



CONESTOGA

Connect Life and Learning

Conestoga College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning

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Final Status Report

ONCAT Project

2015-09

**Measuring the Benefits for Learners and College Programs
Resulting from the Articulation of ACE and OSSD Programming**

March 15, 2016

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The opinions, findings, conclusions and recommendations expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer.

Executive Summary

Conestoga College ITAL (Conestoga) has built on the results and recommendations identified in the *Enhancing Pathways to Postsecondary* (June 2014) report to:

- Undertake a study in 2014-2015 to determine the ways in which a transfer credit option impacts numbers of students participating in college upgrading programming and their subsequent movement to and success in postsecondary and apprenticeship programming, the effect on classroom and program management, and the broader implications for community referral protocols currently in place.

and

- Undertake a pilot project involving both colleges and school boards to determine how this transfer credit process benefits learners in both systems.

A robust environmental scan (Appendix B), conducted in the initial phase of the project, provided data that resulted in some modification to the project focus. It was determined that the addition of a “foundational research phase”, concentrating on answering many of the questions which emerged during the scan process, was crucial.

As a result of this project, colleges are poised to accept transfer credits for a limited and specific set of Ontario secondary school senior level courses for credit toward the granting of the Ontario community college Academic and Career Entrance (ACE) certificate. The partner colleges who participated in this project understand the value of this transfer credit pathway for adult students pursuing college postsecondary programs.

Phase One – Literature Review and Outreach to Piloting Organizations

The focus of Conestoga College's *Measuring the Benefits for Learners and College Programs Resulting from the Articulation of ACE and OSSD Programming* project (hereafter *Measuring the Benefits*) was to investigate the feasibility and benefits of recognizing transfer credit for a limited and specific selection of Ontario secondary school senior level courses toward the granting of the Ontario community college Academic and Career Entrance (ACE) certificate. The project was conceptualized to build on results and recommendations documented in the *Enhancing Student Pathways to Postsecondary* project report funded by MTCU's 2013-2014 Productivity and Innovation Fund (PIF). That report was the result of extensive system-wide research which included 24 community colleges and 12 school board adult and continuing education programs. During the course of that initiative, colleges specifically identified criteria for granting transfer credit for applicable Ontario secondary school courses for the purpose of granting an Academic and Career Entrance (ACE) certificate.

Conestoga College identified two recommendations (listed below) from the *Enhancing Student Pathways to Postsecondary* report which aligned with the Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer (ONCAT) research objective to advance knowledge and understanding of the current state of credit transfer in the province of Ontario, with a preference for research that investigates associated costs and benefits.

- Undertake a study in 2014-2015 to determine the ways in which a transfer credit option impacts numbers of students participating in college upgrading programming and their subsequent movement to and success in postsecondary and apprenticeship programming, the effect on classroom and program management, and the broader implications for community referral protocols currently in place.”

and

- Undertake a pilot project involving both colleges and school boards to determine how this transfer credit process benefits learners in both systems.

The *Measuring the Benefits* project addressed these two recommendations with the participation of nine colleges and a number of school boards in proximity to those colleges. The project included a literature review, environmental scan, and consultations among college Registrars, Admissions, and Academic Upgrading managers, faculty, and staff as well as school board adult and continuing education principals, vice-principals, and guidance counsellors. Although some modifications to the proposed methodology occurred during the project, a number of positive college-school board relationships were developed and relevant findings and recommendations documented to promote further initiatives pertaining to ACE and Ontario secondary school transfer credit.

The initial phase of *Measuring the Benefits* involved a literature review focusing on the cost-benefit analysis which may result from colleges granting transfer credit. Although relevant literature on this specific transfer credit scenario is virtually non-existent, the notion of cost-benefit analysis related to transfer credit in general was examined as it applies to the ACE/Ontario secondary school situation.

It was noteworthy that feedback to the 2014 *Enhancing Student Pathways to Postsecondary* project further anticipated that the acceleration of adult students into postsecondary programs would result in cost benefits for colleges as well as adult learners. A review (Appendix A) of the Snowdon and Associates report, “Towards a Better Understanding of Credit Transfer Costs and Benefits”, initiated during the strategic planning phase of the *Measuring the Benefits* project, recognized that although there are significant differences when determining costs and benefits for students transferring between postsecondary programs and non-postsecondary

programs, there is also a great deal that is consistent. First, the categories for examination are student, institutional and government costs. Secondly, no one benefits if students must repeat comparable learning which has successfully been completed elsewhere. Finally, the provision of transfer credit opportunities is important, especially for non-traditional students who are interrupting their earning years to acquire a credential.

Conestoga initially planned that the *Measuring the Benefits* project would quantify the number of students who would take advantage of this articulation, evaluate their subsequent success, determine economic benefits for students and colleges, and determine the broader implications for community referral protocols currently in place through a college/school board pilot. However, a robust environmental scan (Appendix B), conducted in the initial phase of the project, provided data that resulted in some modification to the project focus. It was determined that the addition of a “foundational research phase”, concentrating on answering many of the questions which emerged during the scan process, was crucial. Colleges were clearly concerned about authentic identification and recruitment of students, better comprehending the anticipated demand, and determining effective internal and external outreach strategies. The revised focus resulted in an increased number of colleges (from three to nine) participating in the project research and a better informed stakeholder group (colleges and school boards).

Although the foundational research phase represented a modification to the initial project plan, the environmental scan and subsequent reports on discussions with local school boards indicated that more detailed and targeted research was needed to realize successful reciprocal recognition of ACE and Ontario secondary school courses. The project modifications were shared with colleges as well as ONCAT in the August 2015 project bulletin (Appendix D).

The nine participating colleges (Boreal, Conestoga, Confederation, Fanshawe, Georgian, Loyalist, Lambton, Niagara and Sault) met/consulted regularly and were provided with a student tracking form (Appendix E) to ensure reporting consistency. The data collection focused on the profile of students for whom this is a viable pathway to postsecondary and innovative strategies for identifying and recruiting these students.

The nine colleges were also asked to ensure that the necessary internal college policies and processes were in place to facilitate the granting of transfer credit. All nine colleges reported that this foundational work was completed without encountering any significant internal barriers.

A secondary project commitment, which was similarly revised from the original submission, was to conduct at least one college/school board pilot. Unfortunately the 2015 summer/fall provincial job action in the school board sector made it impossible to recruit an interested and committed school board partner. Instead of a formal pilot, the project colleges agreed to connect with appropriate school board personnel to initiate discussions which would serve to promote subsequent joint student recruitment and recognition initiatives. The nine colleges were provided with resources to facilitate a meaningful discourse with the school board adult and continuing education staff which would generate equivalent outcomes/results as the originally proposed pilot activity.

Phase Two

Tracking Results

As mentioned previously, the nine participating colleges consulted on the elements of data collection that would be most beneficial to the project objective of promoting the ACE/Ontario secondary school transfer credit pathway. After much collaborative discussion, the nine colleges were provided with a student data tracking form (Appendix E) to record relevant information about the adult students who may be interested in ACE/Ontario secondary school transfer credit as well data on the courses for which transfer credit may be considered. The form included the following categories:

- A. College information
- B. Recruitment and Referral of Students
- C. Student Motivation
- D. Student Profile
- E. Scheduled Participation in ACE Programming
- F. Assessment Results
- G. Analysis of Secondary School Transcript and Potential Transfer Credit
- H. ACE Course Enrollment and Completion
- I. Next Step Training/Education/Employment Goal

Participating colleges were provided with detailed instructions on the use of the form and were asked to submit completed forms to the project consultants as students participating in (or applying for) ACE programming were identified for possible transfer credit. Section G included the criteria for transfer credit eligibility that had been developed in the precursor 2014 project, *Enhancing Student Pathways to Postsecondary*.

The variety of information collected via the tracking form was intended to provide not only data about the courses that were being identified for potential transfer credit but also insights into the background, motivation, and goals of the students involved.

As this phase of the project progressed, it became apparent that only a small number of students were being identified for possible transfer credit across all nine colleges, despite considerable effort on the part of the colleges' ACE program staff. Toward the end of Phase Two, a meeting (via conference call) was conducted to allow participating colleges to review and debrief about the student recruitment and data collection process. This provided an important opportunity for colleges to dialogue and exchange information and experiences, and there was considerable consensus among the colleges regarding their experiences in this phase of the project. The most common reason identified for the lack of potential students was that the secondary school courses which the students presented on their high school transcript either a) were not among the selected secondary courses with direct ACE equivalency; and/or b) did not meet the pre-determined criteria for ACE transfer credit, e.g. minimum grade, completed within previous five years, etc.

