

HANDBOOK FOR INDIGENOUS INSTITUTES PROGRAM REVIEW



BACHELOR'S WITH HONOURS DEGREE

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This *Handbook* is a guide for Indigenous Institutes seeking a program review at the Bachelor's with Honours Degree level. It:

1. outlines the standards and benchmarks used by the Indigenous Advanced Education and Skills Council (IAESC) to assess program review applications submitted by Indigenous Institutes in Ontario; and,
2. provides guidelines to assist Indigenous Institutes in preparing their applications.

Based on assessment of the submissions, the Indigenous Institutes Quality Assessment Board provides recommendations to the IAESC's Board of Directors regarding approval of applications for program quality assurance. Throughout the process, the IAESC assists the Indigenous Institute with any questions or concerns and facilitates communication between all parties involved in the quality assurance process.

Indigenous Institutes should note that the IAESC may revise this *Handbook* periodically, and it is the responsibility of the applicant to consult the most current version. Applicants should refer to the website of the IAESC (www.iaesc.ca) for the most current version of the *Handbook*. In instances where there are differences in the information presented between the print and electronic versions of this *Handbook*, the electronic version at www.iaesc.ca/applications takes precedence.

Inquiries about the standards, benchmarks, guidelines, or procedures presented in this document may be directed to: qa@iaesc.ca.

ABOUT THE DEVELOPMENT

The Indigenous Advanced Education and Skills Council (IAESC) approach to quality assurance is directed by Indigenous worldviews. Indigenous education focuses on the whole learner, including the intellectual, emotional,



physical, and identity dimensions of the learner. It recognizes that learners are embedded in relationships with family, community, Nation, and the natural world.

The IAESC quality assurance framework is rooted in the principle of Indigenous control of Indigenous education and recognizes and respects the autonomy of Indigenous Institutes in formulating their own programming.

The standards and benchmarks were developed for Indigenous Institutes in Ontario, taking into consideration the worldviews, needs, and priorities of Indigenous communities in this region of Turtle Island. The development of the standards and benchmarks is rooted in a process of consensus-building and observes the principles of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent. Beginning in the summer of 2020, the IAESC began inviting Indigenous Institutes and their respective communities to participate in dialogue. To date, dialogues have focused on the vision of education of Indigenous Institutes and their communities; Indigenous ways of knowing, learning, and doing; approaches to, and experiences with, Indigenous education; and understandings of quality assurance. Dialogues help direct the development of the quality assurance framework and inform the IAESC.

As part of the process of development of the standards and benchmarks, the IAESC also held a dialogue with experts in Indigenous education. IAESC thanks Dr. Lorna Williams, Dr. Don McCaskill, and Elder Rick Hill for their wisdom, guidance, and assistance.

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1. THE INDIGENOUS ADVANCED EDUCATION AND SKILLS COUNCIL

The *Indigenous Institutes Act, 2017* ("the Act") was developed through consensus-building in a co-creation process between the province of Ontario as represented by the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development (now called the Ministry of Colleges and Universities) and Indigenous communities as represented by Indigenous Institutes and community members. The Act was supported in many forms, most notably through the establishment of a Policy Co-Creation Table comprised of representatives from both the Province and Indigenous communities. The Policy Co-Creation table identified, developed and addressed policy discussions between both parties, and took its roots in many initiatives on Indigenous education as well as decades of advocacy by First Nations and education leaders. The resulting Act was developed in the spirit of good faith and cooperation.

On December 14, 2017, the *Indigenous Institutes Act* received Royal Assent in Ontario. The Act was introduced to Creation, to the land, and to the Indigenous peoples past and present through ceremony on March 28, 2018 at Rainy River First Nations. The ceremony was led by Anishinaabe Elder Fred Kelly and welcomed the Treaty #3 Drum and singers, the Treaty #3 pipe and other sacred items, as well as representatives from Indigenous Institutes, the provincial government, and the Keewatin-Patricia and Northwest Catholic District School Boards.

The *Indigenous Institutes Act, 2017* acknowledges the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), 2007*. UNDRIP recognizes the right of Indigenous peoples to establish and control their educational systems and institutes, and to provide education in their own languages in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning. Indigenous Institutes are recognized in the Act as Indigenous governed and operated community-based education institutes that are mandated by and accountable to Indigenous communities. The Act further recognizes Indigenous Institutes as a pillar in Ontario's postsecondary education and training landscape.

Through regulation under the Act, the Indigenous Advanced Education and Skills Council (IAESC) was recognized as the Indigenous controlled and governed Council which must:

- establish a quality assurance board and the standards and benchmarks IAESC must apply in assessing Indigenous Institutes; and,
- establish, and undertake to maintain, standards regarding the interests of learners at Indigenous Institutes.

The Indigenous Advanced Education and Skills Council may:

- provide approval to Indigenous Institutes to grant diplomas, certificates, and degrees;
- provide approval to Indigenous Institutes to use the term “university” and any derivation of it; and,
- provide recommendations to the Ministry regarding which Indigenous Institutes should be prescribed for the purposes of receiving funding.



