

POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

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1.6.9 TRANSFER CREDIT FOR PREVIOUS ACADEMIC STUDIES

Purpose

1. The purpose of this policy is to support the transferability of college credits between programs, including degree programs, through Articulation Agreements and Credit Transfers, and to ensure that applicants, students and graduates are aware and informed of these agreements.
2. St. Clair College recognizes that applicants to an academic program may possess a variety of backgrounds, experiences and formal education qualifications. Learning may occur in all aspects of life. This policy pertaining to articulation, credential recognition and credit transfer ensures that program standards are met.

Scope

3. St. Clair College acknowledges that previous learning can be acquired and recognized in either of two ways:
 - a. Successfully completing academic courses at an educational institution, or
 - b. Learning by means of a time period of work, life or experiential learning
4. This policy covers the process for obtaining credit for courses of study successfully completed previously either at St. Clair College, at another post-secondary educational institution (Canadian and international), or, in the case of International Baccalaureate (IB) or Advanced Placement (AP) courses, academic institutions authorized to deliver those courses. For the policy relating to obtaining academic credit for learning acquired through work, life or experiential learning, see policy 1.6.11 relating to (PLAR) Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition.
5. Students applying to a St. Clair College certificate, diploma, advanced diploma, graduate certificate, or degree program (whether by bridging or not) fall under this policy.

Definitions

6. The terms “Transfer Credit” and “Advanced Standing” are understood to have synonymous meaning and can be considered interchangeable within this policy.
7. For the purposes of block transfer of previous academic credits (see “Block Transfer of Credits” in this policy), the term “Defined Educational Group” is any collection of students who have previously attained a specific credential from a specific post-secondary institution during a specified time period. This credential makes members of this group eligible to apply for a block transfer at St. Clair College.
8. For the purposes of block transfer of previous academic credits, the term “standard curriculum plan” is the recognized curriculum, as listed on the official Program Curriculum Chart that a student must complete to attain a St. Clair College post-secondary credential. An “alternate curriculum plan” is an amended curriculum, different from the official Program Curriculum Chart that a student from a Defined Educational Group may complete to attain a St. Clair College post-secondary credential.

Academic Credit for Previous Courses Taken

9. Where a course taken at St. Clair College or at another educational institution is equivalent in outcomes to a prescribed course in a program of study at St. Clair College, a student currently or prospectively enrolled in such course may qualify for a transfer credit for that course if the previous course complies with the requirements of this policy.
10. Transfer credit cannot be granted for previous courses where that previous course itself was granted as transfer credit.
11. Courses successfully completed in post-secondary institutions will be recognized when appropriate documentation is provided, and equivalency is established. In this regard, responsibility for assessment and recognition of equivalency rests with the academic team.
12. It is the sole responsibility of the person who is applying for the transfer of credit (advanced standing) to provide transcripts, course outlines, and other documentation to fully support the application.
13. By obtaining transfer credit for the course, the student is exempted from having to take the course for which the credit or advanced standing was granted.
14. Within all programs, transfer credit and prior learning can be applied only once. In other words, once used for transfer credit, a previous course cannot be used for further credit within the same program offered by St. Clair College.

15. When the transfer credit is granted, the transcript will be coded with “AS” and the course for which the transfer credit was granted will not be counted in the grade point average.

Grade Limitations

16. Before a transfer credit is granted, evidence must be supplied to document that the applicant for transfer achieved, at minimum:
 - a. a grade of “C”, 60%, or 2.00 GPA for a course previously taken at St. Clair College or at another post-secondary institution towards a non-degree program, or
 - b. a grade of “B”, 70%, or 3.00 GPA for a course previously taken at St. Clair College or at another post-secondary institution towards a degree program, or
 - c. a grade of 5 or higher on the exam of an International Baccalaureate (IB) Higher Level (HL) course towards a degree or non-degree program, or
 - d. a grade of 4 or higher on the exam of an Advanced Placement (AP) course towards a degree or non-degree program
17. A grade of “AG” for Aegrotat for a course previously taken cannot be used towards a transfer credit.

