This resource provides practitioners with a summary of the main practices involved when creating new postsecondary programs in Ontario.

New Program Approval Practices

A summary of current program development typologies at Ontario colleges and universities

Prepared by: Joanne Duklas, Duklas Cornerstone Consulting

Research by:

ONCAT Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer

New Program Approval Practices: A summary of current typologies at Ontario colleges and universities

Prepared by:

Joanne Duklas, Duklas Cornerstone Consulting

March 2015

Funding for this research was provided by the Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer.

Acknowledgements

Appreciation is extended to Dr. Serge Demers, George Granger, Stan Taman, Cheryl Kennedy, Sacha Burrows, and Gina Marshall for reviewing the full report.

Appreciation is also extended to the following individuals for their assistance during the research and confirmation phases of this study.

Cheryl Kennedy, Curriculum Consultant, Conestoga College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning ("Conestoga College")

Christopher Eaton, Associate Registrar and Director, University of British Columbia

Deanna Underwood, Manager of Communications, Ontario Universities' Application Centre (OUAC)

Dr. Donna Woolcott, Executive Director, Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance (the "Quality Council")

Dr. James Brown, Chief Executive Officer, Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board

Dr. Jane Harrison, Director, Academic Programs, Policies and Quality Assurance, University of Toronto

Dr. Karen Belfer, Executive Director, Ontario College Quality Assurance Service (OCQAS)

Dr. Robert Fleming, Executive Director, British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT)

Dr. Serge Demers, Registrar and Secretary of Senate, Laurentian University

Geneviève Paquette, Quality Assurance Associate, Ontario College Quality Assurance Service (OCQAS)

George Granger, Executive Director, Ontario Universities' Application Centre (OUAC)

Gina Marshall, Director, Academic Quality, Centennial College of Applied Arts and Technology ("Centennial College")

Janeen Hoover, Associate Registrar, Registration, Records, and Fees, Conestoga College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning ("Conestoga College")

Jeanette Miron, Registrar and Manager of Institutional Research, Canadore College

John Curtis, Registrar, Centennial College of Applied Arts and Technology ("Centennial College")

Karen Creditor, Chief Executive Officer, Ontario College Application Service (OCAS)

Mark Lamontagne, Academic Director, Quality Learning, Teaching and Innovation, Canadore College

Michael Skolnik, Professor, Leadership, Higher and Adult Education, OISE University of Toronto

Mike V. Sekulic, University Registrar, MacEwan University

Nevia Jelenic, former Associate Director, Financial Aid, York University

Sacha Burrows, Degree Programs and Academic Pathways Consultant, Conestoga College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning ("Conestoga College")

Stan Taman, retired Associate Registrar, formerly with York University

Svetlana Georgieva, Graduate Administrative Services Facilitator, University of Windsor

Staff within the Alberta Innovation and Advanced Education Agencies Support Branch, the Education and Training Program Coordination Branch, and the Campus Alberta Quality Council Secretariat

Staff within the Colleges Unit and the Universities Unit of the Postsecondary Accountability Branch within the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

Staff within the British Columbia Degree Quality Assessment Board (DQAB) of the Ministry of Advanced Education

Contents

Acknowledgements 2
Contents 4
Tables 6
Figures 6
Helpful Resources 7
Glossary 9
Executive Summary 10
Section 1: A Summary of Current Program Development Typologies at Ontario Colleges and Universities 11
Research Approach 12
Section 2: A General Overview of Typologies for New Postsecondary Programs 13
General Process Overview 13
Section 3: Setting the Context 18
Program Approval Authority 18
Colleges 19
Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Act, 2002 (OCAATA) 19
Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act, 2000 (PSECE Act) 19
College Quality Assurance Process 19
College New Program Approval Process – College Certificates and Diplomas 22
MTCU Review and Approval of College Certificates and Diplomas 23
Universities 24
University Quality Assurance Process 24
Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board (PEQAB) 27
MTCU New Program Approvals and Consents for Degrees 33
Degree Approvals 33
Degree Consents 35
Section 4: Nuances to the Program Typologies and Related Considerations 38
Apprenticeship Credentials 38
Unfunded Programs 39
Inter-institutional Program Partnerships 39
Section 5: Examples from Institutions and Allied Organizations 41

Disciplinary Emphasis 41
Disciplinary and Industry Emphasis 41
College Examples Related to New Program Creation Processes 42
University Examples Related to New Program Creation Processes 46
Section 6: Additional Considerations and Related Examples 48
Internal Strategic and Operational Considerations 48
Broad Consultation 48
External Program Launch Timeline Considerations 51
Section 7: The Experience in Other Jurisdictions 54
A Broad Overview 54
British Columbia 55
Alberta 58
Conclusion 62
Appendix A: Project Terms of Reference 64
Appendix B: University Program Approvals Process Map 65
Appendix C: Websites for University Quality Assurance Processes (IQAP) 66
Appendix D: Typical Internal Considerations 67
Appendix E: Campus Alberta Quality Council's Degree Program Approval Process Flowchart September 2013 68
References 69

Tables

Table 1: Characteristics of College Baccalaureate Degree Approvals in Selected Jurisdictions 54
Table 2: University of British Columbia Undergraduate New Program Approval Process 56
Table 3: Campus Alberta Six-Sector Model 59

Figures

Figure 1: Overview of New Postsecondary Program Creation Typologies 13
Figure 2: High Level Milestones Involved in New Program Processes 15
Figure 3: Ontario College Quality Assurance Service - Overview of New Program Approval Processes for Certificates & Diplomas 22
Figure 4: Quality Council's Overview of Protocols for Undergraduate and Graduate New Program Approvals 26
Figure 5: Initial Contact and Start of Application Process 29
Figure 6: PEQAB Review Process 30
Figure 7: MTCU University New Program Approval Process 34
Figure 8: MTCU Consent Process for Degrees 37
Figure 9: Conestoga College: Sample of Approval Process for Ontario College Certificates, Diplomas, Advanced Diplomas, and Graduate Certificates 43
Figure 10: Conestoga's Internal Degree Approval Process 45
Figure 11: University of Windsor New Program Approval Process 47
Figure 12: Examples of Internal Departments Involved in New Program Development Processes 49
Figure 13: Typical Operational Program Launch Timeliness Using September as a Proxy Entry Point for Students 51
Figure 14: New Postsecondary Program Creation Typologies 62

Helpful Resources

The following resource links are provided to assist administrators and academic pathway developers engaged in new program development.

Developers of new stand-alone programs and pathway programs are encouraged to first consult with institutional quality assurance offices and with the local academic unit and central academic division within their home college or university for information.

Acts

Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities Act – http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90m19_e.htm

Ontario College of Applied Arts and Technology Act, 2002 - http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_02o08f_e.htm

Ontario College of Trades and Apprenticeship Act, 2009 - http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_09o22_e.htm

Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act, 2002 - http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_00p36_e.htm

Quality assurance agencies

Ontario College Quality Assurance Service – ocqas.org

Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance (the "Quality Council") - oucqa.ca

Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board – peqab.ca

Centralized application centres

Ontario College Application Services (OCAS) – ocas.ca

Ontario Universities' Application Centre (OUAC) – ouac.on.ca

Government resources

CAAT Extranet site (for legislation, regulations, Minister's Binding Policy Directives, Operating Procedures): http://caat.edu.gov.on.ca/

> User name: caatsite
> Password: 900Mowat (case sensitive)
>
> College Diploma and Certificate Program Standards - http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/audiences/colleges/progstan/intro.html
>
> Degree Authority in Ontario - http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/programs/degreeauthority/
>
> Minister's Binding Policy Directive (MBPD) Framework for Programs of Instruction
>
> Minister's Binding Policy Directive (MBPD) Funding Approval of Programs of Instruction

Minister's Operating Procedure Funding Approval of Programs of Instruction Procedures

Ontario Qualifications Framework - http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/programs/oqf/

Canadian Degree Qualifications Framework - http://www.caqc.gov.ab.ca/pdfs/CDQF-FINAL.pdf

Council of Ministers of Education, Canada's Ministerial Statement on Quality Assurance of Degree Education in Canada - http://www.cicic.ca/docs/cmec/QA-Statement-2007.en.pdf

Glossary

AVED	British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education
BCCAT	British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer
CDOG	Colleges Degree Operating Group
CODA	Co-op Diploma Apprenticeship Program
COU	Council of Ontario Universities
CVS	OCQAS's Credential Validation Service
DQAB	Degree Quality Assessment Board (BC)
MTCU or TCU	Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities
OCAATA	Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Act, 2003
OCAS	Ontario College Application Service
OCAV	Council of Ontario Universities' Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents
OCQAS	Ontario College Quality Assurance Service
OCTAA	Ontario Colleges of Trades and Apprenticeship Act, 2009
ONCAT	Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer
OSAP	Ontario Student Assistance Program
OQF	Ontario Qualifications Framework
OUAC	Ontario Universities' Application Centre
PAC	Program Advisory Committee
PDAC	Program Development Advisory Committee
PEQAB	Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board
PQAPA	OCQAS's Program Quality Assurance Process Audit
PSECE Act	Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act, 2000
Quality Council	Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance

Executive Summary

This resource provides an overview of the participants, typologies, and timeframes involved in new program creation, approval, and launch that are followed by publicly funded, Ontario postsecondary institutions. As ONCAT remains focused on enhancing transfer, pathway development, and inter-institutional joint programs in the province, the intention with this information is to demystify the current practices involved in new program creation, approval, and launch.

The research indicates that as complexity and credential levels increase, so do the timelines and processes. This seems reasonable since quality assurance benchmarks and standards and the internal and external consultation expectations necessarily expand. The timeframes to create, develop, refine, and approve credentials delivered by colleges and universities vary: for certificates and diplomas, it typically takes approximately 1 to 1.5 years to conceive and ultimately launch a program. For degrees, whether at a college or university, the process takes approximately 2.5 to 3 years.

With an eye to focusing specifically on the Ontario college credentials (i.e., Ontario College Certificate, Ontario College Diploma, Ontario College Advanced Diploma, and the Ontario College Graduate Certificate) and baccalaureate degrees (whether offered by colleges or universities), this resource provides further details regarding internal institutional processes, explains the mandates and high level protocols followed by the quality assurance bodies, and shares information regarding the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU). Examples are provided from specific institutions. It also touches briefly on apprenticeship programs and the Ontario College of Trades as there are times when such programs are offered through the colleges and, if tied to a credential, can result in additional funding allocations and program approval processes (e.g., under the Co-op Diploma Apprenticeship Program - “CODA”).

An overview is provided of the non-academic considerations institutions explore when creating new programs. In addition, the participation of system-wide opportunities to support program launch are identified as these can impact the timeframes. Finally, a high-level overview is provided of select other jurisdictions.

The research emphasizes the importance of internal quality assurance areas; staff within these areas were regularly identified as the main institutional partners with significant expertise in the areas of quality assurance and program development. Further, they rely routinely on the external quality assurance bodies whose staff offer overarching knowledge of the quality assurance protocols for new programs. As this resource is focused solely on identifying current practices, readers are encouraged to deal directly with these internal professionals.

This resource contributes to the government’s provincial vision for enhanced pathways and related efficiencies as it provides a comprehensive overview of the new program approval typologies, timelines, and practices to assist pathway developers.

Section 1: A Summary of Current Program Development Typologies at Ontario Colleges and Universities

The information in this resource identifies the various legislative and administrative bodies, policies, and practices involved in new program approvals within Ontario with a focus on publicly funded college and university programs. The roles of the various organizations are identified and helpful resources are provided.

For postsecondary programs, four main program creation typologies are evident, each with different timelines. Section 2 provides an overview and outlines the major milestones typical of the more complex credentials. Section 3 establishes the provincial context and elaborates on relevant Acts and approval organizations with a focus on certificates, diplomas, and degrees. Section 4 highlights select nuances that result in some of the differences in practices. Institutional examples are shared in Sections 5 and 6. Also included is an overview of non-academic and project launch considerations. The last section (7) briefly explores other jurisdictional contexts.

The intricacies of developing and creating new postsecondary[1] programs and related inter-institutional program partnerships tend to be well understood by those in institutions tasked with steering new initiatives through governance processes; however, these protocols are less well understood by those with distance from the various processes. Examples of practitioners who are more peripherally involved or impacted by new program approvals but that maintain an interest in having a holistic understanding of the process across institutions include academic and administrative institutional colleagues, allied organizations, student groups, and government staff members. While institutionally situated colleagues might have the benefit of relying on their internal quality assurance or governance staff to help them steward new initiatives, such resource personnel are not necessarily available or known by others with interest in this area. Therefore, the intention of this resource is to help those who have less daily operational involvement in governance processes, particularly for those interested in developing inter-institutional programs.

For the purposes of this information resource, inter-institutional program partnerships might be identified under a range of terms but are primarily understood to encompass joint programs, collaborative programs, or dual credential programs. Considering ONCAT's mandate, the resource is restricted to highlighting processes impacting new programs at Ontario publicly funded colleges and universities.

The resource does not include an examination of broader agreement mechanisms such as memorandums of understanding and articulations, more specific course-based initiatives such as cross-registration, or graduate programs. It also does not include a complete examination of other jurisdictions although this topic is briefly addressed. Recommended best practices or alternate ways to

[1] The credentials primarily considered in this resource include the following: Ontario College Certificate, Ontario College Diploma, Ontario College Advanced Diploma, Ontario College Graduate Certificate, the Baccalaureate/Bachelor's Degree, and the Baccalaureate/Bachelor's Degree – Honours (the latter includes college degrees). University graduate programs are not the focus of this resource given the mandate of ONCAT, the sponsor for this study.

move forward are not identified in this resource as pursuing those kinds of enhancements rest with other bodies. The material is narrowly focused on surfacing the details of current practices and avoids making any comments or suggestions regarding already well-established practices or quality assurance frameworks in Ontario. In doing so, the goal is to ensure those involved in pathway development projects, joint program creation, and related policy decision makers have a pragmatic indication of the processes and timeframes involved in bringing academic initiatives to fruition. The terms of reference guiding this project are contained in Appendix A.

Those interested in creating new programs are encouraged to deal directly with the appropriate contacts at institutions. Specifically, the local departmental leadership within an academic unit, the central chief academic officer, and the staff within the internal quality assurance department. The helpful resources provided at the beginning of this resource are intended to facilitate direct access to the most current information.

Research Approach

The research for this project used a variety of methods. It included an assessment of Ontario institutional websites, a review of foundational documents, and interviews with stakeholders within select institutions and allied organizations. Not all institutions in the province were interviewed for this study as the intention was to capture a generalized overview of processes and timelines.

The interview selection process and the exploratory questions were mindful of institutional and credential differences. Examining potential nuances relevant to joint program development formed part of the questioning.

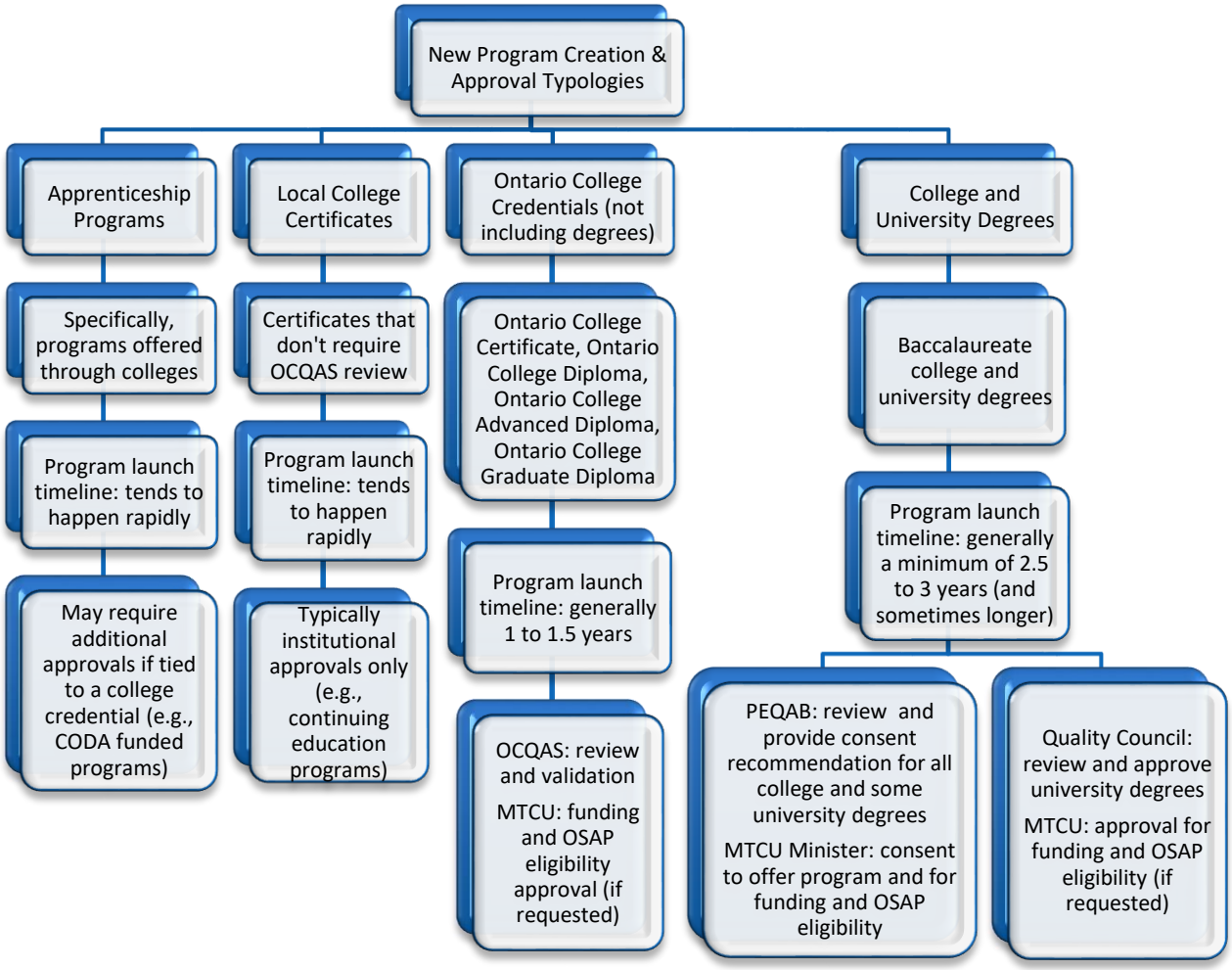
Those interested in creating new programs are encouraged to consult institutional quality assurance personnel with knowledge of qualification frameworks and approval protocols.

Section 2: A General Overview of Typologies for New Postsecondary Programs

General Process Overview[2]

In Ontario, there are four main postsecondary typologies for new program creation evident in publicly funded institutions which are identified in Figure 1. Typically, the process followed depends very much on the sector, institution, the requisite quality assurance process, and the credential type under consideration. Further, programs developed that cross both the college and university sectors are required to follow additional processes which can add to the timelines (J. Brown, personal communications, January 2015). The focus of this study is on certificates, diplomas, and baccalaureate degrees offered by publicly funded colleges and universities (i.e., by member institutions of ONCAT).

Figure 1: Overview of New Postsecondary Program Creation Typologies



[2] A *Helpful Resources* summary and a *Glossary* are provided to assist the reader with accessing additional information and understanding the various acronyms.

