Policy on Quality Assurance: Academic Program Assessment Prior to Implementation

Preliminary Version
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Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION 5
2. PROGRAM PROPOSAL SUBMISSION 7
   - 2.1 Objective and Outcomes of the Program Assessment Process 7
   - 2.2 Institutions Participating in the Program Assessment Process 7
   - 2.3 Scope 8
     - 2.3.1 Proposals for New Programs 8
     - 2.3.2 Proposals for Modified Programs 8
     - 2.3.3 Proposals for Terminated Programs 9
   - 2.4 Collaborative Programs 9
     - 2.4.1 Articulated Programs 9
     - 2.4.2 Cross-Border and International Programs 11
   - 2.5 Programs with Technology-Mediated or Other Distance Delivery 11
   - 2.6 How Are Program Proposals Submitted? 12
3. THE PROGRAM ASSESSMENT PROCESS 12
   - 3.1 Overview 13
   - 3.2 Distribution of Proposals for Comment 14
   - 3.3 Stages of Assessment 15
     - 3.3.1 Stage I Assessment 15
     - 3.3.2 Stage II Assessment 15
   - 3.4 Timelines 16
   - 3.5 Approval Requirements 17
4. ASSESSMENT STANDARDS 17
   - 4.1 Maritime Degree Level Qualifications Framework 17
   - 4.2 Assessment Criteria 17
   - 4.3 Policy Framework 19
     - 4.3.1 Cooperative Action 20
     - 4.3.2 Health and Health-related Programs 20
     - 4.3.3 Education and Education-related Programs 21
     - 4.3.4 Other Provincial Policies 21

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Maritime Degree Level Qualifications Framework 25

Appendix 2 – Guidelines and Information Requirements
- 2A Guidelines and Information Requirements for New Undergraduate Programs 29
- 2B Guidelines and Information Requirements for New Graduate Programs 37
- 2C Guidelines and Information Requirements for Proposals to Modify Programs 47
- 2D Guidelines and Information Requirements for Proposals to Terminate Programs 53

Appendix 3 – Terms of Reference for the AAU-MPHEC Academic Advisory Committee 55

Appendix 4 – Guidelines and Terms of Reference for (External) Program Assessors
- 4A Guidelines for the Selection of (External) Program Assessors 59
- 4B Terms of Reference for External Consultants 61

Appendix 5 – Guidelines for the Preparation of Faculty Curriculum Vitae 63

1. INTRODUCTION

The Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission Act (2005) lists the following as the principal duties of the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission (MPHEC):

(a) to undertake measures intended to ensure continuous improvement in the quality of academic programs and of teaching at institutions, which without limiting the generality of the foregoing may include the review of institutional programs and practices for assuring such improvement and making recommendations to institutions and the Provinces,

(b) to ensure that data and information is collected, maintained and made available for assuring the public accountability of institutions, and to assist institutions and the Provinces in their work, which without limiting the generality of the foregoing may include:

- *(i) establishing data and system standards,*
- *(ii) establishing public reporting requirements and producing public reports, and*
- *(iii) carrying out studies in regard to public policy, institutional concerns and issues related to post-secondary education, and providing advice to institutions and the Provinces on these matters.*

(c) to take initiatives to stimulate cooperative action among institutions and the Provinces where such action is likely to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the post-secondary education system in the Provinces, which without limiting the generality of the foregoing may include:

- *(i) encouraging initiatives for institutions to offer joint, complementary and regional programs, and*
- *(ii) encouraging administrative, financial and common service arrangements which reduce the overhead cost of programs and the overall cost to students and the Provinces.*

(d) to continue to develop and administer funding transfers among the Provinces for regional programs, which without limiting the generality of the foregoing may include developing and administering funding arrangements for programs outside the region, as required to provide additional educational opportunities for students from the region, and

(e) to undertake such other duties as the Ministers may assign.

The following five duties are referred to as the key functions of the MPHEC: (1) quality assurance, (2) data and information, (3) cooperative action, (4) regional programs, and (5) province-specific services.

To fulfill its mandate for quality assurance (and, to some extent, for data and information, cooperative action and regional programs), the MPHEC carries out an assessment of university-level academic programs prior to implementation. The purpose of this assessment is to ascertain the suitability of the program in light of its objectives, structure, content, resources, and stated student outcomes and their relevance.

This document, *Policy on Quality Assurance: Academic Program Assessment Prior to Implementation,* is a reference tool that is designed to provide universities, their partner institutions, Commission members and staff, and the AAU-MPHEC Academic Advisory Committee, as well as other stakeholders, with detailed information on the MPHEC requirements for the preparation, submission and assessment of program proposals. It provides detail on the assessment process and assessment standards; however, it does not provide a comprehensive description of the internal processes used by the MPHEC in carrying out its role, nor does it attempt to address *every* question or issue that may arise in program assessment. Stakeholders are encouraged to contact the MPHEC to discuss specific questions in advance of a proposal submission.

Through the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Act, the three Ministers responsible for post-secondary education have stated that they expect institutions on the MPHEC schedule to comply with the MPHEC's requirements in the areas of quality assurance. In addition, students enrolled in programs that have not been approved by the MPHEC are not eligible for inclusion in calculations for either the New Brunswick or Nova Scotia Funding Formulae, nor are they eligible for government financial assistance in the province of Nova Scotia.

