of curricular agreements and practices appropriate to Flexible Learner Pathways, including those operating on a system-wide basis, such as associate degrees and flexible pre-majors;
 - c) identify a senior individual within each Institution to lead discussions on behalf of that Institution on Flexible Learner Pathways, and a back-up person for that individual;
 - d) consult as appropriate with licensing and professional bodies that may have an interest in courses and programs which are the subject of Flexible Learner Pathways; and
 - e) establish a timetable for evolving the agreement(s) which will be required for Flexible Learner Pathways.

Programs

9. Programs of the Institution must be identified which would benefit from Flexible Learner Pathways. The following high level criteria should be considered to identify those programs:
 - a) Would students enjoy expanded opportunities in a program offered by one Institution by taking courses or programs offered by other Institutions?
 - b) Would access to advanced education be enhanced?
 - c) Would improved bridging opportunities result (e.g. changing majors or minors without beginning anew; accessing post-degree, graduate and continuing education)?
 - d) Would more timely and effective response to emerging issues and demands result (e.g. economy, labour market, social trends and provincial policy)?
 - e) Would student recruitment, retention and credential completion be improved?
 - f) Are the relevant decision maker sand governance bodies in the Institutions supportive?

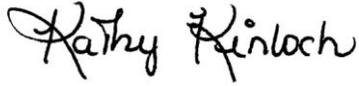
Coordination

10. The Institutions will establish a Flexible Learner Pathways Steering Committee (“SC”) made up of the Presidents of the Institutions, or their designates.
11. The SC will establish its rules and procedures and will guide the development of Flexible Learner Pathways through activities that will include the following:
 - a. ensuring that governance bodies for their respective Institutions are appropriately informed and engaged in decisions with respect to Flexible Learner Pathways;
 - b. approving and maintaining agreements which outline roles and responsibilities among the Institutions with regard to Flexible Learner Pathways;
 - c. allocating human, financial, capital and other resources for implementation of Flexible Learner Pathways;
 - d. establishing a process and framework for periodic evaluation of Flexible Learner Pathways;
 - e. setting out the terms upon which agreement(s) on Flexible Learner Pathways may be terminated or Institutions may withdraw; and
 - f. developing communication strategies to promote Flexible Learner Pathways to students, communities, government, licensing and professional bodies and other stakeholders.
12. The SC will establish an Operating Committee (the “OC”) which will be made up of the Vice Presidents Academic of each of the Institutions, or their designates.
13. The OC will ensure that leadership and support is provided within each Institution to promote and facilitate Flexible Learner Pathways through activities that include the following:
 - a) identifying courses and programs to be considered for Flexible Learner Pathways;
 - b) enabling individuals and groups to develop and support Flexible Learner Pathways;
 - c) developing assessment tools and practices to determine the effectiveness of Flexible Learner Pathways in relation to student learning, student satisfaction, employment outcomes, and cost effectiveness;
 - d) resolving issues and concerns which arise in the administration of Flexible Learner Pathways and when required, refer such issues and concerns for resolution to the SC;
 - e) consulting licensing and professional bodies to ensure that Flexible Learner Pathways do not impair the achievement of their requirements; and
 - f) working with BCCAT to ensure appropriate agreements are incorporated within the Transfer Credit Evaluation System database for the purpose of making credit transfer information available to students through BCCAT websites, and for web service sharing with Institutions.

The Institutions hereby confirm their intention to implement Flexible Learner Pathways as contemplated in this Framework and as may be further agreed by them in the future.

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