

Letter of Understanding

The BC College of Teachers (BCCT), constituted pursuant to the *Teaching Profession Act*, is the professional body for the teaching profession in British Columbia with statutory authority to set standards for the education, competence and professional conduct of its members. The College is also the licensing body for the profession.

The Association of BC Deans of Education (ABCDE) represent institutions in British Columbia that have post-secondary teacher education programs (Institutions). These Institutions are Malaspina University College, Okanagan University College, Simon Fraser University, Trinity Western University, the University College of the Cariboo, the University of British Columbia, the University of Northern British Columbia and the University of Victoria. The Institutions are governed by legislation and the office of the Dean or other administrative officer is governed by the provisions of such legislation and institutional policies.

The BCCT and the ABCDE have created this Letter of Understanding to facilitate the process of nominating candidates for registration in the teaching profession. The process recognizes the independent responsibilities and obligations of the BCCT and the ABCDE and provides for the implementation of credible performance-based assessments to measure whether candidates meet those standards set by the BCCT for the education, professional responsibility, and competence of its members that are relevant for graduates entering the teaching profession in this province (hereafter referred to as the Standards).

I. Roles and Responsibilities

Neither the BCCT nor the ABCDE intend through this Letter of Understanding to abrogate any statutory or other rights, obligations or authority separately and independently vested in them.

The BCCT will develop, in collaboration with the ABCDE and other educational partners, the core criteria that govern the assessment of the Standards for certification purposes. The member Institutions within the ABCDE are responsible for implementing and maintaining programs of education that meet the academic requirements of the Institutions and that prepare graduates to meet the Standards.

The BCCT and the ABCDE recognize that they must work together, while maintaining their independent roles and responsibilities, to ensure that candidates graduating from programs of education in this province will become registered as members of the teaching profession and that as members of the profession they will provide professional leadership and a safe and high quality learning environment for students.



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The BCCT and the ABCDE are committed to the following:

- Regular ongoing dialogue and problem solving for the purpose of developing and reviewing the Standards, their related criteria and performance indicators;
- Recognition and respect for those responsibilities imposed on each party by statute;
- Fairness in assessing graduates and applicants for certification;
- Respect for an appropriate balance between the professional autonomy and responsibility of those charged with educating teachers and those charged with evaluating them for certification;
- Engaging in research and pilot testing towards developing and refining criteria, performance indicators and procedures to implement this Letter of Understanding.

II. Process for Evaluation and Nomination

The intention of the ABCDE is that graduates of the Institutions' programs of education be recognized by the BCCT as meeting the Standards and that those graduates of these programs, nominated by the Institutions, will be accepted by the BCCT for registration in the teaching profession.

The BCCT, as the licensing body for the profession, must be satisfied, when exercising its statutory obligations, that the candidates nominated by the Institutions for registration meet the Standards and are suitable candidates for registration in the teaching profession of British Columbia.

Each member Institution within the ABCDE may develop specific performance indicators that reflect the distinctive nature of their programs and that demonstrate student attainment of the Standards and the criteria. The core criteria established by the BCCT and the range of basic performance indicators established by each institution shall allow for flexibility so that institutions can attain the Standards in diverse ways yet afford evidence by which the judgments can be audited and reviewed.

A. To meet the mutual goals and interests of the BCCT and the ABCDE with respect to the registration of the Institutions' graduates the Institutions will:

1. Prepare and deliver to BCCT an Attainment of Standards Report.
 - The report will describe the Institution's assessment processes for its teacher education program graduates. The assessments will be conducted on the basis of the Standards.
 - Each institution will submit to the BCCT an updated Attainment of Standards report whenever significant revisions are made.



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2. Assess each candidate for graduation from a pre-service teacher education program and to maintain and verify records demonstrating that the candidate meets the Standards.
 - The assessment procedures will be based on the Attainment of Standards Report.
 - Members of the faculty and /or faculty associates of each Institution, in consultation with a practicing educator who is a member of the BCCT, will verify that pre-service teachers meet the Standards.
 - BCCT may audit relevant material relating to individual candidates to determine the validity of the judgments made by the Institution’s faculty.

3. Nominate for registration only those candidates who meet the Standards.

4. Conduct a review of their teacher education programs every five years.
 - The review will be conducted according to the Institution’s procedures and criteria for such review.
 - In particular the review will address whether the Institution’s internal evaluation procedures are valid and whether they provide an accurate measurement of the Institution’s graduates’ ability to meet the Standards.
 - The results of the internal review will be documented in a written report.
 - A BCCT/ABCDE joint committee (“Review Committee”), consisting of at least three members, will examine and prepare a report on those aspects of the five year review that relate to teacher candidate evaluation. The Review Committee will be provided with a copy of the final internal evaluation report and will have access to all files and materials upon which the report was based, subject to privacy regulation.
 - The Review Committee may make recommendations with respect to the five year review and will provide a copy of its report, with or without recommendations, to the Institution, the BCCT and the ABCDE.