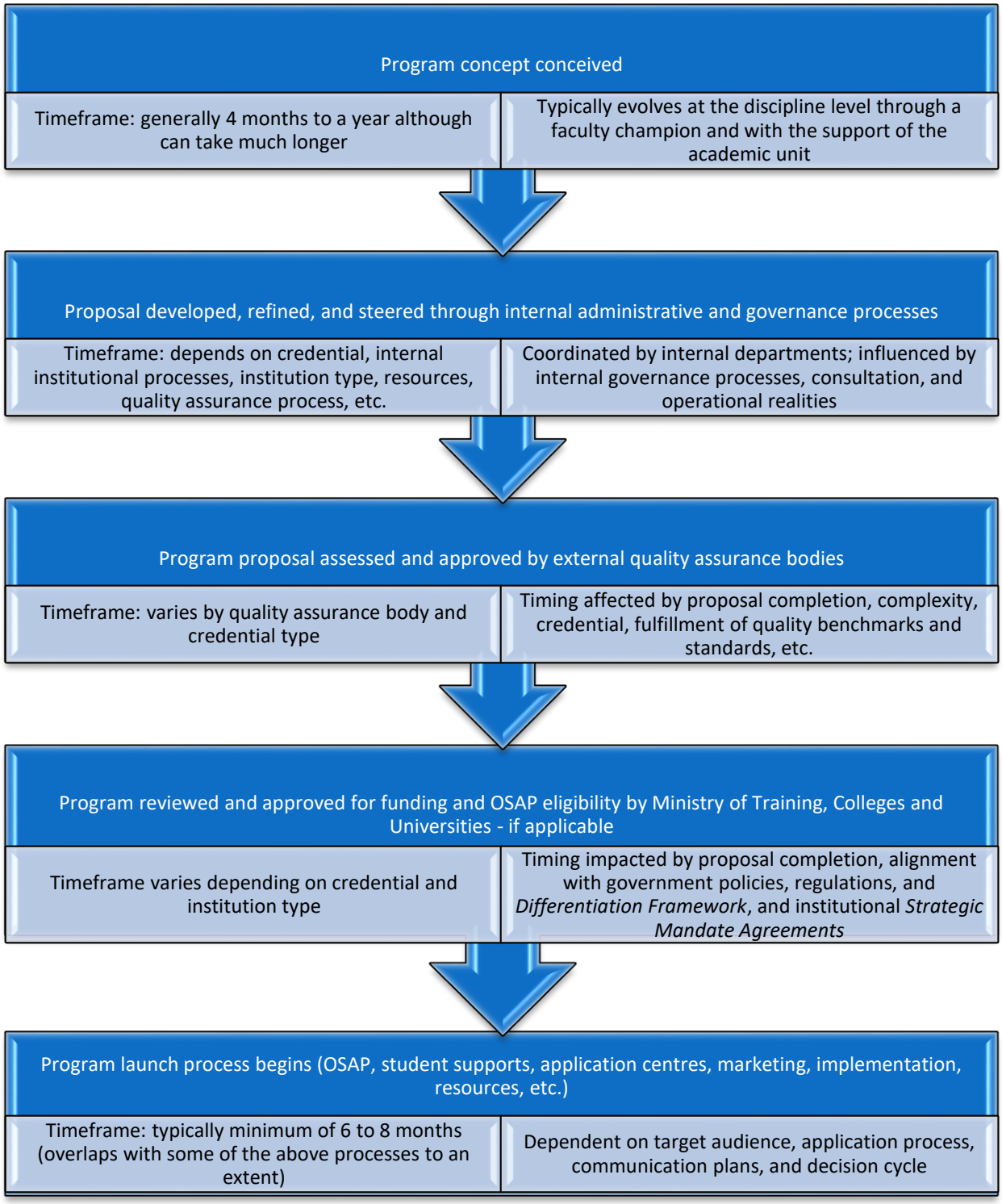
The approximate timeframes noted in Figure 1 include conceptualizing a program idea at the discipline level; obtaining institutional decanal support; submitting early notification of a proposal to internal leadership and/or governance bodies; creating and submitting the program proposal to internal quality assurance offices; developing the proposal and engaging in consultation and refinement; obtaining formal indications of support; organizing potential site visits by external reviewers (or equivalent) and refining the proposal based on their input (if applicable); conducting further proposal reviews, consultations, and refinements; and receiving approvals from various levels of internal governance committees, external quality assurance offices (if applicable), and the MTCU (if applicable). The timeframe to fully execute the launch of a new program after receiving all approvals is not necessarily included in Figure 1.

There are examples of programs that have been created, developed, approved, and launched at a much faster rate as the apprenticeship and local college certificates indicate. Mark Lamontagne, Academic Director of Quality, Learning, Teaching, and Innovation at Canadore College, indicated some programs at the College have taken 9 months to 1 year from point of inception to the final submission of proposals to all approving bodies (personal communications, December 2014). He attributes this to the focused centralization and expertise of resources dedicated to fully develop new program proposals (which situate within his department), decentralization of curriculum development to the academic units, and the streamlined and centralized approval process.

Institutional colleagues reported that as the complexity of credentials increased (or the number of institutions involved increased), more time was required. For this reason, some program proposals take longer than the timelines noted in Figure 1. For example, when the program represents an inter-institutional joint program, timeframes are extended due to the complexities of coordinating between two or more partners, developing shared learning outcomes, program maps, policies, procedures, curriculum, and resourcing, and coming to joint decisions such as determining the credential type(s). Figure 2 highlights typical milestones involved with the full new program creation process with a primary focus on credentials requiring external quality assurance review and validation.

The research indicates that more complex credentials or the involvement of more than one institutional partner extend the timeframe required to create, approve, and launch a new program.

Figure 2: High Level Milestones Involved in New Program Processes[3]



[3] This does not necessarily apply to apprenticeship programs (unless the result is a new college credential such as one that is CODA funded), unfunded local college certificates, and other types of non-degree programs.

It is possible to expedite new program proposal development, approval, and launch by overlapping processes at appropriate points and with due regard to the role of both internal and external approval bodies. However, the process undertaken depends on a number of factors including but not limited to the nature of the program; the type of institution; the available resources to develop the proposal and offer the curriculum; the needs of the intended student audience; the type of external consultation required (e.g., with accrediting bodies); the nature of internal governance processes; the degree of alignment with signed strategic mandate agreements; the quality assurance process that applies; the type and level of credential; and so forth. This is at minimum due to the necessity to carefully develop curriculum with appropriate and thoughtful learning outcomes.

New postsecondary programs in publicly funded colleges or universities are typically conceived at the discipline level after which, if supported by the local department/school and dean, the proposals are further developed and reviewed by internal institutional departments. After this, program proposals move through the institutional consultation and governance approval process and are subsequently refined and enhanced. It is typically during this phase that consultation with outside experts, including regulatory and accrediting bodies (if applicable), unfolds in earnest although in some cases, external consultation of this nature occurs even earlier including at the point of inception. Once approved internally, program proposals are then reviewed by sector specific quality assurance bodies. For the colleges, two organizations are involved: the Ontario College Quality Assurance Service (OCQAS) or the Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board (PEQAB) depending on the credential type. For the universities, the responsible quality assurance body is called the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance (the "Quality Council"). Where a university program or college degree program requires Ministerial consent, the quality assurance body is PEQAB. Institutions may consult with these bodies for guidance during proposal creation and development and prior to approval, a practice which is encouraged.

The program proposals are sent to the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) for final review, approval and/or consent, and/or funding consideration. In the case of colleges, the proposals for Ontario College Certificates, Ontario College Diplomas, Ontario College Advanced Diplomas, and Ontario College Graduate Certificates are reviewed by the staff within the Colleges Unit of the MTCU Postsecondary Accountabilities Branch. College degree proposals are subject to the consent process which involves a review by the MTCU staff within the Universities Unit of the Postsecondary Accountability Branch, after which an initial decision is made by the Minister on policy grounds whether the proposed program should be referred to PEQAB for review. The final decision whether to grant consent is made by the Minister after PEQAB's recommendation. The Universities Unit also receives and reviews university program proposals, most of which require approval and not consent. For all approval or consent decisions, the Ministry reviews various policy considerations including institutional fit, alignment with signed Strategic Mandate Agreements, labour market demand, student demand, duplication, availability of placements, among others. More details regarding the approval and consent processes are described in Section 3 of this resource.

There are nuances to the above. For example, apprenticeship credentials require the leadership and engagement of the Ontario College of Trades. There are also strategic nuances that emerge. For example, a college or university may decide to launch a program without government funding. With specific reference to the university sector, an institution may decide to launch a program early with Ministry funding pending approval. Inter-institutional partnerships introduce another nuance. These

tend to involve greater complexity which can increase the time involved to develop, review, and approve new program proposals. Each of these examples can extend or shorten timelines for approval and full launch depending on local considerations. These nuances are explored further in Section 4.

Much later in the process, institutions begin defining and establishing the implementation framework for new programs although final stages of the launch are affected by necessary respect for internal and external approvals.[4] The process involves many internal considerations (and constituents) such as setting up the program at the academic departmental level; refining the curriculum details; and designing and implementing the supporting systems, procedures, protocols, and resources. It may also involve working with external parties (e.g., to confirm work integrated learning opportunities). It is also at this stage that active development of relevant marketing materials begins to emerge and, upon receipt of relevant approvals, eventually finalize. Externally, institutions collaborate with organizations such as the centralized application centres and the MTCU's Student Financial Assistance Branch for OSAP approval to further implement programs. Other external system-wide organizations such as the Ontario College Application Service (OCAS) and the Ontario Universities' Application Centre (OUAC) are active partners working in collaboration with institutions to fully establish and launch new programs.

Sections 5 and 6 provide examples to illustrate some of the approaches institutions employ to move through these processes. The next section provides an overview of the larger context for creation of new programs.

As a general guideline, it can take a minimum of 1 to 1.5 years to fully launch a college certificate or diploma program and 2.5 to 3 years to fully launch a baccalaureate degree (whether college or university). These timeframes do not necessarily include launch and implementation after all approvals arrive.

[4] Further, there are specific rules governing when a program can be advertised to ensure the best interest of students are preserved and the internal and external governance approval processes are fully respected. Institutional program developers are encouraged to deal directly with their internal quality assurance departments for guidance on this matter.

Section 3: Setting the Context[5]

Program Approval Authority

The MTCU Minister maintains oversight for approving new programs that require government funding and, if applicable, for providing consent for new degree programs. Government legislation that applies in this area includes the *Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities Act*, the *Post-Secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act, 2000 (PSECE Act)*, the *Ontario Colleges Applied Arts and Technology Act, 2002 (OCAATA)*, the *Ontario Colleges of Trades and Apprenticeship Act, 2009,* and individual university statutes (MTCU, 2000, p. 2).[6] With respect to the latter, each university has been authorized to grant degrees, diplomas, and certificates as a result of government statute or by Royal Charter (MTCU, 2000, p. 2).

These various Acts are supported by additional regulations. Ontario Regulations 279/02[7] and 391/11[8] identify the specific parameters governing the consent process which applies to colleges and those private institutions and select Ontario publicly funded universities with limited statutory authority (Algoma University and OCAD University). In the case of colleges, these are called *Minister's Binding Policy Directives (MBPD)*.

The MTCU has introduced a new component to the program approval process which effects both colleges and universities; now, Strategic Mandate Agreements (SMAs) signed with each institution will guide approvals at the Ministry level. The process is further informed and shaped by the MTCU's *Ontario's Differentiation Policy Framework for Postsecondary Education* (November 2013). Colleges and universities (MTCU, 2014, p. 1), as part of the new MTCU program application process, are now required to identify alignment with the signed institutional SMA and government policy directions such as the *Differentiation Framework*. For those not familiar with the Ontario postsecondary system, further background information and specific SMAs are available online.[9]

Within this broader context, OCQAS, PEQAB, and the Quality Council are responsible for the oversight of the quality assurance processes in partnership with institutions for credentials within their individual

---

[5] Appreciation is extended to MTCU staff who reviewed and provided comments on the MTCU information in this resource.

[6] Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities Act = http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90m19_e.htm
Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellent Act, 2000 = http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_00p36_e.htm
OCAATA = http://www.lawofcanada.net/statutes/s-o-2002-c-8-sched-f/ontario-colleges-of-applied-arts-and-technology-act-2002
Ontario College of Trades and Apprenticeship Act, 2009 = http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_09o22_e.htm

[7] http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/regs/english/elaws_regs_020279_e.htm

[8] http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/source/regs/english/2011/elaws_src_regs_r11391_e.htm

[9] MTCU. (November 2013). Ontario's Differentiation Policy Framework for Postsecondary Education. http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/publications/PolicyFramework_PostSec.pdf
List of current Strategic Mandate Agreements: 2014-17 Strategic Mandate Agreements:
Universities - http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/publications/vision/universities.html
Colleges - http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/publications/vision/colleges.html
Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario. (2013*). QUALITY: SHIFTING THE FOCUS. A Report from the Expert Panel to Assess the Strategic Mandate Submissions*. Toronto: Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario.

purview. The thoroughness and expertise within these organizations received high praise from the postsecondary constituents interviewed for this research. Although overviews are provided below for each organization, institutions and interested community members should deal directly with institutional quality assurance offices when first enquiring about program approval practices.[10] Those programs that require external accreditation also must deal with professional organizations and regulatory bodies as part of the program creation and approval process (e.g., Ontario College of Trades, engineering, teaching, nursing, etc.).

Two of the Acts with close relevance to the new program creation process in the college sector are described below.

Colleges

Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Act, 2002 (OCAATA)

The Ontario colleges are governed by the *Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Act, 2002* (OCAATA) which establishes the framework under which colleges can operate in Ontario. This Act outlines the overall mandate, governance structure, and authoritative reach of Ministerial and Lieutenant Governor in Council policy directives with respect to the colleges. Fully enacted in 2005, it stipulates that "the colleges are to offer a comprehensive program of career-oriented, postsecondary education and training to assist individuals in finding and keeping employment, to meet the needs of employers and the changing work environment and to support the economic and social development of their local and diverse communities" (2002, Section 2, Subsection 2). The resulting *Minister's Binding Policy Directive (MBPD) Framework for Programs of Instruction*[11] served as the legislative imperative leading to the creation of the Credential Validation Service (CVS), a key prong of the College System's quality assurance approval process for new programs. Further, this *MBPD* encouraged the emergence of self-regulated quality assurance at the system level within the sector.

Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act, 2000 (PSECE Act)

The *Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act, 2000 (PSECE Act)* governs degree granting and use of the term "university" in Ontario. The Act specifies two ways to have the authority to grant a degree in Ontario: 1) an act of legislature; or 2) the written consent of the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. The PSECE Act established the Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board (PEQAB) as an advisory body. As well, the Act provided the colleges with the right to offer degrees, and acknowledged the role of the PEQAB to establish degree level standards in relation to this credential type (MTCU, 2005, pp. 3, 5).

College Quality Assurance Process

For the past decade, the college sector has achieved several quality assurance initiatives. Following the creation of OCAATA and between 2003 and 2005, a joint working group of the Ontario government and publicly funded colleges was struck and mandated to establish the following:

[10] Ontario College Quality Assurance Service = www.ocqas.org
Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance (the "Quality Council") = http://oucqa.ca/
Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board (PEQAB) = peqab.ca
[11] http://www.accc.ca/wp-content/uploads/archive/es-ce/MTCUCollegeFramework.pdf

> *…a system-wide credentials validation service that will provide reasonable assurance that all postsecondary programs of instruction leading to [any credential identified in the Credentials Framework] […] offered by the colleges, regardless of funding source, conform to the Credentials Framework and are consistent with accepted college system nomenclature/program titling principles. (Minister's Binding Policy Directive Framework for Programs of Instruction, p.4. 2009)*

This joint working group was called the *Coordinating Committee of Vice-Presidents, Academic (CCVPA)/Colleges Branch of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) Working Group*. Its mandate led to the creation of the CVS service, which then led to the inception of the non-mandated *Program Quality Assurance Process Audit (PQAPA)* service (OCQAS, 2015a; G. Paquette, personal communications, March 2015).[12] PQAPA focuses at the institutional level; it "involves the regular and cyclical review of each college's quality assurance processes and … provides the standards for these processes" (OCQAS, 2015b). A PQAPA pilot was run with five colleges in 2006 and formally evaluated by an external reviewer, Dr. William Massy, who "confirmed that the PQAPA reflected global best practices and was well suited to the needs of the Ontario college system" (OCQAS, 2015a). All colleges are now part of the PQAPA audit process since 2006, which was the pilot year; additional refinements including those of international reviewers has resulted in the institutional level quality assurance environment that informs best practices for program development processes in the current day for the College System's Ontario College Certificate, Ontario College Diploma, Ontario College Advanced Diploma, and the Ontario College Graduate Certificate. Since the inception of OCQAS in 2005, the PQAPA process has become part of its array of quality assurance supports.

Ontario College Quality Assurance Service (OCQAS)

With the enactment of OCAATA in 2005, the Ontario government provided publicly funded colleges with the authority to approve programs of instruction and develop related quality assurance processes of the credentials defined for the colleges in the *MBPD Framework for Programs of Instruction* (MTCU, April 1, 2005).[13] Colleges can award an Ontario College credential once they have received validation from the Credential Validation Service; should the college wish the program to receive government funding and the program to be eligible for the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP), government funding approval is required.

This provincial legislation led to the colleges creating the Ontario College Quality Assurance Service (OCQAS) which was "established to provide efficient tools that ensure specific quality and consistency standards are met by the Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology in Ontario" (OCQAS, 2015c). It is an arms-length body that does not report to either the Ministry or Colleges Ontario although it maintains a collaborative relationship with each organization (G. Paquette, personal communications, January 2015). OCQAS supports program and institutional level quality assurance processes through two aforementioned primary services: the Credential Validation Service (CVS) which focuses on program level quality assurance and the PQAPA which focuses on institutional-level quality assurance (K. Belfer, personal communications, December 2014).[14]

[12] http://ocqas.org/?page_id=9179
[13] http://www.accc.ca/wp-content/uploads/archive/es-ce/MTCUCollegeFramework.pdf
[14] The PQAPA process is outlined in detail on the OCQAS website (http://ocqas.org/?page_id=9183 and http://ocqas.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/PQAPA-Process-Revised-December-17-2014.pdf).

As mentioned, the OCQAS through the CVS maintains responsibility for reviewing new and existing programs that result in one of the following credentials: Ontario College Certificate, Ontario College Diploma, Ontario College Advanced Diploma, and the Ontario College Graduate Certificate. New and existing college degrees are reviewed by the Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board (PEQAB).[15]

The mandate of the CVS is nested within the *Minister's Binding Policy Directive (MBPD) Framework for Programs of Instruction.* This *MBPD* contains an outcomes oriented *Credentials Framework* for programs of instruction and emphasizes the role of OCQAS (through the CVS) which is to "provide reasonable assurance that all postsecondary programs of instruction ….regardless of funding source, conform to the Credentials Framework and are consistent with accepted college system nomenclature/program titling principles" (MTCU, April 2005, pp. 3-4).[16] Originally published in 2003 and revised in 2005, this *MBPD* recognizes the capacities of the colleges to conduct internal quality assurance and new program approvals (pp. 2-3, 5). It further emphasizes that colleges must meet all the requirements of a program standard, should a college choose to deliver a program of instruction for which a program standard has been established (pp. 4). [17]

The Evolving Role OCQAS

Approved by the Ontario College System's Committee of Presidents in 2013, OCQAS's role will soon expand in 2015 to that of a formal accreditation body as the colleges will be "moving to an institutional-level accreditation process,"[18] which will replace the PQAPA quality assurance audit (OCQAS, 2015d). As a support for this evolution, the OCQAS management board has approved *Accreditation Standards* many of which touch on program approval practices, demonstration of achieving expected learning outcomes, academic quality, student learning, and more.[19] The new *Standards* will fall under the *College Quality Assurance Audit Process* (CQAAP). The following demonstrates the impact accreditation standards will have on new program approvals (OCQAS, 201d):

> *Specifically, reference* [in the Standards] *is made to the fact that colleges are familiar with, and following current, accepted, evidenced-based practices and research related to the quality of their programs and student learning, and have policies and practices in place that are consistent with this evidence and research.*

The six *Accreditation Standards* will confirm as part of the accreditation process the following are in place at each college: a "Program Quality Management System" that embeds quality assurance practices; supporting "Policies and Practices" that are transparent and effectively communicated to stakeholders and students; "Program Design" protocols that represent carefully established vocational learning outcomes; "Program Delivery and Student Assessment" methods that are consistently applied

---

[15] PEQAB's scope also includes quality assurance reviews of undergraduate and graduate new and existing degree programs delivered by private colleges, out-of-province institutions, and international institutions wishing to operate in Ontario.

[16] http://www.accc.ca/wp-content/uploads/archive/es-ce/MTCUCollegeFramework.pdf and http://ocqas.org/?page_id=9149

[17] The government's *Ontario Qualifications Framework* provides qualification descriptions and standards for credentials ranging from certificates through to doctoral degrees (see http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/programs/degreeauthority/CAATconsents.html).

