



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This report presents Phase One of the Indigenous Program Pathways Inventory Project (herein referred to as the 'Indigenous Pathways' project). For the purposes of this project a pathway is defined as a route from one program to another program that contains specified eligibility requirements and awarded transfer credits and/or other benefits to be applied at the receiving institution (adapted from ONTransfer, online). An Indigenous program is defined as any program which is rooted in or directed toward Indigenous peoples' knowledges, practices and experiences.

In September 2016, Aboriginal institutes, colleges and universities in Ontario were sent an online survey containing 42 multiple choice and open-ended questions designed to provide a comprehensive snapshot of Indigenous pathways in Ontario. In total forty-six individuals participated in the survey, representing 30 institutions. Colleges had the highest response rate at 75%, followed by universities (41%) and Aboriginal institutes (33%).

In December 2016, survey respondents who had indicated in their survey response that they were willing to participate in a follow-up conversation were contacted. Twelve follow-up conversations took place between mid-December 2016 and early January 2017. The follow-up conversations allowed participants to expand upon their survey responses and to provide comment and reaction to the survey results.

These activities were followed by a roundtable discussion in March 2017 to substantiate the interpretation of findings. Fourteen individuals, representing 10 post-secondary institutions partook in the day long gathering to comment on the draft report and to craft an Indigenous program pathways action plan based off report recommendations.

This report provides a summary of survey results and the subsequent follow-up conversations and concludes with a series of recommendations to support wholistic and accessible pathways, collaborative and community-driven pathways, pathway expansion, enhanced data collection, Indigenous approaches to pathway development and commitment to Indigenous education. Key findings from the report are listed below:

- Sixty-seven percent (n=20) of participating institutions have Indigenous programs in place.
- The most widespread areas of study are social services (e.g. child welfare, social work, mental health and addictions), preparatory studies (e.g. bridging programs, general arts and science), and health (e.g. nursing, paramedic, pre-health).
- There are no reported Indigenous pathways developed in the disciplines of justice (e.g. police foundations, law, forensic psychology), hospitality and tourism (e.g. culinary arts, travel services, hotel management) and aviation.
- The most common credential learners hold entering an Indigenous pathway is a diploma and the most common credential learners hope to gain from an Indigenous pathway is an honours bachelors' degree.
- The most common amount of credit received was less than two years but more than one year.



- Five institutions indicated that they track learners who enter their institution through an Indigenous pathway. A need for better data on Indigenous pathways was identified.
- No significant relationship was found between the maximum number of credits awarded in a pathway in relation to: level of collaboration between the sending and receiving institution in the credit assessment process, involvement of certain groups/individuals in the institution (e.g. faculty, program coordinator, associate registrar/registrar, transfer coordinator, and academic leadership), or methodology used to assess credit transfers.
- Only one institution reported that Indigenous knowledges were factored into the assessment process between Indigenous and non-Indigenous programs.
- Multiple institutions shared that they are currently in the process of indigenizing their curriculum, adding Indigenous content and/or learning outcomes to all curriculum.
- Participants believed that there were more advantages than disadvantages associated with Indigenous pathways.
- Almost half of all institutions believed that there were challenges when creating, implementing and/or assessing Indigenous pathways.