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PROGRAM REVISIONS AND NEW PROGRAM APPROVAL

POLICY STATEMENT

North Island College (NIC) will follow established provincial legislation and NIC bylaws and procedures to approve program revisions and new programs which are intended to meet the strategic directions and standards of quality as determined by NIC and regulatory bodies.

PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of this policy is to define the processes by which program revisions and new programs are approved and to identify the requirements and approving bodies for different types of programs.

SCOPE AND APPLICATION

This policy applies to all programs and courses that are authorized through the Education Council (EdCo) approval process.

PRINCIPLES

1. NIC programs support the college's vision and direction as described in its Strategic and Academic Plans.

2. NIC programs will meet standards of quality through the rigour of program review and course and program development and approval processes.

3. All new program proposals which seek an Academic Program Credential will include a feasibility study intended to identify the short and long term demand for the program, associated costs, and impacts to the institution.

4. NIC will offer a broad range of programs that fall within its mandate, reflect the needs of its region, and offer opportunity to attract students from outside the region.

5. NIC will establish and communicate new program approval and revision procedures so that all programs are developed and maintained to a standard that meets its strategic goals.

DEFINITIONS:

Academic Program Credential

A named qualification that is awarded to a student upon completion of a prescribed program of study leading to a certificate, diploma, or degree which requires approval of the Board of Governors (BOG) (see NIC Policy #3-22 Program and Course Credentials).

Internally Developed Curriculum

Programs and courses which are fully developed, determined and accredited by NIC.

Externally Mandated Curriculum

Programs and courses which are determined by a regulatory agency external to NIC.

New Program

A course of study leading to a credential that has either: not previously been offered at the College; cancelled since its last offering; or has been revised to such an extent that it no longer resembles its curricular profile at the time of original Ministry approval.

Program

A course of study leading to a credential.

Program Concept

A brief general description outlining the perceived need for the new program and its relationship to the strategic directions of NIC.

Program Revision

All changes to the content and scope of an approved program not already covered by (or in excess of) Policy #3-15 New Course and Course Revision Approval which include those pertaining to admission requirements, program requirements, program hours or credits, program and/or course learning outcomes, completion requirements or residency requirements of a program.

Revisions such as approved course title and/or course code changes within the program, registry body changes, marketing information, and/or international language requirement equivalencies do not require EdCo approval.

Program revisions that involve only a name change to the program may or may not constitute the need for proponents to revise their program according to the new program procedures. All program name changes must be submitted to the BOG for approval.

Feasibility Study

A comprehensive investigation that objectively and rationally provides an assessment of the viability, resources and impacts to offer a new program. The format and required elements of the study will be determined and communicated by the Education Team (ET).

Program or Course Completion Credential

A document that acknowledges a student's completion of a program (see NIC Policy #3-22 Program and Course Credentials).

GUIDELINES:

- Program revisions will be submitted to the applicable dean/director prior to submission to EdCo for approval.

- If more than 50% of a program's courses or course content is revised within a 5 year period, approval for a new program may be required as determined by the dean/director.

- New programs where a NIC Academic Program Credential will be awarded will be required to go through a consultation process that includes the applicable dean/director and ET prior to being submitted to EdCo for approval.

LEGISLATIVE REFERENCES:

Approval and maintenance of programs at NIC is guided by responsibilities defined within the College and Institute Act, and by the BC Degree Quality Assessment Board (DQAB) Guidelines and Criteria.

PROCEDURES:

NIC will post procedures outlining the implementation of this policy on the College website and include them as Appendix A to this policy.

Cross Reference:

NIC Policy #3-11 Program Review
NIC Policy #3-15 New Course and Course Revision Approval
NIC Policy #3-20 Suspension, Relocation or Cancellation of Academic Credentialed Programs
NIC Policy #3-22 Program and Course Credentials
NIC Policy #6-14 Contract Signing Limits
NIC Policy #6-16 Non-base Funded Programs and Services

Legislative Reference:

College and Institute Act

APPENDIX A

Procedures

A. Revised Programs (less than 50%): revisions without process impact

Departments will routinely engage in refinements, changes to, and maintenance of credentialed programs. All such changes that cumulatively alter less than 50% of the program can be approved by EdCo without constituting a new program and can include:

- Revisions to courses, changes to content and scope pertaining to admission requirements, program requirements, program hours or credits, program and/or course learning outcomes, completion requirements or residency requirements of a program.

Program revisions that involve a name change to the program may or may not constitute the need for proponents to revise their program according to the new program procedures. All program name changes must be submitted to the BOG for approval. The Executive Assistant to the BOG will inform Student Records Office (SRO) of approved credential name changes.

Revisions such as approved course title and/or course code changes within the program, registry body changes, marketing information, and/or international language requirement equivalencies require approval of the dean/director but not EdCo approval.

