

Policy Title	General Education Policy
Policy Holder	Vice President Academic
Policy Approver(s)	Senior Team
Related Policies	Degree Breadth Policy
Related Procedures	
Appendices	
Storage Location	https://www.confederationcollege.ca/department/policies/academic
Effective Date	2025-Mar-27
Next Review Date	2030-Mar-27

Purpose

To comply with the Ministry of Colleges and Universities' Binding Policy Directive: Framework for Programs of Instruction, which requires the inclusion of discrete General Education courses in programs of study.

Scope

This policy applies to all Ontario College Certificate, Ontario College Diploma, and Ontario College Advanced Diploma programs.

Definitions

Academic

Administrator: Dean, Associate Dean, Academic Manager

Breadth: Courses that allow students to explore topics and issues beyond their program's core or professional options.

CPR: Comprehensive Program Review

General Education: General Education

PLAR: Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition

ACPRSC: Academic Council Program Review Committee

Program of Study: A group of courses leading to a certificate, diploma or degree

Governing Laws and Regulations

Binding Policy Directive: Framework for Programs of Instruction, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (2005) - [Link](#)

Policy Statements

1. General Education courses
 - 1.1. The purpose of General Education courses in the Ontario college system is to develop educated citizens who are aware of the diversity, complexity, and richness of the human experience, and who can contribute thoughtfully, creatively, and positively to society.
 - 1.2. These courses must fall under or relate to one of five specific themes:
 - 1.2.1. Arts in Society
 - 1.2.2. Civic Life
 - 1.2.3. Social and Cultural Understanding
 - 1.2.4. Personal Understanding
 - 1.2.5. Science and Technology
 - 1.3. Graduates shall engage in learning that includes breadth beyond their vocational field of study. Students must be exposed to at least one discipline outside their main field of study and are encouraged to select courses from more than one theme. General Education electives should offer students choice.
 - 1.4. Postsecondary programs will comply with Ministry policies by including General Education courses equivalent to 42 normative hours using a combination of required and elective courses, as outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: General Education Requirement by Program Credential

<i>Program Credential</i>	Confederation College Certificate	Ontario College Certificate	Ontario College Diploma	Ontario College Advanced Diploma	Ontario College Graduate Certificate
Courses required	N/A	Encouraged but not required	3 - 5	3 - 5	N/A

- 1.5. General Education courses are to encourage and support continuous learning and shall be delivered as discrete courses addressing one or more of the five themes.
- 1.6. General Education courses, whether required or elective, must meet the criteria listed in item 1.7.
- 1.7. To be designated as a General Education course, it must:
 - 1.7.1. Be 42 hours in length, unless approved otherwise by the VPA.
 - 1.7.2. Clearly contributes to learning distinct from specific vocational skills.
 - 1.7.3. Enable learners to meet societal challenges as they take their place in community, family, and work life.
 - 1.7.4. Focus on big-picture understanding and knowledge acquisition rather than applied skill development.
 - 1.7.5. Include varied assessments requiring engagement with personal, interpersonal, communication, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills.
 - 1.7.6. Support the development of Essential Employability Skills.
 - 1.7.7. Not require a prerequisite.
- 1.8. The GE Coordinator will review new General Education courses against these criteria to ensure compliance with provincial guidelines. As part of the Comprehensive Program Review or upon request, the ACPRSC will review programs of study to ensure they meet General Education requirements.
- 1.9. Students will choose General Education electives from a pool recommended by the GE Coordinator and approved by the responsible Associate Dean.
- 1.10. Required General Education courses will be reviewed on a five-year cycle as part of the Comprehensive Program Review. Elective General Education courses in the pool are reviewed every five to seven years during the Cyclical Review of Elective General Education Courses by the GE Coordinator and validated by ACPRSC.
2. **Transfer of Academic Credit/PLAR for General Education**
 - 2.1. Students may apply for a transfer of credit to required or elective General Education courses if the eligible course was completed less than five years prior to their current program of study.
 - 2.2. Students wishing to use PLAR to challenge a General Education course based on prior learning may challenge the theme areas. The GE Coordinator and course outline lead will assess applications for credit.

Non-Compliance

The Associate Dean of the School of Business, Hospitality, and Media Arts is responsible for ensuring the appropriate selection and approval of General Education courses and for maintaining and updating this policy as required. Associate Deans in other academic areas are responsible for ensuring that each Program of Study complies with the General Education requirements stated in this policy. The Vice President Academic is responsible for monitoring compliance and updating the policy as required.

Revision History

Version	Change	Author	Date of Change
New	Policy created	APAC	March 2025