



# McMasterMohawk Music

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## McMasterMohawk Music

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### Executive Summary

Funded by the Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer (ONCAT), this work aims to examine the viability of degree-level learning outcome mapping as a normative approach in post secondary articulation agreements. Towards this aim, the project team achieved its primary goal of producing and formalizing an articulation and pathway agreement (Appendix A) from Mohawk's three-year Advanced Diploma in Music to McMaster's Honours Bachelor of Music degree program based on degree-level learning outcome mapping. This pathway is one of the first of its kind in Southern Ontario and took effect September 1, 2018.

Mohawk College and McMaster University partners believe that this innovative postsecondary transfer process and our collaboration are informative referents for future use in terms of student mobility, opportunity, outcomes, and progress in Ontario. We have included findings on the efficiency and flexibility that a degree-level outcome agreement process may provide in terms of enhancing pathways and reducing barriers for students looking to transfer from college to university. We have also included recommendations to ONCAT for improving the navigation of articulation agreement projects by post-secondary institutions.

First, we recommend addressing literature, language, and content used in degree level outcomes based approach. The disparity between the literature, language, and content used in colleges and that used in universities resulted in a certain vagueness, which made the process confusing and laborious at points. Until this is resolved, we recommend equal emphasis on a course-level outcome mapping approach, as the degree-level outcome alone cannot account for specific types of knowledge and skills acquired by students, nor do they accurately express the *level* of acquired skill, which must be clear if educators and students are to make informed decisions about transferability. Otherwise, faculty and administrators must interpret or assume what students know or do not know in a degree-level outcomes process. Finally, degree-level outcomes provide little information or clarity for students considering or experiencing articulation.

Nonetheless, there were benefits to be found in a degree-level outcome approach. This approach allowed us to locate gaps, gap types, and potential pathways that course-to-course level outcomes approach would have made more difficult. Where degree-level outcomes were similar, we could then identify where we needed to drill down into more specific course-level outcomes to determine parity in level, skills, etc. Additionally, significant pathways appeared that would not have existed without a degree-level outcome approach. Finally, certain Mohawk courses contributed to a given degree-level outcome, so they were considered to be part of that outcome's pathway. Had a course-to-course process been used, no pathway would have resulted. This could be considered both a benefit and a drawback.

This process also was valuable in revealing gaps between Mohawk College's Essential Employability Skills (EESs), which focus primarily on a student's economic capacity, and McMaster University's Diploma Level Outcomes (DLEs), which focus more broadly on economic, social, and environmental capacity of students. Gaps in critical research were also

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found between institutions. As a result, we recommend provincial revisions to college EESs that reflect a more balanced cultivation of economic, social, and environmental capacity in college students and that increase pathways. We also recommend increasing space for fostering, facilitating, and assessing critical research in colleges in order to decrease barriers to articulation.

Finally, we recommend that admissions departments in Ontario teacher's colleges be made aware of the implications of articulation agreements for applicants. Currently, students must complete two years of university in order to apply. That is, McMaster students normally apply in their 3<sup>rd</sup> year. However, transfer students from Mohawk, also in 3<sup>rd</sup> year at McMaster, are denied entry and must wait an extra year to apply for teacher's college. This is a significant economic and mobility barrier for students.

This work included related goals, such as increasing the visibility of this pathway opportunity. Towards this end, Mohawk has leveraged communication strategies via the College's Pathways Office and Student Recruitment in order to raise awareness of the credit transfer opportunity for its students. In addition, Mohawk and McMaster are working together in order to continually enhance program compatibility so students experience more choice and fewer barriers. Recommendations include agreements between the partners to maintain transparency, align communication, and align program reviews so that future revisions to the articulation agreement can be coordinated, visible, clear, timely and accurate.

This project has brought Mohawk and McMaster closer together through increased and improved collaboration and access, which will have a positive effect on students through an integrated approach to mobility.

Our Mohawk and McMaster team thanks ONCAT for their generous support of this project. Finally, our project team deserves many thanks for all their hard work, dedication and commitment to serving student needs throughout this project.

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### Project Purpose and Goals

Approximately 50% of students who enrol in the Mohawk Music program hope to pursue further educational opportunities upon completion of their diploma. Mohawk College and McMaster University, both located in Hamilton, have worked together in partnership for many years, addressing this student need by providing an informal agreement whereby Mohawk students can receive advanced standing upon entry to McMaster. This ONCAT project allowed us to provide a formal pathway agreement for our students. By doing so, we hoped to reduce barriers and accessibility, and to increase choices, visibility, flexibility, and clarity for students looking to transfer from college to university.

Mohawk and McMaster agreed to remain open and transparent throughout this pathway process by releasing our findings. This final report, its recommendations, as well as best practices and lessons learned via the process, can be shared with other institutions interested in implementing similar credit transfer opportunities. We also look forward to sharing our findings in relevant events and conferences.

#### PROJECT AIM

Provide research on the viability of a degree-level learning outcomes based approach in the formation and production of post secondary articulation agreements as normative.

#### PROJECT PRIME GOAL

The primary goal of this project team was to produce a degree-level learning outcome based articulation agreement in order to facilitate educational mobility and transfer of students from Mohawk College to McMaster University.