As a result of the very small number of students identified for transfer credit, it was not possible to make meaningful observations about the profile and motivation of students who may be interested in this transfer credit pathway. However, the corollary is that this phase pointed to the need to revisit the eligibility criteria for ACE/Ontario secondary school transfer credit and determine if broadening and/or adjusting the criteria would result in greater uptake by adult students of this transfer credit option.

College and School Board Consultations

While participation in the project did not initially require that all nine colleges meet with their colleagues in adult education delivery from school boards, this interaction did become part of the emergent implementation model following the release of the two seminal project reports – the environmental scan report and the findings generated by the Snowdon and Associates’ literature review. Of the nine colleges, seven elected to connect with their local school board adult and continuing education secondary credit program.

During foundational project consultations, the participating colleges gained a comprehensive understanding of how adult and continuing education secondary school programs are able to assess and recognize comparable education and training for adult learners so as to grant them equivalency credits. This is achieved using the Ministry of Education’s Prior Learning and Assessment Recognition for Mature Students (PPM 132) process. Eleven ACE courses had been evaluated as equivalent in content to corresponding secondary school credits by Curriculum Services Canada in 2007, upon the request of the Ministry of Education. As such, an adult education principal has the discretion to recognize ACE courses as equivalent to secondary school credits through the application of the grade 11/12 PLAR equivalency or challenge processes.

Because school boards have a rigorous provincially articulated process and procedure to grant equivalencies for the purpose of an adult learner achieving an OSSD, it was determined that the project did not need to focus on reciprocal activity but rather on colleges creating appropriate strategies for facilitating the transfer process. The interaction with school board adult education programs was intended to promote subsequent joint student recruitment and recognition initiatives.

Upon conclusion of project activity, 89% of the participating colleges responded to a survey developed to collect information regarding the experience and outcome of their interaction with their local school board(s). Further investigation of the non-respondent college revealed that it had chosen to pursue an alternate route to address the transfer process.

The majority (89%) of the responding project colleges connected with one or more of their local school boards for the most part through face-to-face interaction.

All of these respondents indicated that the interaction that occurred was “respectful” while 71% also described it as “collegial” and half also described it as “guarded”. Additional inquiry revealed that the term “guarded” was used to describe the school board participants as both “cautious” and somewhat “noncommittal” regarding future involvement.

The top five survey responses describing the outcomes of their meetings with local school boards were:

1. Increased understanding of the ACE program by school board educators. – 71%
2. Identification of ways to identify appropriate/eligible candidates for the college credit transfer process. – 57%
3. Identification of barriers inherent to the transfer process. – 57%
4. Identification of opportunities resulting from the transfer process. – 57%
5. Agreed to future meetings. -57%

One college reported that a relationship, which had previously not existed, has been established between the administrators of both programs and that she was invited to attend a school board adult education open house. She anticipates additional/future exchanges to occur. While it was reported that the school board administrators all clearly espoused a belief that the OSSD is the only credential currently recognized for the purposes of finding employment, they did seem open to trying to understand ACE programming. Three respondents' communities have tentatively agreed to explore articulated learning opportunities.

One college linked the project research to a local initiative in which they connected with the school board to create a formal partnership agreement with the adult secondary education program that involves shared space, staff, resources and administration.

One college, which had hosted one of the PIF project "community of practice" consultations in 2014, reported that the connection made during this project served to build on the previously initiated transferability and movement between their adult education programs. This college administrator suggested that, based on his experience, only through ongoing recognition of learning and course outcomes will school board and college programs develop mutual understanding and authentic working relationships. Similarly, other college participants reported that much of the success of initiatives such as this one, where institutions are tasked with making connections, depends on having prior relationships and a sense of trust in place. To that end more than one college recommended that newly appointed college ACE administrators would be well advised to take the time to meet and learn about school board adult education offerings in their communities.

All of the college respondents indicated that having a clear understanding of the MEDU PLAR for Mature Students process and how it is operationalized before participating in the school board meeting was helpful.

Phase Three: Final Report

Activities Undertaken

Conestoga College undertook the following activities to determine a) the ways in which the ACE/Ontario secondary school transfer credit option impacts numbers of students participating in college Academic Upgrading programs; and b) to determine how this transfer credit process benefits learners in both systems.

- Literature review
- Environmental scan
- Face-to-face college partners meeting
- Internal college consultations
- College/school board consultations
- Inter-college consultations
- Student data tracking
- Development of outreach/information materials
- Dissemination of project bulletins
- E-survey for college partners

Impact on Students and Colleges

In order to have greater impact on both students and colleges, the foundational research phase was implemented (as described in Phase Two) to address information gaps and provide colleges with background information which assisted them in moving forward. One outcome of that foundational phase was the creation of an overview document for internal use among the nine partner colleges. This document clearly outlined project background, primary messages, suggested approaches, and transfer credit criteria which assisted colleges in their initial understanding and implementation of project objectives.

Additionally, the project team perceived the need for a shorter, more direct communication tool (Appendix C) which could be shared with a variety of partners and stakeholders, e.g. ACE program staff, Employment Services staff, college registrars and admissions departments, school board adult credit administrators, community partners and, of course, students.

Not all individuals arrive at the doors of a college “ready to go”. The impact of this project was directed at those who are not ready-to enter college directly - those who may not even think they can come to the door. The core business of ACE programs is to work with such individuals and assist them in realizing that even though they may not think they can pursue college, there is a pathway into college through the ACE program, and the potential of receiving transfer credit from their previous secondary school courses can actually expedite their transition to postsecondary programs. Such students think they can’t get into college much less be successful in college, but projects such as this show them the options and how it’s possible. That impact on potential students in turn creates an impact on colleges as those students proceed through the ACE program, enter postsecondary programs, and ultimately become successful college graduates.

Recommendations

The recommendations which follow were generated during numerous project consultations, the project's environmental scan, the college/school board interaction survey, and anecdotal comments submitted in the student tracking process. As mentioned previously, all nine participating colleges remained engaged throughout the project and participated in regular consultation either face-to-face or via email or teleconference.

1. ONCAT formally request that the Ministry of Education Adult Education Policy Unit release to school boards the assessments that they contracted from Curriculum Services Canada, in 2007, determining equivalency of college ACE courses to Ontario secondary school courses so as to enhance academic pathways and reduce barriers for students and to better facilitate student mobility within Ontario's postsecondary system.
2. Colleges provide a comprehensive guide for ACE educators on the MEDU PLAR for Mature Students policy and program so that they can better understand the rigors of the adult education school board procedures and prepare eligible learners who wish to engage in the equivalency or challenge process.
3. MTCU and MEDU convene a provincial forum with adult educators from school boards and colleges to explore the possibilities of local coordinated planning and develop strategies for an effective community based pilot.
4. Colleges produce and disseminate provincially a professional resource for the educators of adults that describes the ACE and ACE distance programming and clarifies the role of ACE as one of the pathways to postsecondary education for adult learners.
5. College ACE programs consider the value of providing training to staff regarding MEDU policies of assessment, evaluation and reporting specific to those ACE courses they deliver that are equivalent to secondary credit courses. ACE staff would be better equipped to fully participate in the transfer process if they were better informed regarding program policies such as course codes (destinations) and prerequisites, expectations and associated accommodations and modifications, strands, processes, achievement categories, levels and learning skills etc.
6. Colleges revisit the previously proposed eligibility criteria for ACE/Ontario secondary school transfer credit to provide more opportunity for adult students to take advantage of this pathway.
7. Colleges consider undertaking a collaborative awareness/marketing initiative to promote the ACE/Ontario secondary school transfer credit pathway and to ensure consistent, province-wide messaging.

