

2.4.1 Credential Framework

POLICY

College of the Rockies (College) issues a number of official documents which indicate completion of or participation in programs/courses. The credential framework policy identifies criteria for completion of credentials that will assist students and employers in assessing the scope of education and training received at the College. Identified criteria will also assist faculty in the revision and development of programs.

PURPOSE

As authorized by the *BC College and Institute Act*, the College offers a wide variety of official documents that recognize student achievement in programs by the granting of a citation, certificate, diploma, advanced certificate, advanced diploma, post-degree certificate, post-degree diploma, associate degree and degree. The criteria listed in the credential framework will determine the appropriate credential.

In addition, the College awards Continuing Education Certificates upon successful completion of designated course(s) or programs.

The purpose of this policy is:

- To communicate the criteria for College credentials
- Establish and communicate educational standards
- Improve student mobility and laddering through recognized and well-regarded credentials

SCOPE

This policy applies to credentials awarded in academic, vocational, career/technical, trades and continuing education programs. This policy does not apply to general interest courses and programs.

DEFINITIONS¹

Advanced Certificate: Awarded on completion of programs at the post-secondary level that require a minimum of a diploma for entrance and are normally between 8 and 12 months of full-time equivalent study.

Advanced Diploma: Awarded on completion of programs at the post-secondary level that require a minimum of a diploma for entrance and are normally between 16-24 months of full-time equivalent study.

¹ Many of these definitions are taken from: Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (2007). *Ministerial Statement on Quality Assurance of Degree Education in Canada*.

Associate Degree: Awarded on completion of provincially defined academic arts or science programs consisting of 60 credits of first and second year transferable courses across a range of disciplines. See *BC Transfer Guide* website for associate degree course criteria.

Bachelor Degree (Baccalaureate Degree): Awarded on completion of provincially defined post-secondary programs consisting of a minimum of 120 semester credits of first to fourth year transferable courses drawn from at least three academic disciplines.

BC Adult Graduation Diploma: Awarded to a student 18 years or older on completion of 20 credits in the secondary system or five courses in the post-secondary system as outlined by the Ministries. At least one course must be completed by enrolment at the College. See BC Ministry of Education website for details.

Certificate of Achievement: Awarded on completion of a Continuing Education or Contract Training program which includes a formal assessment of learning for courses.

Certificate: Awarded on completion of programs at the post-secondary level normally between 6 - 12 months of full-time equivalent study.

Citation: Awarded on completion of a minimum of 12 credits in a specific field of study.

Continuing Education Certificate of Completion: Awarded on completion of a designated skills course within the Continuing Education department for which there is a formal assessment of learning.

Continuing Education Certificate of Participation: Awarded when a student has participated in a personal enrichment or skills course.

Developmental: A level of programming that prepares students for English language development, post-secondary studies or career preparation.

Diploma: Awarded on completion of programs at the post-secondary level normally between 16-24 months of full-time equivalent study.

General Interest Course: Courses that are taken for personal enrichment rather than academic reasons and do not contain elements of credential course work. They do not usually lead to a postsecondary credential.

Post-degree Certificate: Awarded on completion of programs that require a Baccalaureate degree for entrance and are normally between 8 - 12 months of full-time equivalent study. The Post-Degree Certificate is not considered graduate level because associated courses are at an undergraduate level.

Post-degree Diploma: Awarded on completion of programs that require a Baccalaureate degree for entrance and are normally between 16-24 months of full-time equivalent study. The Post-Degree Diploma is not considered graduate level because associated courses are at an undergraduate level.

Post-secondary Program: A post-secondary program is defined as a set of courses and other requirements leading to a completion/graduation document in a specific field of study.

GUIDELINES

A. Post- Secondary Programs

Credentials are awarded for College post-secondary programs as outlined in the credential framework (see *Credential Framework Appendix A*).

All post-secondary programs share the following:

- A. 1 All post-secondary programs have a formal assessment of learning or skills application and students are required to meet a specific minimum standard to receive a credential.
 - 1) All academic programs with credit courses require, a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 (C- average) or higher to qualify for a certificate or diploma
 - 2) A minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0 (C average) is required for an associate degree
 - 3) A minimum cumulative grade point average of 4.0 (C+ average) is required for the baccalaureate degree
- A. 2 All post-secondary programs may have practical and theoretical components. These components may be integrated and need not be separate learning experiences.