#### RELATED GOALS

Research and other work that occurred in formation and production of a degree-level learning outcome based articulation agreement helped to meet additional goals:

- increase post secondary pathway visibility, choice, efficiency and flexibility for students
- provide a referent for future use by ONCAT and other post-secondary institutions
- provide insight as to the viability of degree-level learning outcome based articulation agreements as normative

#### LITERATURE LIST

Ontario Government

Post-Secondary Quality Assurance Handbook (PEQAB) for Ontario Colleges (2016)

Mohawk College

Essential Employability Skills (EESs)

Vocational Learning Outcomes (VLOs)

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

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Course-level definitions, program entrance level requirements  
Mohawk Music Handbook  
Document of Proposed BBA Trades Management Degree Program Mapping and Gap Analysis  
Mohawk-Berkeley Articulation Agreement

### McMaster University

McMaster Admission Guidelines Document  
McMaster University Self-Study of Music 2012  
McMaster Music IQAP 2012 year 2-4 PLO mapping document  
Program Learning Outcomes 2012  
University Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations  
McMaster University Self-Study Guide Book

## Environmental Scan

Mohawk and McMaster partners recognize the need for increasing post-secondary student mobility. Creating a culture that values mobility not only involves increasing student pathways, but also ensures that such pathways lead to increased choice, process clarity, conciseness, and time and cost efficiency for students. Strengths and weaknesses of programs illuminated through this research process have provided an opportunity for reflection for both institutional partners, which can be used in program/curriculum reviews. Current and future program/curriculum reviews can now benefit from the evolving values related to mobility. For example, McMaster University and Mohawk College have agreed to work to increase opportunities and decrease threats that may influence current and future pathway project plans.

A culture of mobility should exist not only within the individuals and schools of a given institution but as part of an overarching value system as expressed within mission and values statements. These make explicit the culture of institutions, including providing insight into the priority placed on student mobility. The vision and mission statements of the partners illuminate the contrasts in focus that affect mobility:

- a) research and history at McMaster versus performance and technology at Mohawk
- b) social, environmental, and economic capacity at McMaster versus economic capacity at Mohawk

These contrasts could be perceived as either complementary or obstacles to mobility, depending on the needs of a given student. However, broadening the areas of focus at college to include social and environmental capacity could lead to increased student mobility and preparedness. Likewise, broadening the area of focus in University to include more music performance focus could increase pathways and preparedness. Ultimately, decision-makers need to be mindful in ensuring that the current enthusiasm for mobility does not impede the fostering and facilitating of depth in knowledge and skills acquisition.

Table 1: Institutional Vision and Mission Statements

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Institution	Vision	Mission
McMaster School of the Arts (SOTA)	The Faculty of Humanities is dedicated to cultivating a <u>teaching and research environment</u> , which reflects the highest standards of our disciplines, and to undertaking ventures in new areas of interdisciplinary inquiry and pedagogy. In the Arts, we continue to strive for a balance between the best traditions of Humanities education and the new forms of knowledge emerging within and at the intersections of disciplines. By learning from past and pressing issues facing our global world today, we promote advances in knowledge that make innovative, positive differences in the diverse lives of our students.	Humanities promote a <u>research-intensive environment</u> to promote humanistic inquiry and exchange by supporting innovative scholarly projects and by creating opportunities for interaction among scholars, students and lifelong learners. We aim to ensure that students acquire the <u>analytical skills, historical depth, and appreciation of diverse cultures</u> needed to assume leadership <u>roles as responsible, ethical, and path-breaking scholars, cultural workers, creative artists, policy makers and professional communicators. We prepare our students to be thoughtful and engaged citizens in a global world.</u>
Mohawk College	Future ready. Learning for life.	We educate and prepare <u>highly skilled</u> graduates for <u>success and contribution to community, Canada and the world.</u>
Mohawk Music	Our goal as a faculty at Mohawk College is to help our students harness their talents and dedication in music to become successful for a life in the arts. The courses that you take, ensembles and lessons that you receive and your performance opportunities on and off campus train you for a variety of careers and future possibilities after your graduation. (Excerpt from coordinator's welcome in student handbook)	

## Pathway Development

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology we employed in our work was applied over three phases to achieve specific deliverables, which included contributing to the project's aim, prime goal, and related goals.

Phase 1 occurred between January 1, 2018 and April 30, 2018. We began with the establishment of a project team, which included subject matter experts, a curriculum design specialist, facilitators, report writers, a project manager, and project co-leaders. This team began their work focused on the following objectives:

- reviewing the existing informal agreement
- course design analysis and review
- curriculum mapping and gap analysis
- learning outcomes assessment
- determining student eligibility requirements
- reviewing and researching barriers to entry/accessibility barriers

Phase 2 occurred May 1, 2018 - August 31, 2018 and focused on achieving the following objectives:



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- compose and sign draft articulation agreement
- compose and finalize the articulation agreement between the two institutions.
- have Mohawk engage the Credit Transfer Office and Student Recruitment to develop a communications plan for Mohawk Music students
- provide an interim report to ONCAT

Phase 3 occurred September 1, 2018 - December 31, 2018 to help us achieve the following objectives:

- submit the formalized pathway to ONTransfer.ca
- finalize communication of the credit transfer opportunity to prospective students
- Mohawk will compose and submit the final project report to ONCAT as per funding agreement

The formal pathway was submitted for publication on ONTransfer.ca, 30 Sept 2018.