Appendix A: Literature Review

An Analysis of the Snowdon and Associates report, *Towards a Better Understanding of Credit Transfer Costs and Benefits*

Overview

In 2014, Snowdon and Associates produced for ONCAT the report *Towards a Better Understanding of Credit Transfer Costs and Benefits*. The focus is on comparing the ‘cost’ of a “baccalaureate degree for a direct-entry university student in Ontario versus the cost for a college student who acquires a college diploma and then transfers to a university to obtain a baccalaureate degree.” (Preface) This is a very specific postsecondary focus. The writers indicate that this is just one of many transfer credit paths being developed for students “that may be worthy of study from a financial perspective” (p. 49). Others identified for further study include college to college, university to college and university to university. The authors do not mention any non-postsecondary transfer pathways, but certainly a closer analysis of the costs and benefits for students and institutions to be realized from the articulation of ACE and OSSD programming would also be beneficial. This report makes it clear that the purpose of such analysis is to inform policy makers who are involved in making “internal resource allocation decisions and institutional strategic decisions” (p. 49).

The project consultants responsible for *Measuring the Benefits for Learners and College Programs Resulting from the Articulation of ACE and OSSD Programming* felt that it would be important to become familiar with and promote the replication of all applicable costing processes and recommendations from the initial report. While the project is listed as complete on the ONCAT web site, the full report has not yet been posted. The consultants would like to thank ONCAT for making the full report available to them for analysis. The *Towards a Better Understanding of Credit Transfer Costs and Benefits* report is based on an analysis of available literature including Canadian and international studies, an Ontario environmental scan, conversations with key provincial informants and the consultants’ extensive experience.

For those interested in the costs of college versus university education this is an excellent resource with clear and well written analysis and conclusions. The analysis of college versus university funding as well as financial supports for students are particularly enlightening. As a result of the detailed and thoughtful analysis, the report challenges a number of widely held assertions about costs and savings — in particular that costs for students, government and institutions are lower as a result of “improved transfer credit” initiatives (p. iii). It also challenges the assumption that transfer credit opportunities reduce time spent in postsecondary and improve completion rates. (p. 10) It makes it clear that there are significant “data challenges” which have resulted in inconsistencies among the reports they examined, which then impact many of the conclusions.

Relevant Approaches

Despite the focus in *Towards a Better Understanding of Credit Transfer Costs and Benefits* on college to university transfers for the purpose of earning a baccalaureate, there are many conclusions and processes which are applicable to the *Measuring the Benefits for Learners and College Programs Resulting from the Articulation of ACE and OSSD Programming* project.

Perhaps the most important of these is that despite the fact the first report challenges many long held assumptions about cost and time benefits realized by students transferring from a college to university, it does

reinforce the validity of two other widely-held beliefs: “credit transfer is an important part of providing opportunity for students— especially non-traditional students” and “no one benefits if students have to repeat courses with equivalent learning outcomes” (p. iii). In fact, it identifies that transfer credit will be increasingly important as the student demographic changes to an older non-traditional student group (p. iv). The report suggests that this demographic shift will result in a change in focus from cost savings to “student success” in program planning and institutional policy (p. iv).

Because the focus is on college to university transfer credits, many of the specific costs identified do not have the same applicability to ACE/OSSD transfer credits. The broad categories which the report identifies as needing examination to determine the real costs and benefits of a transfer credit initiative are relevant and applicable. These categories are student costs, institutional costs and government costs.

The document outlines the following student cost categories: “direct costs” (tuition, books/equipment and living expenses) as well as “foregone income” also referred to as “opportunity cost” (p.20). This is primarily lost/reduced wages as a result of missed employment opportunities because a student is in school. Direct costs for adult upgrading and adult credit students are minimal – there is no tuition; books and equipment are provided; as a rule, students do not incur additional living expenses relocating for this level of education. It is the “foregone income” or “opportunity cost” which is forgotten in most analysis and represents the most significant cost for the non-traditional students likely to take advantage of the ACE/OSSD credit initiative. Opportunity cost is significant “the longer a student takes to complete his/her post-secondary education the greater the opportunity cost” (p.20). The report has identified \$30,000 per year as the opportunity cost for each additional year a student spends in postsecondary (p.21).

Institutional costs include “direct costs” primarily teaching staff and “indirect costs” like library, physical plant, and student services. (p. 7). It points out the difficulty in accurately assigning costs given the “multiple program responsibilities” of individual academic departments. (p. 6). These activities might be both internal and external to the academic department. The study also identifies there could be “foregone revenue” costs if an institution’s “policy/practice results in less revenue than an alternative policy/practice” (p. 5). The summary of the many studies which were examined makes it clear that determining institutional costs is a complicated process which must take into consideration “differences in cost by discipline and by level within a program” (p. 12). Government costs include subsidies “provided directly via various kinds of student assistance, including tax credits, and to the institution via operating grants and capital grants” (p. 4).

The literature review and environmental scan make it clear that determining a clear definition of cost is critical, and these costs may vary significantly from student to student especially when considering living expenses and foregone income. It also highlights that determining institutional costs is complicated and should include in the discussion specific costs by “discipline/program and/or year level” (p. 11). This “discipline mix” is the key ingredient in determining cost, but level of instruction, faculty agreements and part-time faculty policies must also be factored into any costing (p. 12).

The report also presents two valid processes to determine comparable costs. The first is to compare FTE equivalent costs between systems. This is fairly straightforward and widely in use. The second costing is more difficult to determine, presents a very different picture, and especially in the case of non-traditional students, may be more relevant. This cost determines cost to graduation. In this costing, the “time is money” consideration (especially for mature students) is calculated.

Conclusion

Although there are significant differences when determining costs and benefits for students transferring between postsecondary programs as opposed to those transferring between non-postsecondary programs, there is also a great deal that is consistent. First the categories for examination are student, institutional and government costs. Secondly, no one benefits if students must repeat comparable learning which has successfully been completed elsewhere. Finally, the provision of transfer credit opportunities is important, especially for non-traditional students who are interrupting their earning years to acquire a credential.



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Environmental Scan
developed for
**Measuring the Benefits for Learners and
College Programs Resulting from the
Articulation of ACE and OSSD**



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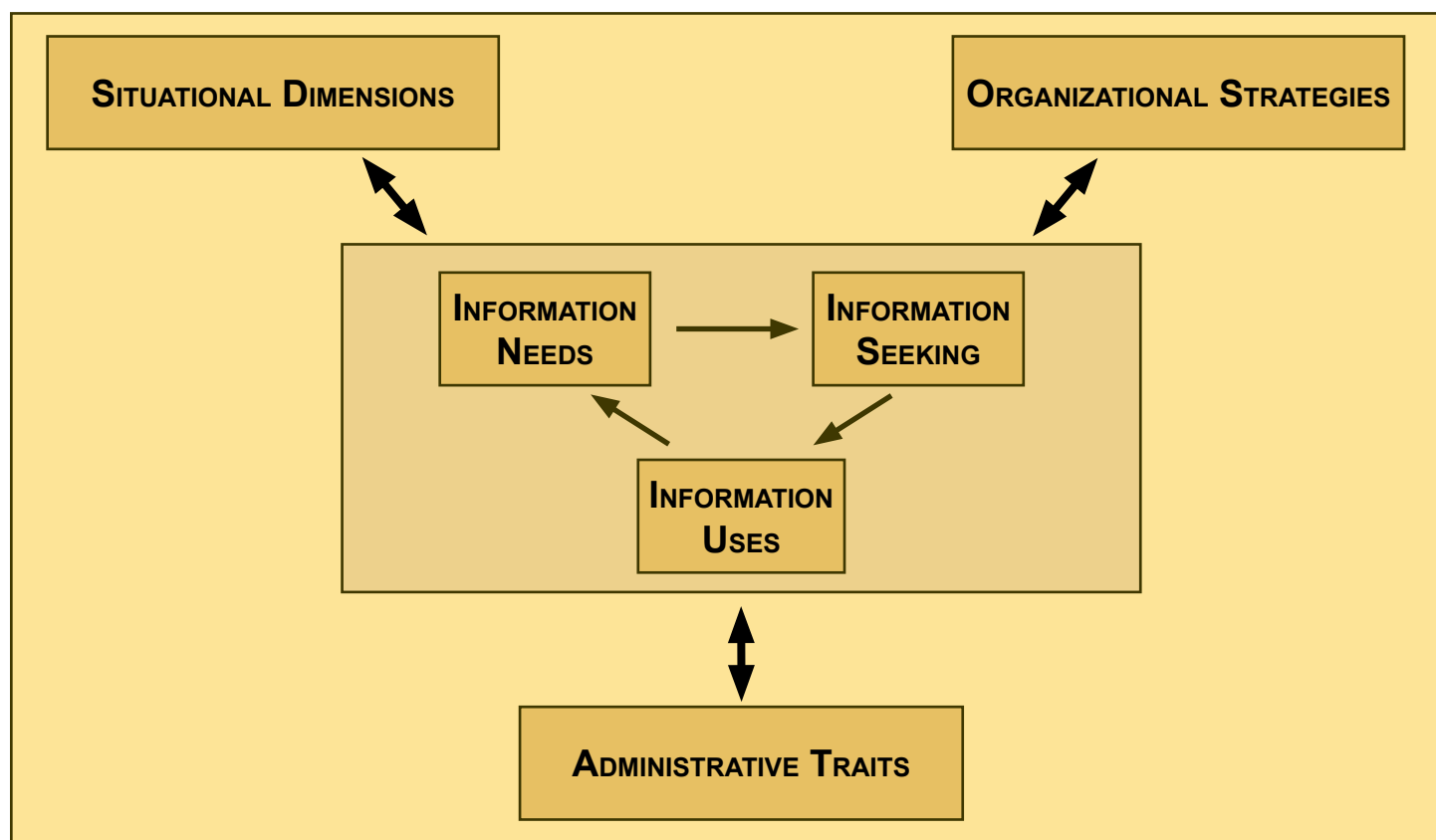
An Environmental Scan

