BCCAT BRITISH COLUMBIA COUNCIL ON ADMISSIONS & TRANSFER

Designation as a Receiving Institution

in the BC Transfer Guide:

Policy and Process

Approved by Council, March 7, 2008

Background

The Recalibrating the BC Transfer System project initiated in 2005 proposed that the designation of institutions in the BC Transfer Guide as either "sending institution" or "receiving institution," according to their perceived primary function, should be examined. The results of the consultation indicated overwhelming support (94%) for removing the restrictions on designation, and providing an environment whereby each institution can undertake its own evaluation of which designations best fit its situation, goals and business practices.

This document establishes a structure to facilitate the implementation of the recommendation to liberalize access to the receiving institution designation. NOTE: A future policy will outline the process for adding the sending institution designation.

BCCAT position

While in agreement that it is no longer appropriate to restrict the receiving institution designation, BCCAT is concerned that the expansion of the BC Transfer System to include many more receiving institutions must proceed carefully for the following reasons:

1. Respondents to the Recalibrating consultation were divided on whether or not BCCAT should continue to manage designation assignment. When asked whether institutions "should be asked to provide assurances to BCCAT that they can support the functions associated with re-designation" slightly over half of the respondents indicated support for this proposition, and analysis of the commentary revealed a preference to have BCCAT continue to play a gatekeeper role – to establish criteria and to "maintain control."
2. Each listing in the BC Transfer Guide constitutes a guarantee for students. To the extent that each listing is current and reliable the system is perceived as credible. The task of maintaining agreements expands with each new receiving institution and trust can be undermined if institutions are unable to keep agreements up to date. BCCAT takes seriously its role as the agency that safeguards this system.
3. The tasks associated with the administration of transfer credit agreements as *a receiving institution* may not be well known or understood at an institution that has traditionally acted as a sending institution. BCCAT expects assurance that each institution planning to add the receiving institution designation has undertaken an examination of the policies, resources and practices required to support this function.
4. Studies of student mobility indicate that some institutions in BC receive few students through deliberate transfer from other members of the BC Transfer System. BCCAT believes that it is important for institutions to examine the business case for requesting the receiving institution designation, so that articulation agreements do not proliferate unnecessarily.

Policy and Process

An institution currently listed in the BC Transfer Guide as a sending institution only, may apply to BCCAT to be also designated as a receiving institution. In preparation for this application, BCCAT recommends that the institution undertake:

1. To familiarize itself with the expectations for receiving institutions by reviewing the information presented in the *Best Practice Guide for Receiving Institutions* and the *How to Articulate Handbook.*
2. An audit of its operations and current business practices to review its institutional readiness to add the receiving institution designation (a Readiness Checklist is provided in the *Best Practice Guide for Receiving Institutions* and is appended to this policy).
3. An analysis of the movement of students into the institution to examine the extent to which it plays a receiving institution role within the BC Transfer System. Such analysis can be general or may relate to specific program areas or specific sending institutions.
4. A review of existing equivalencies in any internal database, checked for currency and accuracy. These equivalencies can form the basis of an initial population of the BC Transfer Guide provided the institution is prepared to honour and maintain the equivalencies as articulations.
5. To determine, in the absence of any existing internal data sources, whether a process of triangulation may be employed to extrapolate equivalencies from the BC Transfer Guide.
6. An analysis of the kind and amount of transfer credit information *best suited* to the strategic objectives of the institution. For example, institutions could choose to limit their records in the BC Transfer Guide to one or more of the following:
   a. course-to-course agreements;
   b. block transfer agreements;
   c. program specific transfer information;
   d. transfer information limited to certain sending institutions.

Once the institution is satisfied that it is ready to become a receiving institution, it can submit a request to BCCAT to implement receiving institution designation in the BC Transfer Guide. Since the Act governing most sending institutions allocates authority for transfer credit policy jointly to the Education Council and the Board, the request should be signed by the president of the institution. The request should:

- specify the steps that the institution has undertaken to date to address the items above,
- contain a copy of its transfer policies, and
- outline an implementation plan for how the institution wishes to go about populating its BC Transfer Guide database (e.g. all university transfer courses, block transfer agreements only, specific programs only, specific sending institutions only, etc.).

Submission of this request will normally be assumed by BCCAT to certify that the institution has gone through the internal processes outlined above and considers itself prepared and resourced to undertake receiving institution functions in accordance with its implementation plan. Council may seek additional clarification, information or assurances, at its discretion, before the institution is designated as a receiving institution. The designation decision will be noted in the minutes of the Transfer and Articulation Committee (TAC) of Council.

READINESS CHECKLIST FOR A NEW RECEIVING INSTITUTION[1]

NECESSARY

Institutional rules and policies
☐ Develop and promulgate institutional transfer credit policies, as needed
☐ Determine how transfer credit is to be recorded, by whom, for which categories of student

Responsibility
☐ Identify ICP for receiving, and set up access to a secure TCES account
☐ Identify contact person in each academic unit or department who will assess requests
☐ Identify who will be responsible for assessing courses beyond the institution's range of curriculum

Timeliness
☐ Determine institutional service standards and set up a reminder procedure

Consistency
☐ Develop a precedent and tracking database for assessments and articulation agreements
☐ Review *How to Articulate* to ensure general compliance
☐ Review *Best Practice Guide for Receiving Institutions*
☐ Provide training for course assessors
☐ Provide training for student advisers
☐ Provide training for admission staff

Implementation
☐ Request that BCCAT change institution's role in TCES to both send and receive
☐ Prioritize existing courses at sending institutions

DESIRABLE

Single accessible data source
☐ Record transfer credit agreements and other transfer credit assessments in the SIS

Efficiency
☐ Utilize the automated functionality of the SIS to award articulated and other commonly-encountered transfer credit
☐ Import frequently-encountered transcripts electronically

Appeal
☐ Establish an appeal process

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[1] From Best Practice Guide for Receiving Institutions, By Nick Heath. Published by BCCAT, 2008