5. Submit proposals for new or substantially revised teacher education programs to a BCCT/ABCDE joint committee (“Revisions Committee”).
 - The Revisions Committee will consist of at least three members who will determine whether the internal assessment processes ensure that graduates of the proposed program will meet the Standards.
 - The Revisions Committee will prepare a report detailing its review and copies of the report will be provided to the Institution, the ABCDE and the BCCT.
 - The BCCT will decide, on the basis of the Revisions Committee’s report, whether the BCCT will accept graduates of the program for certification.



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B. To meet the mutual goals and interests of the BCCT and the ABCDE with respect to the registration of the Institutions' graduates the BCCT will:

1. Provide the Institutions with an opportunity to respond to any concerns the BCCT may have with respect to their teacher education programs or their Attainment of Standards Reports.
 - Before the BCCT concludes, on the basis of a report from the Review Committee or the Revisions Committee, that graduates of a program will not meet the Standards, the BCCT will fully describe the standards and related criteria upon which it has made its judgments and will provide, in a timely manner, the evidence upon which it bases its conclusions and will provide the Institution with an opportunity to respond to the concerns raised by the BCCT.
2. Allow the Institutions an opportunity to make changes to the programs to meet the concerns expressed by the BCCT.
 - After receiving the Institution's response the BCCT may make recommendations for changes to the program to the Institution in order to ensure that graduates of the program meet the Standards. The Institution will be provided with a specified period of time for the implementation of the recommended changes.
 - If the BCCT concludes that the Institution has not made the recommended changes in a satisfactory manner or within a reasonable period of time then the BCCT may advise the Institution that, at a time that will not affect students enrolled in the last two years of the program, the BCCT will no longer accept nominations for the BCCT membership from the Institution or from certain programs within the Institution.

C. The Review and Revisions Committees shall include one person appointed by the BCCT, one by the ABCDE, and one jointly agreed to. For committees whose membership is larger than three persons, the BCCT and ABCDE will each appoint an equal number of additional members.

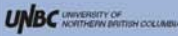
Appendix 1 provides a flowchart of the process of evaluation and nomination as described above.

III. Assessment Guidelines

The ABCDE, in collaboration with the BCCT, has developed guidelines for the implementation of credible performance-based assessments that will measure whether candidates meet the Standards. These guidelines are attached to this Letter of Understanding as Appendix 2.



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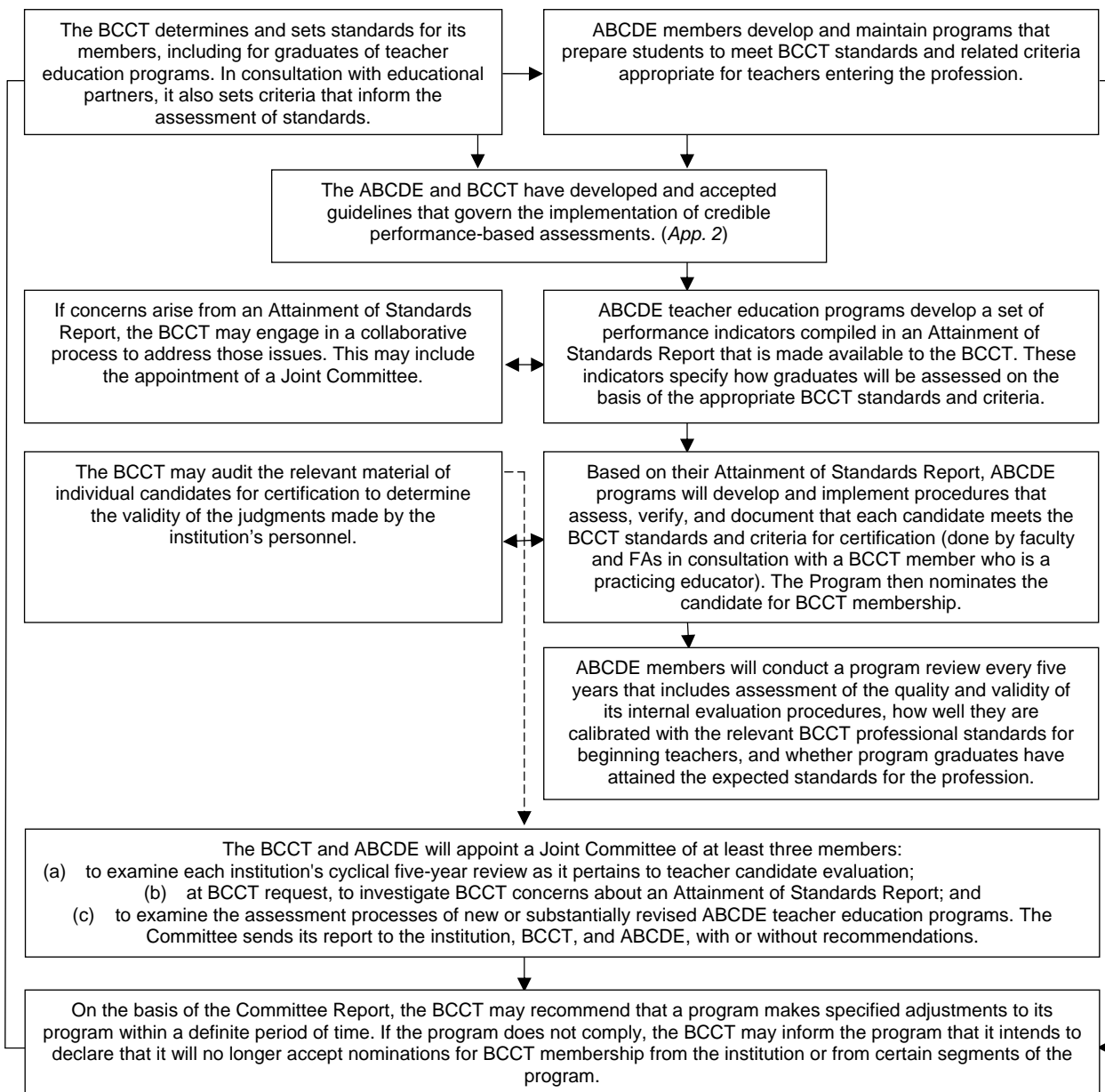