April /May 2015



The environmental scan completed as part of the *Measuring the Benefits for Learners and College programs Resulting from the Articulation of ACE and OSSD* project served to assist the project consultants in their acquisition and use of information about events, trends, and relationships in school board adult education programs and college ACE programs related to the reciprocal recognition of courses/credits. This knowledge of will facilitate the consultants planning the project's future course of action and identifying possible pilot partners.

It is important to understand that this particular environmental scanning exercise included both looking at information (viewing) and looking for information (searching). The use of both written surveys and spoken interviews, that probed for additional information, was useful.



1. School Board Adult Education Environmental Scan

Proposed Inquiry

Identify a sample of school boards with experience recognizing ACE as equivalent using PLAR for Mature Students.

Deliverable

An environmental scan describing information regarding school board adult education programs who recognize ACE through PLAR for Mature Students processes.

Research Tool

As the first step in identifying communities where piloting a reciprocal OSSD and ACE transfer credit process within the project timelines available is possible, it was determined to do an environmental scan documenting factors relating to how school board adult education programs recognize ACE courses for equivalency purposes.



The consultant sent an e-mail survey to 30 school board adult education administrators (included below):

Colleagues in adult education,

I realize that this is a frantic time of year for school board educators and apologize in advance for making this request for your time. I very much hope however that you can spare 5 minutes for me to reply to the following inquiry.

I am currently working on a project through Conestoga College, funded by the Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer (ONCAT). It is an initiative that has emerged in response to the previous work Lynne Wallace and I did for the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities designed to support an adult education system which better assists adult learners in their efforts to successfully transition to postsecondary education, training or the workplace.

I am looking for information on adult students who come to your board's adult credit program having successfully completed Academic and Career Entrance (ACE) courses. I am referring to the eleven courses offered through Ontario community colleges that are based on and equivalent to grade 11 and 12, predominately math and science, credit courses. I have included a list of these courses at the end of my e-mail. I realize that some of you are not actually assigned to the credit program but I am hopeful that you will be able to get this information or pass it on to a colleague who is able to respond. I do not need exact numbers so approximations are welcome.

To respond reply to me with your answers inserted into my e-mail below. Your identity will be kept confidential – I have blind copied all names and no name or school board for the respondents will be documented.

My inquiry for you follows:

- 1. What percentage, if any, of adult students enrolling in your adult credit program come to you having completed ACE courses?*
- 2. Are you currently allowing these students to access PLAR for Mature Students equivalencies for ACE courses through the grade 11/12 equivalency or challenge process?*
- 3. If you are granting PLAR for Mature Students equivalencies for ACE credits, approximately how many of these do you issue in a year?*
- 4. Are you aware of students who have left your adult credit program and gone to an ACE program and have been allowed to use credit courses completed in your secondary school program for the purpose of earning an ACE certificate? If so how many in any given year?*
- 5. Please add any additional information you think relevant to my inquiry.*

Methodology

The environmental scan survey administered in May 2015 identified a sample of 30 school board adult credit programs, 15 of whom responded to a scan survey. From the group who responded to the e-mail eight follow-up phone interviews occurred which proved to be tremendously informative. The following reports on those survey and interview findings. It is, however, important to note that scanning hits (in this case identifying the frequency and quantity of school boards recognizing ACE courses for the purpose of granting secondary school credits) and trends (the clustering of the aforementioned hits to acknowledge a trend) are not predictions.



Identified Trends

School board adult education programs know that some have students who exit the OSSD program and go to ACE. They do not have data on this so the reporting on this was vague. School boards are not required to collect this information, but the sense was that such movement usually took place at the beginning or end of a semester when the adult realized they were many credits and possibly years away from receiving an OSSD and decided that getting ACE courses that led more quickly to a college program was advantageous. They did not drop out of the credit program; they just did not return (adults are not required to attend school and new registration occurs each semester). Most of these students would have grade 9 and 10 completed and successfully earned some grade 11 courses.

They have no data on adult students who graduate with an OSSD and enter ACE, but assumed that this perhaps does occur to allow students to upgrade specific courses required for a college program. They assume learners are directed to ACE from the college they apply to when it is determined they are not able to register at that time because they lack prerequisites.

Adults do not enter into a school board adult credit program from ACE in large numbers. Numbers range, but no school board reported more than 1% to 5% of registrants annually came from having been in an ACE program. When they do register, it is often because they have moved from a community with a community college to one that does not and lacks a public transit system.

When school board guidance staff see students who have successfully completed ACE courses, they usually see them after they have entered a college diploma program and dropped out, possibly failed. These students were frequently not enrolled in the adult credit program prior to this point. They went directly to ACE from secondary school or after time in the workforce. At that point they do register for the OSSD.

Adults who enter a school board adult education centre are eligible to be issued secondary credits through the PLAR for Mature Students' process. All school boards scanned allowed for this. These credits were issued through the PLAR grade 11/12 equivalency process. No school board surveyed indicated that any students had chosen the 11/12 challenge process. That means that the PLAR for Mature Students process they accessed, documents the credit on the OST as an equivalent without a mark. If they had requested the more complex challenge process, the transcript would show both the credit and the mark. The fact that they did not use the process that would show a mark usually indicates that the subject area in which they studied in the ACE program was not the intended postsecondary destination. Colleges and universities require marks on the transcript for prerequisites. Or it possibly could mean in the PSE application they intended to use a combination of both ACE courses and secondary school credits.

Students earning an OSSD must earn (PLAR not allowed) a minimum of four grade 11 and 12 credits – one must be an English credit. This means that students with the ACE communications course do not usually claim it as an equivalent. They tend to take the grade 11 OSSLT course to avoid writing the OSSLT and then must use the grade 12 English as part of the final four.



Students who wish to participate in the PLAR for Mature Students process must be enrolled in the secondary school credit program for the purposes of earning a secondary school diploma. That means that the PLAR equivalency would not be entered onto the transcript until the student was approaching graduation. This is a similar protocol for college upgrading programs: students must be registered in college upgrading in order to transfer secondary school credits for ACE courses.

School boards reported that students who were enrolled in secondary school in the first two years of secondary school reform and the shift to destination courses sometimes selected the wrong destination and were not eligible for the postsecondary program they later decided, as an adult, to apply for. In those cases where the student returned to upgrade from a workplace to a college destination, the guidance staff might recommend they attend ACE. These students would now be in their 30s.

School boards reported students telling them at registration that they had attempted to register for ACE but had been sent to the secondary credit program. This was usually because they had not completed grade 9 and 10 courses (intermediate division) or that perhaps the ACE staff identified that it would be quicker for the student to finish of a secondary graduation diploma.

Every school board adult education program that responded to the survey knew something about ACE. Most were unclear on the exact courses offered and appreciated that the survey included a list of the ACE courses and their equivalent secondary school credit courses.