2. THE INDIGENOUS INSTITUTES QUALITY ASSESSMENT BOARD

The Indigenous Institutes Quality Assessment Board is a committee of the Board of Directors of the Indigenous Advanced Education and Skills Council (IAESC). The committee provides objective and independent recommendations to the Board of Directors of IAESC on quality assurance applications from Indigenous Institutes, as well as on the quality assurance process and accompanying standards and benchmarks.

The Indigenous Institutes Quality Assessment Board is an impartial committee composed of three (3) to seven (7) community and sector experts and Knowledge Keepers, whose expertise and independence preserves the credibility of the IAESC's quality assurance process. The work of the Indigenous Institutes Quality Assessment Board upholds and protects the interests of learners and is consistent with ethical and procedural standards that respect, promote and privilege the diverse worldviews, knowledge, cultures, languages, and traditions of Indigenous communities.

The Indigenous Institutes Quality Assessment Board will, among other functions:

- review quality assurance standards and benchmarks for assessing the organizational capacity and program quality of Indigenous Institutes;
- make recommendations to IAESC on quality assurance standards and benchmarks;
- review quality assurance applications submitted by Indigenous Institutes and provide recommendations to IAESC on those applications;
- oversee the quality assurance process; and,
- report to and advise IAESC on other matters.

3. PROCEDURE FOR REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION

3.1 INTEGRITY

APPLICANT'S OBLIGATIONS

The Indigenous Institute, the applicant, may conduct internal consultations regarding the Program Review Panel report, while continuing to maintain confidentiality. It may also share the report with all staff, learners, and administrators involved in the Program Review to assist in developing its response to the Program Review Panel Report.

INDIGENOUS INSTITUTES QUALITY ASSESSMENT BOARD MEMBERS' COMMITMENTS

Indigenous Institutes Quality Assessment Board members will follow a code of ethical conduct and ensure that recommendations on applications are fair and based on objective criteria. The standards used to assess applications respect, promote, and privilege the diverse worldviews, knowledges, cultures, languages, and traditions of Indigenous communities.

The Indigenous Institutes Quality Assessment Board's commitments and approach are consistent with Articles 11-15 of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 2007*. The Indigenous Institutes Quality Assessment Board is also committed to the ideas and aspirations embodied in foundational policy papers and reports, such as *Indian Control of Indian Education, 1972*; the *Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996*; and the *Final Report and Calls to Action* of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015.

3.2 FEES AND CHARGES

Applicants are responsible for fees and charges for each program review and will be provided with an estimate of costs in advance. A fee deposit must be received prior to the site visit. Please refer to step four (4) in Section



4.1. of this *Handbook* for information on the site visit.

The fee deposit is used for application processing costs, including evaluation, travel, and ancillary costs (such as meeting rooms, video conferencing, etc.). Total fee and charges for processing applications also include costs based on the number of reviewers, the length and complexity of the review, travel, accommodation, meeting and communication costs, and whether the application requires additional assessment. All fees and charges must be paid in full and settled before the Indigenous Advanced Education and Skills Council (IAESC) Board of Directors announces its decision on the Indigenous Institute's application.

3.3 TRANSPARENCY OF THE PROCESS

The following documents are shared with IAESC's Board of Directors following the Indigenous Institutes Quality Assessment Board's examination of each program review:

- Program Review Panel Report;
- the Indigenous Institute's response to the Program Review Panel Report; and,
- the Indigenous Institutes Quality Assessment Board's recommendation.

Following the review and consideration of the Board of Directors, a final decision is issued, which, together with the public (redacted) version of the approved application, are posted on the IAESC's website.

3.4 RENEWAL OF AN APPLICATION

The quality assurance of programs will require periodic renewal with the IAESC. Program renewals are carried out every eight (8) years. Applicants are responsible for checking the IAESC's website for up-to-date instructions regarding timelines, procedures, and costs associated with the renewal process.

3.5 MID-TERM REPORT

The IAESC may request a mid-term report outlining the progress and standing for the approved program. The IAESC will contact the Indigenous Institute with further details when requesting the mid-term report.

3.6 WITHDRAWAL OF AN APPLICATION

The applicant will provide written notice to the IAESC if the decision to withdraw an application is made. Once the withdrawal notice has been received and processed, the IAESC will return unused fees and charges submitted for the purpose of assessing and reviewing the application.

3.7 MAJOR MODIFICATIONS TO PROGRAMS

In the event that a program approved by the IAESC undergoes substantial modifications (significant changes to course content, delivery, learning outcomes, or degree requirements, etc.) prior to its renewal date, the Indigenous Institute is responsible for notifying the IAESC. IAESC will advise the Indigenous Institute of the required steps to be taken.