B. Program Revision (greater than 50%):

Revisions to more than 50% of program courses or course content between completed program reviews, or within any five-year period, must follow the procedures outlined below.

1.0 The dean/director will authorize the revision of the program and curriculum for internally developed and externally mandated courses, which must proceed as follows:

1.1 All revisions to approved programs must undertake an abbreviated feasibility study (not involving labour market or demand analysis). The feasibility study will examine and draw conclusions on key factors that are crucial to the program's success. An ET-approved feasibility form/checklist will be available as a guideline.

1.2 The relevant dean/director will oversee and present the abbreviated feasibility study to ET for its review and approval.

1.3 ET will determine if the program revision can be supported administratively and operationally. ET will approve, defer or decline the program revision to move forward for development.

1.4 All ET-approved abbreviated feasibility studies for revised programs will be presented to the Leadership Team (LT) for information in a timely manner.

1.5 The initiating department/developer will complete a Program Development Worksheet (PDW) indicating the requested program revisions and revised Authorized Course Description (ACD) (and required supporting documents for each ACD) for each revised course within the program.

1.6 The dean/director will submit completed documents to Curriculum Committee for review and to EdCo for approval.

    1.7   The dean/director will draft BOG tuition and credential rationale and submit to the Vice President, Academic (VP, Academic) according to established processes.

    1.8   PDWs and revised ACDs for both internally developed and externally mandated curriculum must be forwarded to Student Records Office by the EdCo Recording Secretary once approved by EdCo.

C.   Revised Programs: New Programs

Any program revisions that result in a credential change (e.g., certificate to diploma), or substantially change the program's overall intent, purpose, and /or learning outcomes constitute the need for proponents to revise their program according to the new program procedures as outlined below. A name change to an existing credential may or may not constitute a new program.

D.   New Programs

1.0 Program Concept

    1.1   A Program Concept is required and may be developed by an individual, department or school in the College, under approval of the applicable dean/director. Approval by ET is required before a program concept can move forward to the feasibility stage of development.

    1.2   A completed Program Concept form will be included with any Multi-Year Program Plan (MYPP) that includes the development of a new program. A review of all new program concepts will be incorporated into the MYPP adjudication and approval process. Previously approved concept papers will be attached for information purposes only.

    1.3   All ET-approved program concepts will be presented to LT for information in a timely manner.

2.0 Feasibility Study

    2.1   All new program proposals must undertake a feasibility study. The feasibility study will examine and draw conclusions on key factors that are crucial to the program's success. An ET-approved feasibility form/checklist will be available as a guideline.

    2.2   The relevant dean/director will oversee the development of the feasibility study and present it to ET for its review and approval.

    2.3   ET will determine if the program can be supported administratively and operationally.

    2.4   All ET-approved feasibility studies will be presented to LT for information in a timely manner.

    2.5   The VP, Academic will inform EdCo when a feasibility study has been approved and will provide a summary of the program for information purposes.

3.0 Program and Curriculum Development

The dean/director will authorize the development of the program and curriculum for internally developed and externally mandated courses, which must proceed as follows:

    3.1   The initiating department/developer will complete a PDW and all related CDW for each new course within the new program.

3.2   The dean/director will submit PDWs and CDWs to Curriculum Committee for review and then to EdCo for approval.

3.3   The dean/director will draft BOG tuition and credential rationale and submit to the VP, Academic according to established processes.

4.0 PDWs and CDWs for both internally developed and externally mandated curriculum must be forwarded to Student Records Office by the EdCo Recording Secretary once EdCo has approved the appropriate documents.

5.0 Peer Review – Posting of Programs to the Post-Secondary Institution Proposal System

5.1   After new certificate or diploma programs are approved by EdCo, the dean/director's office will complete and forward to the VP, Academic all required documents in preparation for posting onto the Post-Secondary Institution Proposal System. (Applicable templates for completion are found on the Ministry of Advanced Education Post-Secondary Institution Proposal System website). Terminal certificates are not required to be posted.

5.2   Degree credentials are to be posted according to the process as established by the DQAB. The dean/director should reference this process and consult with the VP, Academic when seeking approval for a new degree.

5.3   The VP, Academic will post new credentials, as required, onto the Post-Secondary Institution Proposal System and notify the dean/director's office of any peer comments after the posting period has expired.

6.0 The VP, Academic will bring forward the new academic credential and tuition fees to the BOG for approval.

7.0 The Executive Assistant to the BOG will inform SRO, LT and ET once the academic credential and tuition fees are approved by the BOG.

8.0 Implementation of new programs will allow for enough time to recruit and manage admissions. Revisions to admission and completion requirements must be posted 12 months prior to implementation.