

# **CAFCE ACCREDITATION COUNCIL Council Members Operations Manual**

**July 2014**



**Canadian Association for Co-operative Education**

# CAFCE ACCREDITATION COUNCIL

A key standing-committee of CAFCE, the Accreditation Council sets standards and reviews programs applying for accreditation. It educates practitioners about standards, program design and delivery and is challenged to retain quality practice while also being adaptable to the changing world of work and needs of members.

## MISSION

The Accreditation Council of CAFCE provides leadership for the development of quality co-operative education programs.

## GOALS

- Establish and maintain rules and procedures for the conduct of Accreditation Council business
- Establish, review and amend the standards, as appropriate, according to which co-operative education programs will be accredited by CAFCE
- Receive and respond to suggestions and queries regarding appropriate standards for accreditation as provided by the membership
- Establish guidelines, documentation and procedures by which co-operative education programs shall be evaluated
- Evaluate co-operative education programs presented to it and award accreditation or withhold accreditation in accordance with the established standards
- Establish a period of accreditation
- Establish an appeal procedure
- Recommend to the board an appropriate fee structure for the evaluation of programs such that the review and assessment procedure is self-supporting. All fees shall be paid to CAFCE.
- Appoint review teams to conduct the review of co-operative education programs brought forward for accreditation, in accordance with the established guidelines and procedures. Teams shall be comprised of three (3) voting members of CAFCE, one (1) of whom must be a voting member of the Council
- Survey CAFCE members about co-op practice, as appropriate
- Maintain and update material for publications and the CAFCE website such as accreditation standards and rationale, and accreditation FAQs

## MEMBERSHIP

- An institution seeking accreditation must have at least one employee who is a current member of CAFCE; institutions with de-centralized programs must have at least one member for each de-centralized unit
- Each institution with accredited programs is invited to appoint a representative to become a member of the Accreditation Council. Institutions with de-centralized programs are requested to establish an institutional representative from among those with accredited programs
- A letter is sent to the president, CEO or board chairperson who signed the application for accreditation (copied to the co-op contact person of the institution announcing their application results), requesting a council representative for the six-year accreditation period if one is not already identified in the application or already a member of the council

## Council Officers

### Chair

- Becomes chair for two-year period and is appointed as a CAFCE Board member after completing two-year period as chair-elect of Accreditation Council
- Calls and chairs accreditation meetings
- Reviews minutes and establishes agendas in conjunction with the secretary
- Responds to accreditation inquiries or assigns to other members as appropriate
- Reviews list of accreditation members provided by the CAFCE office and seeks replacement members for those who have withdrawn from the council
- Reviews list of accredited programs annually, as prepared by the CAFCE office, and sends a notice to members when accreditation for their co-op programs will expire the following December
- Establishes review teams, communicates with team chairs as necessary and maintains tracking system developed by CAFCE office
- Approves an extension for accredited programs beyond the six-year period where appropriate and in consultation with the council executive
- Attends board meetings and prepares material for CAFCE's annual report

- Prepares package of information for new members and welcomes them to the council

#### **Chair-Elect**

- Voted in by council members for two-year period before becoming chair of the council
- Co-ordinates accreditation promotional activities for CAFCE events
- Assists chair with inquiries
- Works with standards and rationale committee and forwards updates to CAFCE office
- Becomes familiarized with chair role

#### **Past Chair**

- Becomes past chair after completing roles as chair-elect and chair
- Reviews material in operations manual and on web site and submits updates to CAFCE office
- Assists chair with inquiries

#### **Secretary**

- Voted in by council members for six-year period
- Contacts members by e-mail to remind them of upcoming meetings
- Prepares and e-mails meeting agendas after consultation with chair
- Prepares minutes, sends to chair for review, and then e-mails to members and the CAFCE Office
- Co-ordinates request for members to update accredited program lists (in French and English) which are then forwarded to the CAFCE office
- Forwards updates for application guide to the CAFCE office

#### **Resignations**

- Resignations should be made in writing to the chair with notification of a new representative from the institution

#### **New Member Orientation**

New members receive an e-mail from the chair, welcoming them to the council, with a link to the accreditation section on the CAFCE site, noting:

- List of council members and accredited programs
- Copies of the 2 previous sets of meeting minutes
- Link to the council operations manual
- Link to the accreditation guide and application

### **GUIDELINES FOR COUNCIL MEMBERS**

Each council member is requested to contribute by:

- Attending meetings regularly
- Providing a channel of communication between the council and the general membership of CAFCE
- Helping to publicize the goals and initiatives of the council to the co-op community
- Recommending and helping establish quality standards and accreditation guidelines
- Acting as a sounding board for new ideas, recommending actions which could enhance quality co-op practice
- Helping arrange and/or participate in special events associated with the council
- Maintaining good community relations for the council when representing its goals and outcomes, and alerting the council to concerns when they arise
- Encouraging colleagues to seek accreditation and providing assistance with applications where feasible
- Serving on accreditation review teams as needed, particularly by participating as a chair
- Serving on ad hoc task forces that are established to review issues or practices

### **MEETINGS**

- A minimum of two meetings are held per year, at the CAFCE AGM or the biennial conference and approximately six months after full council (usually in February). Members are encouraged to attend council meetings. If unable to attend, sending regrets to the chair in advance is most helpful
- Additional meetings may be conducted as required, or at the request of quorum (50% plus 1 of the members of the full council)
- The chair requests meeting facilities through an e-mail request to the CAFCE office
- The agenda is determined by the chair and secretary and is created by the secretary. Council members may request that items be added