4. PROCESS FOR PROGRAM REVIEW

4.1 PROCESS FOR PROGRAM REVIEW

ELIGIBILITY

All Indigenous Institutes that have an approved application for Organization Review by the Indigenous Advanced Education and Skills Council (IAESC) are eligible to submit a program review application.

Applications for a Bachelor's with Honours Degree program are assessed using the standards and benchmarks outlined in this *Handbook*. Please refer to the guidelines in *Appendix A: Submission Guidelines* (page 24) and those appended to each standard for more specific instructions.

The steps in the application process are:

Step One (1): The Indigenous Institute completes and submits an application on the Indigenous Institutes Application Portal, available on the IAESC's website (<http://submit.iaesc.ca>).

Step Two (2): The IAESC:

- a. provides the applicant with a preliminary assessment; and then,
- b. schedules a day and time for an overview presentation by the applicant.

Step Three (3): The IAESC assembles a Program Review Panel, responsible for evaluating the application and conducting a site visit at the Indigenous Institute.

- a. Note: IAESC may consider the Indigenous Institute's suggestions for Program Review Panel members.

Step Four (4): The Program Review Panel conducts a site visit accompanied by IAESC staff as an observer.

- a. Online site visits will be conducted using a video conference platform.

Step Five (5): The Program Review Panel prepares a report and, following review by IAESC, the report is sent to the applicant.

Step Six (6): The applicant reviews the report and submits a formal written response to IAESC.

Step Seven (7): The Indigenous Institutes Quality Assessment Board (IIQAB) considers all documents and records associated with the application. IIQAB submits a formal recommendation to the IAESC Board of Directors.

Step Eight (8): The IAESC's Board of Directors considers the application and the recommendation of IIQAB and issues a final decision.

Step Nine (9): Once approved, the decision and the public (redacted) application are posted on the IAESC website.

4.2 PROGRAM REVIEW PANEL

The Program Review Panel will review the program application using the standards and benchmarks approved by the Board of Directions of the Indigenous Advanced Education and Skills Council (IAESC). The standards and benchmarks are listed and described in this *Handbook*.

The IAESC appoints a Program Review Panel made up of experts. A Chair is appointed and is responsible for coordinating the review of the program application and for developing a written report.

The report includes the following information:

- an assessment of the application against each of the IAESC's standards and benchmarks as described in Section 5 of this Handbook;
- an assessment of the sufficiency of the evidence provided by the applicant;
- an assessment of evidence found during site visit(s); and,
- an evaluation of whether the program meets the IAESC's criteria.

The Program Review Panel members are held to a high standard, and possess a broad outlook, open mind, and sound judgment. The Program Review Panel members agree to abide by the IAESC code of ethical conduct and confidentiality agreement, as well as a declaration that confirms no conflict of interest exists. At least one (1) of the panel members must have expertise in the field of study most closely related to the proposed program. Ideally, the candidate(s) will also have demonstrated knowledge of, and applied experience in, Indigenous education, Indigenous community(ies), administration, admission and enrolment processes, learning resources, budgeting, and finances.



4.3 OUTCOMES OF REVIEW

The Indigenous Institutes Quality Assessment Board's recommendation on the Program Review application is sent to the Indigenous Advanced Education and Skills Council's Board of Directors, which will issue a decision for:

- Approval; or,
- Provisional approval (i.e. approval with conditions); or,
- Recommendation for re-submission.

5. PROGRAM REVIEW STANDARDS

The purpose of the Program Review is to assess an Indigenous Institute's proposed program using the standards and benchmarks listed below. For each standard, the Indigenous Institute prepares a narrative, using the benchmark questions as a guide. In addition to the narrative, the Indigenous Institute is encouraged to provide supporting materials for each standard.

Guiding benchmark questions and examples of supporting materials have been included for each standard. Supporting materials can be presented in various formats:

- textual (e.g., original documents, write-ups, website links);
- visual (e.g., photographs, videos, infographics);
- auditory (e.g., recorded material, testimonials, commentary).

Complete applications include the following:

- ✓ a program abstract that briefly describes the program to be reviewed;
- ✓ an executive summary of the entire application; and,
- ✓ a narrative for each standard and supporting materials.

For more details see Appendix – Submission Guidelines below.

Program Review Standards

1. Foundations: Indigenous Principles, Values, and Community
2. Indigenous Ways of Knowing, Doing, and Being
3. Learner Well-Being
4. Credential Level Learning Outcomes
5. Administrative Capacity
6. Financial Stability

1. FOUNDATIONS: INDIGENOUS PRINCIPLES, VALUES, AND COMMUNITY

The Indigenous Institutes' foundations respond to the community and /or region experience and world views.

1. Describe the organization and program foundations (e.g., principles and values, Indigenous languages, worldviews, ways of knowing, doing and being, teachings, protocols, ceremony, knowledge keeping and sharing).
2. How does the program connect to the Indigenous Institute's mission, vision, and strategic plan?
3. How are the Indigenous Institute's foundations applied in the program's operations (e.g., teaching, curriculum, learner experience, cultural support and activities)?
4. How does the program respond to community and/or region?
 - a. How do community issues, priorities, and goals inform the program?
 - b. Please describe how community input and feedback are incorporated into program design, implementation, evaluation, and communication.
5. How does the Indigenous Institute determine, assess, evaluate and monitor the impact of the program to community and/or region?