Mohawk College's Pathways Office and Student Recruitment have finalized student communications surrounding credit transfer opportunity.

### PROGRAM COMPARISON AND ANALYSIS

In order to meet these work objectives, the team next compiled a literature resource consisting of documents from both partners and the province. This resource (see literature list) was used for degree level outcomes-based comparative work (phase 1 objectives). This work was done within the agreed-on framework of degree level mapping.

As this is one of the first projects of its kind, established literature for the degree-level outcomes-based process was almost non-existent. Where it did exist, disparities between college and university documents were frequent. Mohawk's Curriculum Design Specialist and McMaster's Humanities Academic Advisor were integral to ensuring the data we collected was accurate and useful in meeting provincial and institutional standards, as well as relevant to our needs. Meetings were held between team members to ensure that any claims made in reference to program outcomes and levels that appeared in the literature were being adhered to in practice.

After the literature resource was gathered, specific comparative work began. This work involved critically reviewing all relevant literature from the partnering institutions and the Province of Ontario:

- a) mapping college vocational learning outcomes (VLOs) and university program learning outcomes (PLO) Hours,
- b) mapping college Essential Employability Skills (EES) with university Degree Level Expectancies (DLE),
- c) providing mapping levels of Mohawk courses to McMaster's PLOs,
- d) mapping of VLO and PLO hours\*, and
- e) summary of mapping gaps (see *Data and Analysis tables 2-4, p 16-18*)

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\* Note that only required (core) course hours can be used for comparison. Options and electives cannot be included for the sake of consistency.

A critical review of the literature allowed us to see which claims were up to date and being met in practice. It also identified institutional differences in language and outcomes that needed to be understood in order to find both gaps and common ground for pathways. Once this work was done, we located *overarching concepts* and *knowledge* that would translate into a degree-level outcome based block transfer agreement at the recipient institution. Our method supplied us with the information we needed in order to successfully meet our phase 1 objectives. This work was distributed among team members and, upon completion, was reviewed by the whole team before being employed as a summary of gaps, student eligibility requirements, agreement terms and conditions, barriers, pathways, etc.

Maintaining open communication was key to our success. Subject specialists and curriculum design specialists worked separately and together throughout the literature review, maintaining a constant line of communication and holding meetings when needed. In order to determine student eligibility requirements, we reviewed and clarified learning outcomes, course levels, and course hours. We also determined a) the cumulative grade point average that would be needed in order for a student to apply through the agreement, b) a date from which students would be eligible to apply retroactively for through the agreement, c) whether an audition would be required if students met these requirements, and d) and whether there would be an alternative mode(s) of entry available for students who did not meet the articulation agreement requirements.

The methods we employed were summarized in the form of tables (p 16-18), which were useful for communicating our findings in a clear and concise way. A considerable amount of background work went into forming these tables.

Completing this work took significantly longer than anticipated due to navigating differences in curricular language between colleges and universities (PLOs/VLOs, EESs/transferable skills, "levels", course outcomes, learning elements, hours/credits). In order to address equivalencies, a common understanding needed to be found without our being able to make changes to each institution's language. Further, no governmental or other standard templates or resources existed for our work. Where they did, resources for colleges and universities differed. Again, we needed to cobble together, revise, and or create new resources for any comparative work.

Although the two institutions used different language for defining course levels, we settled on linking levels from both institutions to agreed-upon PLO's in order to conclude where the levels aligned (see table 3).

Concerning barriers to entry and accessibility, we referred to results from our comparative work. These included research gaps on the side of Mohawk College in a) critical research, and b) social and environmental capacity cultivation and assessment, which suggest a need for

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colleges to revise essential employability skills (EESs). We also documented an accessibility barrier existing between McMaster University and Ontario teacher's colleges for students who had first transferred from Mohawk to McMaster.

Phase 1 objectives culminated in formalizing credit guidelines used for assessing transfer credit from Mohawk College using a learning outcomes-based approach.

### IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

Having determined student eligibility requirements in phase 1 we moved forward in phase 2 with the production of the formal articulation agreement. For this process our method involved holding team meetings for the purpose of formalizing the terms of the agreement. Our curriculum specialist took the lead in producing the final articulation agreement document (see appendix). The agreement was signed on June 30, 2018 as scheduled. The rollout date for the agreement occurred September 1, 2018 for a 3-year term. Students completing the Mohawk Applied Music Program of Studies from September 2016 and onward may apply for this transfer agreement.

In meeting another phase 2 deliverable, Mohawk has leveraged communication strategies via the college's Pathways Office and Student Recruitment in order to raise awareness of the credit transfer opportunity for its students. This has involved increasing visibility, clarity, accessibility, timeliness, and accuracy of credit/program transfer information for student use in navigating course choices during their Mohawk POS so that they positively affect future pathways.

Phase 1-2 work was summarized in an interim report provided to ONCAT 01 Aug 2018. We chose the a team member from Mohawk to author this report involved with, and knowledgeable of, each deliverable, as well as to how we were progressing with this work in terms of deadlines. In accordance with ONCAT funding terms, as we proceeded, we were mindful to document recommendations, lessons learned, and promising practices.