Residency Requirement for Transfers of Credit (Advanced Standing)

18. All St. Clair College non-degree programs of study shall have a residency requirement of twenty-five percent (25%). This requires that at least twenty-five percent of the vocational courses within a non-degree program of study must be taken under the auspices of St. Clair College. Accordingly transfer credit together with exemptions based on PLAR shall not be granted in excess of 75% of the available transfer credit for vocational courses.
19. For the purposes of satisfying the 25% residency requirement for non-degree programs of study, only vocational courses are counted, and general education courses are excluded.
20. Accredited programs at St. Clair College are mandated to follow accreditation body requirements pertaining to curriculum, delivery, and program outcomes. In some cases, the residency rule of such programs may exceed the requirements of 25%. For such programs, St. Clair College will apply the residency requirement mandated by the accrediting body.
21. For degree programs of study, there shall be a residency requirement of fifty percent (50%). This requires that at least fifty percent of the courses within a degree program of study must be taken under the auspices of St. Clair College. Accordingly transfer credit together with exemptions based on PLAR shall not be granted in excess of 50% of the available transfer credit for courses.

- a. Students can apply for transfer credits from a non-degree program to a degree program. The maximum number of transfer credits transferable in this situation is 30 credits or a full first year.
22. Subject to other provisions in this policy, the granting of transfer credit (advanced standing) for a course which is part of the Program of Study belonging to a particular school is the responsibility of the Program Coordinator and Program Chair regardless of whether the course is the responsibility of or delivered by the Program Chair's School or whether it is the responsibility of or delivered or serviced by another department at St. Clair College. In reviewing the recommendations of the Program Coordinator and in making the final decision regarding the transfer of credit, the Chair must seek the advice and assistance of the Chair of the School or department that services or delivers the course in question.

Process for Obtaining Academic Credit or Advanced Standing

23. Where a student applies for transfer credit (advanced standing) in a course or courses in which the student is already enrolled the student should continue to attend classes until the transfer credit (advanced standing) is officially entered on the student's transcript or is otherwise officially notified that the application for transfer credit (advanced standing) has been granted.
- a. A course for which credit is claimed cannot be dropped while a request for transfer credit is ongoing.
24. Where a student applied for transfer credit (advanced standing) in a course or courses and the student is involved in an investigation of academic misconduct, the application for transfer credit (advanced standing) will be put on hold until the investigation of academic misconduct is resolved. See policy 7.1 relating to the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities
- a. The program coordinator or program Chair will notify the Registrar's Office of any investigation of academic misconduct
 - b. The program coordinator or program Chair as the investigator(s) of the academic misconduct will recommend to the Registrar's Office how to proceed with any requests for transfer credits once the investigation of academic misconduct has been completed.
25. A transfer credit will not be granted for a previous course in which the student was enrolled and was not successful, i.e. the student did not obtain a satisfactory grade to pass the course.
26. Students wishing to obtain transfer credit (advanced standing) for courses previously completed should provide all necessary supporting documentation (including transcripts and other documents necessary to establish that the previous course is sufficiently equivalent to the course for which transfer credit (advanced standing) is claimed to the Registrar's Office.)

27. Where the Registrar's Office has verified with the Program Coordinator and is satisfied that the previous course is sufficiently equivalent to the course for which transfer credit is being claimed, the Registrar's Office shall complete a "Form 7 - Request for Transfer of Academic Credit" attaching all relevant documentation and submit it to the Program Chair for consideration and possible approval, subject to the exception contained in Paragraphs 24(a) and 24(b).
 - a. Where the Registrar's Office has verified with the ONCAT (Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer) database that the previous course is sufficiently equivalent to the course for which transfer credit is being claimed, and the grade limitation has been met as per Paragraph 16, the Registrar's Office shall complete a "Form 7 - Request for Transfer of Academic Credit" and process the request without further approval.
 - b. Matters entered on the "Registrar's Office Internal Transfer List" are considered as entered on the ONCAT database.
28. Additional supporting documents and other information may be requested by the Program Coordinator or Program Chair to assist in determining whether the application should be granted. These additional documents may include course outlines, syllabuses, copies of textbooks, assignments, tests, and other items deemed necessary to determine the depth or rigor of the courses taken at another institution.
29. The Program Coordinator may meet with the Program Chair to provide additional clarification and advice to the Program Chair if requested by either the Program Coordinator or the Program Chair.
30. The Program Coordinator's recommendation and the Program Chair's decision to grant transfer credit for a vocational course must be based on the determination that:
 - a. enough similarity exists between the previously taken course and the course for which the credit or advanced standing is being claimed, and
 - b. the academic integrity and reputation of the institution that delivered the previously taken course is recognized academically in Ontario or, in the view of the Chair, meets an appropriate standard of scholastic integrity.
31. Once the application for transfer credit (advanced standing) has been approved by the Program Chair, the Chair's office will forward the documentation to the Accountability Office for auditing in accordance with the Protocol on Accountability Audit of Academic Credit attached as Appendix A. A student shall not receive credit for a course unless the transfer has passed an audit of the Accountability Office.