[18] http://ocqas.org/?page_id=9272

[19] http://ocqas.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/CQAAP-Standards-2015-Revised-January-13-2015.pdf

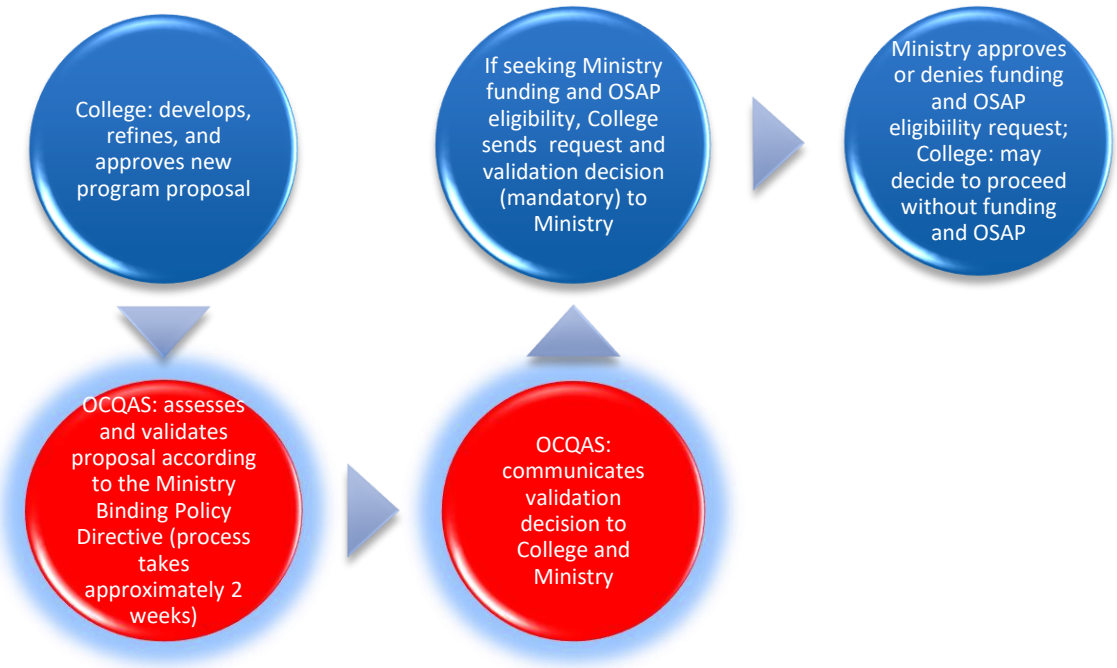
and are in “Conformity with Government Requirements”; and consistent, high quality “Availability and Allocation of College Wide Resources” to ensure student achievement of program vocational learning outcomes (OCQAS, 2015e). In keeping with a focus on continuous improvement, these new *Standards* are anticipated to have an impact on institutional level quality assurance practices although specific details were not available at the time this research was conducted (G. Paquette, personal communications, January 2015). Additional information is published on the OCQAS website.[20]

The Ontario College Quality Assurance Service (OCQAS) is responsible for evaluating and verifying the Ontario College Certificate, Ontario College Diploma, Ontario College Advanced Diploma, and the Ontario College Graduate Certificate against the Credentials Framework for Programs of Instruction. It is also responsible for the Program Quality Assurance Process Audit (PQAPA) which is at the institutional level.

College New Program Approval Process – College Certificates and Diplomas

The external process for new certificate and diploma program approvals for the college sector is outlined in Figure 3. The components highlighted in red (shaded) represent the OCQAS focus.

Figure 3: Ontario College Quality Assurance Service - Overview of New Program Approval Processes for Certificates & Diplomas



Source: K. Belfer, personal communications, 2014

[20] http://ocqas.org/?page_id=9281

In keeping with the *Minister's Binding Policy Directive (MBPD) Framework for Programs of Instruction* and the embedded *Ontario Credentials Framework,* the MTCU requires that colleges adhere to specific program standards (where applicable) when developing new program proposals, when delivering new programs, and when executing the program review process (MTCU, 2015b).[21] According to the Ministry, "program standards apply to all similar programs of instruction offered by colleges across the province" and established programs; at this time, these include the following elements: "vocationally specific learning outcomes...essential employability skills learning outcomes[22] [and a]…general education requirement" (2015b). These standards are available online at the Ministry website.[23] When examining a new program proposal, OCQAS conducts a detailed review to ensure the proposal aligns with the *MBPD Framework for Programs of Instruction, Program Standards* (if existing), and system-wide titling protocols. Further, anticipated learning outcomes are carefully considered to ensure the program is meeting the requirements for the appropriate credential level. According to Karen Belfer, Executive Director of OCQAS, *Program Standards* are in place to ensure consistency across the system; where graduates across the province acquire the same vocational skills necessary to find employment in the field of study of the program they successfully complete (personal communications, January 2015). *Program Descriptions* are also in place to ensure consistency; however, colleges have more opportunity to adapt the language used when writing the vocational learning outcomes of the program. Together, these *Standards* and *Descriptions,* the *MBPD Framework for Programs of Instruction,* and the titling protocols guide colleges in the development of new programs.[24] They serve as the framework that helps both the colleges and the MTCU define in which family of programs a new program will reside. As noted in Figure 3, it takes approximately 2 weeks for OCQAS to complete this review for each new program proposal.

MTCU Review and Approval of College Certificates and Diplomas

After the approval by the home institutions and verification by the OCQAS CVS service, certificate and diploma programs for which colleges are seeking government funding are then sent by the college to the MTCU Colleges Unit in the Postsecondary Accountabilities Branch for review and funding approval. According to MTCU staff, applications are accepted throughout the year, creating a more fluid approval process. As might be anticipated, it is worth noting that the volume on the college side is much higher than on the university side because of the College System's need to be readily responsive to labour market changes and intensities.

As mentioned previously, MTCU first considers the proposal's alignment with the SMAs, and its responsiveness to labour market demands. Further, staff in the Colleges Unit conduct a policy review, confirm adherence and alignment to Binding Policy Directives, and consider other government policy components when examining each proposal. For the funding review, the Ministry examines the total number of hours included in the program, what constitutes those hours, and how these map back to existing programs. The timeframe for program approval reviews depends very much on the completeness of the college proposal, the response time of the college to any question that may arise (technical or otherwise), and the submission and review of any additional requested information.

[21] http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/audiences/colleges/progstan/index.html
[22] http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/audiences/colleges/progstan/essential.html
[23] Sample: http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/audiences/colleges/progstan/essential.html
[24] For further details on program standards and titling protocols, program developers should consult with college curriculum specialists.

Further, if a regulatory or accreditation approval is outstanding, this can further delay the review (sometimes upwards of three years). Once approved, if a college modifies a program greater than 25%, it must be re-reviewed for any technical change considerations including, potentially, a new funding review (as opposed to a new policy review).

Universities

University Quality Assurance Process

Ontario universities have a long history of establishing robust quality assurance practices that spans several decades (Quality Council, 2015a). Graduate programs have been reviewed for quality by the *Ontario Council on Graduate Studies* (OCGS) since the 60s and in the late 90s the *Council of Ontario Universities* (COU) "adopted procedures for the external auditing of university processes for reviewing undergraduate programs" through the *Undergraduate Program Review Audit Committee* (UPRAC) (2015a). Requiring the adoption of new program procedures and conducting "an arms-length periodic review of existing undergraduate programs" were core elements of UPRAC's quality assurance review (2015a). Created in 2010, the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance (the "Quality Council") replaced these policies and bodies; it operates as an arms-length, oversight body that conducts its work in accordance with the *Quality Assurance Framework*[25] approved by executive heads in 2010 (Quality Council, 2015b). Given the specific legislative authority of universities to create and approve certificates, diplomas, and degrees, each maintains oversight for its new program approval process through a Senate or Board approved institutional quality assurance process (IQAP) which has been ratified by the Quality Council.

Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance (the "Quality Council")

With respect to the Quality Council, its mission and mandate are defined in the *Quality Assurance Framework* (Quality Council, 2015b). It "…oversees quality assurance processes for all levels of programs in Ontario's publicly assisted universities, and helps institutions to improve and enhance their programs…" (2015b). The Quality Council ensures the following:

> *…the continuing achievement of a defined level of quality in the design and delivery of an institution's programs, with particular emphasis on the desired learning outcomes and Ontario's degree level expectations, as well as on the monitoring of an institution's compliance with its Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP) in its cyclical program reviews. (2015b)*

"Degree level expectations" are outlined in full on the Quality Council website.[26] This body delivers its mandate in a manner that respects institutional autonomy. Two internal committees support the work and decisions of the Quality Council: the Appraisal Committee which reviews and recommends new programs for approval at both the undergraduate and graduate levels (Quality Council, 2015c) and the Audit Committee which assesses an institution's adherence to its IQAP and provides recommendations to the Quality Council (Quality Council, 2015d).

[25] http://oucqa.ca/resources-publications/quality-assurance-framework/
[26] http://oucqa.ca/framework/appendix-1/

Figure 4 outlines the Quality Council's protocol for undergraduate and graduate new program approvals. An expedited approval process is possible for select program types (Quality Council, 2014, pp. 15-16).[27] Program developers are required to consult with the institutional quality assurance office for clarification on whether a proposal is eligible for expedited review.

A new program proposal following the process outlined in Figure 4 is expected to be evaluated by institutions using IQAP approved criteria such as alignment of the program's objectives with institutional mission and academic plans; appropriateness of admission requirements, structure, and assessment strategy given intended program learning outcomes and degree level expectations; evidence that the program is reflective of the current discipline, contemplating an appropriate delivery mode, and incorporates comprehensive plans for resources related to administration, faculty, staff, class size, etc.; and provides demonstrable indicators of achieving quality (pp. 8-11). An institution's IQAP is expected to follow specific steps which are outlined in the Quality Council's *Quality Assurance Framework* and, if a program is not eligible for expedited review, to include an external review (pp. 11-12). Institutional support, review, and approval are required by each university before consideration of the new program proposal by the Quality Council's Appraisal Committee. Institutional IQAP's, guided by the *Quality Assurance Framework*, emphasize an extremely broad and deep assessment of each new program.

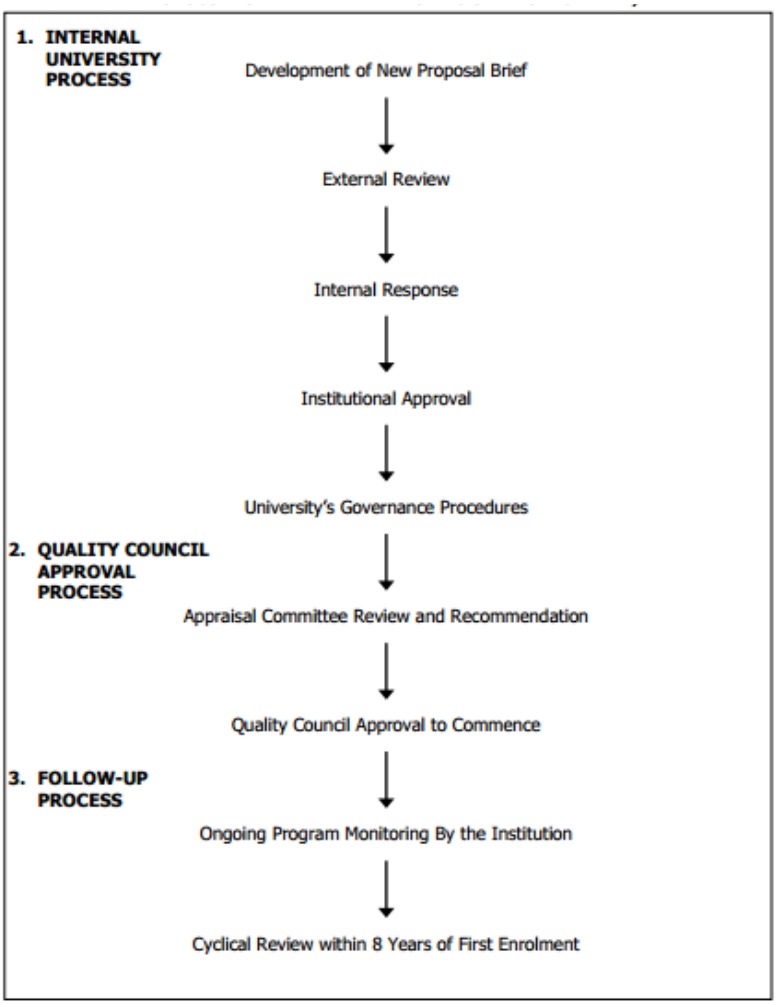
The Quality Council ensures the following (2015b):

[T]he continuing achievement of a defined level of quality in the design and delivery of an institution's programs, with particular emphasis on the desired learning outcomes and Ontario's degree level expectations, as well as on the monitoring of an institution's compliance with its Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP) in its cyclical program reviews.

---

[27] New graduate diploma programs follow an expedited process (Quality Council, 2014, p. 9).

Figure 4: Quality Council's Overview of Protocols for Undergraduate and Graduate New Program Approvals



Source: Quality Council, 2014, p.9

Each Ontario university publishes the institutionally approved IQAP on its website (see Appendix C for the individual university website addresses).

The published timeframe to review and approve new program proposals by the Quality Council's Appraisal Committee is 45 days; this assumes the proposal is complete and the Appraisal Committee does not require any additional information from the university (D. Woolcott, personal communications, December 2014). Program developers, through designated institutional quality assurance personnel and chief academic officers, routinely seek clarifications from the Quality Council Secretariat regarding the approval process and which type of program initiatives require review by the Appraisal Committee (D. Woolcott, personal communications, December 2014). The names, degrees, and a brief description of each approved program are posted routinely on the Quality Council website.[28] Select institutional examples are provided in Sections 5 and 6 of this resource.

[28] http://oucqa.ca/program-approvals-menu/program-approvals/

Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board (PEQAB)

PEQAB is an arms-length, advisory agency for the MTCU which makes recommendations to the Minister regarding "applications for ministerial consent" and other related matters in accordance with the *Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act, 2000* (PSECE Act) (PEQAB, 2009). According to its chief executive officer, Dr. Brown, PEQAB's scope of authority includes reviewing for quality assurance any type of undergraduate or graduate postsecondary program (public or private) offered by those colleges, universities, and other institutions not otherwise empowered by an act of the provincial legislature to offer a degree program in Ontario (personal communications, March 2015).

Section 7 in the PSECE Act outlines the composition, duties, powers, procedures, and other related matters for PEQAB (2000). For the most part, publicly funded Ontario universities are not required to have their degree programs reviewed for quality assurance by PEQAB as they each have the right to grant certificates, diplomas, and degrees through provincial Act of Legislature (or Royal Charter) (J. Brown, personal communications, December 2014). Exceptions would be universities that have limits to their degree granting authority (i.e., Algoma University and OCAD University); in these cases, new programs that fall outside of the contours of each institution's statutory authority would need to be reviewed by PEQAB and would require Ministerial consent. Applications subject to PEQAB review are new degree programs and existing degree programs from publicly funded colleges, private postsecondary institutions located in Ontario, postsecondary institutions from other provinces, international postsecondary institutions, and some joint programs between an Ontario institution and an institution from outside of Ontario. With respect to private institutions, PEQAB conducts two reviews: an organizational review[29] and a program review. In 2000, the Minister authorized publicly funded Ontario colleges to offer applied bachelor's degrees (MTCU, 2000). Therefore, Ontario colleges may participate in the program review process for new degree programs and those existing degree programs that are being renewed.[30]

Program proposal applications for college degrees are received and then may be referred by the Minister to PEQAB for review prior to consideration of consent. This unfolds after an initial policy review within the Ministry and a recommendation to the Minister. The qualifications descriptions and standards under the *Ontario Qualifications Framework* (OQF) for these degrees are captured within "11 – Baccalaureate/Bachelor's Degree: Honours" (MTCU, 2015c).[31] The Ontario Qualifications Framework is not binding on Ontario universities; however, the degree-level standards are generally consistent between the Quality Council and PEQAB. In July 2009, PEQAB recommended and the Minister dropped the requirement that college degrees include the term "Applied" in their nomenclature (J. Brown, personal communications, January 20, 2015). Examples of college degrees using this new nomenclature are available on the PEQAB website.[32]

According to Dr. Brown, the timeframe to conduct a review and compile a recommendation takes on average approximately a year from the point of referral of an application to PEQAB through to delivery

[29] The organizational review is focused on ascertaining an organization's resource and policy framework, financial robustness, and academic capacity, and its attention to the overall care of students.
[30] Review of previously approved programs happens five to seven years after first approval and every subsequent five to seven years.
[31] The Ontario Qualifications Framework is currently being reviewed by the MTCU and is subject to change.
[32] http://www.peqab.ca/completed.html (retrieved January 20, 2015)

of a recommendation to the Minister for consent consideration (personal communications, January 20, 2015). The list of the publicly funded college degrees reviewed by PEQAB that have received Ministerial consent is available online.[33]

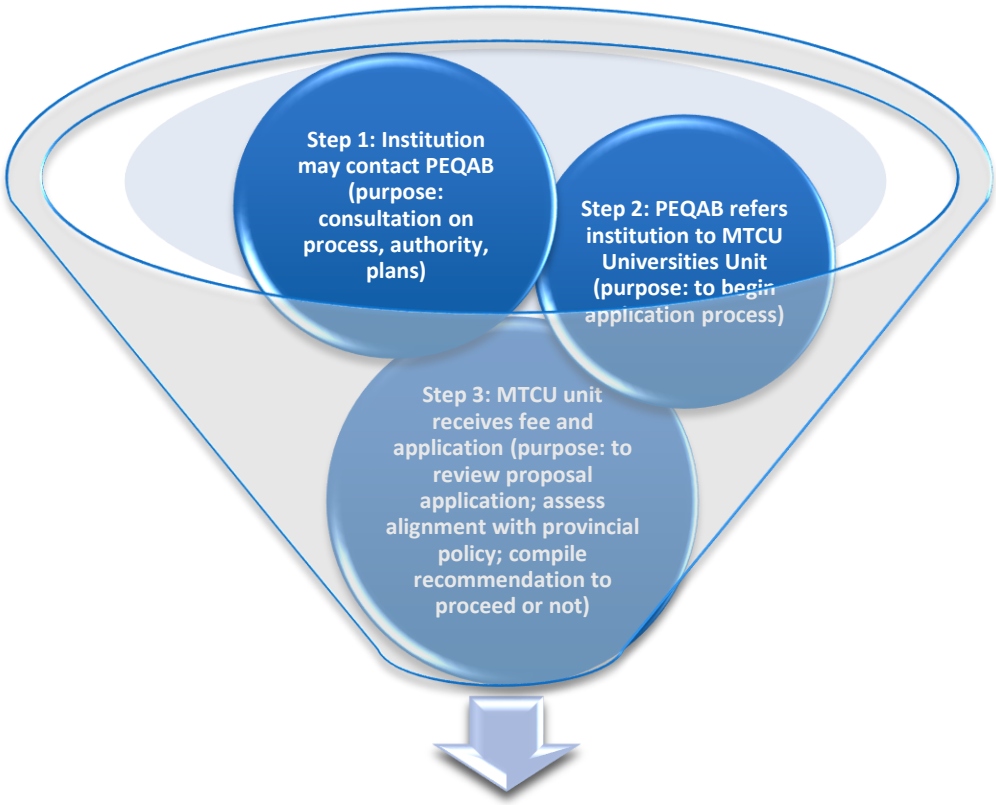
With respect to new degree program approvals, PEQAB "may" establish review panels to "assess the educational quality of proposed degree programs in Ontario" if an initiative has been referred to it by the Minister (PSECE Act, 2000, Section 7, Subsection 4). The Minister has the authority to refer new program applications to PEQAB or another accrediting or quality assurance body (although the latter has not occurred) (Section 5, Subsection 2).

Figures 5 and 6 provide a summary of the application, review, and consent process followed by institutions for a new degree proposal that is subject to PEQAB review. PEQAB's one year timeline to review new proposals addresses those components identified in red (shaded) in Figure 6. The duration is affected by a number of factors including the necessary time required by the PEQAB Secretariat to receive and review the initial application and to identify potential subject matter experts for the Quality Assessment Panels;[34] the PEQAB Board to approve the Panel participants and the assessment strategy; the Panel to conduct a site visit and create the final report; the institutions to respond to the findings; the PEQAB Board to formulate the final recommendation; and the Secretariat to write a recommendation and background report for the Minister (J. Brown, personal communications, January 20, 2015). The amount of documentation required to inform a final recommendation is extensive and driven by the evidence needed to satisfy the quality assurance benchmarks and standards for a degree level honours program (J. Brown, personal communications, January 20, 2015).