### SUMMARY OF PATHWAYS CREATED

We determined the point of entry for the pathway by examining which McMaster degree-level outcomes and levels would be met by Mohawk students upon entry to their music program. Pathway information can be summarized as follows:

- Units of Transfer Credits: the pathway created via the McMasterMohawk Music project includes 63 units of transfer credit (a block 2 year transfer) in the McMaster Music (Hons) Degree program to successful Mohawk Music candidates.
- Agreement Terms and Conditions: Graduates of Mohawk College's 3-year Applied Music Ontario College Advanced Diploma program who have a Cumulative Grade Point Average of at least 75% are granted 63 units of transfer credit, if:
  1. they enrol in Honours Music; and

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2. they have achieved a grade of no less than 70% in each Mohawk College music course , thereby enabling them to complete the remaining 60 units for the degree in, potentially, a further two years.
  3. For qualified applicants who meet the admission criteria for this transfer agreement, an audition will not be required.
  4. For students who do not meet the admission requirement in point 2 above, an alternative offer may be made at the discretion of McMaster University
- Access and Barriers: Towards increasing access and reducing barriers, for qualified applicants who meet the admission criteria for this transfer agreement, an audition will not be required. We also determined that for students who do not meet the admission requirement in point (2) above, an alternative offer may be made at the discretion of McMaster University.

## Data and Analysis

### MOHAWK ESSENTIAL EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS (EES) AND MCMASTER DEGREE-LEVEL EXPECTANCIES (DLES)

First, we compared EESs and DLEs between programs. Ontario universities map their programs to six DLEs, which are further divided into more specific competencies (amounting to 26 different expectancies), while colleges map their programs to eleven EESs. The DLEs and EESs mapped to each music program are listed below.

#### DLEs mapped to McMaster Music:

1. Depth and Breadth of Knowledge
  - a. A developed knowledge and critical understanding of the key concepts, methodologies, current advances, theoretical approaches, and assumptions in a discipline overall, as well as in a specialized area of a discipline
  - b. A developed understanding of many of the major fields in a discipline, including, where appropriate, from an interdisciplinary perspective, and how the fields may intersect with fields in related disciplines
  - c. A developed ability to
    - i. gather, review, evaluate, and interpret information
    - ii. compare the merits of alternate hypotheses or creative options, relevant to one or more of the major fields in a discipline
  - d. A developed, detailed knowledge of and experience in research in an area of the discipline
  - e. Developed critical thinking and analytical skills inside and outside the discipline
  - f. The ability to apply learning from one or more areas outside the discipline
2. Conceptual & Methodological Awareness/Research and Scholarship: An understanding of methods of enquiry or creative activity, or both, in their primary area of study that enables the student to

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- a. evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems using well-established ideas and techniques
  - b. devise and sustain arguments or solve problems using these methods
  - c. describe and comment upon particular aspects of current research or equivalent advanced scholarship
3. Communication Skills: The ability to communicate information, arguments and analysis accurately and reliably, orally and in writing, to specialist and non-specialist audiences using structured and coherent arguments, and, where appropriate, informed by key concepts and techniques of the discipline
4. Application of Knowledge
  - a. The ability to review, present, and critically evaluate quantitative and qualitative information to
    - i. develop lines of argument
    - ii. make sound judgments in accordance with the major theories, concepts, and methods of the subject(s) of study
    - iii. apply underlying concepts, principles, and techniques of analysis, both within and outside the discipline
    - iv. where appropriate, use this knowledge in the creative process
  - b. The ability to use a basic range of established techniques to
    - i. initiate and undertake critical evaluation of arguments, assumptions, abstract concepts and information
    - ii. propose solutions
    - iii. frame appropriate questions for the purpose of solving a problem
    - iv. solve a problem or create a new work
  - c. The ability to make use of scholarly reviews and primary sources
5. Professional Capacity/Autonomy
  - a. The qualities and transferable skills necessary for further study, employment, community involvement, and other activities requiring
    - i. the exercise of initiative, personal responsibility, and accountability in both personal and group contexts
    - ii. working reflectively with others
    - iii. decision-making in complex contexts
  - b. The ability to manage their own learning in changing circumstances, both within and outside the discipline, and to select an appropriate program of further study
  - c. Behaviour consistent with academic integrity and social responsibility
6. Awareness of Limits of Knowledge: An understanding of the limits to their own knowledge and ability, and an appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity, and limits to knowledge and how this might influence analysis and interpretations

### EESs mapped to Mohawk Music:

1. Communicate clearly, concisely and correctly in the written, spoken and visual form that fulfills the purpose and meets the needs of the audience
2. Respond to written, spoken or visual messages in manner that ensures effective communication

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3. (EES 3 is not applicable)
4. Apply systematic approaches to solve problems
5. Use a variety of thinking skills to anticipate and solve problems
6. Locate, select, organize, and document information using appropriate technology and information systems
7. Analyze, evaluate, and apply relevant information from a variety of sources
8. Show respect for the diverse opinions, values, beliefs and contributions of others
9. Interact with others in groups or teams in ways that contribute to effective working relationships and achievement of goals
10. Manage the use of time and other resources to complete projects
11. Take responsibility for one's actions, decisions, and consequences

The difference in number of, specificity of and approaches to DLEs and EESs created immediate problems for articulation mapping, as it was difficult to make direct comparisons. As can be seen, DLEs tend to refer to the ways in which knowledge and knowledge sources are understood and applied within and outside of one's field, including knowledge of one's own limits and capacity. However, EESs tend to refer to skills (literacy, numeracy, interpersonal problem-solving, technology, and personal management). In spite of these difficulties, an analysis was done to find all possible points of comparison.