SUPPORTING MATERIALS:

If applicable and relevant, supporting materials may be provided to help develop the narrative, including:

- Charter that indicates Indigenous/First Nations Authority;
- Materials outlining the Institute's Indigenous principles and values;
- Materials on the promotion, enhancement, and use of the community's and/or region's Indigenous languages within the program;
- Materials showing that these principles and values reflect the community's and/or region's knowledge, cultural practices and expertise, and local definitions of education, such as, but not limited to:
 - o materials demonstrating that the goals and objectives of the program are in line with the Indigenous Institute's principles and values;

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- materials indicating that expertise of community members is included in program delivery;
 - references to teaching elements items and the way in which they are incorporated into the program's educational experience; and,
 - reference to policy or description of protocols for handling and use of sacred items;
 - Policies and protocols for respectful engagement with community;
 - Records of decision-making that involved community engagement; and,
 - Any other materials to support the standard.



2. INDIGENOUS WAYS OF KNOWING, DOING, AND BEING

The Indigenous Institute provides Indigenous methods of teaching and learning.

1. Describe how the Indigenous Institute employs Indigenous ways of knowing, doing, and being in its program?
2. Describe the Indigenous Institute's capacity to teach Indigenous ways of knowing, doing, and being.
3. How is knowledge kept, transmitted, and shared?
 - a. How does the program engage the learner in learning by doing?
4. How does the program promote relationships to the natural world?
 - a. Identify, if applicable, any natural world-based skills taught in the program.
5. How is Indigenous language(s) incorporated in the program?
6. How does the program promote the revitalization, resurgence, and sustainability of Indigenous knowledge, cultures, and languages?
7. How is Indigenous knowledge incorporated in the development of the program?
 - a. How is this communicated to community and/or region(s)?
 - b. How is Indigenous knowledge kept and protected?

SUPPORTING MATERIALS:

If applicable and relevant, supporting materials may be provided to help develop the narrative, including:

- Materials that outline or explain the Institute's worldviews, ways of knowing, doing, and being; teachings; protocols; and practices of knowledge keeping and sharing;
- Announcements for events, particularly relating to ways of knowing, doing, and being;
- Learner handbooks or website links;
- Program descriptions, course calendars, and syllabi;
- Proposals for new courses;
- Examples of grading systems and/or methods of advancement;
- Examples of learner assignments;
- Statements of teaching philosophy; and,
- Any other materials to support the standard.

3. LEARNER WELL-BEING

The program prioritizes the learner's intellectual, emotional, physical well-being and identity.

1. Please describe how the program supports learner's well-being.
 - a. Intellectual (e.g., complaints, appeals, grievances, and accountability, mentorship, peer-support, and tutoring services, academic advising, accommodations,¹ preparatory academic skills development, protection of intellectual property and Indigenous knowledge, etc.);
 - b. Emotional (e.g., readiness, support, and application of mental health indicators etc.);
 - c. Physical (e.g., exercise and fitness, health services, supportive environments and gathering spaces such as study halls, lounges, or kitchens, daycares, smudging places, etc.); and,
 - d. Identity (e.g., culture, language, cultural practices, community events and celebrations, etc.).
2. How does the program respond to varying learning styles and learner capacities?
 - a. Please describe the Indigenous Institute's accessibility support and services.
3. How does the Indigenous Institute respond to learner:
 - a. financial aid; and
 - b. accommodations.²
4. Please describe the Indigenous Institute's technological support/services:
 - a. Equipment; and
 - b. Internet offerings.
5. Please describe the Indigenous Institute's:
 - a. career counselling;
 - b. placement services (program and employment); and,
 - c. support for life-long learning.

¹ Accommodations refer to policies, services, and supports aimed at enhancing equity of access to the education provided at the Indigenous Institute. They may be put in place to address issues related to disability, health, language, cultural practices, and personal responsibilities to family and community, for example. Accommodations may be made in areas such as admissions, submission of academic work (e.g., exams and term work), and access or use of technology and learner spaces.

² See footnote 1.



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6. Are there opportunities for the learner to become involved in the learning community of the Indigenous Institute? If yes,
 - a. How does the program provide opportunities for the learner to have relationships with land, community, culture, and language?
 7. How does the program support self and collective Indigenous identity?
 8. Please describe how the program supports learner's involvement in:
 - a. Extra-curricular programming;
 - b. Organization-wide activities; and
 - c. The Indigenous Institute's governance.
 9. How does the program support and nurture learner's abilities and talents?
 - a. How does the program promote the development of leadership?
 10. How does the program provide the learner with skills, knowledge, and tools to fulfill their responsibilities to self, family, community, and the natural world? Please describe those that apply.
 11. How does the program promote the development of values such as respect, resiliency, responsibility, and integrity?