[33] http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/programs/degreeauthority/CAATconsents.html

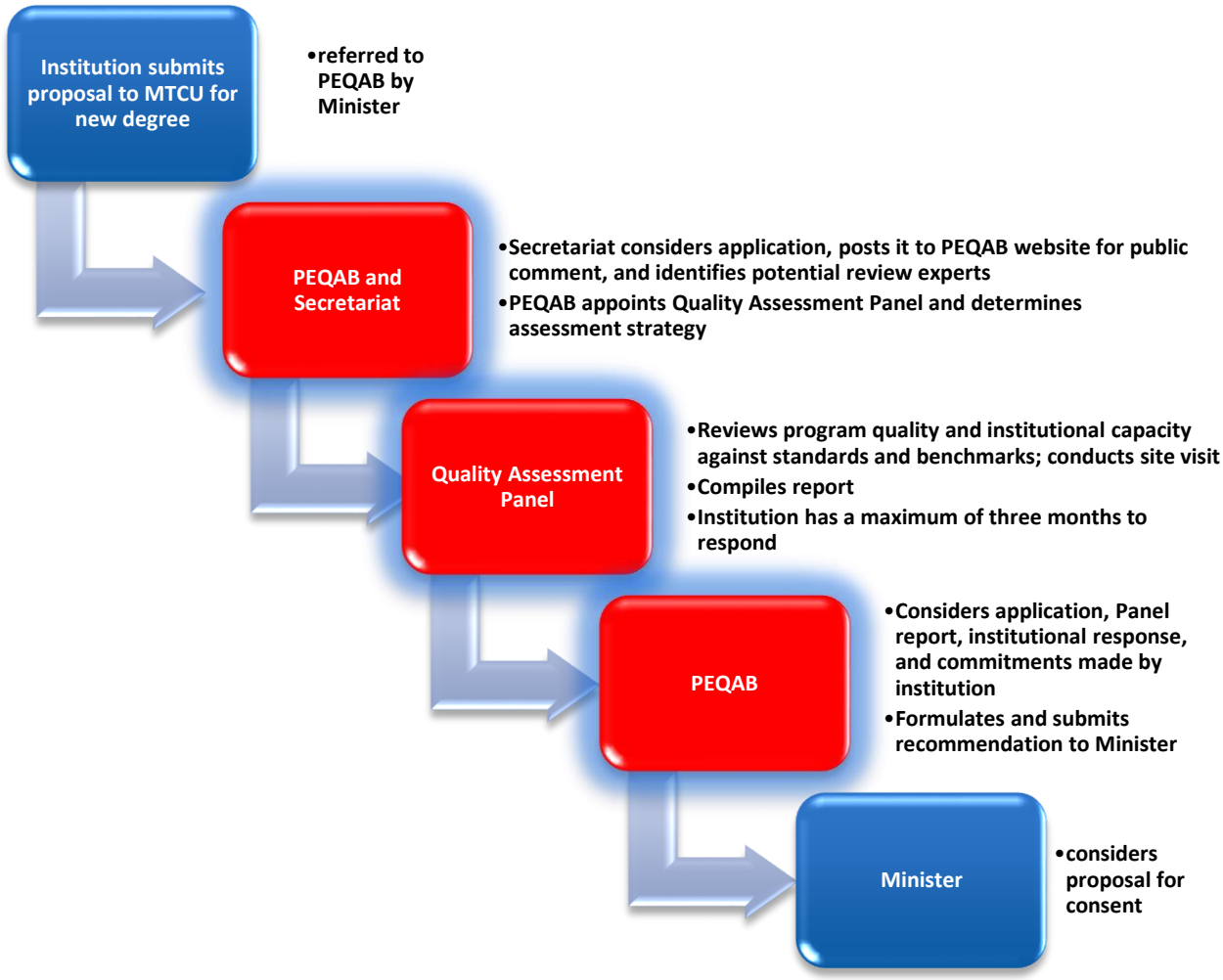
[34] Potential candidates are identified as a result of national searches relevant to each program proposal's disciplinary focus.

Figure 5: Initial Contact and Start of Application Process



Step 4: Minister receives recommendation - if in support of the recommendation, the application is referred to PEQAB

Figure 6: PEQAB Review Process



Source: adapted from PEQAB, 2014, pp. 9-10

When reviewing new program proposals, PEQAB determines who sits on the Quality Assessment Panels (PEQAB, 2014, pp. 12-13) based on several criteria including evidence of possession of "an advanced academic credential related to the subject area under review (normally at the terminal level in the field); [35] required or desired professional credentials and/or related work experience of substantial depth and

[35] The PEQAB *Handbook* defines a terminal academic credential as normally the doctorate "with the exception of certain fields where a master's degree in the field/discipline is more typical" (2014, p. 12).

range;…" etc. (p. 12). As a norm, participants are invited to sit on a Panel if they have evidence of a terminal degree (usually a doctoral degree) in the discipline under review.

There are contractual, orientation, and logistical supports provided by the Secretariat to the Quality Assessment Panel. Site visits are handled by both the Panel participants (usually a chair and a subject matter expert) and the PEQAB senior policy advisor.

With respect to the colleges, the review criteria and related benchmarks applied by PEQAB to assess a program application are outlined in its *Handbook for Ontario Colleges (New Programs)* (2014, pp. 14-33). These include a review and assessment of the following: program structure; degree level; admission, promotion, and graduation; program content; program delivery; capacity to deliver; credential recognition; regulation and accreditation; nomenclature; program evaluation; academic freedom and integrity; student protection; economic need; and non-duplication of programs. With respect to colleges, PEQAB has recently approved revisions to the nature of work integrated learning component, including more flexibility in its term.[36] This *Handbook* is updated annually by PEQAB, with the new edition published in June of each year.[37]

For colleges, PEQAB is focused on ensuring new degrees adhere to the government's *Ontario Qualifications Framework for Honours Bachelor Degrees* (PEQAB, 2014, p. 15), in keeping with government stated expectations (MTCU, 2015b). Therefore, only four-year degrees have been approved to date. According to the Ministry, these types of degree programs prepare a student for "…entry into graduate study in the field, second-entry professional degree programs or, depending upon content, employment in a particular field of practice or employment in a variety of fields" (MTCU, 2015c).

After assessing the new program and conducting the site visit, the chair and the subject matter expert compile the Quality Assessment Panel report to which institutions are given 90 days to respond; the typical timeframe for response is 60 days. PEQAB is in the process of consulting the colleges to reduce the timeframe, both for the subject matter experts to deliver their report and for the College to respond (J. Brown, personal communications, January 2015). The PEQAB senior policy advisor compiles a background report for the Board's review, a body that meets six times per year at 2 month intervals.[38] The Board reviews all the material and crafts a final recommendation to the Minister which may result in consent or denial of consent, and if consent, a period of consent--typically five to seven years--and any conditions of consent. As of 2015, the Minister has also agreed to receive from PEQAB recommendations for a more flexible form of consent, 'seven year audit consents,' which on renewal focus PEQAB processes on auditing the self-quality assurance processes for institutions which are mature in offering degree programs and which have a track record of honoring commitments. The Secretariat staff compile two reports for the Minister: the official recommendation from the PEQAB Board and a background report to capture the rationale (particularly important if there are conditions or if there is a denial).

[36] Each program must meet a legislative requirement of a minimum of 14 weeks of work integrated learning.
[37] The PEQAB benchmarks and standards predate and, as such, served as the foundational base for the MTCU Ontario Qualifications Framework (OQF) and the Canadian Degree Qualifications Framework entrenched within the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada's *Ministerial Statement on Quality Assurance of Degree Education in Canada* which was signed by Canada's provinces (J. Brown, personal communications, March 2015); the OQF and the Canadian framework were adopted in 2005 and 2007 respectively.
[38] http://www.peqab.ca/meetingdates.html

The above documents are forwarded to the Minister who has the authority to rule on the program proposal application. If consent is not granted, the background report may be shared with the applicant with the approval of the Minister.

PEQAB is responsible for reviewing college degree proposals referred to it by the MTCU Minister. It is further responsible for conducting institutional and program level audits for undergraduate and graduate programs delivered by other types of institutions wishing to operate in Ontario (private colleges, other provinces' institutions, international institutions). It is not responsible for Ontario university quality assurance audits or degree program approvals unless Ministerial consent is required and the proposal is referred to PEQAB by the Minister.

Changes

Colleges Ontario, the advocacy organization for the publicly funded provincial colleges (n.d.), has advocated previously for the refinement of the quality assurance approval process for college degrees. This position is echoed within a 2012 Colleges Ontario sponsored study by Michael Skolnik, *Rethinking the System of Credentials Awarded by Ontario's Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology* (June 2012, p. 3, 32-34) and noted in two publications by Colleges Ontario in 2012 and 2013 respectively: *Reaching New Heights: Differentiation and Transformation in Higher Education* (November 2013, p. 7) and *Empowering Ontario: Transforming Higher Education in the 21st Century* (September 2012, p. 11). Subsequent to the publication of these documents, the PEQAB Secretariat has been collaborating with the colleges to refine the current program approval process. Collaborative venues exist to support these discussions such as the Ontario College System's *College Degree Operating Group* (CDOG). This group maintains a website marketing the college degrees[39] and runs an annual conference[40] to advance its goals and collaborative learning conversations. This group also meets several times a year; therefore, the PEQAB Secretariat has adopted the practice of putting on the CDOG agenda for consultation, any changes to benchmarks, criteria, and processes affecting college degrees, while such changes are at the proposal stage (J. Brown, personal communications, January 2015). PEQAB also consults the Colleges Ontario's *Coordinating Committee of VPs, Academic*, the body to which CDOG reports.

According to Dr. Brown, the PEQAB process has benefited from collegial input from CDOG members particularly in the area of providing greater clarity regarding the expectations for benchmarks (e.g., what constitutes scholarly engagement, work integrated learning requirements, identifying faculty with

[39] http://www.degreesindemand.ca/
[40] http://www.senecac.on.ca/cdog/2014/present.html

doctoral degrees,[41] etc.). The previously mentioned 'seven year audit consent' is a recent example of such a change, wherein PEQAB recommended to the Minister that an expedited process be implemented for previously approved programs that have demonstrated consistently high quality (J. Brown, personal communications, December 2015), which the Minister accepted. This new PEQAB process would focus on the College's demonstrated ability to self-quality assure renewal programs and is anticipated to be a much less involved and onerous process. There will be additional changes to PEQAB's criteria because its process, endorsed by the Board's adoption of "continuous improvement" in quality assurance among its stated values, involves constant review of its criteria (personal communications, December 2015). Therefore, those creating new college degree programs should reference the PEQAB website resource materials directly including the college specific *Handbook for Ontario Colleges* and *Submission Guidelines for Ontario Colleges (New Programs).*[42] These are updated yearly in June.

MTCU New Program Approvals and Consents for Degrees

Degree Approvals

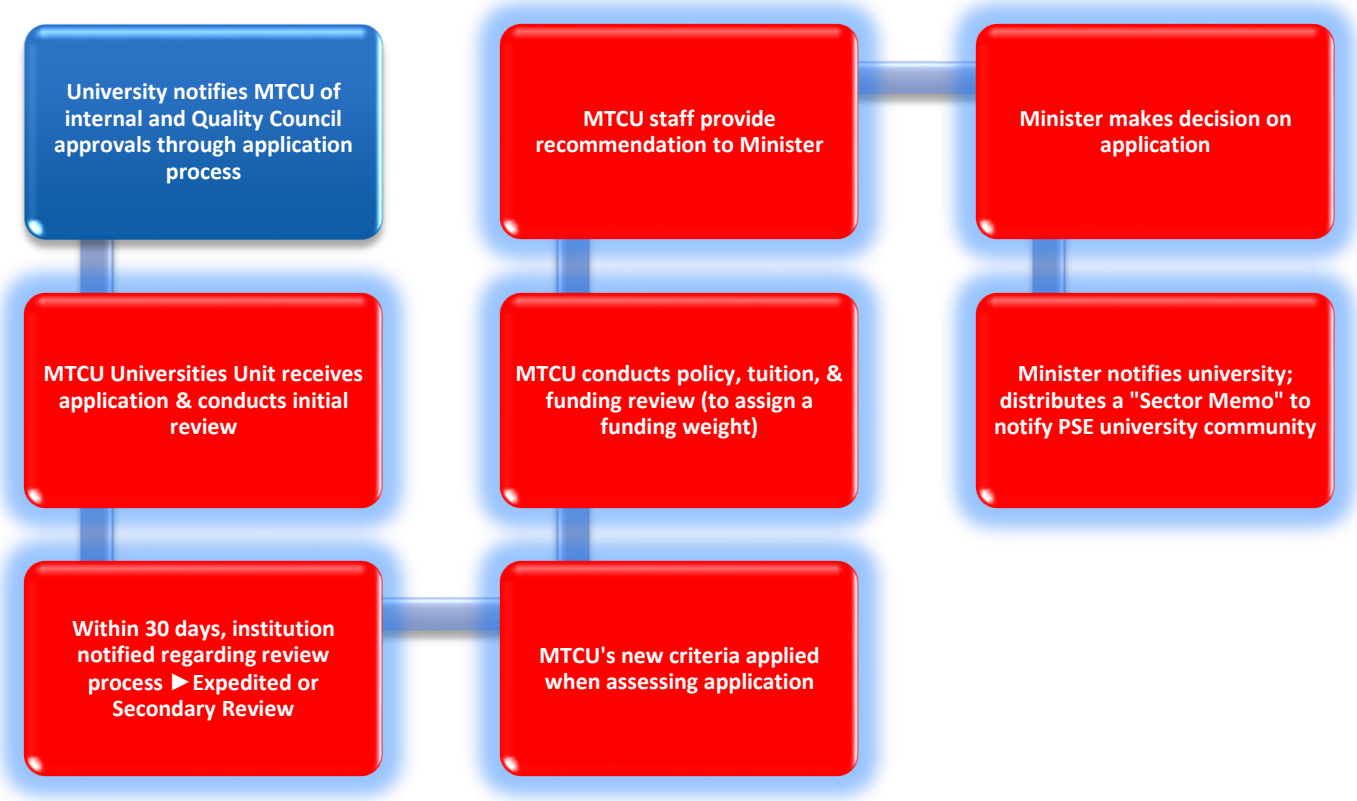
In October 2014, the MTCU introduced new guidelines for approving university programs for those seeking funding and OSAP eligibility. Figure 7 provides a high level overview of the new process; those components that involve the Ministry are identified in red. Appendix B provides a more detailed summary which is an excerpt from the October 17, 2014 memorandum distributed by the Ministry to the sector.[43] As a recommendation to the sector, the Ministry, in its *University Program Approval Submission Guideline* (October 2014, p. 5), encouraged institutions to submit program proposals concurrently when making submissions to the Quality Council; however, indicated approval would remain outstanding until the quality assurance review and approval was finalized by the latter body.

[41] Note: in place of actual evidence of faculty with doctoral degrees on staff at the point of application, PEQAB will accept as part of the review process a doctoral hiring plan with an anticipated start date (J. Brown, personal communications, January 20, 2015).

[42] http://www.peqab.ca/handbooks.html

[43] Note: the Ministry provides institutions with a list of "core" programs that do not require approval (MTCU, University Program Approval Submission Guidelines, October 2014, p. 15). Currently, these include university undergraduate programs in the following areas: biological sciences (including biotechnology), English language and literature, French language and literature, general arts and science, humanities (including ancient and classical languages), mathematical sciences and computer studies, physical sciences, social sciences (including women's studies), and theology. Core programs are currently under review by the Ministry to ensure the currency of this list.

Figure 7: MTCU University New Program Approval Process



The guidelines include criteria along with submission and review timeframes (e.g., MTCU, 2014, p. 1). Specifically, MTCU now assesses new program approval applications against the following criteria (p. 2):

1. *Strategic Mandate Agreement alignment;*
2. *Proposed tuition fee (including institutional and sector comparators), funding weight, and FORPOS code;*
3. *Costs (including program financing considerations and capital cost implications);*
4. *Justifiable duplication;*
5. *Societal need and labour market demand;*
6. *Student demand;*
7. *Enrolment planning and graduate allocations;*
8. *Experiential learning; and*
9. *Program prioritization/program transformation initiatives.*

As noted in the Ministry's *University Program Approval Submission Guidelines*, each of these criterion is evaluated according to specific considerations (pp. 1-3). For SMA alignment, the Ministry is looking for evidence of fit with existing university offerings, SMA approved program areas of growth and strength, future plans, enrolment forecasts, and government direction; for tuition, internal consistency and alignment with sector comparators; for costs, the ability to fully establish the program without additional provincial funding; for justifiable duplication, evidence of appropriateness and consultation with other institutions and a rationale for why another program in the area is needed. With respect to

societal need, labour market demand, and student demand, the Ministry is looking for evidence that the program will produce graduates with strong employment opportunities and will attract interest. For experiential learning, the Ministry wishes to ensure evidence of supply and the existence of sufficient placement opportunities for students. Prioritization and transformation speak to a desire to see consistent alignment with transformation objectives in SMAs and to understand the impact on other internal programs (e.g., closures). Enrolment planning and graduate allocations are intended to ensure fit and to avoid institutions inadvertently creating unfunded pressures in graduate programs. Further, the Ministry is expecting that institutions be at the appropriate stage of relevant professional accreditation processes (pp. 6-7). The Ministry Guidelines provide more details as well as the *Program Approval Certification Form* and the *Program Approval Request Form* (pp. 8-14).

The MTCU now offers two types of review both of which are intended to ensure alignment with the government's *Differentiation Policy Framework*[44] and the SMAs: *Expedited Review* and *Secondary Review* (MTCU, October 7, 2014, p. 2). After an initial analysis by the Universities Unit of the MTCU Postsecondary Accountability Branch,[45] institutions are informed within 30 days as to the category of review that applies for any new program (p. 3). After the initial review and decision on process, the proposals are subject to closer examination to determine alignment with and fulfillment of the additional criteria noted above.

Expedited Review applies in cases where universities submit complete program proposals that align with SMAs. If the Minister does not require additional information or review, proposals deemed as eligible for *Expedited Review* are given priority in the approval process. For this process, the MTCU has provided specific target dates for decisions which potentially means these proposals can be finalized within four months assuming submission by the deadlines, proposal completeness, and no additional questions arise during the review process regarding the above remaining eight criteria (MTCU, October 7, 2014, p. 2, 3). Proposals that fall into the *Secondary Review* category are reviewed after the expedited reviews and take longer to allow for appropriate follow up, consultation with the institution, and further assessment and review (p. 6).

Degree Consents

The MTCU consent process regarding new degrees is significantly different than the above approval process. Ministerial consent related specifically to new programs is required if an institution plans to engage in any of the following (s. 2, PSECE Act, 2000):

- *using the term "university";*
- *granting a degree;*
- *providing a program or part of a program of post-secondary study leading to a degree to be conferred by a person inside or outside Ontario;*
- *advertising a program or part of a program of postsecondary study offered in Ontario leading to a degree to be conferred by a person in or outside Ontario;*

[44] http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/publications/PolicyFramework_PostSec.pdf

[45] The Universities Unit and the Colleges Unit of the MTCU Postsecondary Accountabilities Branch are responsible for managing the relationships between the Ministry and the institutions with a particular focus on administering accountability mechanisms such as new program approvals, key performance indicators, *Strategic Mandate Agreements (SMAs),* and the program funding approvals process.

- *selling, offering for sale or providing by agreement for a fee, reward or other remuneration, a diploma, certificate, document or other material that indicates or implies the granting or conferring of a degree….*

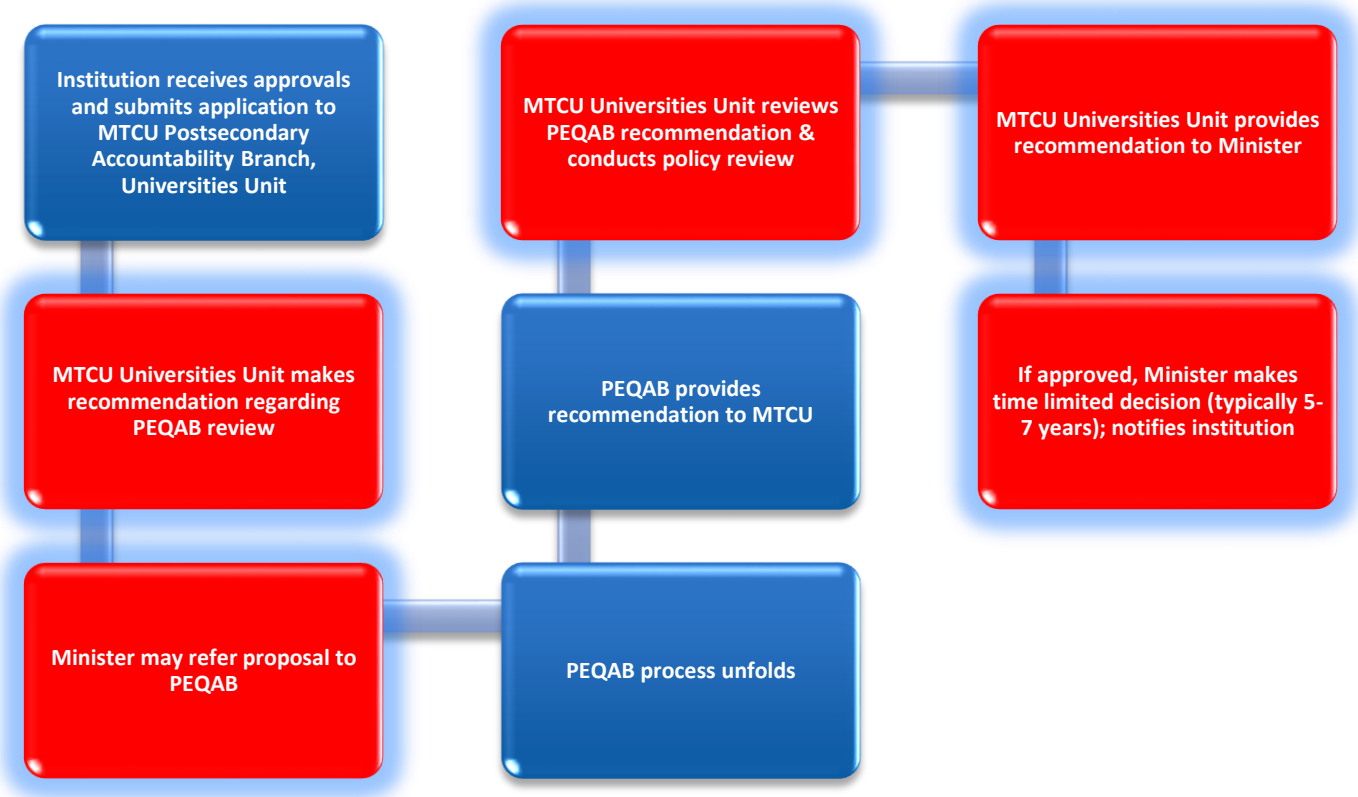
There are requirements in addition to those noted above such as the right to operate as a university in the province.