### PROGRAM HOURS BY OUTCOME

Secondly, we looked at the Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) in McMaster Music and each Vocational Learning Outcomes (VLOs) in Mohawk Music. Again, the different emphases of the programs made direct comparisons difficult. McMaster's PLOs are weighted more heavily toward research, history and analysis whereas Mohawk's VLOs are weighted more heavily toward application and performance. In order to make an accurate comparison, the number of hours devoted to a given PLO or VLO needed to be established. This required a course-by-course calculation (core courses only). Table 3 shows the final comparison of total PLO and associated VLO hours. A list of Mohawk Music VLOs appears below the table.

Table 2: Degree-Level Outcome Hours by McMaster PLO and Associated Mohawk VLO

McMaster PLO	McMaster PLO hours (Total - Years 1 & 2)	Mohawk VLOs (see list below)	Mohawk VLO Hours (Total - 3-year Diploma)
<b>PLO 1</b> Demonstrate continual growth, improvement and confidence in pursuit of excellence in solo and ensemble performance.	25	VLO 1, 2, 3, 5, 8	48
<b>PLO 2</b> Comprehend musical traditions, histories, cultures, contexts and styles.	37	VLO 1, 3	43
<b>PLO 3</b> Critically research music and communicate their insights and discoveries in presentation and writing.	9	VLO 3, 6, 4, 9	3

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<b>PLO 4</b> Analyze and understand musical forms, harmony, and the structures of notated music, and appreciate their relationship to perceptual processes.	46	VLO 1, 2, 3, 7, 8	50
<b>PLO 5</b> Demonstrate competencies in ear training, keyboard harmony and sight singing	25	VLO 1, 3, 5	39

### **Mohawk Music Vocational Learning Outcomes**

VLO 1 Perform on his or her principal instrument at a professional level  
VLO 2 Provides private instrumental and theoretical instruction to students  
VLO 3 Connect the background and structure of music to personal performance and composition  
VLO 4 Evaluates career and further educational opportunities that exist in music  
VLO 5 Perform at a professional level demonstrating ability to integrate elements of music recognizing transcription (aural recognition)  
VLO 6 Communicate convincingly in speech, writing and presentation  
VLO 7 Compose and arrange music appropriate to area of specialization  
VLO 8 Organizes and directs musical groups  
VLO 9 Use technology to enhance professional communication and research skills

### LEVELS OF SOPHISTICATION OR SKILL

Third, we needed to analyze the level of skill or sophistication achieved in Mohawk's program years to determine the amount of appropriate transfer in the pathway. Mohawk's levels are Foundational (broad introduction and/or context for further reading), Specialized (in-depth and/or focused learning), and Integrational (synthesis of numerous concepts and processes at a program exit level (e.g. in the form of a capstone course or project)). McMaster refers to Moderately or Strongly Basic, Intermediate or Advanced levels. With no common framework, equivalencies could not be assumed. It was necessary for McMaster faculty to analyze Mohawk course outcomes and learning elements to determine level equivalents. It was more efficient to look at the level of a course over a year (e.g. Tonal Harmony 1 & 2) rather than by semester. We can see these yearly representations in Table 3.

Table 3: Levels of Sophistication/Skill by Mohawk Course

Required Mohawk Courses Accepted for Articulation	Mohawk Level, according to course outlines	McMaster PLO	Possible McMaster Level of course per PLOs & DLEs, based on McMaster perception of course outline
Ear Training & Solfege 1 & 2	Foundational	1, 4	Moderately Basic
		5	Strongly Basic
Ear Training & Solfege 3 & 4	Foundational, Integrational	1, 4	Moderately Basic
		5	Strongly Intermediate
Keyboard Skills 1 & 2	Foundational	1	Moderately Basic
		5	Strongly Basic
Tonal Harmony 1 & 2	Foundational	2	Moderately Basic
		4	Strongly Basic
Contemporary Harmony 1& 2	Foundational	2	Moderately Basic
		4	Strongly Basic
Tonal OR Contemporary Harmony 3 & 4	Specialized	2	Moderately Basic
		4	Strongly Intermediate
Ensemble 1 & 2	Foundational	1, 2, 4, 5	Moderately Basic
		1	Strongly Basic
Ensemble 3, 4, 5, 6	Specialized	2, 4, 5	Moderately Basic

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		1	Strongly Intermediate
Principal Instrument 1 & 2	Foundational	1, 2, 4, 5	Moderately Basic
		1	Strongly Basic
Principal Instrument 3 & 4	Specialized	2, 4, 5	Moderately Basic
		1	Strongly Intermediate
Principal Instrument & Performance 1 & 2	Specialized	2, 4, 5	Moderately Basic
		1	Strongly Intermediate
Popular Music and Society	Foundational	4	Moderately Basic
History of Western Music	Specialized	3, 4	Moderately Basic
		2	Strongly Basic
Improvisation 1 & 2	Foundational	2	Moderately Basic
		1	Strongly Basic
No moderately intermediate levels were identified because levels were determined on a yearly, not semester, basis.			

