QUALITY ASSESSMENT STANDARDS – PROGRAM

April 2005
With revisions to December 2011

The responsibility for the quality of programs and for their ongoing review and improvement rests with the institution. It is Council's responsibility to ensure that appropriate standards are met. This process begins with the institution's preparation of a program proposal, in which the institution is required to engage in a self analysis and to seek the advice of Independent Academic Experts (Appendix I of the *Handbook*) in the particular field.

Proposals for undergraduate degrees must meet the CAQC Expectations for Design and Structure of Undergraduate Degrees in Chapter 4.3.3 of the *Handbook*. Please note that degree programs delivered in whole or in part in blended, distributed or distance modes are expected to also meet Council's Additional Quality Assessment Standards for Programs Delivered in Blended, Distributed or Distance Modes in Chapter 4.5 of the *Handbook*.

Last sentence added April 2011

NOTE: Unless otherwise indicated, where a separate standard is listed for a particular degree level/category (i.e. 'For Applied Degrees'), that standard completely replaces the main standard.

1. **Faculty and staff** – The program is supported by an appropriate number of suitably qualified academic faculty and instructional staff to develop and deliver the degree program. Faculty shall have an appropriate level of scholarly output and/or research or creative activity for the baccalaureate or graduate program involved.

   For Applied Degrees: The program is supported by an appropriate number of suitably qualified academic faculty and instructional staff to develop and deliver the degree program. Faculty shall maintain continuing academic and professional competence and accreditation in their discipline or field appropriate to the specific applied degree program.

2. **Academic policies** – The program has academic policies such as those dealing with admissions, promotion and graduation requirements, mature students, credit transfer and prior learning assessment, appeals, and academic dishonesty consistent with the level of the degree program. It has established policies and procedures that outline the process by which transfer of academic credit is awarded.

   For Applied Degrees: By definition, applied degrees must have a work-related experience component. Therefore, in addition to the above, the institution must have policies and procedures which define the roles of the institution, employer and student in the directed field studies component of the program and resources in place to effect these policies. Work placements and learning outcomes must be directly related to the practical and work experience program outcomes.

3. **Resource capacity** – The program is supported by the physical resources, both start-up and development, needed to assure the quality of the degree program. These include, where applicable, equipment, library and learning resources (physical and electronic), laboratories, computing facilities, shops, specialized equipment, etc., and work

placements where this is a component of the program. There is an institutional commitment to maintaining and supplementing resources and equipment as needed to meet standards applicable to the field.

4. **Credential recognition** – The credential is or can be recognized and accepted by other post-secondary institutions, employers, and professional and licensing bodies, where applicable. There is an appropriate fit between the nomenclature of the credential and the content of the degree. The name of a degree should convey long-term meaning, and the content of the degree program should be consistent with the name.

   For Applied Degrees: The credential is or can be recognized and accepted by other post-secondary institutions, employers, and professional and licensing bodies, where applicable. There is an appropriate fit between the nomenclature of the credential and the content of the degree. The name of a degree should convey long-term meaning, and the content of the degree program should be consistent with the name. Institutions are responsible for advising students of the nature of the applied degree with respect to its recognition for further study.

5. **Program delivery** – Learning methodologies are the methods of delivery that will be used to achieve the desired learning outcomes at an acceptable level of quality. The institution must demonstrate that it has the expertise and resources to support the proposed methods of delivery and ensure their effectiveness. The institution should also demonstrate the ways in which it understands and attends to the learning needs of students in the program, and supports their engaged and active learning.

   Revised December 2011

6. **Program content** – The program offers education of sufficient breadth and rigour to meet relevant national and international standards, and the content of the program, in both subject matter and outcome standards, is appropriate to the level of the degree program and the field of study. Its curriculum must be current and reflect the state of knowledge in the field, or fields in the case of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary programs. The institution must have a process to maintain the currency of the program and the quality of its learning outcomes.

7. **Program structure** – The structure of the degree is such that there is an appropriate balance between core requirements and specialized courses, for example, between Arts and Science courses and discipline specific courses, and between the proposed program and existing programs.

8. **Program evaluation** – The program is subject to a formal, approved policy and procedure requiring a periodic review and improvement process. The policy and procedure includes assessment of the program against published standards (including the institution's own learning outcome standards for the program), and assessment of individual student work in the terminal stage of the program against program outcomes. Such assessments normally include the advice of external experts.

9. **Regulation and accreditation** – Learning outcomes and other requirements for graduation in programs leading to professions are designed to prepare students to meet the requirements of the relevant regulatory, accrediting, quality assurance or professional body.