The counsellors were interested in ACE Distance but had almost no information about it. One interviewee was particularly interested because in her school board the placements for e-learning were limited and for the most part being assigned to youth from small schools without adequate enrollment (declining enrollment issues) to offer sections in senior sciences. Adult learners were being turned away. On the other hand some school boards have distance learning programs specifically designed for adults. They are appealing because they offer a broad range of courses including most of the ACE distance course subjects. A student taking an academically challenging course like SBI3C could offset the work by taking a grade 11 accounting course or a creative grade 12 Writer's Craft at the same time which makes the workload a little lighter.

Critical Trends

School Board Adult Education administrators and guidance staff are poorly informed about ACE and are interested in learning more. They harbour no antagonism towards the program and do not see it as competition. The attitude observed was one of viewing ACE as just another option for adult learners who are academically capable of college/university destination PSE.

All school boards acknowledged that ACE courses can be recognized as equivalent to secondary school credit courses for the purpose of earning a secondary school graduation diploma issued under OSS/OS Diploma requirements through the PLAR for Mature students process.

All school boards surveyed also recognize ACE courses for the purposes of issuing graduation diplomas, using OSIS and or SSGD Circular H.S. 1, as equivalency credits coded as QEE (Equivalent Education Credit). The student applicant must be able to provide evidence that the ACE course required a minimum of 110 hours of instruction. If the hours' criterion is problematic, some programs will recognize the ACE course as QMA (Maturity Credit).



Not one interviewee raised any antagonistic comments about ACE. They did not view it as competition for teaching jobs or learners. Interestingly enough most of their information about ACE originally came to them from LBS instructors. Consequently, many of them view ACE as a literacy and basic skills program. Teachers in the credit program are distanced from the LBS program. A small number of adults successfully enter the adult credit program from LBS in most school boards.

Implication of the Trends for Ontario College ACE Programs

School board adult education programs need information on the ACE program to better understand how it can contribute to the success of their learners.

Ontario colleges offering ACE often connect with a school board's LBS department. This is a mistake. In most cases they should probably focus the alliances/partnerships they develop with the adult credit program. Note this is not the mainstream secondary credit program in the local high school but the Adult and Continuing Education (A&CE) department.

The confusion that surrounds pre ACE and GED prep offered by colleges to the same client base and under the LBS mandate as ACE is an issue that probably should be resolved. School board adult education staff tends to be somewhat dismissive of the GED program. Most of them have had experiences where an adult returns to an adult education credit program to earn an OSSD after having received the GED.

Assumptions from the Researcher

When school boards surveyed indicated any concern about the quality of ACE education (teaching and learning), they almost exclusively did so based on students who came to them from what I believe was a pre- ACE or GED prep program. It seems that the learners presented this as "coming from ACE". They need to be advised about the documentation a student coming from an ACE program would bring to avoid this confusion.

Community colleges cover an area in which more than one school board operates and as such more than one school board adult education centre is available for adult students the ACE program. This is no doubt a challenge for improved communication.

2. College Upgrading Environmental Scan

Proposed Inquiry

Determine the following:

- Are college upgrading programs still committed to the concept of granting transfer credit for the purposes of granting an ACE Certificate for OSSD courses?
- Do college upgrading programs believe that the criteria identified in the 2014 *Enhancing Student Pathways to Postsecondary* project are still correct?
- Have college upgrading programs initiated discussions with their Registrars to move this initiative forward?
- Have any colleges begun issuing transfer credits for the purposes of issuing an ACE Certificate?
- Which colleges are interested in participating in a joint college school board pilot?

Deliverable

An environmental scan of college upgrading programs indicating their readiness to move forward with the granting of transfer credits for OSSD for the purpose of issuing an ACE Certificate.



Research Tool

As the first step in identifying communities where piloting a reciprocal OSSD and ACE transfer credit process within the project timelines available is possible, it was determined to do an environmental scan documenting progress to date at the twenty-four colleges. Following the April project announcement to College Upgrading managers and Registrars, the lead college researcher distributed a follow up email to the managers at the twenty-four college upgrading programs. The following email was sent to each college manager May 1, 2015:

Last week Andrea Leis distributed an announcement that Conestoga had received funding through ONCAT to move forward with a number of recommendations from the Enhancing Pathways to Postsecondary project. This project examined the feasibility of granting transfer credits for specific OSSD courses for the purpose of granting an ACE certificate. That project determined there is broad system commitment to moving forward. It also determined the criteria for granting transfer credit. The focus of this project is on quantifying “the impact of implementing the recommended transfer credit process on the movement of adult students into college postsecondary and apprenticeship programming, and the opportunity it provides for closer working relationships between colleges and school boards across the province.”

The first step is to conduct an environmental scan “to determine which colleges have either moved forward with implementing a transfer credit process or are interested in moving forward.” I would like to schedule a brief phone conversation with you in May to discuss this transfer credit initiative. I have provided below a number of questions which will guide our conversation, but as always in my exchanges with colleges I am certain these questions are just a starting point for much broader input. I will subsequently prepare a report which I will share with all colleges.

QUESTIONS

- 1. Has your college already moved forward with granting transfer credit for OSSD courses for the purpose of granting an ACE Certificate?*
- 2. If no, is your college interested in moving forward?*
- 3. Have any discussions taken place in your college in order to move forward?*
- 4. Are you aware of any school boards in your catchment area that have initiated transfer credit for ACE courses for the purposes of issuing an Ontario Secondary School Diploma?*
- 5. In the original report the following criteria for granting transfer credit were agreed to by a majority of colleges: the ten OSSD courses specifically identified in the ACE-OSSD Equivalency Chart should be considered for transfer credit; transfer credit should be granted for a maximum of two OSSD courses; the minimum grade required for transfer credit is 70%; OSSD courses must have been completed within the past five years. Do you agree that these criteria are still a good starting point?*
- 6. Are you available for a brief phone conversation in May? If you are not available for a follow up conversation, you can also provide answers to the above questions by return email.*

A follow up e-mail was distributed May 5 requesting that managers identify a time that worked for them from a clearly identified schedule:

This is a follow up to my email last week indicating I would like to schedule a time for a brief phone call. I have provided the text of the original email below. The following are the times still available, but I can be more flexible to accommodate your schedule by starting calls earlier or later. I have allowed an hour for each call, but I'm sure the information and feedback I require will take much less time.

Pick a time and let me know.

Methodology

Each college scheduling a call received a reminder the day before confirming the time and contact process. The email also included the twelve recommendations from the PIF project. Reviewing these recommendations provided the structure for each of the calls.



As the consultant reviewed the status of each recommendation, the answers to the original five questions were provided. In addition the consultant asked each manager if they had any additional feedback or questions to provide about the transfer credit criteria and if they might be interested in participating in a pilot.

Response Rates

Feedback from twenty-three of the twenty-four colleges (96%) was gathered. Two colleges provided written responses and a follow up phone interview was not conducted. Twenty-one colleges participated in subsequent phone calls ranging from 30 minutes to an hour.

Identified Trends

No college was aware of a school board in their area granting transfer credit for ACE courses, but they were very interested in learning more about the process and results.

College Upgrading programs indicated that their primary linkage with school board programs is through LSPs with Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) programs. Since this is not the program area delivering Adult Credit programming, it is consequently not the best linkage for purposes of this initiative.

Three colleges have put in place the required processes and policies within the last few months to begin the transfer credit process. Centennial has not yet had any applicants; Georgian believes there have been a few applicants and will follow-up to identify numbers; Boreal has issued transfer credits for two students. In the college system, the student must initiate the request for transfer credit.

One college has already entered into a highly collaborative partnership with their local school board to plan joint delivery for adult students. The targeted students are those who have good academic skills but lack a significant number of secondary credits. Consequently the fastest route to a credential and subsequent enrollment in a postsecondary program is sharing the student. The school board will provide Communications and Math programming; the college will provide ACE Self Management/ Self Direction, which is not available through the school board and is seen by the school board as important to clarifying the clarification of postsecondary goals and processes, and at least one more ACE course based on the student's postsecondary destination. The student will receive an ACE Certificate. Students applying for postsecondary admission will provide transcripts from both the school board and college programs for consideration.

Communications with Registrar departments varies from not currently a priority to either ongoing or planned for the summer period. No college identified that moving forward would have to overcome any significant barriers.