### GAP ANALYSIS

Finally, after points of comparison between DLEs and EESs, PLOs and VLOs, hours and levels of sophistication were determined, an analysis of gaps and pathways could be undertaken. The gaps are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4: Summary of Mapping Gaps

McMaster PLOs & DLEs (Degree Learning Expectations)	Mohawk Diploma-Level VLOs & EESs	Associated Content, Knowledge or Skills Missing in Mohawk Diploma Content	Type of Gap CKS: Content, Knowledge or Skills LS: Level of Sophistication/Skill
PLO3: Critically research music and communicate their insights and discoveries in presentation and writing.	VLO 3 - Connect the background and structure of music to personal performance and composition VLO 6 - Communicate convincingly in speech, writing and presentation VLO 9 Use technology to enhance professional communication and research skills*	<u>Critical</u> research (and communication)	LS
DLE 1: Depth and Breadth of Knowledge (f)		i) (f) the ability to apply learning from one or more areas outside the discipline	CKS
DLE 2: Knowledge of Methodologies (a) iii	EES 7 Analyze, evaluate, and apply relevant information from a variety of sources	iii) Describe and comment on <u>articular</u> aspects of current research or equivalent advanced scholarship	LS
DLE 3: Application of Knowledge (a)i; (a) iii; (b) iii; (c)	EES 4 Apply a systematic approach to solve problems EES 7 Analyze, evaluate, and apply relevant information from a variety of sources (no advanced research equivalent)	(a) i) Develop lines of argument (a) iii) apply underlying concepts, principles, and techniques of analysis both within <u>and outside</u> discipline (b) iii) frame appropriate questions for the purpose of solving a problem ( <b>research questions</b> ) (c) the ability to make critical use of scholarly reviews and primary sources	LS, CKS
DLE 6: Autonomy and Professional Capacity (a), (c)	EES 7 Analyze, evaluate, and apply relevant information from a variety of sources. EES 8 Show respect for the diverse opinions, values, belief systems, and contributions of others	(a) Qualities and transferable skills necessary for... <b>community involvement</b> ; behaviour consistent with... <b>social responsibility</b> (c) behaviour consistent with academic integrity <u>and social responsibility</u>	CKS



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Notable gaps on the Mohawk side include level of sophistication in terms of critical research (e.g. articular aspects of current research, use of scholarly reviews), content or knowledge of historical/sociological context or environmental capacity (e.g. hours spent on music history, breadth outside the discipline, and hours devoted to community involvement or social responsibility within and outside the field). Specifically, 1/3 of Mohawk Music courses explicitly reflect a focus on economic capacity (e.g. business/entrepreneurship, music technology and music production courses for commercial purposes). McMaster's Degree Learning Expectancies do not share the same focus. For example, DLE 6 a) and c) use language to describe "community involvement; behaviour consistent with...social responsibility... behaviour consistent with academic integrity and social responsibility". This focus is also explicit in McMaster's Vision and Mission Statements, PLOs and other public documents.

On the McMaster side, there was a gap in terms of musical performance (fewer hours on playing skills in principal instrument and ensemble contexts). Specifically, 48 hours of performance skills time were attributed to Mohawk's program over three years, whereas McMaster's total time on this PLO was 25 hours over four years.

### OVERALL TRENDS

- McMaster has a focus on history and teaching, whereas Mohawk tends to focus on performance, technology, production and entrepreneurship.
- Mohawk College tends to focus on cultivating economic capacity of students, whereas McMaster University focuses on cultivation of economic, social, and environmental capacity. These areas are assessed as part of college EEs and University DLEs.
  - The team together decided that the different language (EEs vs. DLEs) used to frame these skills affects program content and pathway generation. Subject specialists determined that Mohawk's business/entrepreneurship courses reflected mostly an economic focus, which could only serve minimally in the mapping process toward basic research, but not toward pathways connected to social and environmental capacity.
  - Our pathways coordinator expressed to us that other project teams in the province had shared this observation. An examination of a variety of university literature from across the province and types of programs (UofT, Guelph, Lakehead, York, Trent, Waterloo, etc.) revealed that they had a very similar focus on social and environmental capacity.

### LIMITATIONS

The framework of this project, that the articulation agreement deliverable be founded on degree-level outcomes, limited our ability to capture many nuances of program knowledge and skills that could have been used in both creating pathways and illuminating gaps. The

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vague language of degree-level outcomes allowed for gaps to appear larger or smaller than they may realistically have been. For example, an initial gap in critical research was later considered transferable when history, technology, production, and entrepreneurship courses that minimally fed a Mohawk VLO were considered to meet an equivalent McMaster PLO. That would not have been likely to occur had course-to-course mapping been used, as the actual amount of critical research explicitly taught and assessed in the Mohawk music program is significantly less than that in McMaster's music program. While this situation would seem to benefit Mohawk students on paper, giving them more transferable credit, it may disadvantage them in terms of real preparedness for the research demands in 3<sup>rd</sup> year at university.

As mentioned throughout this report, a lack of common frameworks and terms means that equivalencies in skills and knowledge, or in level of skill and sophistication, could not be accurately determined by using degree-level outcomes alone.

## Promising practices and lessons learned

This was a fascinating comparison to undertake, and much was learned, not only about the pathways between our programs, but about the articulation process. We offer the following promising practices and lessons learned in the hope that others can benefit from our experience and manage expectations.