SUPPORTING MATERIALS:

If applicable and relevant, supporting materials may be provided to help develop the narrative, including:

- An illustration or document to indicate the Institute's concept of well-being with regards to learning;
- Program descriptions, course calendars, syllabi, learner handbooks, website links, or other materials that outline
 - o learner and/or cultural supports;
 - o learner responsibilities;
 - o academic integrity;
 - o learner privacy and confidentiality; and,
 - o learner code of conduct and policies;
- Promotional material, such as viewbooks, newsletters, brochures, course/program advertisements, etc.; and,
- Any other materials to support the standard.

4. CREDENTIAL LEVEL LEARNING OUTCOMES

The program's credential level learning outcomes are consistent with the Indigenous Institute's Foundations. The learning outcomes build and expand upon the requirements of the Ontario Qualifications Framework's stated competencies, skills, and knowledge that the learner is expected to have acquired upon graduation.

1. How does the program help the learner meet the credential level learning outcomes below? In the narrative, address the elements applicable to the program.

a. Depth and Breadth of Knowledge

A developed knowledge and understanding of key concepts, methodologies, theoretical approaches, and assumptions, incorporating:

- i. an appreciation of Indigenous, non-Indigenous, and discipline-specific knowledge, teachings - historical and contemporary;
- ii. an appreciation of Indigenous language(s) for understanding Indigenous worldviews and knowledge;
- iii. an appreciation of reciprocal learning relationships with the land, cultural practices, and language(s);
- iv. an inclusion of the learner's prior life experiences, abilities and talents that contributes to the building of collective knowledge;
- v. a developed acquisition of knowledge systems related to the program, rooted in historical and contemporary applications, including, where applicable:
 - (a) reflection on the diversity of Indigenous systems of knowledge;
 - (b) exploration of interaction, intersection, and interchange between Indigenous and non-Indigenous approaches and other field(s);
 - (c) engagement with diverse sources and expertise; and,
 - (d) critical thinking and analytical skills inside and outside the discipline;
- vi. specific knowledge in an area of concentration or area of study;
- vii. an ability to access, gather, review, evaluate, reflect on, receive feedback, interpret, and convey information relevant to the program; and,
- viii. collaborative thinking, problem-solving, and research skills.

b. Conceptual and Methodological Awareness

A developed understanding of Indigenous (and, where applicable, non-Indigenous) ways of knowing, doing, and being, in the primary area of concentration, that:



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- i. enables the learner to access, apply, share Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledge, protocols and ethical standards in study or research;
 - ii. enables the learner to evaluate the appropriateness of multiple ways of solving problems using well-established and innovative ideas and techniques; and,
 - iii. enables the learner to actively apply key concepts, narratives, theories, and interpretations;

c. Sharing of Knowledge

The ability to communicate prior and acquired knowledge and key concepts accurately and reliably to diverse audiences by:

- i. using appropriate methods and forms of delivery (e.g., oral, written, visual, performative, multimedia-based); and,
- ii. being consistent with protocols, policies, laws (e.g., natural, regulatory and legislative).

d. Application of Knowledge

The ability to apply knowledge, individually or collectively, to:

- i. contribute to the revitalization of Indigenous language and cultures;
- ii. interpret and assess information, opportunities, and challenges;
- iii. apply abstract concepts, use creative approaches and diverse methods to contribute to the well-being of community, society, and the natural world;
- iv. create pathways for further study, work, or professional development;
- v. develop and expand lines of enquiry and apply methods of investigation;
- vi. contribute to discussion of key concepts, narratives, theories, and interpretations;
- vii. contribute to discussions that draw on major concepts, approaches, and methods of the field(s) of study;
- viii. propose approaches for addressing questions and for providing innovative and creative solutions and responses; and,
- ix. develop an understanding that knowledge has limitations and ambiguities that impact analyses, interpretations, processes of decision-making, and actions.

e. Professional Capacity and Life-Long Learning

The ability to engage with, contribute to, and serve the community, society, and natural world by:

- i. promoting knowledge and learning that reinforces learner's respect for,
 - (a) Indigenous ways of knowing, doing, and being;
 - (b) major concepts, approaches, and methods of the field(s) of study;

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- ii. promoting conduct that is respectful to Indigenous ways of knowing, doing, and being; and,
 - iii. developing the learner's professional capacity necessary for further study, employment, community involvement, and other activities, including through:
 - (a) field placements;
 - (b) practicum placements; and,
 - (c) internships.