For some colleges, there is a sense that there might not be a significant demand. These same colleges do, however, recognize that in some communities such a transfer credit process could be of interest to many adult students. Some colleges also asked what students to reach out to, how to recruit students for whom transfer credits would be applicable and advice on how to market the opportunity.

Critical Trends

All responding colleges remain committed to granting transfer credits for identified OSSD courses for the purpose of granting an ACE Certificate. (One college did identify they would need to time for further consideration as they are undergoing program changes at the ACE level of programming.)

All responding colleges confirmed that the identified transfer credit criteria are correct. There were some questions about the limit of two courses and the need for these courses to have been completed within the last five years. Some colleges indicated they need to determine if these criteria are in line with existing college policies for other program areas. They did agree that residency (number of courses) and currency (when courses were completed) are important considerations.

Many colleges indicated they have highly collaborative working relationships with local school boards as a result of Dual Credit, S-C-W initiatives and youth apprenticeship initiatives. They believe building on these relationships is the best process to move forward with reciprocal recognition.

Many colleges expressed an interest in participating in a pilot for this project. They indicated the interest of the local school board adult education program and the commitment of the Registrar as critical. The size of the school board is also a consideration for identifying pilot locations. Many also indicated recent personnel changes in the Upgrading program and/or the Registrar's office might delay immediate action. Those colleges which were not interested in being pilot sites at this time are definitely interested in hearing more about the pilot processes and outcomes.

Implication of the Trends for Ontario College ACE Programming

Colleges need more information and discussion to better understand how transfer credit can contribute program and learner success.

Moving forward with reciprocal transfer credit requires the engagement of the secondary school adult credit programming not LBS.

It is important to maintain the forward movement of this initiative. Upgrading programs remain committed, and many have begun discussions with their Registrar departments. Colleges already have internal processes in place for programs to identify for admissions/record keeping transfer credit requests and criteria.

Conclusion

It is clear that programs in both delivery sectors have moved forward with the granting of transfer credits. While any movement forward is a positive development, this progress has primarily taken place internally. Colleges are largely unaware of school board initiatives; school boards are unaware of college initiatives. In order for the full benefits of this transfer credit process to be realized for the benefit of students and programs in both sectors, cross-sector communications and co-ordination between College Upgrading and school board credit programs at the local level should be encouraged.

Appendix C Outreach Information Tool

OSSD and ACE Transfer Credit at [*insert name*] College

What?

- ❖ This is a new transfer credit pathway available to students in college Academic Upgrading (AU/ACE) programs.
- ❖ Students can apply for a maximum of two transfer credits for OSS (Ontario Secondary School) courses in order to qualify for the college's **Academic and Career Entrance** (ACE) certificate

The ACE Certificate is recognized as Grade 12 equivalent for

- applying to Ontario's community colleges
- registering for apprenticeship training
- hiring and promotion by a growing number of employers.

Who?

In order for students to take advantage of this pathway, OSS course(s) must:

- ❖ have a final grade of at least 70%
- ❖ have been completed in the last five years
- ❖ be on the list on the following page

Why?

- ❖ Save time which in turn, saves money!
- ❖ Receive credit for learning accomplished previously to qualify for an ACE Certificate.
- ❖ Spend less time in Academic Upgrading which allows faster access to postsecondary programs.
- ❖ ACE courses may be eligible for transfer credit toward an OSSD through a school board Adult Credit program.
- ❖ Provides an alternative pathway for adult students who do not have an OSSD who are seeking certification for education, training and/or employment

See the table below to identify OSS courses available for ACE transfer credit:

Ontario OSS		Academic and Career Entrance Program (ACE)		
Course name	Course code	Course name	In-class course code	Distance Learning course code
English				
English, Grade 12, College Preparation	ENG4C	ACE Communications		
Math				
Foundations for College Mathematics, Grade 12, College Preparation	MAP4C	ACE Apprenticeship Mathematics		
Foundations for College Mathematics, Grade 12, College Preparation	MAP4C	ACE Business Mathematics		
Mathematics for College Technology, Grade 12, College Preparation	MCT4C	ACE Technical Mathematics		
Mathematics for Work and Everyday Life, Grade 12, Workplace Preparation	MEL4E	ACE Workplace (Core) Mathematics Equivalency		
Science				
Biology, Grade 11, College Preparation	SBI3C	ACE Biology		
Biology, Grade 12, University Preparation	SBI4U	ACE Biology University Prep		
Physics, Grade 11, University Preparation	SPH3U	ACE Physics		
Physics, Grade 12, College Preparation	SPH4C	ACE Physics		
Chemistry, Grade 12, College Preparation	SCH4C	ACE Chemistry		
Chemistry, Grade 12, University Preparation	SCH4U	ACE Chemistry University Prep		

How?

- ❖ Contact your local community college Academic Upgrading (ACE) program [*insert contact details*] for more information
- ❖ Be prepared to show your OSS transcript

Appendix D: Project Communication to the Field

These updates and bulletins were sent to college Academic Upgrading managers and Registrars from Andrea Leis, Dean, School of Career and Academic Access, Conestoga College, between April 2015 and March 2016.

Field Update: Tuesday, April 21, 2015

Last fall, Conestoga College sent you the final report written by project consultants, Lynne Wallace and Brenda King, on the Productivity and Innovation-funded project, Enhancing Student Pathways to Postsecondary. The purpose of the project was to explore the feasibility of developing a transfer credit process which would enable adult students to apply up to two previously completed Ontario Secondary School (OSS) courses for credit toward the college Academic and Career Entrance (ACE) certificate.

Since October, work has been completed on Recommendation 11: “Develop a clear pathway document which identifies all the multiple routes which adult learners currently take to acquire the necessary credentials for further training and employment needs.” Literacy Network of Durham Region (LiNDR) secured Service Delivery Network Development Funds (SDNDF) to develop a Pathways Flowchart and Companion Guide for potential learners and their advisors to use when deciding the best route to postsecondary apprenticeship, community college and university programming. The Flowchart and Companion Guide have been widely distributed and well received by college upgrading program staff, employment and training counsellors and MTCU. To view the original PIF report and the Pathways resources go to www.lindr.on.ca.

I am pleased to announce that Conestoga has recently received funding through ONCAT to proceed with Recommendations 6, 7 and 8. These recommendations focus on the impact of implementing the recommended transfer credit process on:

- student numbers in upgrading
- subsequent success in postsecondary
- personal and financial status of students
- training for school board adult credit and college upgrading programs.

Lynne Wallace will be contacting all colleges as part of an environmental scan process to determine which colleges have either moved forward with implementing a transfer credit process or are interested in moving forward. Brenda King will be contacting school board adult credit programs to gather the same information. Based on the results of these inquiries, at least one college and its feeder school board(s) will be identified to participate in a joint pilot to examine in more detail, benefits and challenges for programs in both systems and implications for affected learners.

Conestoga is excited about this project which will quantify the impact of implementing the recommended transfer credit process on the movement of adult students into college postsecondary and apprenticeship programming, and the opportunity it provides for closer working relationships between colleges and school boards across the province. I will be issuing regular updates identifying the progress that has been made and the information the project has generated. The final report will be posted on the ONCAT website.

If you have questions or suggestions, please don't hesitate to contact me. I sincerely hope that you will be able to respond to Lynne's request for information and assistance in the next few weeks.

College Bulletin #1: Thursday, August 13, 2015

I'm writing to update you on the progress that's been made on the ONCAT project, *Measuring the Benefits for Learners and College Programs Resulting from the Articulation of ACE and OSSD Programming*. Since I first wrote to you in April, the project consultants, Lynne Wallace and Brenda King, have completed the attached Environmental Scan. The Scan identified which colleges and school boards have either moved forward with implementing an ACE/OSSD transfer credit process or are interested in proceeding. During the college interviews, program managers were asked to indicate if they would be interested in participating in a fall pilot.

As I wrote in my initial email, based on the results of these interviews at least one college and its feeder school board(s) will be identified to participate in a joint pilot. The pilot will examine in more detail the benefits and challenges for programs in both systems resulting from the mutual articulation of ACE and OSSD courses and the implications for qualifying learners. The project consultants will be contacting those colleges which indicated an interest in being part of the piloting phase to identify those in the best position to participate. Selection will be based on determining if there is a school board in the community which is also interested in participating, whether the appropriate documentation processes are in place and the college's ability to collect and report on the required information. Piloting communities will be determined later this month and identified in our next bulletin.