As mentioned previously, in the college sector, consent is always required if an institution wishes to offer a new degree program whereas at the university level, if the new degree program falls outside of an institution's statutory mandate, a consent application is required.

Figure 8 outlines at a high level the consent process institutions follow. The items in red (shaded) identify the areas under the purview of the MTCU Postsecondary Accountability Branch. This process may also apply when one institution with authority to grant a degree partners with a second institution that does not have authority to grant a degree or to offer a joint-program.

When the Minister provides consent, a letter of intent is first provided by the Minister followed by a letter of consent from the Assistant Deputy Minister. It is time limited, meaning an institution is required to reapply at a later point to renew the program. Usually the time period for the initial consent is five to seven years, after which the institution is required to apply for consent again. Unless there is a dramatic policy change, it is referred to PEQAB for an assessment and onto the Deputy Minister who has delegated authority from the Minister to review the applications and PEQAB recommendations and to approve renewals. As described previously, PEQAB has recently begun to implement a 'seven year audit consents' renewal process to expedite review of these renewals.

Figure 8: MTCU Consent Process for Degrees



Section 4: Nuances to the Program Typologies and Related Considerations

There are situations that can decrease or extend the launch time for a new program. Some are unique to the credential, to funding considerations related to institutional goals and/or target audience, and/or to whether more than one institution is involved (i.e., a joint program arrangement). Examples are provided below.

Apprenticeship Credentials

Apprenticeship programs represent a nuance to the new program creation process and an example of a credential that represents a somewhat unique category. Typically, these are the fastest type of program to develop and launch. The Ontario College of Trades, established in April 2013, has the authority to regulate the skilled trades' apprenticeships through its Board of Governors. Specifically, it has the authority to create regulations regarding programs and training hours for apprentices (Ontario College of Trades, 2013). It executes its work in accordance with the *Ontario Colleges of Trades and Apprenticeship Act, 2009 (OCTAA) (section 11, 2009)*.[46] When establishing training programs, the Ontario College of Trades works with organizations including colleges. In keeping with this and according to Colleges Ontario, 90% of in-school apprenticeship training is delivered through the Ontario College System (Colleges Ontario, November 2013, p. 12). When a student completes such a program, the government awards the *Certificate of Apprenticeship* (MTCU, 2015b); the Ontario College of Trades now awards the *Certificate of Qualification* whereas before it used to be awarded by MTCU (Ontario College of Trades, 2013); and finally, the college awards the college certificate or diploma.

For college delivered programs, the apprenticeship training opportunity might encompass pre-existing programs and/or courses within a college. These types of programs can be mounted and launched very quickly (assuming no additional college credential requiring further approvals is required). Typically, the funding and target audience for these types of programs are known and readily available which also tends to expedite full launch.

In 2013, MTCU released the *Co-op Diploma Apprenticeship Program (CODA) Guidelines* that specify the criteria for new program proposal approval and other relevant details (2013). According to these Guidelines, a CODA program "enables individuals to train as apprentices, completing all in-school learning outcomes, and a minimum of four months on-the-job training in a specific trade, while concurrently obtaining a college diploma" (MTCU, 2013, p. 3). As this category of program benefits from targeted funding, additional information is required as part of the program approval application which is outlined in the *Guidelines* (pp. 8-10). Examples include an approved 'Sponsor' in place to ensure apprenticeship placements as part of the work integrated learning component and demonstrating "how the CODA program will respond to current and emerging labour market needs of the trade" (pp. 8, 9). New CODA programs more closely follow the process outlined in Figure 1, Section 1 of this report with the addition of the apprenticeship requirements component. As a further note, it is not possible for a college to apply for CODA funding until after the regular diploma is approved; further, there is a separate application and reporting and audit process.

[46] http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_09o22_e.htm

Those wishing further information on apprenticeship programs in Ontario are encouraged to review Refling and Dion's *Apprenticeship in Ontario: An Exploratory Analysis* recently published by the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO) (January 2015).

Unfunded Programs

At times institutions will decide to enact programs that do not receive Ministry funding. One example of the former would be an unfunded apprenticeship program. Another would be a local college certificate that does not receive government funding. With respect to universities specifically, an institution may make the decision to conduct an early launch with funding approval pending from MTCU (S. Demers, personal communications, December 2014). It is important to stress that an institution can do this if an "approval" decision is pending; however, not if "consent" is required.

There are implications when an institution proceeds with a funding decision pending. For example, the Ministry will only fund a university program and provide OSAP eligibility for an entire fiscal year if approval occurs before February 1 (MTCU, p. 3, October 7, 2014). Otherwise, all enrolled students are considered ineligible for funding for that year. Plus, there is a risk that funding may not be approved. An institution would therefore need to consider the financial viability of a program in such a situation. Given the expansion of the approval criteria and the increased emphasis on *Strategic Mandate Agreements*, this could be a higher risk than in years past.

Further, part of the approval process for MTCU results in the assignment of a program code for financial aid funding through MTCU's Student Financial Assistance Branch. By moving forward with MTCU funding approval pending, the institution does so acknowledging that OSAP won't be available for a period of time. This may be a strain for students assuming the cohort is one which needs to rely on government financial aid.

Inter-institutional Program Partnerships

In 2011, the Ontario government through its Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities established a vision for credit transfer that stressed the following:

> *Ontario will have a comprehensive, transparent and consistently applied credit transfer system that will improve student pathways and mobility, support student success and make Ontario a postsecondary education destination of choice. The credit transfer system will assist qualified students to move between postsecondary institutions or programs without repeating prior, relevant learning. (2011, p. 1)*

The policy framework for transfer outlines guiding principles that are intended to preserve concepts such as quality and academic integrity, full institutional participation, student success and mobility, efficiency and optimized approaches, fairness and equity, and transparency and consistency (p. 2). It also acknowledges the time and resources required for institutions to participate in actualizing the vision and incorporates into its strategy support for new partnerships (p. 3).

While it is understood that a credit transfer system does not necessarily speak explicitly to program partnerships, there has been interest on the part of pathway developers to create and study inter-institutional partnerships. Therefore, this vision is helpful support as the research findings from this project indicate that developing inter-institutional programs necessarily extends the time to develop,

review, and approve new programs. Generally, this means it will take more than 2 years to create inter-institutional programs. This is due to several factors. At the concept creation phase, there are typically greater complexities, resources, and time involved in developing the program concept and the related partnerships necessary to ensure the new proposal is sufficiently supported and robust. It is not unusual for the partnership to first require formal institutional approval by relevant parties after which the actual program requires varying levels of informal and formal consultation and approval. Once internal approvals are finalized, joint programs may also require the involvement of two different quality assurance organizations because of the different standards and benchmarks overseen by each individual body. Whether this occurs depends upon credential outcome intentions. It is also impacted by whether consent is required; if it is a new program for either or both partners, both parties are required to submit a consent application to MTCU simultaneously (unless, in the case of the college, the program has been previously approved) (MTCU, October 7, 2014, p.5).

In the university sector, the Quality Council's *Quality Assurance Framework* directly references joint programs and related new program approval processes. First, it defines joint programs as "*A program of study offered by two or more universities or by a university and a college or institute, including an Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning, in which successful completion of the requirements is confirmed by a single degree document*" (2014, p. 6). It further defines dual credential programs as "[a] *program of study offered by two or more universities or by a university and a college or institute, including Institutes of Technology and Advanced Learning, in which successful completion of the requirements is confirmed by a separate and different degree/diploma document being awarded by each of the participating institutions*" (p.6). Since inter-institutional program partnerships at the undergraduate level can fall into either of these categories, both definitions apply.

As such, creation of a new joint program is subject to the processes outlined in the Quality Council's *Quality Assurance Framework* (D. Woolcott, personal communications, December 2014). These joint programs will be required to follow the Quality Council's *New Program Approval Process* whether the partner is another university or a college (2014b, p. 5). Details on this process are outlined in the Quality Council's *Guide (pp. 5-6)*. The process emphasizes joint reviews and submissions, and joint consultation with faculty, staff, and students at both locations by both partners. For clarification on whether the *New Program Approval Process* applies, pathway developers are encouraged to consult with their institutional quality assurance departments in the first instance; these areas routinely deal with the provincial quality assurance bodies and, therefore, are well positioned to provide clarity and consult further if necessary.

Different circumstances such as creating an inter-institutional program can extend the timeframes to create, approve, and launch a new program.

Section 5: Examples from Institutions and Allied Organizations

The Ontario colleges and universities interviewed for this project represent a diverse spectrum of both institutions and programs as they were of varying sizes, linguistic emphasis, types, complexity, and programmatic and geographic diversity. Further, some of these schools engage actively with the apprenticeship process or external accreditation as part of the new program approval. In addition, institutional websites across the province were examined to benchmark findings further. Examples to illustrate the complexities impacting new program creation processes are outlined below.

Disciplinary Emphasis

Institutional colleagues interviewed for this project continually emphasized the importance of faculty when developing new programs; ideas for new proposals typically emerge from academic colleagues at the discipline level regardless of institution type. These individuals are considered primary drivers of academic innovation and often this expectation is nested firmly in internal quality assurance processes.

As one example, the University of Toronto entrenches a comprehensive peer review focus in its Institutional Quality Assurance Process (UTQAP) which is typical at Ontario universities. According to Dr. Jane Harrison, Director, Academic Programs, Policies and Quality Assurance at the University of Toronto, the UTQAP enshrines the foundational principle of ensuring robust peer review by colleagues across a broad spectrum of areas: from within the program's home unit; from cognate units through the consultation process; from colleagues from peer institutions as part of the review process; from Faculty colleagues through Faculty level governance; from University colleagues through university level governance; and from colleagues from across the province (Quality Council) (personal communications, March 2015). Consideration of MTCU requirements is also core to the process.

The University of Windsor provides another illustrative example of the academic disciplinary emphasis in new program development. In its procedures for initiating a new program proposal, it highlights the role of faculty and emphasizes the grassroots nature of the creation process (2014, p. 10).

> *…faculties and departments initiate new programs in response to the evolving needs of the local and global community and the emerging patterns of knowledge construction within and among disciplines. New programs are initiated with attention to curriculum design, the development of program learning outcomes, the alignment of effective teaching and assessment methods, and the responsible management of the requisite human, instructional and physical resources within the institution.*

Disciplinary and Industry Emphasis

For the colleges, the importance of a disciplinary emphasis as well as the involvement of industry are clearly evident as both these perspectives drive the initial creation of new program proposals. In the colleges, the faculty and academic areas are the primary drivers for conceptualizing new programs; further, the processes include extensive academic and administrative consultation to ensure program viability, available resources to support the program, and institutional fit. As an illustrative example of industry emphasis in the colleges, the program creation process is augmented by input from the College Program Advisory Committees (PACs) which are mandated by the government as a result of the previously mentioned *Minister's Binding Policy Directive Framework for Programs of Instruction*.

> *The board of governors is to ensure that an advisory committee for each program of instruction or cluster of related programs offered at the college is established and is made up of a cross-section of persons external to the college who have a direct interest in and a diversity of experience and expertise related to the particular occupational area addressed by the program. The board of governors is to establish in by-law the structure, terms of reference, and procedures for program advisory committees (MTCU, 2005, p. 3).*

According to Colleges Ontario, these bodies are active participants in the creation of new programs and inform the development of both the program proposals and the learning outcomes (September 2012, p. 20). The involvement of PACs occurs prior to institutional approval being granted.

As an illustrative example related to new programs, Centennial College establishes ad-hoc PACs during the program development stage to provide the industry input (G. Marshall, personal communications, March 2015). Once the program is approved, Centennial converts the ad-hoc PAC to a standing PAC (the same members may remain on the PAC or new members may be added).

Conestoga College provides an interesting approach to ensure both a disciplinary and industry focus which is very similar to Centennial's. When creating a new degree program, a Program Development Advisory Committee (PDAC) is created with voting membership from industry and non-voting membership from within the Institution (S. Burrows, degree programs consultant, January 2015). The PDAC typically includes representatives from a variety of areas involved in creating the new degree such as from the degree area, the Curriculum Office, the Library, and the Co-op office. Special guests are also invited as needed such as the registrar and the marketing team. Conestoga PDACs serve in an advisory capacity and adhere to formally established and approved guidelines.

Whether existing or like Conestoga's PDAC, these committees are considered an essential partner to facilitate informed creation and review of new programs. Each ensures additional industry expertise and consideration of labour market needs and trends inform the development of the curriculum and a program's learning outcomes (G. Marshall, personal communications, December 2014).

College Examples Related to New Program Creation Processes

According to Cheryl Kennedy, a curriculum consultant for the Conestoga College Institute of Advanced Learning and Technology, Conestoga's new program approval process carefully assesses the value of the program for students and industry, considers how best to embed quality in the program, and ensures significant alignment with learning outcomes and the *Minister's Binding Policy Directive (MBPD) Framework for Programs of Instruction* and *Standards* (personal communications, December 2014*)*. Using Conestoga College as an example, Figure 9 outlines a detailed internal process for new program development which results in college credentials requiring Credential Validation Service (CVS) review. This process is not necessarily followed for apprenticeship programs. While different colleges may have different committee structures beneath the Board level and different practices, the essence of the process remains very similar across institutions: ensuring academic unit/decanal support; encouraging industry input via the PACs; engaging in broad consultation; ensuring institutional viability, fit, and alignment with *Strategic Mandate Agreements*; and involving internal levels of governance committees from program specific through to the Board.

Figure 9: Conestoga College: Sample of Approval Process for Ontario College Certificates, Diplomas, Advanced Diplomas, and Graduate Certificates

Source: adapted from Conestoga College, July 2014

In the above Figure, the "Request for Approval to Proceed" is a comprehensive document detailing the program, academic, and industry relevant labour market information; physical, financial, technological and academic resources; human resources; and other services needed to run the program. In addition, the Proposal refers to the industry support received by the PDAC or PAC to date. The term "Data Pack" refers to the curriculum design proposal and includes the program description and graduate employment pathways; program outcomes; admission requirements and processes; course descriptions; course and program hours and credits; and the associated levelling semester by semester. As with all the publicly funded Ontario colleges, Conestoga's Board of Governors approves the program proposal before it goes for evaluation to the Credential Validation Service (CVS) and then onto the MTCU for funding consideration.

According to Cheryl Kennedy, curriculum consultant at Conestoga College, the operating principles that govern new program approval practices within the colleges as overseen by the CVS and MTCU, emphasize the following at minimum (personal communications, December 2014):

1. clearly specifying the target audience for a program;

   (For example, if the audience is known and very specific, the type of credential and/or curriculum can be developed with a high degree of focus. This ultimately advantages timelines.);

2. providing clarity regarding the type of program and credential desired;
3. developing the program in a collaborative manner and with a discipline focus;
4. satisfying a need evident in the market and ensuring there will be opportunities for graduates;
5. ensuring there are available resources for the program;
6. seeking assurances of quality by ensuring alignment with learning outcomes, benchmarks, and standards;
7. adhering to the *Minister's Binding Policy Directive Framework for Programs of Instruction* and its embedded *Credentials Framework* as well as the *Program Standards*; and,
8. aligning with institutional mission and mandate and the *Strategic Mandate Agreement* signed with MTCU.

The College's process for developing degree programs illustrates these principles in action. Figure 10 represents a high-level overview of a systematic approach to degree program development, again using Conestoga as an illustrative example. According to Sacha Burrows, Degree Programs and Academic Pathways Consultant at Conestoga College, the process outlined in Figure 10 can take up to 2 years from the point of program conceptualization through to final submission to MTCU and PEQAB. With the addition of the final PEQAB review,[47] MTCU approval, and subsequent program launch, an average of 2.5 to 3 years emerges (S. Burrows, personal communications, January 2015).

The College has incorporated a preapproval moment with MTCU to ensure the degree as it exists at that point in time is in keeping with broader provincial expectations. The approach of encouraging and systematizing internal and external consultation is evident at other institutions and is considered very helpful to ensure robust development of degree proposals (S. Burrows, personal communications, January 2015). When creating the Degree Approval Package, extensive consultation occurs with areas such as the Curriculum Office, Library, IT, Facilities Resources, Finance, Co-op, the Registrar, Academic Operations, the PDAC committee, and the various administrative and academic governance committees. Throughout the entire process, the degree programs consultant and the curriculum consultant provide significant coordination support to ensure broad and deep consultation and to facilitate the development of appropriate learning outcomes in accordance with quality benchmarks and standards. Conestoga College currently delivers 11 degrees and is a good example of the approach used at colleges to create degree programs.

[47] Conestoga supplies an initial submission which is reviewed by a Quality Assessment Panel (QAP) assigned by PEQAB and is the subject of an initial recommendation to the PEQAB Board. Conestoga responds to that recommendation (including providing additional materials, as required), and both the QAP report and the response are added to the original submission to create the full, final submission considered by the PEQAB Board and the MTCU (S. Burrows, personal communications, March 2015).

Figure 10: Conestoga's Internal Degree Approval Process

Source: adapted from Conestoga College, Degree Development Procedure Map, August 2014

University Examples Related to New Program Creation Processes

As mentioned previously, the new program approval process at universities is governed by approved institutional quality assurance processes (IQAP) which are in keeping with the Quality Council's *Quality Assurance Framework*.[48] As an illustrative example of institutional processes and timeframes, the University of Windsor publishes specific details including timeframes for new program approvals on their institutional website to guide the community in the creation of proposals.[49] Timeline workflow charts for three start dates are provided each of which speak to the point in time when new program proposal briefs are submitted to the Quality Assurance Office: September, January and May respectively.[50] While it depends on the type of program and whether or not an expedited review is possible, the overview in Figure 11 outlines the typical milestones and potential timelines assuming a September submission of the "New Program Proposal Brief" to the institutional Quality Assurance Office (University of Windsor, n.d.). Assuming the various suggested processes unfold as expected, it may take close to 2 years from start to finish before a proposal reaches the point of being submitted for MTCU review and consideration. This does not include the time involved to conduct the MTCU review or the time involved to conduct the various implementation launch processes that emerge following final approvals.

[48] http://oucqa.ca/ and http://oucqa.ca/framework/2-protocol-for-new-program-approvals/
[49] www1.uwindsor.ca/graduate/approval-timeline-for-new-program-proposals
[50] www1.uwindsor.ca/graduate/approval-timeline-for-new-program-proposals

Figure 11: University of Windsor New Program Approval Process

Source: adapted from University of Windsor, January 2015

At the University of Toronto, a minimum of 1.5 years is considered fairly typical (J. Harrison, personal communications, December 2014). This does not include the time it takes to receive Quality Council approval, Ministry approval, or to launch the program. Using a university degree proposal as an example, adding in the 45 days for the Quality Council approval process and the 4 months minimum for the MTCU Expedited Review, then 2 years begins to emerge as an absolute minimum. Adding in the program launch considerations and this extends the timeframe beyond the 2.5 years. Most of the institutional time is spent on institutional program development, consultation, and approval. More

generally and not atypical of most institutions, the sequencing of governance approval meetings was noted as an important consideration guiding the process (S. Demers & J. Harrison, personal communications, December 2014).

Section 6: Additional Considerations and Related Examples

The internal and external quality assurance processes are critical components of the new program approval process. Additional important considerations were identified by those interviewed for this project. These included the parallel need to consider and develop non-academic supports to ensure successful program creation and launch. Further, that individual institutions and allied organizations operating at the system level routinely consider strategic and operational non-academic considerations. The next two sub-sections provide a high-level overview of each of these topics.

Internal Strategic and Operational Considerations

Appendix D provides a summary of additional considerations that may or may not necessarily be captured in the quality assurance process for new programs. Example topic areas include student support, development, and success; alignment with *Strategic Mandate Agreements* (SMA) and institutional mission; and a variety of resource and infrastructure considerations. This is not meant to be an all-inclusive summary; rather, it represents the typical and additional considerations colleges and universities explore when implementing a new program or pathway initiative. Each of these areas requires significant consultation which informs and potentially affects, the timeframes for program approvals and launch.

Broad Consultation

Broad consultation is a core principle for both the college and university new program creation and approval processes. Examples include site visits by external reviewers (i.e., for the PEQAB and the Quality Council's quality assurance processes); the college PACs and PDACs mentioned earlier; the various levels of engagement with committees comprised of academic colleagues, administrative staff, and senior executives; and the deep consultation and review by internal academic governance committees and across respective institutions and relevant organizations (such as external accrediting bodies or the Ontario College of Trades).