SUPPORTING MATERIALS:

If applicable and relevant, supporting materials may be provided to help develop the narrative, including:

- Learner handbooks or website links with information for prospective and enrolled (current) learners;
- Program descriptions, course calendars, and syllabi;
- Proposals for new courses;
- Examples of grading systems and/or methods of advancement;
- Examples of learner assignments;
- Informational brochures or website links on learner opportunities, which may include:
 - field placements;
 - practicum placements;
 - internships;
 - mentorship programs;
 - professional development;
 - preparatory or transitional courses;
 - workshops;
 - summer programs; and,
 - learner exchanges;
- Learner admission requirements, procedures, and practices;
- Sample of admission package;
- Materials discussing possible pathways for graduates following their studies;
- Testimonials and alumni interviews or surveys;
- Evaluations or appraisals of learners' independent work;
- Descriptions of learner community initiatives developed and undertaken under the supervision of Institute or community personnel; and,
- Any other materials to support the standard.



5. ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY

The Indigenous Institute has the capacity to deliver the program consistent with its administrative and governance structures.

1. Please describe the program structures, policies, processes, and personnel requirements.
 - a. Describe the admissions criteria and process.
 - i. How does the program recognize previous credit and experience? The Indigenous Institute may consider the following areas:
 - (a) Transition programming requirements (prerequisites and equivalencies);
 - (b) Advanced standing;
 - (c) Credit transfer;
 - (d) Micro-credentials; and,
 - (e) Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR).³
 - b. Describe the grading system and/or methods of advancement.
 - c. Describe the graduation requirements.
2. Please describe the resources required to support the program. The Indigenous Institute may consider:
 - a. Physical resources on-site;
 - b. Physical resources off-site;
 - c. Natural environment;
 - d. Financial resources;
 - e. Human resources (including business, social, political, economic, and cultural); and,
 - f. Community governance (e.g., systems and infrastructure).
3. Please describe the Indigenous Institute's learner complaint and conflict resolution procedures and policies (including Indigenous traditional conflict resolution, and/or restorative justice, if applicable)?
4. Please describe the policies and procedures the Indigenous Institute has established for the periodic review of the proposed program?
 - a. How does the Indigenous Institute respond to:
 - i. Community;
 - ii. Human resources (e.g., academic, professional, administrative, specialist, support); and,
 - iii. Learner feedback.

³ In the context of this benchmark, Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) refers to the assessment of learning gained in settings such as work experience, volunteering, outside study, apprenticeship with Elders or Traditional Knowledge Keepers, or other educational opportunities.

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5. How does the Indigenous Institute share key information about the program with the learner and the broader community? The Indigenous Institute may consider the following:
 - a. The Indigenous Institute’s mission and goals statement, and/or strategic plans, with reference to its Indigenous ways of knowing, doing, and being;
 - b. a general description of the program (e.g., purpose, outcomes, length, personnel); and,
 - c. course descriptions and credit values.

 6. Describe the policies and procedures related to the program and organization and, the method of delivery to the learner (e.g., handbook, website, learner information system). The Indigenous Institute may consider the following areas:
 - a. Admissions, grading, dismissal, and graduation;
 - b. Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR);
 - c. Entrance examinations or comparable assessment method;
 - d. Credit transfer information;
 - e. Criteria for international learners to complete the program requirements;
 - f. Method of course delivery;
 - g. Assessments and evaluations;
 - h. Accessibility and accommodations;⁴
 - i. Learner support and services;
 - j. Tuition fees (payment, late charges, default, refunds);
 - k. Learner achievements, recognition, and awards;
 - l. Bursaries, scholarships, and financial aid;
 - m. Withdrawals (program, course(s));
 - n. Academic integrity (e.g., plagiarism, cheating, dishonesty, fraud, etc.);
 - o. Learner privacy and confidentiality;
 - p. Learner code of conduct and policies addressing harassment, bullying, theft, e-learning;
 - q. Protection of intellectual property and Indigenous knowledge;
 - r. Learner complaints and conflict resolution (issue identification, resolution, and appeals); and,
 - s. Contingency plans for interruptions.

4 Accommodations refer to policies, services, and supports aimed at enhancing equity of access to the education provided at the Indigenous Institute. They may be put in place to address issues related to disability, health, language, cultural practices, and personal responsibilities to family and community, for example. Accommodations may be made in areas such as admissions, submission of academic work (e.g., exams and term work), and access or use of technology and learner spaces.



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7. Please describe the mode of delivery (in-person, online, hybrid, blended, etc.). If more than one mode is offered, please also describe. The Indigenous Institute may consider the following:
 - a. Forms of technology required;
 - b. Competency required for learner participation; and,
 - c. Costs for participation.
 8. If applicable, please describe plans or steps taken to consult with postsecondary institutions, transferability councils (e.g., Ontario Council for Articulation and Transfer), and advisory bodies to support transferability and recognition of the program.
 9. If applicable, please describe plans or steps taken to consult with relevant regulatory and/or accrediting bodies, regarding the preparation of the learner for employment in occupations that are subject to regulatory and legal requirements.