Conestoga is excited about this project which will not only quantify the impact of implementing the recommended transfer credit process on the movement of adult students into college postsecondary and apprenticeship programming, but also provides an opportunity for closer working relationships between colleges and school boards across the province.

The pilot phase will further enable the researchers to do the following:

- develop and evaluate the processes required to promote collaboration between college upgrading and school board adult credit programs to enable cross sector course articulation
- identify and deliver the training required by frontline staff in pilot programs
- determine student demand
- develop a profile of students benefiting from this articulation opportunity
- track subsequent participant success in postsecondary

Two foundational reports are referenced in the Environmental Scan: Ontario's Pathways to Postsecondary Education for Adult Learners: A Companion Guide and Enhancing Student Pathways to Postsecondary. Both are now posted in English on the College Sector Committee website www.cscou.com and in English and French at www.lindr.on.ca. If you have questions or suggestions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Field Update: Wednesday, August 26, 2015

On August 11, 2015, I distributed the Environmental Scan which resulted from phase one of the ONCAT project, *Measuring the Benefits for Learners and College Programs Resulting from the Articulation of ACE and OSSD*. I indicated in the covering memo that the project consultants were in the process of contacting those colleges which had indicated an interest in participating in piloting activities and that information would be distributed in August identifying the participating colleges.

As a result of college feedback gathered during the environmental scan phase as well as the uncertainty during the summer regarding school board negotiations, we have modified the focus of the project for the fall. A foundational research phase will answer many of the questions which colleges asked regarding identification and recruitment of students, anticipated demand, and internal and external outreach strategies. This research phase will address the previously identified issues:

- determine student demand
- develop a profile of students benefiting from this articulation opportunity
- develop recruitment and outreach strategies

Conestoga is pleased to announce that in addition to Conestoga, the following colleges have confirmed their participation in this foundational research phase: Confederation, Fanshawe, Georgian, Lambton, Loyalist, and Niagara.

Subsequent piloting involving a college and school board adult education program(s) will be the final phase, scheduled to begin in late fall.

Although this foundational research phase is a modification to the initial project plan, the Environmental Scan indicates that it will be very advantageous in promoting the future success of reciprocal recognition of ACE and OSSD courses. It is important to stress this project is not a provincial cross sector implementation initiative; rather it is designed to conduct selected pilot activities to identify potential benefits of reciprocal recognition for learners and programs.

If you have any questions or recommendations, please contact me or the project consultants — Lynne Wallace l.wallace@xplornet.com or Brenda King brenda@eduworks.ca.

College Bulletin #2: Tuesday, January 12, 2016

In early September, I provided an update on the *Measuring the Benefits for Learners and College Programs Resulting from the Articulation of ACE and OSSD*. I was particularly pleased to announce that in addition to Conestoga College, Boreal, Confederation, Fanshawe, Georgian, Lambton, Loyalist, Niagara and Sault Colleges had joined the project. (Centennial had previously put in place the necessary internal procedures to grant transfer credit bringing to ten or 42% of colleges able to issue transfer credit.)

During the environmental scan process, colleges requested more information regarding identification and recruitment of students, anticipated demand, and internal and external outreach strategies. School board adult education program staff, when contacted during the both the environmental scan and follow-up regional discussions with colleges, continued to express a lack of information regarding ACE programing and the role

that it plays in Ontario's adult education teaching and learning continuum. Consequently the nine participating colleges have agreed to track and report on student demand and recruitment as well as effective internal and community engagement strategies.

The participating colleges have had two meetings. The first was a teleconference in August and the second a face-to-face in October. At these consultations, the participants provided updates on on-going activities and identified next steps and the supports required to maximize success. All colleges indicated that the internal arrangements necessary to officially recognize those secondary school senior credits that include content equivalent to ACE courses for the purposes of issuing an ACE certificate had been made. The colleges also indicated that meetings with potential school board partners had been initiated. Throughout the fall, the focus has been on developing resources and approaches to promote subsequent reciprocal recognition in all interested communities.

Although the initial project plan has been modified, it is clear that any broader movement forward requires the solid foundation of understanding and resources which the participating colleges are currently building. The project will end in April 2016 at which time a final report identifying next steps will be distributed to the field and published on the ONCAT website.

If you have any questions or recommendations, please contact me or the project consultants — Lynne Wallace l.wallace@xplornet.com or Brenda King brenda@eduworks.ca .

College Bulletin #3 March 15, 2016

Hello College Upgrading and Registrar Colleagues,

This is the final college bulletin on the status of the *Measuring the Benefits for Learners and College Programs Resulting from the Articulation of ACE and OSSD* project funded by ONCAT.

Conestoga College has built on the results and recommendations identified in the *Enhancing Student Pathways to Postsecondary* (June 2014) report to determine the ways in which a transfer credit option impacts students participating in college upgrading programming.

The foundational research phase identified information needs for both colleges and school board adult education programs and barriers for participation. Recommendations to enhance the articulation of ACE and Ontario secondary school credits have been enumerated.

This project may be ending but the goal of assisting adult students in reaching their educational and ultimate career goals continues. The path to transfer credits between Ontario secondary school and ACE is an avenue which has been paved and is ready for traffic.

Thank you to the participating colleges: Boreal, Confederation, Conestoga, Fanshawe, Georgian, Lambton, Loyalist, Niagara and Sault Colleges and especially the project consultants, Brenda King and Lynne Wallace and Project Advisor, Barb Glass for their collaboration, insights and perseverance.

If you have any questions or recommendations, please contact me. You can look forward to reading the final report when it is posted on the ONCAT website.

Appendix E Student Data Collection Form

(Note that the font size and formatting has been altered from the original document for ease of inclusion in this report.)

Collecting and Forwarding Student Information

In order to track and analyze both student profiles and college activity, it is important that all participating colleges collect the same information and forward for central compilation. (I promise it won't be as onerous as EOIS CaMS – just the relevant facts!). Data which is already being collected on the LBS Participant Registration Form is highlighted in yellow.

Two simple data collection forms are provided:

- **Student Intake Form** should be completed and scanned to Lynne Wallace at l.wallace@xplor.net as new students are recruited. **Please complete a form for each student who is evaluated for transfer credit.** We are interested not only in those who are granted transfer credit, but also those who are not and the associated reasons/circumstances.
- **Student Exit Form** should also be scanned to Lynne as students who have been granted transfer credit exit the program. Results of both forms will be compiled and shared monthly.

Please see the explanations below regarding the information on both forms.

1. Student Intake information

a) Student Identifier

We do need to track individual participant information and results, but names are not required. Consequently, the following identification system has been developed. Each college has been assigned a two letter identifier. These two letters should be followed by a number starting with 01 for the first student 02 for the second etc. Here are the college identifiers:

Boreal BL	Conestoga CA	Confederation CN	Fanshawe FE	
Georgian GN	Lambton LN	Loyalist LT	Niagara NA	Sault ST

b) Program Location

Because many of you have multiple satellite locations, please indicate which site students are attending. This may help to identify if there are specific community demands and student profiles.

c) Recruitment/Referral

Understanding where interested students can be recruited is a significant component of this foundational research phase. For each student, please indicate on the checklist how they learned about this new pathway option.

d) Participating Student Information

This is primarily the same information which is collected for EOIS CaMS. Data already being collected for EOIS CaMS entry has been highlighted in yellow.

e) Assessment Results

It would be ideal if everyone was using the same test – probably ESEE – but I suspect this isn't the case. The really critical pieces of information are whether students with OSSD credits eligible for transfer credit demonstrate the necessary academic foundation required to participate in an ACE course and whether the student has been advised/required to upgrade communications and/or mathematics skills before admission to an ACE level course.

f) Transcript Analysis

You will need to obtain a copy of the student's high school transcript. All colleges have designated transfer credit staff (usually in the Registrar's Office) who process transfer credit forms once the transfer credits have been identified, verified, and signed off by the appropriate academic department, in this case by Academic Upgrading. You will need to check with your own transfer credit office to access the internal form(s) they need you to use. You will also need to determine who in AU will be responsible for doing the evaluation of the transcript and the completion of the required forms. The form in this package provides a quick checklist for initial evaluation of the transcript.