In addition to these examples, the research revealed that institutions have developed various approaches to ensure broad consultation beyond academic considerations. Approaches are often entrenched in quality assurance protocols and/or the templates supporting the new program approval process.

Figure 12 identifies at a general level the internal departments consulted when creating a new program. These areas provide academic advice and logistical and implementation advice.

Figure 12: Examples of Internal Departments Involved in New Program Development Processes

As an illustrative example, the University of Toronto's Quality Assurance department has created consultation venues and templates that ensure champions of new program proposals anticipate not only academic matters but additional issues such as tuition and funding considerations, administrative needs, and space/infrastructure requirements (J. Harrison, personal communications, December 2014). For the University of Toronto, these types of considerations are entrenched in a *Business Essentials Document* template that is completed by developers of new program proposals. Further, the process of creation, consultation, and approval of new programs at the University is tracked through a unique program approval database which is maintained by the Quality Assurance department. The University of Toronto, as part of its *New Undergraduate Program Proposal Template*, also notes consideration of non-academic items such as space and infrastructure needs (University of Toronto, New Undergraduate Program Proposal Template, November 2014, p. 8).[51]

Conestoga College provides another example. The *Request for Approval to Proceed* template for new programs contains a number of criteria fairly typical for new program approval proposal forms such as

[51] See also the Quality Council's sample *Program Proposal Brief*: http://oucqa.ca/guide/10-sample-program-proposal-brief/

proposed credential type; program name, description, and delivery method; admission and progression requirements; Library resources; evidence of demand and need; alignment with organizational mandate; co-op and accreditation requirements; proof of support such as from the Program Advisory Committee (PAC); assessment of competition and duplication; projected enrolments; and required teaching resources (2012-14).[52] In addition, it also includes questions regarding space allocation; capital and equipment resources; development costs; recruitment plans; financial plans; and tuition and funding expectations. According to Cheryl Kennedy, Conestoga College, various parties are provided with opportunities to discuss proposals at pivotal stages (personal communications, March 2015). The *Program Planning and Review Committee*, for example, is a venue that invites open dialogue from various college areas. It has proven to be an efficient and effective method of engaging stakeholders, identifying potential operational and academic issues, and determining potential solutions and next steps before further work is completed on the proposal (C. Kennedy, personal communications, March 2015). Consultation along with broad and deep community engagement are foundational components of the process.

Canadore College provides another example of how an institution weaves the academic quality assurance process into a consultation framework to ensure the items in Appendix D are considered. The College's *Academic Group* has carriage of conducting the initial review of new program proposals after the Dean and local academic unit have approved the proposal in principle. This committee is chaired by the Vice President, Academic. Membership includes the Director of Quality, Learning, Teaching, and Innovation (Canadore's quality assurance department), Deans, the Vice President Academic, and, the Registrar (M. Lamontagne, personal communications, December 2014). After this and prior to going to the Board, the proposals are vetted by the Senior Executive Team of the College which includes the President, Vice Presidents, Senior Human Resources Consultants, and the Director of Corporate, Community and Alumni Partnership. Centennial College has a similar venue to Canadore's *Academic Group* called the *Program Innovation and Development Committee* (PID) which serves the same purpose and has similar membership (G. Marshall, personal communications, December 2014).

Institutions have numerous tracking mechanisms and consultation opportunities in place to support new program development, refinement, and approval that complement the academic quality assurance processes and that further expedite consultation, timely program launches, and efficiencies. The next section explores the high-level practices involved in fully launching a program after all approvals arrive (or are 'pending').

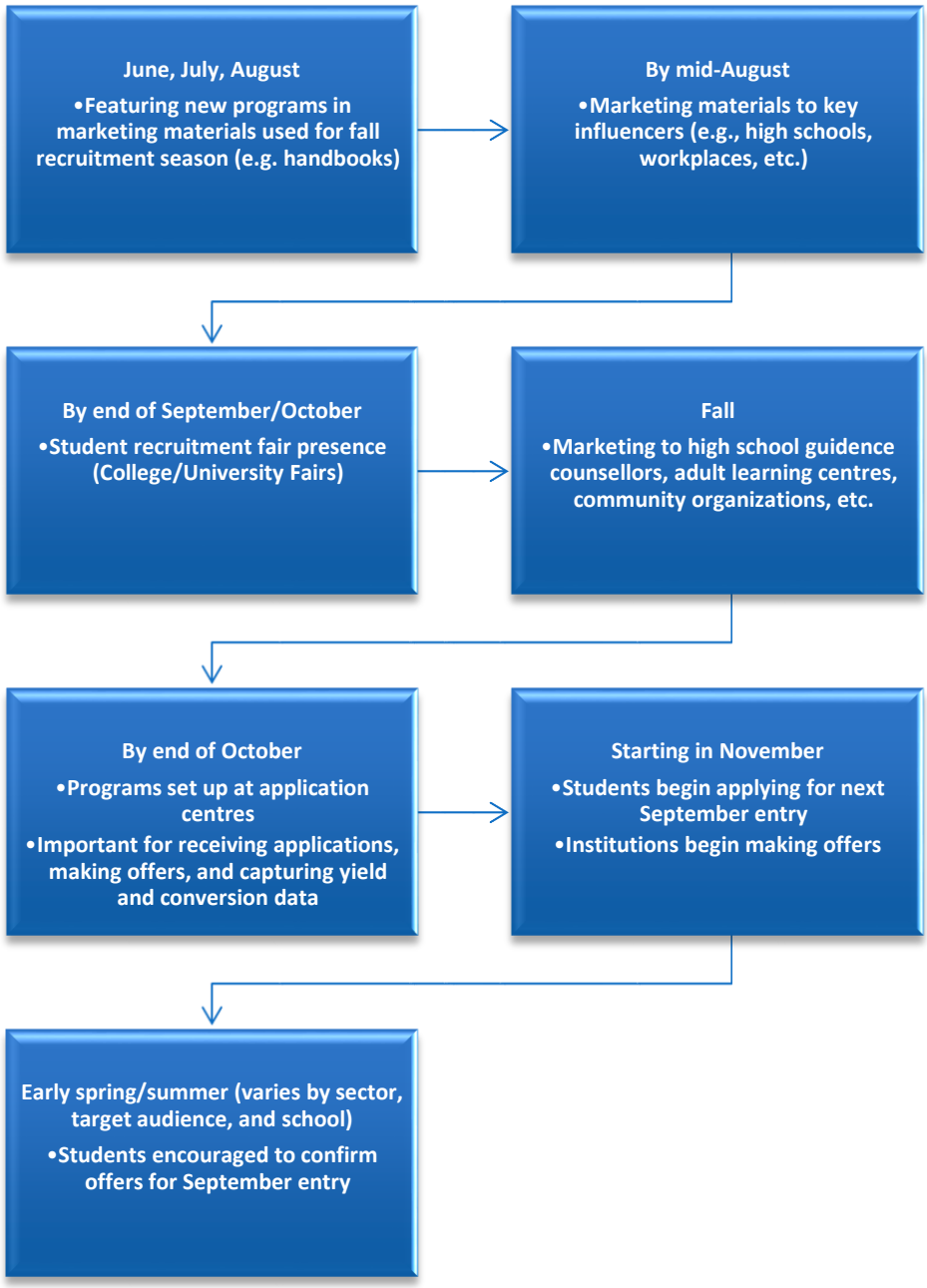
Broad and deep consultation is a core component of new program development at both the colleges and universities in Ontario. The necessity of this will extend timeframes and introduce complexities into the process.

[52] https://myconestoga.ca/web/tlc/learn-about-program-development-and-approval-processes

External Program Launch Timeline Considerations

Figure 13 outlines the typical external program launch considerations and related timing colleges, universities, and allied organizations reported preparing for when launching an approved program. For the sake of simplicity, the primary focus is on preparing for program launches that allow for students to start in the September entry point although it is very true that with the flexibility offered by the Internet, it is possible to launch new programs at different points than is suggested with the timelines noted in Figure 13.

Figure 13: Typical Operational Program Launch Timeliness Using September as a Proxy Entry Point for Students



The overview in Figure 13 is specifically focused on highlighting recruitment related topic areas and associated timeframes for external communication opportunities tied to services provided or supported primarily by organizations operating at the systems level such as the province's central application centres. It is not meant to highlight internal marketing and recruitment campaigns.

Typically, institutions interviewed for this project indicated approval of a program by November/December is considered somewhat late if the goal was to launch the program for students wishing to start in the following September. The rationale was that the primary recruitment season, the fall, has been missed by this point (S. Demers, personal communications, December 2014). Those interviewed also acknowledged that if a program was approved later, institutions do make best efforts to ensure a September intake occurs.

Examples of collateral used centrally to share information about new programs include the websites maintained by the Ontario College Application Service (OCAS) and Ontario Universities' Application Centre (OUAC). For OUAC, an online resource called "E-Info" is a primary tool for students applying;[53] for OCAS, a specialized, targeted website called "CollegesOntario.ca" is available to students.[54] In addition, the sectors often launch specialized campaigns such as the College System's "Degrees in Demand" website maintained by the *College Degree Operating Group* (CDOG).[55] Major recruitment events occur to support both the colleges and universities. Examples include the Ontario College Fair,[56] the College Information Program,[57] the Ontario Universities' Fair,[58] and the Ontario University Information Program.[59] As another example, both sectors engage in extensive communication with local high school partners, which represent a key influencer group for direct entry students. Each Centre produces specialized publications for these types of audiences sharing information about a variety of topics including new program launches.[60] When launching programs for non-direct entry students, institutions reported more nuances are required as appropriate to each target audience.

An additional implementation consideration involves administratively establishing a new program in the government financial aid system to allow for enrolled students (or newly admitted students) to apply for OSAP. When a new academic program is approved for funding and OSAP eligibility, institutional Financial Aid Offices initiate the administrative process and submit the request to MTCU's Student Financial Assistance Branch for OSAP approval (N. Jelenic, personal communications, January 2015). These same institutional financial aid staff work in collaboration with the Student Financial Assistance Branch to establish the program cost codes in the OSAP system, which facilitates the processing of the financial aid applications for students. This designation process can take approximately 2 to 4 weeks. Typically, students start completing OSAP applications in April for the upcoming September entry, therefore, it is helpful to begin this process as soon as possible after MTCU funding approval and OSAP

[53] http://www.electronicinfo.ca/
[54] http://www.ontariocolleges.ca/home
[55] http://www.degreesindemand.ca/
[56] http://www.ocif.ca/
[57] http://www.ontariocolleges.ca/news/cip
[58] http://www.ouf.ca/
[59] http://www.ouf.ca/uip/
[60] OCAS = http://www.ocas.ca/e-materials.html; OUAC = http://guidance.ouac.on.ca/in-the-loop-september-2014/guidance-counsellor-resources/

eligibility of the new or modified program is received (N. Jelenic, personal communications, January 2015).

As another timeline consideration, while it is necessary to routinely update the ONCAT transfer database for students on the *ontransfer.ca site*, it is helpful for students if institutions ensure the *ONCAT Student Transfer Guide* is updated well in advance of September.[61] This is particularly appropriate as institutions begin making offers to transfer students January through to the summer for September entry (varies by institution).

Operational program launch considerations can extend the full launch of a new program by 6 to 8 months. This timeframe unfolds after all approvals arrive. Institutions can shorten timelines by engaging in advance preparation while maintaining due regard for approval bodies and government regulations. Launch timeframes are also influenced by the inherent needs of unique student audiences and their related decision cycle and subsequent entry point.

---

[61] https://www.ontransfer.ca/www/index_en.php

Section 7: The Experience in Other Jurisdictions

A Broad Overview

Approaches to new program approvals vary by jurisdiction. Michael Skolnik in *College Baccalaureate Degree Approval Processes in Other Jurisdictions* (2013), provides a thoughtful summary of the approval typologies and quality assurance processes for college degree approvals across Canada and in international jurisdictions. He also highlights the salient differences which are provided in Table 1 (2013, page 28). While the primary focus of the study is on college degree approval processes given its sponsorship by Colleges Ontario, it is not restricted to that sector. For the purposes of this ONCAT resource, it helps to illuminate the different strategic approaches to program approval.

Table 1: Characteristics of College Baccalaureate Degree Approvals in Selected Jurisdictions

Jurisdiction	Program Duration	Approval Stages	Approval Model
Austria	3 years	NA	Program assessment
British Columbia	4 years	2	Program assessment
Denmark	3-4, varies by program	NA	Program assessment
Finland	3.5-4, varies by program	2	Process audit
Florida	2 years (after two-year associate degree)	2	Institutional accreditation
Germany	3-4 years, varies by program	1	Choice of program assessment or institutional accreditation
Ireland	3-4 year degrees	NA	Program assessment
New Zealand	3-4 year degrees	1	Program assessment
Netherlands	4 years	2	Mixed

Source: adapted from Skolnik, 2013

Definitions for each of the strategic approval models referenced in Table 1 are outlined below (Skolnik, 2013).

> **Program assessment**: the program assessment model involves "a full review of each and every program" (p. 11).
>
> **Process audit**: using the example of Finland, new program approvals are handled by the institutions and the Finish Higher Education Evaluation Council (FHEEC) audits the procedures (p. 10).
>
> **Institutional accreditation**: using the US as the exemplar, Skolnik indicates that institutions, rather than programs, are accredited as one of the components is to determine whether an institution "has the capacity to ensure the quality of all its programs" (p. 10). Having noted this, he emphasizes that colleges offering first baccalaureate degrees undergo a more in-depth review.

The last two categories represent a combination of one of the above or a mixed approach. BC is an example of a mixed jurisdiction where currently a significant number of public universities are exempt from review of new programs at the baccalaureate level or higher whereas all public colleges are subject to baccalaureate program specific reviews to inform the potential granting of consent by the Minister of Advanced Education (M. Skolnik, p. 11; R. Fleming, personal communications, December 2014).

British Columbia

In British Columbia, the Degree Quality Assessment Board (DQAB) is a Ministry appointed advisory board for the Minister that maintains responsibility for overseeing the degree level quality assurance process for both public and private institutions.[62] The Board is guided in its work by different Acts including the *Degree Authorization Act* which came into force in November 2003 (DEQAB, November 2006, p. 1). This Act provided institutions other than publicly funded universities with the right to grant degrees.

> *For the first time in British Columbia, private and out-of-province public institutions have the means to legally grant degrees in British Columbia and use the word "university" in their name without having their own statute. The consequential amendments to the Act expanded the degree granting authority of British Columbia public institutions to provide the opportunity for public colleges to grant applied baccalaureate degrees and public university colleges and provincial institutes to grant applied master's degrees. (p. 1)*

With the passing of this Act, a new degree approval process was created and the DQAB came into being. The *University Act* and the *College and Institute Act* govern new program approvals for BC public universities and BC public colleges and institutes respectively. In either case, new programs must still be reviewed by the DQAB prior to Ministerial approval consideration (p. 2). Applied degrees must have ministerial approval before being reviewed by DQAB (pp. 2-3).

DQAB's external quality assurance process for new degree program proposals is available online.[63] The Minister, in November 2006, updated the *Exempt Status Criteria and Guidelines* which provide an expedited review for institutions with long standing capacity and rigorous quality assessment processes for successfully granting degrees (Ministry of Advanced Education [AVED], November 2006).[64] Any BC institution can apply for exempt status; if this is approved by the DQAB, the quality assessment process would be expedited "up to the degree level specified" and the programs would be forwarded to the Ministry for "review and consent / approval" after the requisite 30-day public advertisement on the Ministry's degree quality assessment site (p. 1). Institutions in this category do not require DQAB review of new programs up to the level of degree for which they are approved for a specified time period; however, it is still within the Minister's discretion to request a DQAB review or recommendation if the circumstances warrant.

The University of British Columbia provides an example of how an institution in another jurisdiction approves new programs (see Table 2).[65] UBC has been approved for exempt status.

[62] http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/degree-authorization/
[63] See the following site for an overview of the process for non-exempt institutions: http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/degree-authorization/documents/workflow.pdf
[64] See the following site for an overview of the process for exempt institutions: http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/degree-authorization/documents/workflow.pdf
[65] http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/degree-authorization/documents/exempt_status.pdf

Table 2: University of British Columbia Undergraduate New Program Approval Process[66]

Steps	Process	Responsible Unit
1	New program begins development	Academic unit
2	Dean's/Provost's offices informed	Academic unit/Dean's Office
3	New unit planned (if applicable)	Proponent consults with Committee of Deans
4	Proposal developed	Academic unit consults with other areas (Library, other departments / Faculties, etc.)
5	Proposal presented to relevant departmental committees for review and approval	E.g. Curriculum Committee, Teaching and Learning Committee, etc.
6	Proposal presented for Departmental approval	Departmental committee
7	Proposal submitted to Dean's office for review	Includes formal consultation with Vice-Provost Academic Affairs
8	Proposal prepared and submitted for review and approval by Faculty Committees; government ministry Executive Summary prepared	Academic Units/Faculty Committees
9	Additional formal consultation occurs	E.g., with academic units, Library (for resources), Senate Secretariat (for form, format, and completeness), Provost
10	Final proposal prepared reflecting all consultation	Academic unit
11	Proposal presented for final Faculty approval	Faculty committee
12	Proposal forwarded to VP Students Office	Vice-Provost Academic Affairs forwards to VP Students Office; Student Consultation Report provided requiring faculty response
13	Tuition Proposal prepared	Faculty
14	Vice-Provost Academic Affairs signs the Budgetary Impact Form, informs Academic unit, forwards proposal to Senate Secretariat	Vice-Provost Academic Affairs
15	Proposal sent to Senate	Senate Curriculum Committee and Senate Admissions Committee sends the proposal
16	Upon Senate approval, proposal forwarded to Board of Governors	Senate
17	Program proposal, Tuition Proposal (if applicable), and Student Consultation Report considered	Board of Governors (if a planned September intake, proposal submitted and approved no later than March/April meeting to accommodate Ministry approval)
18	Proposal and Executive Summary forwarded to Ministry of Advanced Education[67]	Vice-Provost Academic Affairs
19	Under expedited review, Minister provides consent	Minister
20	If Ministerial concerns, proposal referred to Degree Quality Assessment Board (DQAB)	DQAB

Source: adapted from University of British Columbia, New Degree Program Proposals, November 14, 2014

Joint program proposals at UBC are required to follow the above process; however, additional components apply. For example, requirements include expectations of coordination with the other partners, a review of the terms of agreement by University Counsel before internal approval occurs, and a review of the proposal by the Vancouver Senate Academic Policy Committee (University of British, February 2013). Further, the partner may not necessarily have exempt status; therefore, the regular

[66] Note: this process is currently under review at UBC to refine the steps, examine consultation opportunities, and tighten approval timelines.

[67] Programs requiring Ministry approval include new undergraduate programs and majors; new graduate programs; new degree credentials or significant revisions that result in credential renaming. Non-degree programs do not require Ministerial consent (University of British Columbia, February 2013).

program approval process would apply. The additional requirements would necessarily introduce greater complexity and timelines.

Ministry approval is required before admitting a student to a new UBC degree program even under the expedited process. Although it is possible to advertise in advance after finalizing internal approvals, a proviso is required indicating the pending status of Ministerial approval (University of British Columbia, February 2013). According to BC DQAB *Degree Program Review: Criteria and Guidelines*, institutions are advised to "submit proposals 12 – 18 months prior to the planned start-up date of the program to allow sufficient time" for the quality assessment process to unfold and subsequent marketing and recruitment to occur (DQAB, November 2006, p. 5).

Non-degree program approval processes are very different than degree program approvals. Implemented in 2002 by AVED, the approval authority is vested in the local institutions.[68] For the new approval process, institutions submit their proposals to the online Post-secondary Institution Proposal System (PSIPS) to facilitate public input into the proposal development and for posting the follow up institutional response and outcomes (AVED, July 2008, p. 1). Eligible programs include new fields of study, new credentials, new options recognized on students' transcripts, major program revisions, and programs originally offering credentials outside of BC that are now being offered inside BC (p. 3). Stand-alone certificates are exempted (p.3).

The BC new degree program approval process is different and yet similar in some ways to the process in Ontario. DQAB plays a more comprehensive, overarching role across all sectors which is supported by legislation, a scope of authority very different than the quality assurance bodies in Ontario. However, DQAB has also implemented an expedited process for approvals to support the sector for those institutions with a robust history with granting degrees. This is a strategy that is similar to other quality assurance bodies in the country. The internal institutional processes are similar to those in Ontario in that there are numerous opportunities for internal and external consultation and active engagement of governing bodies. Collaboration with other institutions in the case of inter-institutional program initiatives is the expected norm. Further, the extensive timelines to allow for thoughtful proposal development, community engagement, and public launch are evident as might be expected given the comprehensive approach and application of program benchmarks and standards.

