

Policy Manual

Issues Policy

Issues Policy 09 (IS-09): Credit Transfer

Adopted by: Board of Directors

Adopted on: September 09, 2014

Summary:

For a variety of reasons, many students who start a post-secondary diploma or degree at one institution may choose to finish it at another institution. Changing market demands and new programs offered by post-secondary institutions have also led to an increase in the number of students who chose to supplement a diploma or degree with a second designation.

While British Columbia has responded to a marked increase in the level of inter-institutional cooperation by establishing provincial regulation to ensure that programs remain congruent, other provinces and the federal government have made no effort to coordinate credit transfer between provinces. In the absence of an inter-provincial or federal initiative to facilitate articulation and credit transfer among institutions, hundreds of agreements have emerged between individual post-secondary institutions.

While this rapid emergence of inter-institutional cooperation has improved educational opportunities, it has also led to increased confusion, inconsistency and duplication. As a result, students are often left to try and navigate a system where programs may be offered at separate institutions, guided by separate policies or, when transferring from one institution to another, forced to negotiate on their own which credits will be recognized. Due to the ad hoc nature of these agreements, many students find themselves paying for and earning the same credits more than once, adding to additional costs for the student and the government.

To help ensure that students are able to move easily and efficiently from institution to institution, British Columbia's provincial system of credit transfer needs to be strengthened and a mandatory national system of credit transfer needs to be created.

Policy:

- I. The Union supports:
 - a. Enhancing student mobility through:
 - i. The strengthening of British Columbia's provincial system of credit transfer;
 - ii. The creation of a mandatory national credit transfer system;
 - iii. The harmonization of international credit transfer systems in order to facilitate international learning and the recognition of international students' credits;
 - b. Equivalency of grading practices within a single institution, so as to ensure ease of credit transfer with other institutions;
 - c. Accurate and fair Prior-Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR);
 - d. Eliminating unnecessary duplication of learning;
 - e. Standardized assessments of credits, certificates, diplomas, and degrees;

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- f. A system that prioritizes block transfers over a credit-to-credit transfer model;
 - g. The strengthening of the British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT) to facilitate the provincial credit transfer system including:
 - i. Continuous student representation on the BCCAT to ensure BC's credit transfer system is meeting the needs of students;
 - h. Adequate funding to ensure the maintenance and success of the credit transfer system;
 - i. Institutional credit transfer systems that ensure the efficient and effective processing of students' transfer applications including:
 - i. The transparent communication of what is, and is not, accepted for transfer credit in advance of a student's registration;
 - ii. Timely processing of transfer applications;
- II. The Union opposes:
- a. Agreements that undermine a students' ability to transfer between institutions of his or her choice;
 - b. A credit transfer system without the adequate funding necessary for operational success;
 - c. A credit transfer system that is optional for universities, colleges and institutes;
 - d. Fees being attached to the process of transferring credits, including user fees.