2. Student Exit Information

At exit we are trying to capture the following information. Did the student complete the plan as identified at intake? If not, why not? If yes, what were her/his grades and what is the next step in training? For those students (probably minimal with direct employment goals) this is an opportunity to identify employers who do and do not recognize ACE as OSSD Equivalent.

If you have any questions about the data being collected or suggestions for additional data, please contact Lynne l.wallace@xplornet.com.

Student Intake Form**A) College Information**

Name of College: _____

Name of Site: _____

Person Completing Form (name/position): _____

Student Identifier (e.g. CA 01): _____

B) Recruitment and Referral

Please indicate from the following list how the student found out about this new pathway option.

Please add any additional routes which the student identified.

Recruited from

- During college Academic Upgrading intake
- From college Academic Upgrading classroom

Referred by

- Registrar's Office
- College Counselling/Advising department
- College Aboriginal Student Services
- Postsecondary academic program/department
- College Continuing Education
- College Employment Services program
- Community or school board Employment Services program
- College Apprenticeship Department
- School Board LBS program
- Community-based LBS Program
- School Board Adult Credit Program
- Community Aboriginal Centre
- WSIB
- Second Career
- Promotional Materials
- Word of mouth
- Other (Please provide specific information)

C) Student Motivation

Please indicate why the student is pursuing this transfer credit pathway. (Check all that apply.)

- Needs certificate in order to qualify for postsecondary admission purposes
- Needs certificate to qualify to register as an apprentice
- Needs certificate for employer hiring and/or promotion purposes
- Wants certificate for personal reasons
- Faster progress into next step training
- Saving of time
- Saving of money
- Other (Please provide details)

D) Student Profile Information

Gender	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Undisclosed	
Family Status	<input type="checkbox"/> Married (or equivalent) <input type="checkbox"/> Single <input type="checkbox"/> Undisclosed	
Age	<input type="checkbox"/> < 19 <input type="checkbox"/> 19 – 25 <input type="checkbox"/> 26 – 29	<input type="checkbox"/> 30-39 <input type="checkbox"/> 40 – 49 <input type="checkbox"/> 50+
Member of Designated Group (s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Newcomer <input type="checkbox"/> Visible minority <input type="checkbox"/> Francophone <input type="checkbox"/> First Nations/Metis/Inuit	<input type="checkbox"/> Person with Disability <input type="checkbox"/> Deaf <input type="checkbox"/> Deaf blind
Source of Income	<input type="checkbox"/> Employed FT <input type="checkbox"/> Employed PT <input type="checkbox"/> Self-employed <input type="checkbox"/> OW <input type="checkbox"/> ODSP <input type="checkbox"/> Dependent of OW/ODSP	<input type="checkbox"/> EI <input type="checkbox"/> WSIB <input type="checkbox"/> Band-sponsored <input type="checkbox"/> Private insurance <input type="checkbox"/> Family/Savings <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)

E) Participation in ACE Programming:

Location	<input type="checkbox"/> On-site	<input type="checkbox"/> Distance	<input type="checkbox"/> Both	
Weekly Planned Commitment	<input type="checkbox"/> 6 hrs or less	<input type="checkbox"/> 7 – 14 hrs	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 - 20 hrs	<input type="checkbox"/> More than 20 hrs
Primary Time	<input type="checkbox"/> Days	<input type="checkbox"/> Evenings	<input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Varies

F) Assessment Results

Intake Assessment Administered: Yes No

If yes, list assessment tool(s) used:

Student’s Scores Meet ACE Communications Requirement: Yes No

Student’s Scores Meet ACE Mathematics Requirement: Yes No

Student Plan Includes academic remediation in:

Communications Mathematics Other (specify) _____

G) Analysis of Secondary School Transcript

Course Details				Where/How was OSSD course completed? (check which apply and include name of school board if not an ILC course)				Recommendation
OSSD Course Code	ACE Course	% grade in OSSD Course <i>70% minimum to qualify</i>	Year OSSD Course Completed <i>(within 5 yrs to qualify)</i>	Adult Credit Program <i>(Yes/No)</i>	Mainstream High School <i>(Yes/No)</i>	ILC <i>(Yes/No)</i>	Name of School Board (if not ILC) <i>(Must be Ontario School Board to qualify)</i>	Recommended for Transfer Credit <i>(Yes/No)</i>
ENG4C	ACE Com							
MAP4C	ACE App Math							
MAP4C	ACE Bus Math							
MCT4C	ACE Tech Math							
MEL4E	ACE Core Math							
SBI3C	ACE Coll Biology							
SBI4U	ACE Univ Biology							
SPH4C	ACE Coll Physics							
SPH3U	ACE Univ Physics							
SCH4C	ACE Coll Chemistry							
SCH4U	ACE Univ Chemistry							

For students not granted transfer credit check all reasons which apply.

- Marks too low
- OSSD course older than 5 years
- Out of province high school transcript
- Out of country high school transcript
- Other – please identify

Why did student not initially complete OSSD? (Check all that apply)

- Disengaged
- Academic Challenges
- Family/Personal Situation
- Health Issues
- Found Employment
- Other (Please specify) _____

H) ACE Course Enrollment

Has the student previously completed one or more ACE courses? If so, indicate below.

ACE Course Title	Completed at (specify College name or ACE Distance)

How many ACE courses does the student require to qualify for the ACE Certificate (assuming transfer credit is granted)? _____

In which of the following ACE courses is the student applying to enroll:

Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> English	<input type="checkbox"/> French	<input type="checkbox"/> Anglais langue seconde	
Mathematics	<input type="checkbox"/> Apprenticeship	<input type="checkbox"/> Business	<input type="checkbox"/> Core	<input type="checkbox"/> Technology
Sciences	<input type="checkbox"/> Biology	<input type="checkbox"/> Chemistry	<input type="checkbox"/> Physics	
	<input type="checkbox"/> U-stream Biology		<input type="checkbox"/> U-Stream Chemistry	
Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Computer Fundamentals		<input type="checkbox"/> Self-Management	

I) Next Step Training or Employment Goal

- Community College Program _____
- Private College Program _____
- Apprenticeship Trade _____
- University Program _____
- Employment
Hiring _____ or Promotion _____ (check one)

Student Exit Form

A) College Information

Name of College: _____
 Name of Site: _____
 Person Completing Form (name/position): _____
 Student Identifier (e.g. CA 01): _____

B) Exit Summary

1. Did student complete the ACE courses required to receive an ACE Certificate?
 Yes No
2. If no, why not?
 Financial Demands Relocating
 Academic Challenges Health
 Personal Situation Employment Opportunity
 Family Commitments Scheduling Conflicts
 Other (Please Specify): _____
3. If the student did not complete the ACE Certificate, is s/he planning to
 Return to college Academic Upgrading
 Attend Adult Credit program
 Attend other education/training (please specify) _____
4. How long was student in the program in months? _____
5. Please complete the table below for all students, including those who withdrew.

ACE Course Completion(s)

ACE Course	Start Date	End Date	Complete (Y/N)	Final Grade

Next Education/Training Step

Postsecondary Program(s) Applied For	Institution	Application Denied	Conditional Acceptance	Confirmed Acceptance

6. For students requiring an ACE Certificate for employment purposes please respond to the following questions:
 - a) Was employer aware of ACE certification before student began program?
 Yes No
 - b) Is the employer recognizing ACE Certificate as OSSD Equivalent for hiring/promotion purposes?
 Yes No
 - c) In order to confirm employer acceptance, was it necessary for a program representative to provide promotional materials/program information and/or meet with employer?
 Yes No
 - d) Name of employer: _____

Appendix F: Key Milestones Table

I.D.	Title	Planned completion date	Actual completion date
1	Field Update Announcement to Field	April 21, 2015	April 12, 2015
2	Environmental Scan Distributed	August 11, 2015	August 11, 2015
3	College Bulletin 1	August 13, 2015	August 13, 2015
4.	Field Update	August 26, 2015	August 26, 2015
5.	College Bulletin 2	December 2015	January 12, 2016
4	Report on Progress of Recruitment and Recognition at eight Colleges (teleconference)	March 4, 2016	March 4, 2016
5	Report on College/School Board Discussions	March 11, 2016	March 11, 2016
6	Final Report and College Bulletin 3	March 11, 2016	March 11, 2016

Appendix G Acknowledgements/Project Contributors

Project Team

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