[68] http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/degree-authorization/public/non-degree-program.htm

Alberta[69]

For publicly funded institutions, the program approval process is governed primarily by the Ministry's *Post-secondary Learning Act* (PSLA),[70] which also provides the legislative framework for all postsecondary institutions operating in the province, Campus Alberta, and the Campus Alberta Quality Council (PSLA, 2004).[71] As an example, it outlines the structure of the governance bodies within a postsecondary institution and each body's individual scope of authority (such as which body has the authority to approve new programs and degrees). Division 2 of the Act specifically outlines the "six-sector model" of categorization and introduces the concept of "Campus Alberta" as consisting of membership of publicly funded institutions within each of the six sectors that are governed by particular mandates and authorized to offer credential types in alignment with the Act (2003, Chapter P-29.5, pp. 67-70).

Section 108 of the Act stipulates the mandate and authority of the Campus Alberta Quality Council, which includes the power to review proposals for new degree programs (i.e., focused on assessing fulfillment of demonstrated need, institutional capacity to deliver a program, alignment with institutional mission, course and program transferability and portability, and contribution to system coordination) (p. 73). The Act is supported by regulations which can impact program development and approval such as the *Campus Alberta Sector Regulation* (Alberta Regulation 239/2008),[72] *Alternative Academic Council Regulation* (Alberta Regulation 219, 2006), [73] and the *Programs of Study Regulation* (Alberta Regulation 91/2009).[74] The *Campus Alberta Sector Regulation* specifies the "six-sector model," which is summarized in Table 3. Further examples of supporting regulations are available on the Government of Alberta website.[75]

[69] Note: this section has been reviewed and commented upon by Alberta Ministry staff.
[70] http://eae.alberta.ca/ministry/legislation/psla.aspx
[71] http://eae.alberta.ca/ministry/agencies/caadvisory/caqc.aspx
[72] http://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/Regs/2008_239.pdf
[73] http://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/Regs/2006_219.pdf
[74] http://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/Regs/2009_091.pdf
[75] http://eae.alberta.ca/ministry/legislation/psla.aspx

Table 3: Campus Alberta Six-Sector Model

Sector	Assigned Institutions
Comprehensive Academic and Research Institutions	Athabasca University University of Alberta University of Calgary University of Lethbridge
Baccalaureate and Applied Studies Institutions	Grant MacEwan University Mount Royal University
Polytechnical Institutions	Northern Alberta Institute of Technology Southern Alberta Institute of Technology
Comprehensive Community Institutions	Bow Valley College Grande Prairie Regional College Keyano College Lakeland College Lethbridge College Medicine Hat College NorQuest College Northern Lakes College Olds College Portage College Red Deer College
Independent Academic Institutions	Ambrose University Canadian University College Concordia University College of Alberta The King's University College St. Mary's University
Specialized Arts and Cultural Institutions	Alberta College of Art & Design The Banff Centre

Source: Alberta Regulation 239, 2008

With a focus on institutions that make up the "six sectors," each has some form of internal quality assurance process and associated governance policies and procedures in place to manage the new program development and quality assurance processes. The Campus Alberta Quality Council is the quality assurance body that acts in an advisory capacity to the Ministry in that it is responsible for making recommendations regarding new degrees under the Act and the *Programs of Study Regulation*[76] for degree program proposals from institutions within the six sectors and any non-resident institution wanting to offer a degree program in Alberta, other than a degree in divinity. It operates in a manner similar to BC's DEQAB and Ontario's PEQAB although, and in comparison to the latter, it functions with a broader mandate and scope. Diplomas and certificates are subject to a different process wherein the Minister reviews and approves the programs after submission. These credentials are not reviewed by the Campus Alberta Quality Council.[77]

[76] http://eae.alberta.ca/ministry/legislation/psla.aspx
[77] http://eae.alberta.ca/post-secondary/credentials/approvalprocess.aspx

The Campus Alberta Quality Council's *Handbook: Quality Assessment and Quality Assurance* (2013) provides a comprehensive overview of the particulars of the approval process for degree programs.[78] Proposals are submitted to the Ministry and subject to a two-stage process that encompasses a "*System Coordination Review*" by the Ministry and upon referral to the CAQC, a "*Quality Review*" (Alberta Innovation and Advanced Education, August 2009).[79] These reviews unfold for every degree including for those that are expedited. For the "*System Coordination Review*," institutions are required to complete "*Part A*" of the *"Degree Program Proposal Template for Undergraduate Programs*" which focuses on identifying an "assessment of student and employer demand; the situation of the program in the context of Campus Alberta; and the financial viability of the program, including implications for students and taxpayers" (p. 135). This information is then reviewed by the Ministry and circulated to 26 postsecondary institutions in the province with the expectation that comments will be tabled within 30 days.

Following a positive system coordination review and after incorporating any changes resulting from the review, the institution provides the completed Template (Parts A and B) to the Quality Council. This represents the beginning of the "*Quality Review*." At this stage, the full program details are provided with a goal to "satisfy Council that the level of learning to be achieved is consistent with that which is expected at the proposed degree level, that the program has sufficient breadth and rigour to meet national and international standards" such as what is available in the *Canadian Degree Qualifications Framework* (Appendix B, pp. 129-134) and that it is of comparable quality (p. 139). Further, institutions are expected to outline how the program meets "Council's program quality standards" and identify any unique features that set it apart (p. 139). The *Handbook* outlines the 14 criteria underpinning the "*Undergraduate Program Evaluation Framework*" which include meeting expectations such as demonstrating fit and curriculum clarity, ensuring learning outcomes and student objectives are comparable to similar programs, establishing availability of resources to support the program, providing evidence of broad and relevant consultation occurred with both internal bodies and external institutions and other "relevant licensing or regulatory bodies" (for the latter, if applicable), etc. (pp. 171 to 174). The degree program *Template* is provided in full in Appendix C of the *Handbook*. An overview of the approval process is provided in this ONCAT resource in Appendix E.

For the "Quality Review," proposals are subject to a "Full Review," "Partially Expedited Review," or "Fully Expedited Review,"[80] which result in different timelines for approvals (Campus Alberta Quality Council, May 2008). The *Comprehensive Academic Research Institutions* sector represents universities that are eligible for "expedited" quality review consideration for new programs given their long history and organizational capacity to provide degree programs. Institutions in other sectors are also eligible to apply for an expedited review of a program proposal providing Council's criteria are met.

With respect to the timelines associated with the review categories noted above, proposals that require external peer review will take longer. Recognizing that it is difficult to specifically identify new program approval timeframes, and timing is often affected by the quality of the written program proposal, a degree program proposal can take anywhere from 2 months to 2 years to move through the Campus Alberta Quality Council quality assurance review process.

[78] http://caqc.gov.ab.ca/media/4650/handbook_july_2014.pdf
[79] http://www.caqc.gov.ab.ca/pdfs/Flowchart.pdf
[80] http://caqc.gov.ab.ca/pdfs/Expedited_review_process_FINAL__DRAFT_6_May_08.pdf

The Ministry's approval process for certificates and diplomas in Alberta is somewhat different than the degree quality assurance process. It is still necessary to ensure all program proposals are approved by the appropriate governance bodies at an institution and to demonstrate support was received by the chief academic officer and any external licensing or regulatory bodies if applicable (C. Baldwin-Dery, personal communications, February 2015). The review process of new certificate and diploma programs by the Ministry focuses on determining evidence of support from external program advisory committees given the importance of satisfying vocational learning outcomes benchmarks, alignment with meeting labour market demand, etc. Once institutions submit programs to the Ministry, they are reviewed by Alberta Innovation and Advanced Education staff and a recommendation is tabled with the Minister (or with the formally delegated designate) who then approves (or denies) program proposals (Alberta Innovation and Advanced Education, n.d.). There is no expedited process for these types of diploma and certificate credentials.

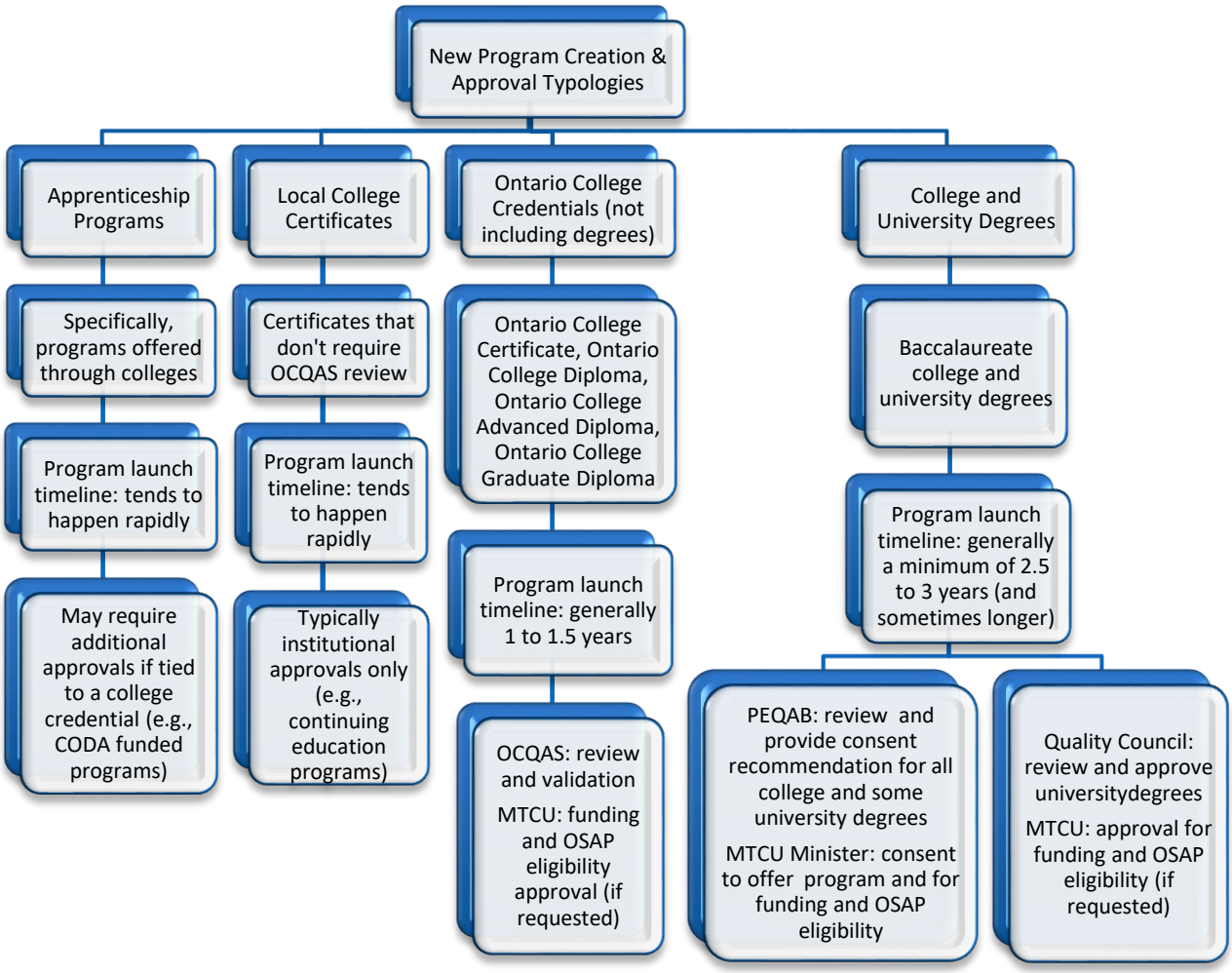
The legislative framework, mandate, and scope of authority of quality assurance bodies, and approval processes vary depending on jurisdiction and institution. The provinces examined carefully embed quality assurance protocols to ensure program learning outcomes are met for each of certificates, diplomas, and degrees. BC's DQAB recommends institutions submit proposals 12 to 18 months prior to a planned launch to ensure timely consideration. Like the government and quality assurance bodies in Ontario, both BC and Alberta have introduced expedited review processes for new program approvals for eligible institutions.

Conclusion

The information in this resource identifies the various participants involved in new program approvals within Ontario and the typical approval typologies, processes, timelines, and practices. The research and scope of this resource focuses primarily on publicly funded postsecondary institutions (i.e., members of ONCAT). Different methods comprised the information gathering process; it consisted primarily of reviewing institutional websites and foundational documents, and conducting select interviews.

With a focus on college certificates and diplomas and college and university baccalaureate degrees at publicly funded Ontario institutions, there are four main new program creation typologies, each with relatively unique processes and timelines. Figure 1 from Section 1 is provided once again as Figure 14 as it provides a helpful summary.

Figure 14: New Postsecondary Program Creation Typologies



The Ontario Quality Assurance agencies, OCQAS, PEQAB, and the Quality Council, and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) serve important roles in the province ensuring institutional alignment with the *Credential Qualifications Framework* relevant to each credential and sector. Faculty at the discipline level drive the academic innovation process informed by environmental scans,

administrative colleagues, academic mission and mandate, *Strategic Mandate Agreements*, and adherence to program standards (if applicable), benchmarks, and principles of academic quality.

A scan of institutions and allied organizations has revealed that credential complexity and level result in extension of the time it takes to create, develop, and refine proposals; conduct necessary consultations and site visits (if applicable); move through governance processes; and seek final approvals internally and externally before program proponents can turn to the necessary task of fully launching the new program to students. The allied organizations that complement the work of internal and external quality assurance bodies such as OUAC, OCAS, CDOG, and ONCAT along with internal institutional experts provide tremendous expertise and coordination capacity to ensure the successful launch of new programs. Institutions report that timing in the recruitment cycle to ensure successful launch can delay the actual point when admitted students begin classes in the new program. This is not unusual and is to be expected.

The overview of select jurisdictions suggests that Ontario is similar to its provincial counterparts in terms of the depth and breadth of consideration for developing thoughtful, discipline driven new programs that adhere to outcomes oriented quality assurance benchmarks and standards. Further, although it was difficult to obtain specifics on timelines, other provinces appear to experience expanded timelines as the credential level increases or the number of partners expand. Expedited approvals are also evident in these other jurisdictions. Having noted this, there are significant differences in legislation, scope of quality assurance bodies, and approaches between Ontario and the two Canadian provinces examined (Alberta and BC).

The purpose of this research is not to suggest changes in practices or to evaluate the efficacy of specific quality assurance processes, standards, and benchmarks as that type of analysis situates with other bodies; rather, it is to surface the general typologies, practices, and timeframes experienced by institutions and allied organizations when creating a new program. The goal is to provide pathway developers and supporting practitioners with a resource guide; thereby enhancing awareness in the province regarding the various considerations involved when creating and launching a new program. Internal administrative staff that routinely support the implementation of new programs emerge as potential partners to those creating new programs. Examples include administrative support staff within Faculties or Schools and centrally located registrarial staff. Further, the staff within internal quality assurance departments at each institution who work in partnership with external quality assurance bodies are important guides in the new program development process as they serve as significant participants with broad and deep expertise surrounding the new program approval processes. Those interested in developing new programs that will either exist within one institution or span institutions would be well served by relying on these professionals.

Appendix A: Project Terms of Reference

Project:

The research project is focused on identifying the current approval processes, timelines, and general typology for undergraduate new program development at select Ontario colleges and universities. For the research, the goal is to identify and understand the program approval practices and governing frameworks at internal institutions, external allied organizations, and government, and to present the findings in one comprehensive report. Unique components related to joint program development, if evident, will be identified and noted. Currently, a comprehensive resource about general governance processes and timelines that crosses institutional type does not exist in Ontario; the final deliverable for this project is intended to close that gap.

Final Deliverable:

A report of the findings will be produced and published in the ONCAT website for use by its members and allied organizations. It is anticipated that the material will assist those new to the pathway development process and those with institutionally specific expertise. It is further anticipated that the report will facilitate and expedite the development of new bi-lateral and multi-lateral pathway initiatives. Please note, it is not the intention of this research to suggest new standards, procedures, or best practices.

General Research Approach:

The project will involve identifying and selectively interviewing relevant contacts at exemplar institutions and allied organizations, and researching foundational documents at the institutional and system level with a focus on those stakeholders involved in new program approvals. In the interviews, the intention is to surface specific examples, generic timelines, and details regarding governance approval processes related to new program development.

It will not be possible to include all institutions in the interview process, nor feasible to conduct numerous interviews at selected institutions; however, institutions and allied organizations are welcome to submit comments and/or relevant foundational documents and studies (if available) to facilitate the research. These should be directed to the consultant, Joanne Duklas, at jduklas@cogeco.ca.

How you can help:

The project consultant on ONCAT's behalf, is seeking identification of the individual at your organization responsible for either leading or supporting new program approvals who has knowledge of a portion of the new program approval process or has significant knowledge of the entire process of approvals from inception (i.e., idea formulation) through to final government approval.

Consultant: the consultant for the project is Joanne Duklas who is the researcher and consultant for Duklas Cornerstone Consulting. She brings to the project expertise in new program approvals, strategic enrolment management, and pathway development.

Questions:

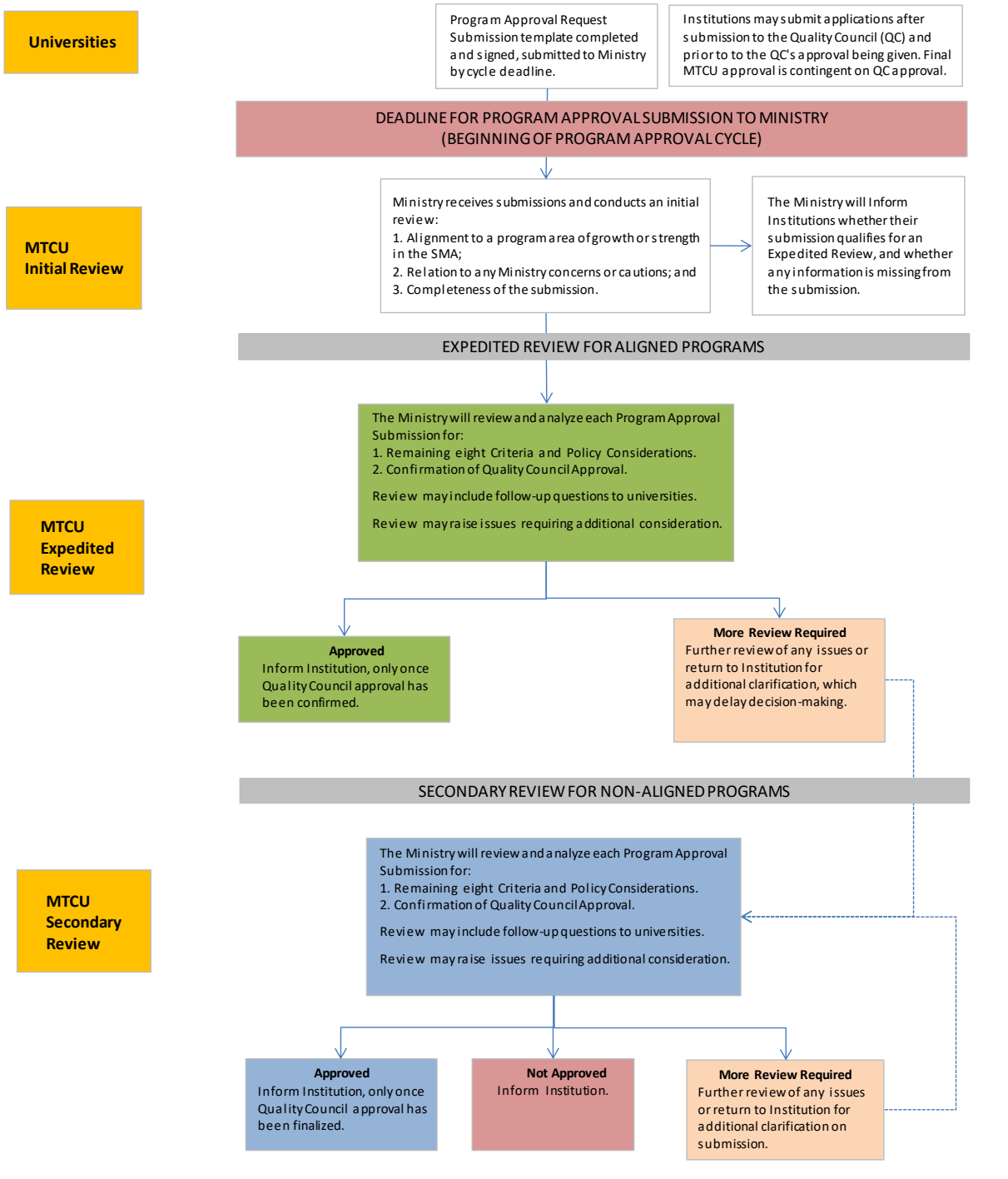
Consultant

Joanne Duklas
Researcher and Consultant
Duklas Cornerstone Consulting
Tel: 905 877 7485
Email: jduklas@cogeco.ca

ONCAT

Glenn Craney, Executive Director or Arlene Williams,
Director, Projects and Programs
ONCAT
Tel: 416 640-6951
Emails: gcraney@oncat.ca and awilliams@oncat.ca