Process where there is uncertainty about granting the application for transfer credit

32. Where the Program Coordinator or Chair is uncertain that the application for transfer credit fully complies with the protocol for granting a transfer credit, the question of the transferability may be referred to the Centre for Academic Excellence and Quality Assurance for a review and a decision on the matter.

33. The Centre for Academic Excellence will review the application and will consult with the Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability or designate prior to making a final decision. The person making this decision will issue a written decision as to the appropriateness of granting the application for transfer of academic credit in which the transfer of credit is granted or not granted together with the reasons for the decision.
34. This decision must be reviewed and approved in writing by the Executive Director, Centre for Academic Excellence or designate before it is effective. Once this decision is approved and signed by the Executive Director, Centre for Academic Excellence or designate it is final and binding on all parties and all departments at the College.
35. Copies of the approved decision will be sent to the Program Coordinator, Program Chair, and Registrar's Office.
36. The Program Chair will then issue the appropriate paperwork to process the transfer credit at the Registrar's Office, if necessary.

Timing of an Application for Transfer of Academic Credit (Advanced Standing)

37. Students must apply for a transfer credit (Advanced Standing) either prior to registering in or before the official "drop date", as set by the Registrar's Office of, the course for which they are claiming to be exempt from taking based on the transfer of credit (advanced standing. A failure to comply with this section will form the basis for a denial of transfer credit.
38. A transfer credit will not be granted for a course in which the student is currently enrolled and is not maintaining a satisfactory grade to pass the course.

Time Limitation on Transfer of Credit

39. For any previously-taken vocational or general education course, regardless of when or where it was taken, on the recommendation of the Program Coordinator and with the confirmation of the Program Chair, an application for transfer of credit (advanced standing) may be denied based on the fact that the particular topic, content or focus of the course has been the subject of significant change to the point that the previous course is simply outdated and insufficient to meet the learning outcomes of the course for which application for exemption has been made.
40. St. Clair College reserves the right to limit the time that a course will be considered current and therefore eligible for transfer credit. This will be determined by the Program Chair, Program Coordinator, or the Centre for Academic Excellence at the time of application for credit.

Basis for the Transfer Credit (Advanced Standing) for General Education Courses Taken at St. Clair College

41. Courses currently classified by St. Clair College as vocational cannot be used as a credit transfer (advanced standing) for a current general education course.
42. Transfer credit (advanced standing) will generally be given for any St. Clair College general education course that was successfully completed previously provided that at the time that it was completed, it was classified by the College as a general education course. St. Clair College courses designated as general education will have a “G” appended to the end of their course code.

Transfer Credit for “General Education” Courses Taken at Institutions Other Than St. Clair College

43. Recognizing that post-secondary educational institutions, both Canadian and International, and, academic institutions authorized to deliver International Baccalaureate (IB) or Advanced Placement (AP) courses do not necessarily utilize the concept of general education as found in the Ontario College system, St. Clair College accordingly recognizes that the decision to grant a transfer credit (advanced standing) for a general education elective course can be problematic and challenging.
44. Granting a general education transfer credit for courses taken at another educational institution is the responsibility of the School Chair for the program in which a transfer credit (advanced standing) is being claimed. In making the decision regarding the transfer of credit, the Chair must seek the advice and assistance of the Centre for Academic Excellence or find the course listed as an appropriate transfer credit in the database referred to in this policy.
45. The course may be claimed as a transfer credit (advanced standing) in place of a St. Clair College general education course, either elective or directed, if the purpose and content of the course for which transfer credit is being claimed for a general education requirement falls within one of the five themes for general education, the learning outcomes generally fall into the affective domain of learning outcomes, and the assessment processes are appropriate to the measurement of the learning outcomes.
46. In the case of courses taken at other Ontario Colleges, if there is a database of general education courses delivered by other Ontario Colleges that have been previously approved transfer credit (advanced standing) for St. Clair College general education courses, the listing on the database determines the transferability of the academic credit (advanced standing) for the courses listed in the database.
47. The database or general education courses delivered at Ontario Colleges may also contain a listing of courses that are not approved for transfer of credit (advanced standing) for St. Clair College courses and the listing of these courses as not

transferable for academic credit (advanced standing) is determinative of the issue and no transfer credit may be granted for any such listed course.

