

TYPE:	Academic
TITLE:	General Education
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RESPONSIBILITY:	Executive Vice-President, Academic
APPROVED BY:	Durham College Leadership Team
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1. Introduction

Durham College (DC) strives to ensure that [students](#) who graduate from postsecondary programs are immediately employable in their field of study, able to progress in employment through the ability to continuously learn and capable of contributing positively to the society in which they live and work.

[General education](#) provides an opportunity for students to learn more about themselves and the robust world they live in by better preparing them for the challenges and opportunities of their chosen career and for life in general.

2. Purpose

This policy and procedure will provide a mechanism for complying with the Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCU) Minister's Binding Policy Directive Framework for Programs of Instruction. This directive requires each [program of study](#) to provide students with vocational, essential employability and general education courses.

3. Definitions

Refer to [Durham College's Standard Definitions](#).

4. Policy statements

- 4.1. General Education is intended to engage the student in learning that incorporates breadth of study beyond the vocational field of study.
- 4.2. Students in Ontario College diploma and advanced diploma programs must complete a minimum of three (3) elective general education courses in order to graduate. Students in Ontario College certificate programs may be required to complete one or more general education courses in their program of studies, based on unique program needs. This policy does not apply to students in Ontario College graduate certificate programs.
- 4.3. This policy does not apply to degree programs. Breadth requirements in degree programs are established by the Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board.

- 4.4. General education courses must be at least 42 hours in length. Exceptions to this requirement must be approved by the Executive Vice-President, Academic.
- 4.5. General education courses must not require a prerequisite.
- 4.6. General education course credits may be transferrable among DC's programs of study.
- 4.7. Any changes to [curriculum](#) through program review and renewal processes must ensure continued compliance with this policy.

5. Procedure

- 5.1. Proposed general education courses will be vetted through the General Education Committee to ensure general education requirements are met. The Faculty of Liberal Studies will maintain a detailed, up-to-date record of the status of all proposals.
- 5.2. As programs propose curricular changes ([major](#) and/or [minor](#)), the Manager, Academic Quality Assurance, will ensure the program is compliant with this policy. The General Education Committee and Executive Dean or designate in the Faculty of Liberal Studies will be notified of all approved program changes affecting general education.
- 5.3. As needed, the Executive Dean or designate in the Faculty of Liberal Studies may issue a call for proposals to college faculty for the development of new general education courses. Proposals may also be submitted to the Faculty of Liberal Studies on an ad hoc basis. Proposals will be submitted on the college-approved General Education Proposal Form template, and compiled for review by the General Education Committee.
- 5.4. The Committee will assess proposals based on criteria including, but not limited to: subject area; content; student workload and; perceived interest to students. The Committee may seek clarification on or provide feedback about proposals, as appropriate.
- 5.5. The Committee will make recommendations for course development to the Executive Dean in the Faculty of Liberal Studies. Any newly developed course(s) will be included in a list of potential offerings for upcoming academic semesters.
- 5.6. Annually, the Executive Dean in the Faculty of Liberal Studies will provide a report to the Academic Leadership Team (ALT) of newly developed general education courses.
- 5.7. The roster of elective general education courses being offered will be distributed to the Office of the Registrar and other departments, as appropriate.

6. Roles and responsibilities

- 6.1. The Executive Vice-President, Academic is responsible for ensuring that the General Education Policy is fully implemented.
- 6.2. The Executive Dean or designate in the Faculty of Liberal Studies is responsible for ensuring the General Education Committee complies with its terms of reference, approving new general education courses and providing an annual update to ALT about newly developed general education courses.
- 6.3. The Manager, Program and Curriculum Development is responsible for ensuring all new programs being submitted to the Credentials Validation Service (CVS) comply with MCU's Binding Policy Directive, Framework for Programs of Instruction – General Education requirements.
- 6.4. The Manager, Academic Quality Assurance is responsible for ensuring that any programs proposing major and/or minor changes to a program of study will comply with the MCU's Binding Policy Directive, Framework for Programs of Instruction – General Education requirements.
- 6.5. The General Education Committee is responsible for reviewing new general education course proposals and the Executive Dean or designate in the Faculty of Liberal Studies is responsible for providing final approval.

7. Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act considerations

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) standards have been considered in the development of this policy and procedure and it adheres to the principles outlined in the College's commitment to accessibility as demonstrated by the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

8. Non-compliance implications

Failure to comply with this policy and procedure risks the College's reputation for high-quality education and students' ability to meet the necessary requirements to obtain their credentials. It also puts the College in conflict with the Minister's directive and at risk of actions by the government.

9. Related forms, legislation or external resources

- MCU's Binding Policy Directive: Framework for Programs of Instruction
- MCU's Program Standards
- Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board: Manual for Ontario Colleges
- Ontario Qualifications Framework
- General Education Proposal Form Template