Appendix B: University Program Approvals Process Map

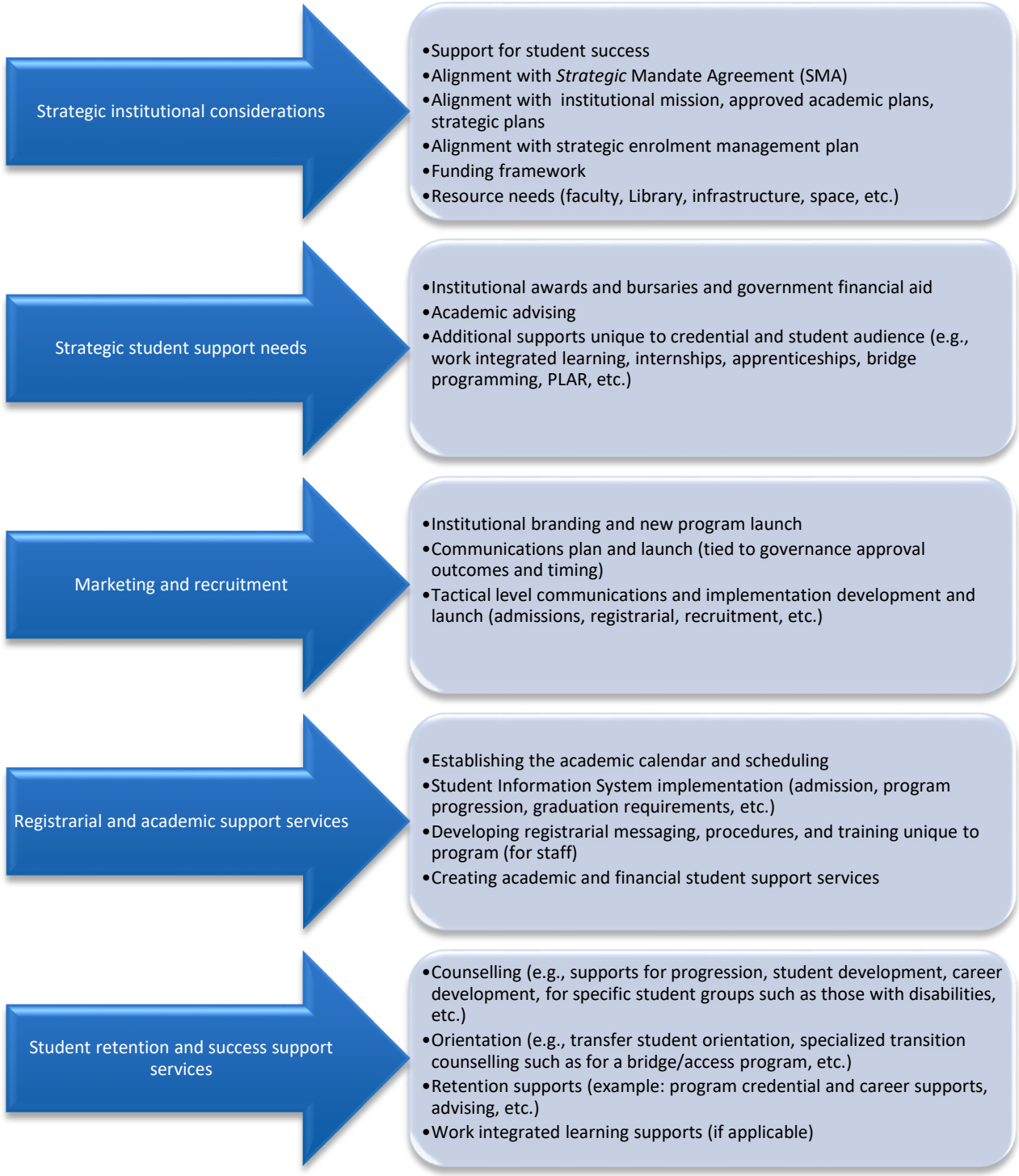


Source: Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. (October 7, 2014). *Updates to the University Program Approvals Process [Memorandum].* Ontario: Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.

Appendix C: Websites for University Quality Assurance Processes (IQAP)

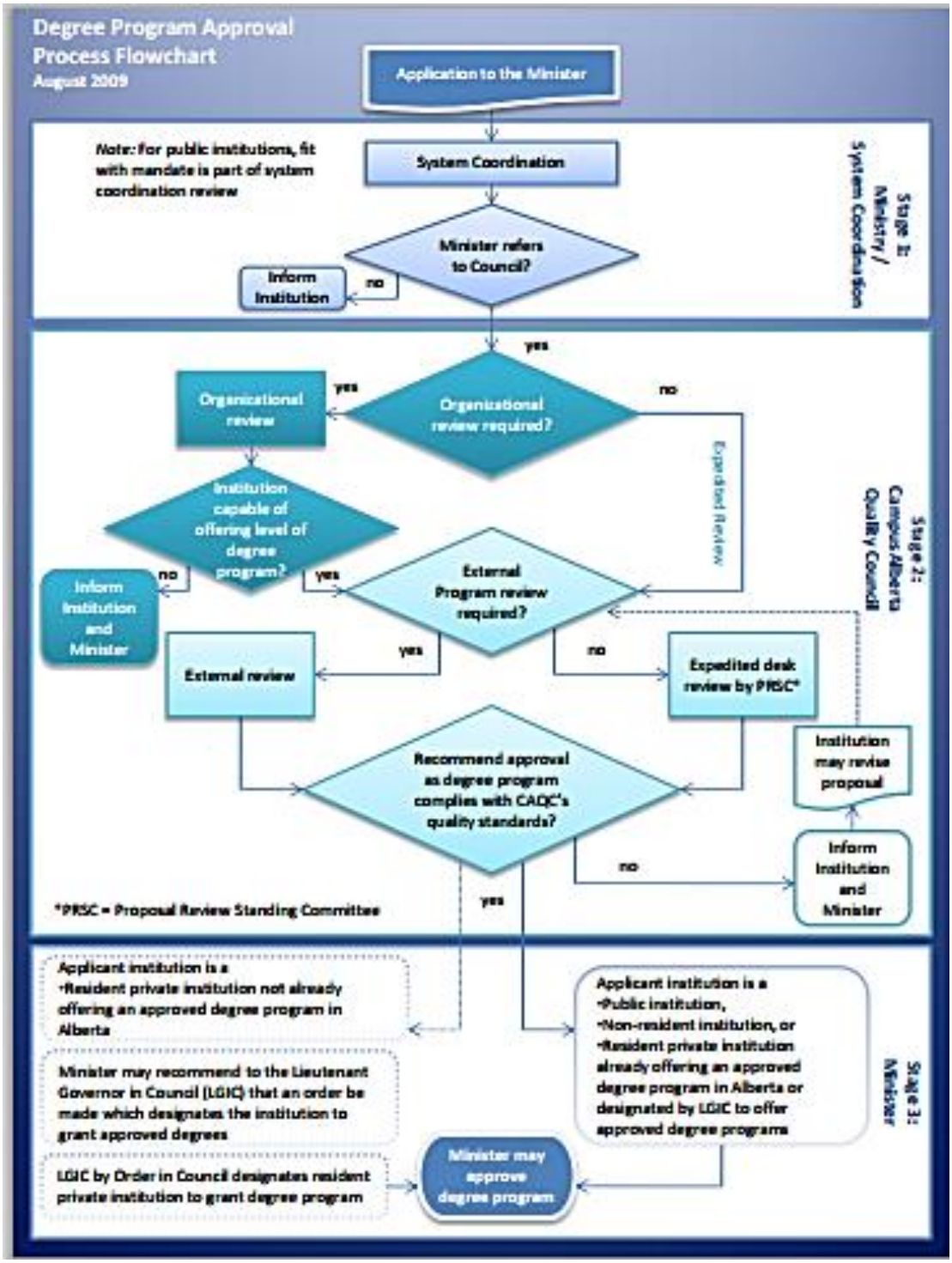
Institution	New Program Approval Information
Algoma University	http://www.algomau.ca/academics/office_of_the_dean/quality_assurance/
Brock University	http://www.brocku.ca/vp-academic/quality-assurance
Carleton University	http://carleton.ca/provost/quality-assurance/
Lakehead University	http://vpacademic.lakeheadu.ca/?display=page&pageid=112
	http://vpacademic.lakeheadu.ca/?display=page&pageid=116
Laurentian University	http://laurentian.ca/academic-accountability
McMaster University	http://cll.mcmaster.ca/COU/quality/index.html
Nipissing University	http://www.nipissingu.ca/departments/admissions-registrar/curriculum/Pages/Guidelines.aspx
	http://www.nipissingu.ca/academics/VP-Academic-Research/academic/program-assessment/Documents/NU%20IQAP%2028jun13.pdf
OCAD University	http://www.ocadu.ca/about/governance/IQAP.htm
Queen's University	http://queensu.ca/provost/responsibilities/qualityassurance.html
Ryerson University	http://www.ryerson.ca/provost/planning/curriculumquality.html
Trent University	http://www.trentu.ca/vpacademic/pqac.php
University of Guelph	https://www.uoguelph.ca/secretariat/office-services-senate-senate-boards-and-standing-committees-committee-quality-assurance/quality
	http://www.uoguelph.ca/vpacademic/avpa/newprograms/
University of Ontario Institute of Technology (UOIT)	http://www.uoit.ca/footer/about/governance/Quality-assurance-at-uoit.php
University of Ottawa	http://www.uottawa.ca/about/sites/www.uottawa.ca.about/files/institutional-quality-assurance-process.pdf
University of Toronto	http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/~vpdean/documents/RevisedUTQAP_approvedSept2012web_000.pdf
University of Waterloo	https://uwaterloo.ca/academic-reviews/
	https://uwaterloo.ca/centre-for-teaching-excellence/teaching-resources/curriculum-development-and-renewal/program-review-accreditation
University of Windsor	http://www1.uwindsor.ca/grad/new-program-proposals
Western University	http://www.uwo.ca/pvp/vpacademic/iqap/
Wilfrid Laurier University	http://legacy.wlu.ca/qao
York University	http://yuqap.info.yorku.ca/

Appendix D: Typical Internal Considerations



Appendix E: Campus Alberta Quality Council's Degree Program Approval Process Flowchart September 2013

(Campus Alberta Quality Council, September 2013, p. 11)



See: http://www.caqc.gov.ab.ca/pdfs/Flowchart.pdf

References

Alberta Innovation and Advanced Education. (n.d.). *Credentials and Programs Offered in Alberta.* Alberta: Government of Alberta. Retrieved January 30, 2015 from http://eae.alberta.ca/post-secondary/credentials/definitions.aspx

British Columbia Degree Quality Assessment Board Secretariat [DQAB]. (November 2006). *Degree Program Review: Criteria and Guidelines*. Victoria, BC: AVED, Ministry of Advanced Education. Retrieved January 21, 2015 from BC Degree Quality Assessment Board Secretariat, Degree Program Review: Criteria and Guidelines, November 2006

British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education [AVED]. (July 2008). *On-line Non-degree Program Review Process.* Victoria, BC: AVED, Ministry of Advanced Education. Retrieved January 21, 2015 from http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/degree-authorization/psips/docs/ndgGuidelines.pdf

British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education [AVED]. (November 2006). *Exempt Status Criteria and Guidelines.* Victoria, BC: AVED, Minister for Advanced Education. Retrieved January 9, 2015 from http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/degree-authorization/documents/exempt_status.pdf

Campus Alberta Quality Council. (2013). *Handbook: Quality Assessment and Quality Assurance*. Alberta: Campus Alberta. Retrieved January 30, 2015 from http://caqc.gov.ab.ca/media/4650/handbook_july_2014.pdf

Colleges Ontario. (n.d.). *What is Colleges Ontario?* Toronto: Colleges Ontario. Retrieved January 20, 2015 from www.collegesontario.org

Colleges Ontario. (November 2013). *Reaching New Heights: Response to Differentiation.* Toronto: Colleges Ontario. Retrieved January 13, 2015 from http://collegesontario.org/policy-positions/position-papers/Reaching_New_Heights_Response_to_Differentiation_Paper.pdf

Colleges Ontario. (September 2012). *Empowering Ontario: Transforming Higher Education in the 21st Century.* Toronto: Colleges Ontario. Retrieved January 13, 2015 from http://collegesontario.org/policy-positions/position-papers/Empowering%20Ontario%20(2).pdf

Conestoga College. (2012-14). Request for Approval to Proceed. Kitchener: Conestoga College. Retrieved January 30, 2015 from https://myconestoga.ca/web/tlc/learn-about-program-development-and-approval-processes

Conestoga College. (April 2013). *New Program Approval Process – Internal and External Approval Documents and Bodies.* Curriculum Office.

Government of Ontario. (2015). *Ontario Qualifications Framework: 11 – Baccalaureate/Bachelor's Degree: Honours*. Ontario: © Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2015. Retrieved January 12, 2014 from http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/programs/oqf/certificate11.html

Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities [MTCU]. (2013b*). Co-op Diploma Apprenticeship Program (CODA) Program Guidelines*. Ontario: MTCU. Retrieved January 20, 2015 from http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/eopg/publications/coda_2013_program_guidelines_2014-15_delivery.pdf

Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities [MTCU]. (2015a). *College Diploma and Certificate Program Standards.* Ontario: © Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2015. Retrieved January 14, 2015 from http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/audiences/colleges/progstan/intro.html

Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities [MTCU]. (2015b). *Ontario Qualifications Framework: Questions and Answers*. Ontario: © Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2015. Retrieved January 19, 2015 from http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/programs/oqf/QsAsOQF.html

Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities [MTCU]. (2015b). *Published College Program Standards*. Ontario: © Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2015. Retrieved January 29, 2015 from http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/audiences/colleges/progstan/index.html

Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities [MTCU]. (2015c). Ontario Qualifications Framework. Ontario: © Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2015. Retrieved January 29, 2015 from http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/programs/oqf/certificate11.html

Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities [MTCU]. (April 2000*). Increasing Degree Opportunities for Ontarians: A Consultation Paper.* Ontario: © Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2000. Retrieved January 14, 2014 from http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/discussi/degree/degree.pdf

Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities [MTCU]. (April 2005). *Ministry's Binding Policy Directive: Framework for Programs of Instruction*. Ontario: MTCU. Retrieved January 19, 2014 from http://www.accc.ca/wp-content/uploads/archive/es-ce/MTCUCollegeFramework.pdf

Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities [MTCU]. (November 2013). Ontario's Differentiation Policy Framework for Postsecondary Education. Ontario: MTCU. http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/publications/PolicyFramework_PostSec.pdf

Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities [MTCU]. (October 7, 2014). *Updates to the University Program Approvals Process [Memorandum].* Ontario: MTCU.

Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities [MTCU]. (October 2014). *University Program Approval Submission Guideline: For Universities Seeking Funding and OSAP Eligibility for Programs*. Ontario: Government of Ontario.

Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities. (2011). *Policy Statement for Ontario's Credit Transfer System: 2011.* Ontario: MTCU. Retrieved December 3, 2014 from http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/eopg/publications/CreditTransferE.pdf

Ontario College of Trades and Apprenticeship Act, 2009. (2009). Ontario: Government of Ontario S.O. 2009, Chapter 22. Accessed January 13, 2015 from Government of Ontario website: http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_09o22_e.htm

Ontario College of Trades. (2013). *What we do.* Toronto: Ontario College of Trades. Retrieved January 13, 2015 from http://www.collegeoftrades.ca/about

Ontario College Quality Assurance Service [OCQAS]. (2015a). *PQAPA Background*. Toronto: OCQAS. Retrieved January 30, 2015 from http://ocqas.org/?page_id=9179

Ontario College Quality Assurance Service [OCQAS]. (2015b). *About PQAPA*. Toronto: OCQAS. Retrieved January 30, 2015 from http://ocqas.org/?page_id=9175

Ontario College Quality Assurance Service [OCQAS]. (2015c). *OCQAS Background*. Toronto: OCQAS. Retrieved February 1, 2015 from http://ocqas.org/?page_id=9063

Ontario College Quality Assurance Service [OCQAS]. (2015d). *Colleges Moving to Accreditation.* Toronto: OCQAS. Retrieved January 30, 2015 from http://ocqas.org/?page_id=9272

Ontario College Quality Assurance Service [OCQAS]. (2015e). *CQAAP Standards*. Toronto: OCQAS. Retrieved February 1, 2015 from http://ocqas.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/CQAAP-Standards-2015-Revised-January-13-2015.pdf

Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance [Quality Council]. (2015a). *Process of New Program Approvals*. Toronto: Quality Council. Retrieved February 1, 2015 from http://oucqa.ca/program-approvals-menu/program-approval-process/

Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance [Quality Council]. (2014a). *Quality Assurance Framework.* Toronto: Quality Council. Retrieved December 3, 2014 from http://oucqa.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/Quality-Assurance-Framework-and-Guide-Updated-October-2014.pdf

Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance [Quality Council]. (2014b). Guide to the Quality Assurance Framework: Toronto: Quality Council. Retrieved February 1, 2015 from http://oucqa.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/Quality-Assurance-Framework-and-Guide-Updated-October-2014.pdf

Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance [Quality Council]. (2015b). *What we do in quality assurance.* Ontario: Quality Council. Retrieved January 12, 2015 from http://oucqa.ca/what-we-do/what-we-do-in-quality-assurance/

Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance [Quality Council]. (2015c). *Appraisal Committee*. Ontario: Quality Council. Retrieved February 1, 2015 from http://oucqa.ca/the-quality-council/appraisal-committee/

Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance [Quality Council]. (2015d). *Audit Committee*. Ontario: Quality Council. Retrieved February 1, 2015 from http://oucqa.ca/the-quality-council/audit-panel-committee/

Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act, 2000 [PSECE Act]. (2013). Ontario: Government of Ontario S.O. 2000, Chapter 36. Accessed January 12, 2015 from http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_00p36_e.htm

Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board [PEQAB]. (2009). *Welcome to the Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board*. Ontario: ©Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2009. Retrieved January 9, 2015 from http://www.peqab.ca/about.html

Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board [PEQAB]. (2014). *Handbook for Ontario Colleges (New Programs)*. Toronto: PEQAB. Retrieved January 13, 2015 from http://www.peqab.ca/Publications/HNDBKCAAT2014.pdf

Post-Secondary Learning Act. (2003). Chapter P-19.5. Alberta: © Published by Alberta's Queens Printer, 2003. Retrieved January 27, 2015 from http://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/Acts/p19p5.pdf

Post-Secondary Learning Act: Alternative Academic Council Regulation. (2006). Alberta Regulation 219/2006. Alberta: © Published by Alberta's Queens Printer, 2006. Retrieved February 3, 2015 from http://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/Regs/2006_219.pdf

Refling, E., & Dion, N. (2015). *Apprenticeship in Ontario: An Exploratory Analysis*. Toronto: Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario

Skolnik, M. (June 20, 2012). *Rethinking the System of Credentials Awarded by Ontario's Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology*. Toronto: Colleges Ontario. Retrieved January 13, 2015 from http://www.collegesontario.org/research/DegreeGranting/Rethinking_the_System_of_Credentials_Awarded_by_Ontarios_Colleges_of_Applied_Arts_and_Technology.pdf

Skolnik, M. (September 2013). *College Baccalaureate Degree Approval Processes in Other Jurisdictions*. Prepared for Colleges Ontario. Retrieved December 12, 2014 from http://www.collegesontario.org/research/DegreeGranting/College_Baccalaureate_Degree_Approval_Processes_in_Other_Jurisdictions.pdf

University of British Columbia. (February 8, 2013). *Curriculum Guide: Types of Proposals.* Vancouver: University of British Columbia. Retrieved January 9, 2015 from http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/degree-authorization/documents/exempt_status.pdf

University of British Columbia. (February 8, 2013). *Curriculum Guide: Minister of Advanced Education Approval*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia. Retrieved January 9, 2015 from http://senate.ubc.ca/vancouver/curriculum-submission-guide/new-degree-program-proposals/ministry-advanced-education

University of British Columbia. (February 8, 2013). *Curriculum Guide: Program Nomenclature*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia. Retrieved January 9, 2015 from http://senate.ubc.ca/vancouver/curriculum-submission-guide/program-nomenclature

University of British Columbia. (November 14, 2014). *Curriculum Guide: New Degree Program Proposals*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia. Retrieved January 9, 2015 from http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/degree-authorization/documents/exempt_status.pdf

University of Toronto. (November 2014). *New Undergraduate Program Proposal Template*. Toronto: University of Toronto.

University of Windsor. (2014). *University of Windsor Institutional Quality Assurance Process Quality Assurance Guide.* Windsor: University of Windsor.

University of Windsor. (n.d.). *New Program Approval Timeline*. Windsor: University of Windsor. Retrieved January 27, 2015 from http://www1.uwindsor.ca/graduate/system/files/New%20Program%20Approval%20Timeline_Sept_submission.pdf