Right to Appeal a Denial of Transfer Credit Application

48. The Registrar's Office will inform the student if the request has been denied at any point during this process. This will be provided in writing and as soon as possible.
49. If a transfer credit is denied, the applicant for transfer credit may appeal the decision to the Vice President, Academic who shall review the evidence provided by the applicant or such additional information as the Vice President, Academic requires. The appeal must be launched in a timely manner and in no case later than 10 College business days after the communication of the Program Chair's decision to the applicant. The decision of the Vice President, Academic is final.
50. The transfer of academic credit (advanced standing) shall not be granted for academic courses in a St. Clair College academic program except in accordance with all the terms of this policy.

Block Transfer of Credits

51. Block transfer of credits may be established for programs from other educational institutions provided the curriculum in those programs has a high degree of consistent or mandatory courses.
52. The scope and rigor of the analysis required to determine the volume of transfer credits within any block transfer will vary depending on the level of similarity between the St. Clair College program and the program for which transfer credit is requested.
53. For any St. Clair College post-secondary academic program, except degrees, the Vice President, Academic may deem an alternate curriculum plan equivalent to the standard curriculum plan for any student in a particular Defined Educational Group provided:
 - a. The alternate curriculum plan requires the student to take at least 25% of the academic program at St. Clair College;
 - b. Any vocational learning outcome gaps between the alternate curriculum plan and the standard curriculum plan are proven to be covered by the previous learning within the credential that defines the Defined Educational Group.
54. Any gaps between the alternate curriculum plan and the standard curriculum plan will be identified through curricular analysis performed by the Program Chair and Program Coordinator of the program and be validated by the Centre for Academic Excellence.

55. Every alternate curriculum plan must be re-evaluated if there is a change either to the curriculum of the credential that defines the Defined Educational Group or to the standard curriculum plan for the St. Clair College academic program.

Accountability Audit of Academic Credit

56. To ensure quality, integrity and consistency, the College shall audit each request for academic credit, that is not previously recognized by ONCAT (Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer) or the Registrar's Office Internal Transfer List, to ensure that the procedures set out in this policy have been used to grant students academic credit.
57. The audit shall be conducted by the Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability, in accordance with the process detailed in the Protocol on Accountability Audit of Academic Credit.
58. A student will not be given credit for a course unless the request has been green flagged by the Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability, following an Accountability Audit.

Appendix A

Protocol on Accountability Audit of Academic Credit

Preamble

This Protocol is made by the President in accordance with Policy 1.6.9 - Transfer Credit for Previous Academic Studies and Policy 1.6.11 - Academic Credit for Previous Work and Life Experience (PLAR), and is intended to set out the process to be used by the Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability (hereinafter referred to as the Accountability Office) for conducting audits of credit transfer and PLAR requests for academic credit.

The term “*Official Transcript*” shall be defined as an official document:

- That is generated by the previous learning institution recording the official grade for the subject course.
- That contains an original signature and the Official Seal of the Office of the Registrar or designate of that institution; A copy of the original document is acceptable provided the Program Coordinator has compared the copy with the original and has certified on the face of the copy that the copy is a true copy of the original transcript.
- That was received directly from the said institution. For the purpose of clarity the college may accept delivery of an Official Transcript directly from the student, provided the recipient is satisfied the document has not been tampered with in any manner.
- That has been translated in accordance with the requirements of this protocol in the case of transcripts written in a language other than English.
- Electronic transcripts may be accepted as official transcripts in the absence of an Official Seal and original signature provided their authenticity is confirmed by the Registrar’s Office prior to granting a transfer credit.

The term “*Course Outline*” shall be defined as any document or collection of documents, generated by the previous institution, that contain sufficient detail to enable a proper comparison to be made with the SCC credited course and should include reference to specific course content, course objectives and/or outcomes, textbook requirements, evaluation methods and frequency. For the purposes of clarity, a brief course description, in the absence of additional information about the course, would not be a considered as a course outline.

Protocol

1. The Executive Director of Program and Degree Accountability or some other person as designated by the College President shall review all templates (including attachments) for any group credit transfer, individual credit transfer or PLAR credit that has been approved by the appropriate Program Chair before the student is given credit for the course. A student will not be given credit for a course unless the request has been green flagged by the Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability following an accountability audit.
2. Subject to paragraph 23, which creates an exception for credit transfers previously entered onto the ONCAT data base or the Registrar’s Office Internal Credit Transfer List, every request for credit will be audited.