- Scheduling meetings was a challenge due to team member availability, as the schools each had different academic calendars and work schedule commitments, e.g. exams, promotion meetings, other deadlines, and vacations. Understanding these schedules at the outset would have been beneficial for planning deadlines and meetings.
- Set aside plenty of time for all comparison and review work, as well as literature review. Collecting and organizing relevant documents (see literature list) to be used for gap analysis and other mapping took considerable effort and time.
- Make sure the initial Literature Resource is developed and clearly understood by both parties. This includes analyzing differences in terms between college and university systems and between institutions and the province. Specifically, degree level outcomes from each institution, as well as those in contained in the Post Secondary Education Quality Assessment Board's Degree Level Standards for Diploma, (PEQAB handbook, p. 17) need to be:
  - collected
  - compared and contrasted
  - "translated" into mutually agreed-on terms
  - understood (by both partners)

This work will provide a key referent, underpinning all pathway decision-making that takes place.

- Provide extra time for language, content, and literature revision and updating. Resources that were not up to date or in need of other revision slowed the work process. A review of institutional program-level resources to ensure currency would be helpful prior to the actual articulation process.
- Mapping outcome levels was time-consuming and confusing, given the differences in institutional language. Again, ensuring that course-level outcomes and elements are current, clearly articulated and understood by stakeholders prior to mapping is key.
- Having a single representative from each institution do background work with a curriculum specialist during the mapping and review process, prior to bringing the information to the team as a whole, proved to be extremely valuable and efficient.
- Smaller side meetings between specific team members added to efficiency. Over the course of the project, we learned that the full group was too large to effectively and

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efficiently execute some tasks. It was also difficult for everyone to have the same depth of knowledge about the content, terms, and so on involved in the process since grappling with them was so complex. Therefore, small groups with the relevant knowledge completed given tasks. It was then essential to provide team members with the resulting documents and a general topic discussion list, which, with adequate lead time, they could review in order to be prepared for any follow-up discussion or decision-making. This made for more efficient large-group meetings.

- Sharing the articulation agreement, interim report, and the final report between all team members for proofing has been extremely helpful.

## Recommendations

Recommendations to ONCAT for improving navigation of future projects are as follows.

1. As it stands, course-level mapping should remain a part of articulation processes. The disparity of language and frameworks between colleges, universities, and the province present difficulties in comparative analysis of degree-level outcomes alone. Without considerable reference to course-level outcomes, particularly to determine levels, degree-level mapping would have been vague and inaccurate.
2. If the goal is that degree-level learning outcome mapping be the normative approach, shared language would increase clarity and efficiency. A new or merged framework for EES/DLE-level, program-level, and course-level outcomes and for content/skills/knowledge and skill/sophistication levels is recommended.
3. Related to recommendation 2, the team recommends a revision of Communication Skills on page 17 of the PEQAB handbook to include aural and paralinguistic modes of communication, important to music and other domains. This was a noticeable gap in the language of Mohawk EESs.
4. We recommend that ONCAT consider the disparity between colleges and universities in cultivation of economic, social, and environmental capacity of students. As it stands, colleges focus mainly on economic capacity, which impedes potential pathways between college EES's and PLO's and DLE's. To remediate this gap, colleges could introduce more curriculum focused on cultivating and assessing social and environmental capacity.
5. We recommend that colleges increase opportunities for programs to teach and assess critical research skills in order to increase pathway opportunities.
6. Any articulation team's ability to accurately compare levels between programs depends on both programs' adherence to entrance standards and course-/year-/program-level standards. Adhering to these standards ensures validity of and responsibility to all other aspects of the articulation formation process. If levels "float", claims about a student's

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preparedness for mobility become meaningless. This has real-life implications for transfer students, who need to feel secure about their ability and preparedness to be successful at university. The very best must be done to ensure that we do not set students up for failure via pathway agreements.

7. Teacher's colleges (TC) need to be informed that transfer students are unfairly disadvantaged when it comes to access. Students entering 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the McMaster program are currently unable to successfully apply to TC programs because of a perceived lack of university "years", while their non-transfer 3<sup>rd</sup> year classmates get access. This needs to change if these agreements are to have access and mobility benefits for students beyond their college-to-university articulation.
8. While there is a desire to increase the culture of mobility via degree-level outcomes, we recommend mindfulness about sacrificing domain-specific and course-specific outcomes that reflect depth of knowledge, content, skills, and sophistication. The trend toward vague, generalized language in degree-level outcomes seems to permit greater possibilities for pathways between institutions and programs. However, it also limits what we understand about students' actual competencies in the field and preparedness for articulation. Further, it diminishes clarity about and homogenizes unique knowledge and skills cultivated in a given program or domain. This has implications not only for transfer within a domain and between institutions, but also for transfer between domains.

## Conclusion

This McMasterMohawk Music ONCAT project has achieved its goal of producing a degree-level learning outcome based articulation agreement towards facilitating educational mobility and transfer of students from Mohawk College to McMaster University. This goal contributed to the project aim, which was to provide insight as to the viability of degree-level learning outcome mapping as a normative approach to post secondary articulation agreements. Additionally, this report provides a referent for future use and navigation by ONCAT and other post-secondary institutions.