Appendix 1

Overview of BCCT—ABCDE Agreement Re: Certification of Graduates

Governing principles:

- Commitment to regular ongoing dialogue and problem solving for the purpose of reviewing and developing the standards, criteria and performance indicators.
- Recognition of and respect for each other's statutory responsibilities
- Commitment to fairness in assessing graduates and applicants for certification
- Respect for an appropriate balance between professional autonomy and responsibility of those charged with educating teachers and evaluating them for certification
- Commitment to engage in pilot testing towards revision and refinement of both performance indicators and the procedures to implement the agreement.



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Appendix 2

Guidelines for Assessing BC Teacher Education Students: Meeting Certification Standards

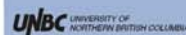
The ABCDE, in collaboration with the BCCT, has developed guidelines that will govern the implementation of credible performance-based assessments, and that will in turn measure whether each prospective teacher meets the standards and related criteria set by the BCCT. To be credible, assessments need to be administratively feasible, professionally acceptable, publicly responsible, ethically sound, and legally defensible.

The guidelines for the development and use of credible performance assessments include:

1. **Ethical Standards.** The assessments should be done in a manner that (a) fully informs all participants (teacher educators and pre-service students) of the intent and nature of all assessments; (b) includes opportunity for internal appeal or renegotiation if necessary; and (c) addresses issues of disclosure and access in accordance with privacy legislation.
2. **Sampling adequacy:** Assessments will be based on an adequate sampling of individual performance including his/her understandings across all of the applicable standards for a beginning teacher. Multiple forms of assessment that respect diverse talents, program diversity, and varied ways of learning should be used.
3. **Evidence:** Assessment artifacts (e.g. copies of the evaluation forms and notes of those judging the student, observational notes or assignments, lesson plans, journal entries, portfolios, scholarly papers, examinations) should be maintained in a file for each student.
4. **Professional Judgments:** Assessments of student performance and understandings will involve constructs consistent with the BCCT standards and criteria. Judgments about students meeting the standards will be made by appropriately qualified personnel (university teacher educators and representatives, and school-based personnel with BCCT membership) who are directly involved in the teacher education program including practicum placements. Periodically, a representative sample of these assessments will be reviewed to ensure that these judgments are consistent within and across institutions (for instance as part of a five-year program review).
5. **Individuality and Distinctiveness:** Assessment methods used to assess students may vary from individual to individual, program to program, and across situations. The guidelines for assessing candidates in this Appendix do not presuppose sameness or standardization and a margin of flexibility in making decisions is essential.



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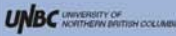


6. Audit and Jeopardy: Relevant assessment material would be available for audit by the BCCT, but the findings of audit alone could not normally be used to jeopardize student's eligibility for certification.
7. Continuous refinement: The responsibilities of the BCCT, ABCDE and individual programs as defined in the Agreement, notwithstanding these assessment guidelines, will be periodically reviewed for the purpose of clarifying and eliminating requirements that might lead to complications in procedures.

In summary, students will be evaluated using these assessment guidelines that afford judgments of context-based performance including student understandings. The judgment by qualified individuals reflects a verifiable assessment in accordance with a construct befitting the standards for a teacher to be certified.



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