- The secretary makes the call for a meeting two months prior to the meeting. The date of the next meeting is determined at the previous meeting. The e-mail should include a standing request to submit any changes regarding the council members/accredited programs list to the secretary prior to each meeting
- Minutes are distributed by the CAFCE office to the full council and the CAFCE board, including a reference and link to the council members/accredited programs list on the web

## **ACCREDITATION REVIEW**

- The accreditation review process is a peer review. The goal is to enhance quality practice and to provide feedback and leadership. The guidelines deliberately leave room for interpretation. If the “rules” are so rigid that there is little opportunity for innovation and program development, the value of the accreditation process as a tool to enhance quality is lost. By discussing innovative program development issues, the review team and the institution will enhance their understanding of the co-operative education process
- The ultimate role is to provide leadership in quality program development. It is important in any review to focus on the essence of accreditation criteria and the CAFCE definition of co-operative education, rather than variations in program delivery. The prime objective must be to enhance the education of students as they integrate academic and guided work experiences within a framework of quality standards. Each institution should be designing programs to best meet that objective
- The chair of the review team is encouraged to contact the applicant institution to seek additional information or clarification to assist the team in assessing the nature of co-op practice. Readers should frame their observations and recommendations to recognize program strengths and make constructive suggestions for improvement or development, recognizing that there are differences in program delivery and infrastructure across institutions

## **Application Review Process**

- The CAFCE office establishes an application tracking sheet which is shared with the executive and updated by the chair
- The CAFCE office notifies the chair of the Accreditation Council when application cover sheets (Part A) are received from an applicant
- The chair of the Accreditation Council establishes the review team. An e-mail is sent by the chair with a link to the accreditation guide/application to each team member and a reminder about the requirement for confidentiality
- The chair of the Accreditation Council notifies the applicant of the review team members, the target date for the completion of the review and the requirement to distribute applications binders to each member of the review team. The applicant is advised to retain a copy of the application
- If the program has been previously accredited, any available initial accreditation review team comments and recommendations are included in the application binders which are forwarded to the accreditation team by the applicant for consideration in the review process
- The review team chair contacts team members to establish the review schedule and process to be followed
- The review team chair presents written recommendations to the chair of the accreditation council by addressing the following topics:
  1. Recommendation to accredit or deny accreditation
  2. Areas of strength in applicant's programs
  3. Recommendations for applicant to consider for further quality development
  4. Conditions for the applicant to meet in order to become eligible for accreditation in the future
  5. Issues and questions for the council to consider concerning interpretations, standards etc.
- The chair of the review team presents the review team's recommendations during the next council meeting. The recommendation letter and any other notes pertaining to the application are then submitted to the CAFCE office for archiving
- The Accreditation Council votes on the recommendation
- The chair of the Accreditation Council advises the applicant of the outcome by email after the meeting, and prepares a formal letter to the senior member of the institution who certified the application, outlining the results and requesting a council representative where applicable.
- The CAFCE office prepares and sends the certificate(s) and the logo
- The chair of the Accreditation Council thanks the review team and advises them to destroy their copies of the application or return them to the applicant, upon request
- If not accredited, the chair of the council sends the applicant an official letter explaining the outcome; the institution has 30 days to appeal this decision by writing to the chair
- The chair of the council provides the CAFCE office with a copy of all material for archiving
- Standardized letters used by the chair of the Accreditation Council for each step of the process are available through the CAFCE office

## **PROGRAM LISTS**

- The list of accredited programs is developed by the CAFCE office and submitted to the secretary who provides updates following council meetings
- The chair reviews the list annually (in July), identifying all programs losing accreditation by December 31 of the following year
- The chair advises the CAFCE office to send a letter to applicable members of the Accreditation Council, alerting them to the deadline and requesting a status report

- A summary is presented to Accreditation Council, including the list of institutions losing accreditation
- The chair sends an official notification letter to the senior co-op person at institutions losing accreditation

### **MARKETING AND PROMOTION**

A variety of marketing and promotional activities may be planned by the Accreditation Council in order to enhance awareness of accreditation and quality co-op standards:

- Display at national conference
- Regional workshops
- National workshops including promotion of professional development to beginners, experienced coordinators and managers/directors of co-op operations
- New CAFCE member information about accreditation
- Use of the accreditation logo
- Information and articles on the website including co-op tips and techniques
- Material for CAFCE annual report
- Promotion to institutions which have not applied for accreditation
- Accreditation certificates

### **ANNUAL PLANNING AND OBJECTIVES**

When the council meets each year, goals such as the following will be reviewed and objectives set for the upcoming year, at the discretion of the incoming chair:

- Provide experienced council member volunteers who are willing to assist new institutions in establishing co-op programs
- Develop co-op tips and techniques articles on current issues
- Update accreditation information on the CAFCE site
- Encourage those without accredited programs to learn about the accreditation process through serving on an accreditation review team
- Update the accreditation guide and application and other documents
- Facilitate new workshops at CAFCE conferences

### **SUPPORT PROVIDED BY THE CAFCE OFFICE**

The CAFCE office provides the following services to support the work of the Accreditation Council:

- Responds to general inquiries about the Accreditation Council, refers queries on to council members where appropriate, and refers people to the web site for further information
- Maintains CAFCE website pages and official documents to ensure current accreditation information is included
- Provides support to the council executive as noted above, including developing tracking records for accredited programs, applications received and review teams assigned, to ensure continuity and consistency of the accreditation process
- Retains archive documentation for each application for accreditation (submittal pages and a copy of the review team's report), along with application material sent electronically