In terms of viability, we have determined there are some positive aspects in using a degree-level outcome approach. It allowed us to view the programs more holistically, in terms of whether they are providing balanced cultivation of economic, social, and environmental capacity. When used in concert with yearly levels of sophistication in college outcomes, they gave us a sense of overall breadth and depth of skills and knowledge. They also helped us to identify general gaps and promising areas for pathways. Nonetheless, levels and content, for the purposes of articulation, cannot be mapped accurately without assistance from course-level outcomes.

Although we share ONCAT's desire and commitment to increasing mobility, until issues of language and frameworks between college and university systems are resolved, we recommend proceeding with caution with initiatives and policies that normalize degree-level

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learning outcome mapping. Exceptionalities in program cultures must not be inadvertently undervalued or sacrificed – a balance between addressing mobility barriers and maintaining institutional vision is important. Most importantly, student preparedness, confidence and success should not be negatively affected by mobility objectives, strategy, and context. We all have a responsibility to *ensure* that articulation agreements prepare and place students appropriately to flourish.

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### Works Cited

Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board. (2016). *Handbook for Ontario Colleges: Applying for Ministerial Consent under the Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act, 2000*. Retrieved 12 09, 2018, from peqab.ca:  
<http://www.peqab.ca/Publications/Handbooks%20Guidelines/2016HNDBKCAA T.pdf>

## Appendix

### Articulation Agreement

between

Mohawk College, Applied Music Advanced Diploma

and

McMaster University, Bachelor of Music (Hons)

#### Purpose

Mohawk College and McMaster University have developed this articulation agreement with the purpose of facilitating the educational mobility and transfer of students from the Mohawk Applied Music Advanced Diploma program to the McMaster Bachelor of Music (Hons) program.

Mohawk College and McMaster University enter into this agreement as cooperating, equal partners who shall maintain the integrity of their separate programs while working to ensure a smooth curriculum transition for interested students.

#### Agreement Terms and Conditions

This agreement is in effect starting September 1, 2018 for a 3-year term. Students completing the Mohawk Applied Music Program of Studies from September 2016 and onward may apply for this transfer agreement.

Graduates of Mohawk College's 3-year Applied Music Ontario College Advanced Diploma program who have a Cumulative Grade Point Average of at least 75% are granted 63 units of transfer credit, if:

1. they enrol in Honours Music; and
2. they have achieved a grade of no less than 70% in each Mohawk College music course, thereby enabling them to complete the remaining 60 units for the degree in, potentially, a further two years.
3. For qualified applicants who meet the admission criteria for this transfer agreement, an audition will not be required.
4. For students who do not meet the admission requirement in point 2 above, an alternative offer may be made at the discretion of McMaster University.

#### Curriculum Review

Both parties agree to communicate annually concerning curriculum or program outcomes changes that affect the agreed-upon relationship between articulated programs, understanding that the responsibility for curriculum and program of studies is the sole



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responsibility of each respective institution, and to communicate future planning that might lead to further opportunities for program articulation between the two parties.

### Articulation Amendments

Both parties reserve the right to amend or revise by mutual consent and in writing this agreement.

McMaster University and Mohawk College will review this agreement every 3 years and make adjustments and amendments as deemed appropriate to maintain the integrity of each institution as well as improve the transfer process and student articulation. If agreed upon, pending review, a renewal of the agreement may be signed.

### Terms for Renewal or Cancellation

In the event that Mohawk College or McMaster University does not fulfill the above responsibilities, either party may terminate the agreement with one academic year written notice to the other. The parties agree that the termination of this agreement shall not operate so as to affect those students participating in the program, until they have had the opportunity to complete it fully.

### Communication

Mohawk College will designate an individual who will be responsible for the ongoing communication and monitoring of the articulation agreement at Mohawk College. McMaster University will designate an individual responsible for this articulation agreement at McMaster University.

### Marketing

The two institutions agree to promote this articulation agreement through:

- a. exchange of promotional materials as required;
- b. joint publications;
- c. recruitment initiatives in Canada and abroad as negotiated annually for the duration of this agreement.

The use of logos, trademarks, crests, coats-of-arms, etc. of each institution by the other institution on promotional material will be done only with prior notice and reasonable opportunity for input and any editing. Each institution reserves the right of refusal of any such use if agreement of use is not reached.

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### Signatories

This agreement will commence the date of signing. The signatories hereby warrant that they have express and sufficient authority to execute this agreement on behalf of the institutions on whose behalf they have signed.

SCHEDULE A

Requirements for Completion of the McMaster Music (Hons) Degree  
for  
Graduates of Applied Music Ontario College Advanced Diploma  
at Mohawk College

Successful transfer students will receive a transfer designation or “T” on their transcript for 63 units in the McMaster Music (Hons) Degree program.

To successfully complete the McMaster Music (Hons) Degree, students must maintain a GPA of 60% and complete an additional 60 units including the following:

1. MUSIC 1MH3 - Music History I: Music and Culture
2. One of either MUSIC 2MH3-Music History II: Music in Western Culture to 1900, or MUSIC 2Bo3 - History of Western Music 1890-Present.
3. One of MUSIC 4Yo3 - Topics in Music History: Advanced Musicology Seminar; MUSIC 3KK3 - Topics in Music History: Music from c. 1750-c. 1900 or MUSIC 3JJ3 - Topics in Music History: Music Before c. 1750.
4. 51 additional credits in Honours Music program at McMaster.