3. A credit transfer audit shall examine the following:
 - The proper college template is attached to the request.
 - The proper college template is completed correctly.
 - An Official Transcript is attached, unless the previous course was completed at SCC in which case an Official Transcript is not required.
 - Where an Official Transcript is required and the previous course was completed at a private or foreign institution, a Request for Official Transcript and/or Course Outline Exemption Form is submitted, if for legitimate reasons an Official Transcript cannot be produced.
 - A course outline of the previously completed course is attached, unless the previous course was completed at SCC; or is part of a Transfer Agreement of which SCC is a participant; or has been entered into the ONCAT data base, in which case a course outline is not required.
 - Where a course outline is required and the previous course was completed at a private or foreign institution, a Request for Official Transcript and/or Course Outline Exemption Form is submitted, if for legitimate reasons a course outline cannot be produced.
 - The previously completed course is sufficiently (70%) equivalent in content and outcomes to the SCC credited course and in the case of General Education courses the previous course complies with MTCU General Education requirements.
 - The previously completed course is equivalent in credit weight to the SCC credited course.
 - Where a Request for Official Transcript and/or Course Outline Exemption Form is submitted, that the Form discloses sufficient evidence to make a proper comparison between the previous course and the SCC credited course.
4. A PLAR credit audit shall examine the following:
 - That the template required to process such requests has been completed properly and certified by the faculty member conducting the review and that the requirements of Policy 1.6.11 have been met.
 - That the course learning outcomes of the subject course are consistent with the granting of a PLAR credit and that the method used to determine if the student has sufficiently demonstrated an ability to perform course learning outcomes accurately measures same.
 - That the Program Chair has approved the PLAR review and granting of a PLAR credit following completion of the review.
5. For the purposes of greater clarity, the Request for Official Transcript and/or Course Outline Exemption Form was developed to deal with requests involving courses completed in jurisdictions outside of Ontario or at private institutions. It would be extremely rare that such request would be made for a course completed within an Ontario public institution.
6. Results of the audit shall be completed in writing and attached to the credit request template.
7. In the case of a successful audit, the template shall be forwarded by the Accountability Office to the Registrar's office for processing. The Registrar's Office shall process the credit and drop the

uncompleted subject course that the student is obtaining credit for from the student's schedule when applicable (ie: student is registered for the course during the current semester).

8. If the student is subsequently registered for the credited course in another future semester it is the obligation of the students to ensure that the course is dropped from their schedules.
9. In the case of an unsuccessful audit, the Accountability Office shall return the template to the Registrar's Office for correction (if appropriate). Corrections shall be made electronically. Hand written corrections are not acceptable.
10. Once the template has been corrected it will be forwarded to the Accountability Office for a further audit. In the case of a successful audit, the process outlined in paragraph 7 above shall be followed. In the case a second unsuccessful audit, the process outlined in paragraph 9 shall be followed, however, it is recognized that the opportunity to correct the template may not be afforded if correction would not change the results of a red flagged audit.
11. All credit request documentation, including audit results, shall be stored by the Registrar's Office.
12. At the conclusion of each month, the Executive Director, Program & Degree Accountability, shall ensure that a comprehensive chart of statistical data for the specific month, and year to date, is completed and forwarded to the President, Vice President, Academic, Associate Vice President Academic, Executive Director, Centre for Academic Excellence and all Program Deans and Chairs.
13. The President shall ensure that the statistical data referred to in paragraph 14 above, is forwarded to SOG at least once every calendar year or additionally as required by the President.
14. For statistical results, any template returned to the Registrar's Office for correction shall be considered a red flag even if it is subsequently corrected and resubmitted.

Foreign Documents

15. Any document submitted in a foreign language shall be correctly and fully interpreted into the English language by an interpreter who has certified in writing that:
 - The interpreter is fluent in both the English language and the language that is to be translated;
 - The interpreter is at arm's length to the student;
 - The translation attached to the document is an accurate translation of the document submitted;
16. This written certification shall be signed by the interpreter and shall clearly disclose the interpreter's name and contact information.

17. The certification of the interpreter does not require an official legal notarization but such notarization or any other information may be required by the Chair if in the Chair's opinion such additional information is required to process the request for academic transfer.
18. Any financial costs incurred to obtain a proper translation of foreign documents shall be the responsibility of the student.

ONCAT

19. St. Clair College is a participating member of ONCAT and will comply with Ministry policy and protocol with respect to same.
20. Where the previous course has been completed at another Ontario college or university the auditor shall also determine if the previous course qualifies for entry into the ONCAT data base.
21. In such cases the previous course shall be compared to the SCC course in such detail as to ensure that the ONCAT data base is not compromised.
22. A course shall not be entered into the ONCAT data base unless the credit transfer that forms the basis of the entry has been audited by the Accountability Office and the Accountability Office has certified in writing that the course is approved for entry into the ONCAT data base.
23. Credit transfer requests that have been previously entered onto the ONCAT data base or the Registrar's Office Internal Credit Transfer List shall be processed without an accountability audit.