SUPPORTING MATERIALS:

Please provide the following supporting materials for this standard:

- Governing Board policies and/or governance handbook;
- Employee handbooks, guidelines, and orientation process;
- Handbooks, brochures, website links, learner information system, or other materials outlining learner life, tuition and fees, program requirements, course schedules, support services, and program administration;
- Program information, including the program title, abstract, and description.
- Materials indicating that the Institute has taken into consideration questions and potential challenges regarding learners' pursuit of pathways that are subject to regulation or accreditation (including through correspondence or other records of consultation with regulatory and/or accrediting bodies);
- Correspondence or other materials demonstrating input from other postsecondary education institutions underlining the interest in the development of the program, which may include information indicating that the credential will be recognized for the purposes of further study;
- Correspondence or other materials demonstrating input from employers, occupational agencies, professional associations, indicating the demand for or interest in the development of the program, highlighting that the credential will be recognized for purposes of employment;
- Policies and procedures on learner complaint and conflict resolution;
- Statements or protocols that outline the protection of intellectual property and Indigenous knowledge;
- Contingency plan for course or program interruptions approved by senior administration;
- Business plans and strategic plans;
- Policy documents concerning learner fees and tuition, withdrawal and refund, etc., including, where applicable, credit transfer policies/agreements; and,

If applicable and relevant, additional supporting materials may be provided, such as:

- Link to staff directory;
- Materials attesting to relevant certifications or qualifications of personnel in the program (e.g., CVs, résumés, biographies);
- Plan for recruitment or policy on recruitment process;
- Job descriptions or sample job postings;
- Sample interview questions or description of hiring process;
- Minutes from governance and administrative bodies at the Institute;
- Annual staff report or program report describing activities of staff (e.g., community projects, research collaborations, publications, active participation at conferences, organization of conferences);
- Demographic data (statistics on admission and enrollment rates, Indigenous communities served by program, etc.);
- Evidence of collaboration with partnering postsecondary institutions, such as:
 - meeting minutes between members of the Indigenous Institute and members of partnering postsecondary institutions regarding transferability arrangements;
 - drafts of Articulation Agreements and/or Memorandums of Understanding with other postsecondary institutions; and,
 - completed Articulation Agreements or Memorandums of Understanding with other postsecondary institutions, where appropriate;
- Campus map;
- Materials or records that outline policy for periodic evaluation or plan for periodic evaluation; and,
- Any other materials to support the standard.



6. FINANCIAL STABILITY

The Indigenous Institute demonstrates financial planning and resources to provide a stable program.

1. Please describe the program's ongoing operational funding and financial plan. The description may include:
 - a. Start up costs;
 - b. Developmental costs;
 - c. Quality assurance costs;
 - d. Tuition and other associated fees;
 - e. Human resources requirements (e.g., academic, professional, administrative, specialist, support);
 - f. Capital requirements;
 - g. Operations and maintenance;
 - h. Library, learning resource, and other program level costs; and,
 - i. Learner support services.
2. Please describe all anticipated revenues and enrolment for the program.
3. Please describe the financial support/aid available to the learner to the program.
4. Please provide copies of audited financial statements pursuant to O. Reg. 239/18 and Section 7 (2) of the Indigenous Institutes Act, 2017, S.O. 2017, c. 34, Sched. 20.
5. Please provide financial plans for:
 - a. Contingencies such as addressing funding disruptions and instability (e.g., unstable and/or unpredictable sources of funding, unanticipated expenses, program interruptions); and,
 - b. growth to enhance and expand the program.
6. Please provide a business plan for three (3) complete program cycles.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORTING MATERIALS:

If applicable and relevant, additional supporting materials may be provided, such as:

- Budgetary projections of best- and worst-case scenarios;
- Materials outlining fundraising strategies;
- Materials outlining available and projected learner financial aid;

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- Demographics data, which may include:
 - statistics on admission and enrollment rates; and,
 - statistics on Indigenous communities served by program;
 - Relevant sections of Transfer Payment Agreements; and,
 - Any other materials to support the standard.

PLEASE INCLUDE ANY OTHER INFORMATION THAT YOU CONSIDER NECESSARY FOR YOUR APPLICATION.



APPENDIX

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Please consult the following guidelines when completing the online Program Review application.

*If the application is for renewal, please consult the Indigenous Advanced Education and Skills Council's website for details.

APPLYING ON THE INDIGENOUS INSTITUTES APPLICATION PORTAL

- i. Send a request by email to qa@iaesc.ca to inform the Indigenous Advanced Education and Skills Council (IAESC) of the intent to submit an application.
- ii. The IAESC will respond by email and, if applicable, provide an invitation along with instructions for accessing the Indigenous Institutes Application Portal.
- iii. If needed, establish login credentials by entering your email address and creating a password.
- iv. Enter the site, <https://submit.iaesc.ca/>.
- v. Select "View Programs".
- vi. Select "More" under the desired credential.
- vii. Select "Apply" to begin.
- viii. Name your application file. For example, Bachelor's with Honours Degree in Indigenous Knowledge – Institute Name.
- ix. Complete the organization contact information with the full name of the Indigenous Institute, the mailing and email addresses, and identify the primary contact and email address for the application. Please note that it will be possible to add additional individuals (collaborators) to assist with completing the application. However, IAESC will communicate with the identified primary contact only.