B. Residency requirements

- B. 1 Unless otherwise stated, students must complete at least twenty-five (25) percent of a program or the applicable number of credits while registered at the College, in order to be granted a college diploma, certificate or baccalaureate degree.
- B. 2 In Adult Upgrading, one College course will be considered sufficient to meet residency requirements for the BC Adult Graduation Diploma.

C. Credential completion

- C. 1 Students are responsible for ensuring that the Registrar is informed of the completion of the requirements for a credential by submitting a formal written application using the *Credential Request Form* available from the Enrolment Services office. For vocational programs, the instructor(s) will normally submit the required information on behalf of the students upon completion of the required courses.
- C. 2 Time limits for completing a credential:
 - Completion within the time limit: The standard time limit for completion of a credential is twice the length of time it takes to complete the program as a full-time student unless otherwise specified in the program outline or program progression policy.
 - Completion beyond the time limit: The College cannot guarantee that courses or programs will be available for a student to complete graduation requirements after this time. A student who completes beyond the specified time limit will be required to meet the program requirements at the time of credentialing. This may require that the student repeat certain courses, complete additional courses, or follow a new or revised program of studies.

- C. 3 Qualifying for Dual and Multiple Credentials: to acquire a subsequent or higher level credential, a student must complete all the requirements of the credential. In addition, at least twenty-five (25) percent must be new and be completed in order to be awarded a subsequent or higher level credential.

D. Administration of Credentials

- D. 1 All College of the Rockies credentials will be issued by the Office of the Registrar, will bear the Registrar's seal and will be signed by the Registrar and the President. Other documents, for example a continuing education program certificate of completion, may bear the College's logo, but will not bear the Registrar's seal. Such documents may have other signatories as approved by the College Registrar. In addition, logos of training partners may be included on the credential.
- D. 2 All credentials approved by Education Council and the College Board will be developed by or in partnership with an academic department. The academic departments (through the dean) assume responsibility for the integrity and quality of these programs. Refer to Policy 6.1.2 Program Approval, Review and Implementation for development and review of programs.
- D. 3 Continuing Education and Contract Training courses and programs will normally be managed through either the Executive Director, International and Regional Development or the Director, Continuing Education and Contract Training in consultation with the Registrar. They will be responsible for the integrity and quality of the courses and programs.

E. Posthumous Credential

The College may award a credential to a student who, upon death, has not completed the necessary requirements to qualify for the credential.

Posthumous credentials may be awarded at any time:

- E. 1 To a student who has met all program graduation requirements (no special notations on transcripts or credentials).
- E. 2 Upon approval of the Dean, to a student who has substantially completed the requirements of the program and for whom successful completion was expected. The notation "posthumous" will be recorded on the student's transcript, but will not appear on the credential.

LEGISLATED REFERENCES

College and Institute Act Sections 19 g) and 23 n)

RESPONSIBILITY

The Office of the Registrar is responsible for the implementation of this policy.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Credential Framework

Credential Type	Credits*	Entrance Requirements (minimum)	Length (months)	Rigour /level of study	Approved By
Continuing Education Certificate of Completion	None	Course specific	Variable	Personal Enrichment/Skills	College
Continuing Education Certificate of Participation	None	Course specific	Variable	Personal Enrichment/Skills	College
Continuing Education or Contract Training Certificate of Achievement	None	Program specific	Variable	Personal Enrichment/Skills	College
Adult Graduation Diploma	Variable secondary school and adult upgrading credits	student specific	Variable	Developmental	Education Council/Board Ministry of Education
English Language Program Certificate	variable	student specific	variable	Developmental	Education Council/Board
Citation	12	Program specific	4 months	post-secondary	Education Council/Board
Certificate	30	Program specific	6-12 months	1 st year post-secondary	Education Council/Board
Diploma	60	Program specific	16-24 months	1 st and 2 nd year post-secondary	Education Council/Board
Advanced Certificate	30	Diploma or equivalent	8-12 months	3 rd year post-secondary or higher	Education Council/Board
Advanced Diploma	60	Diploma or equivalent	16-24 months	3 rd year post-secondary or higher	Education Council/Board