DEVELOPING THE APPLICATION

- i. For the program abstract, briefly describe the program to be reviewed (maximum 300 words), outlining the credential level, the main field(s)/subject(s) of study, the expected learning outcomes, and alignment with the

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- Indigenous Institute’s principles and values.
- ii. The executive summary of the Program Review application should include the following information:
 - o A brief overview of the program foundations for the proposed program, highlighting the guiding Indigenous principles and values, as well as its rootedness in community;
 - o The proposed credential to be awarded;
 - o The location(s) of the program delivery;
 - o Anticipated program start date;
 - o Anticipated completion time for the proposed credential; and,
 - o An overview of the proposed program, including its relevance to learners and community.
 - iii. For each standard, include the narrative in the text box or upload the text as a separate document (.pdf and .docx formats are preferred). Each narrative should explain how the program meets the specific standard using the benchmark questions as a guide.
 - o There are no word limits for any text box sections.
 - o Include examples of supporting materials that help describe the narrative.
 - iv. Indicate clearly where information requested for a particular section is not applicable to the Institute or not available.
 - v. Prepare separate applications for each program submitted.

SUPPORTING MATERIALS

- i. Applicants may include additional files including textual, audiovisual, and image files. There is no limit to the number of files that can be uploaded; however, if a file exceeds 1GB in size or if it is a direct link to an online file, please provide an active link in the “Supporting Documents” section of the application.
- ii. Attach each supporting document as a separate file. If necessary, scan hard copies of documents to include them in the electronic file. Label and number attachments and note that the same document/appendix may be referred to in more than one standard narrative.
- iii. Ensure that all formal policies submitted are those approved by the Institute’s governing body and identify the date at which each policy was approved.

PROCESSING APPLICATIONS

- i. Complete applications only will be processed and assessed.
- ii. Once an application has been completed and submitted, the applicant will receive electronic confirmation that the process for reviewing the submission has begun.
- iii. Following a final decision on the approval, provisional approval or recommendation for resubmission of the application rendered by the Board of Directors of the Indigenous Advanced Education and Skills Council, the Indigenous Institute will be notified. In the case of a decision of Approval, the applicant will



submit a redacted electronic version of the application containing the same materials as in the original application, but with confidential and proprietary information removed (e.g., CVs, non-public financial information, referee letters, personal information such as names, addresses, and phone numbers, and Indigenous intellectual and cultural property not intended for public distribution).

- o The redacted version of the application will be submitted directly to the Indigenous Advanced Education and Skills Council at qa@iaesc.ca and will be made public on IAESC's website, together with the IAESC's decision. Please also ensure that the file is compliant with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001.

GLOSSARY

ASSESSMENT (PROGRAM REVIEW APPLICATION)

In the Indigenous Advanced Education and Skills Council's quality assurance process, assessment is rooted in reflection on the Indigenous education provided by Indigenous Institutes. Assessment involves careful review and feedback for the Indigenous Institute as part of the quality assurance process.

COMMUNITY

First Nation, region or territory where original peoples have historically and continuously occupied and used the land.

ELDERS

Indigenous individuals recognized by their communities for their cultural knowledge and expertise.

INDIGENOUS WAYS OF KNOWING, DOING, AND BEING

A learner is provided with experiences that transmit Indigenous knowledge traditions and Western education. These experiences and transmission of knowledge are holistic and reflect the interconnectedness of the Indigenous ways of knowing, doing and being that form pathways to lifelong learning of an individual.

MATURE LEARNER

Usually defined as a learner who is at least 18 years old; however, definitions of mature learners may vary across Institutes' admissions policies and may include applicants that do not have the Ontario Secondary School Diploma or whose formal education may have been interrupted.



MICRO-CREDENTIALS

Micro-credentials, also known as micro-certifications, are typically short-term and skills-oriented courses designed to address labour market gaps. Some micro-credentials are designed to count for credits and “stack” towards more conventional degree programs.

PATHWAYS

Pathways refer to the different activities learners pursue following their completion of a program. These activities can involve participation in the community, employment, or further study. Pathways rest upon the structures, services, policies, and regulations that support the learner in transitioning after the completion of the credential.

PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION (PLAR)

Refers to the assessment of learning gained in settings such as work experience, volunteering, outside study, apprenticeship with Elders or Traditional Knowledge Keepers, or other educational opportunities.

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REVISIONS

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Version: March 31, 2021 - Page 11

3. How are the Indigenous Institute's foundations applied in the program's operations (e.g., teaching, curriculum, learner experience, cultural support and activities)?
 - a. How does the program respond to community and/or region?
 - b. How do community issues, priorities, and goals inform the program?
4. Please describe how community input and feedback are incorporated into program design, implementation, evaluation, and communication.

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