The document is divided into four sections:

Program Proposal Submission

This section describes what ought to be submitted to the MPHEC for approval and outlines the three main types of program proposals: proposals for new programs, for modified programs and for program terminations. It also includes information on proposals for collaborative programs, including articulated programs, and for those that are offered through technology-mediated and other distance delivery modes, along with information on how to submit program proposals.

The Program Assessment Process

This section provides an overview of the steps in the program assessment process, including information on the MPHEC's assessment stages: Stage I and Stage II. It also includes information on the AAU-MPHEC Academic Advisory Committee, which contributes significantly to the program assessment process.

Assessment Standards

This section describes the Maritime Degree Level Qualifications Framework, an important tool for assessing whether a proposed degree program meets established standards. It also outlines the MPHEC's seven assessment criteria, and provides information on provincial policies that can affect program assessment and approval.

Appendices

This section includes key reference documents for the preparation and submission of program proposals upon which the Commission, its staff and its Academic Advisory Committee rely in carrying out program assessments. It includes the Maritime Degree Level Qualifications Framework; Guidelines and Information Requirements for the Preparation of Proposals; Terms of Reference for the AAU-MPHEC Academic Advisory Committee; Guidelines for the Selection of (External) Program Assessors; Terms of Reference for External Consultants; as well as Guidelines for the Preparation of Faculty Curriculum Vitae.

As a specific service to the Provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, the MPHEC also acts as the quality degree assessor for applications made by privately-funded institutions under each province's Degree Granting Act[1]. In doing so, it provides for a level-playing field in terms of university program assessment[2] in the region

[1] In this capacity, the MPHEC carries out institutional and program assessments and advises the Minister in the respective Province of its assessment of the institution's ability to meet established standards.

[2] The few notable exceptions to this coverage are: degrees conferred by religious institutions not within the MPHEC scope, the applied degree offered by Holland College, and degrees offered in the region by out of region providers. The MPHEC has stated that the scope of its work in the area of quality assurance should include all degrees offered in the region, regardless of the institution type. (For further information on the MPHEC's work under provincial Degree Granting Acts, please refer to the MPHEC website at www.mphec.ca.)

2. PROGRAM PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

This section describes what ought to be submitted to the MPHEC for approval and outlines the three main types of program proposals: proposals for new programs, for modified programs and for program terminations. It also includes information on proposals for collaborative programs, including articulated programs, and those that are offered through technology-mediated and other distance delivery modes, along with information on how to submit program proposals.

2.1 Objective and Outcomes of the Program Assessment Process

The overall objective of the program assessment process is to ascertain the suitability of a program in light of its objectives, structure, content, resources, and stated student outcomes and their relevance, through, as required, an iterative process.

The program assessment process has two main outcomes:

- to provide assurances that programs meet pre-determined standards of quality, and
- to improve, as required, the quality of academic programs.

The program assessment process is most directly linked to the MPHEC's quality assurance function; however, it also feeds into other duties of the MPHEC, including: data and information, cooperative action and province-specific services. For example, information gathered through the program assessment process is integrated with enrolment data within the Postsecondary Student Information System (PSIS)[3] which allows the MPHEC to produce audited enrolment counts for publication and for calculating province-specific funding formulae. These data are also used in the application of the Regional Transfer Arrangement[4] and have been a source of information for the MPHEC assessments of institutions' quality assurance monitoring policies and procedures.

2.2 Institutions Participating in the Program Assessment Process

At the time of writing, the following institutions[5] are subject to the program assessment processes and procedures outlined in this document[6]:

New Brunswick
Mount Allison University
St. Thomas University
Université de Moncton
University of New Brunswick

Prince Edward Island
University of Prince Edward Island

Nova Scotia
Atlantic School of Theology
Acadia University
Cape Breton University
Dalhousie University
Mount Saint Vincent University
Nova Scotia Agricultural College
Nova Scotia College of Art and Design University
Saint Mary's University
St. Francis Xavier University
University of King's College
Université Sainte-Anne

[3] The MPHEC collects information on program and course offerings, student demographics, program and course registration, and credentials granted. The database format used is the Postsecondary Student Information System (PSIS). PSIS is designed to provide longitudinal student records to enable the generation of standardized statistics and to facilitate research on post-secondary issues such as retention, attrition, mobility and graduation rates.

[4] The Regional Transfer Arrangement is a government-to-government arrangement administered by the MPHEC whereby each of the three Maritime Provinces provides funding in respect to any of its university students enrolled in programs in either of the other two provinces that are not offered in the student's home province. The purpose of the Regional Transfer Arrangement is to ensure accessibility of university programs for Maritime residents and to assist the provinces in attaining a more effective utilization and allocation of resources.

[5] The MPHEC uses the official name of the university in the working language of the institution.

[6] Private degree-granting institutions are subject to a similar assessment process under the Degree Granting Acts enacted in the provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Please refer to the MPHEC website for further information.

Should a university listed above propose to offer a program in partnership with an educational institution that is not normally subject to the MPHEC's program assessment processes, it is the university's responsibility to ensure that these programs are submitted to the MPHEC in accordance with this policy and to provide all information pertinent to the program proposal and any follow-ups.

2.3 Scope

Universities are required to submit, prior to implementation, a proposal for any new, modified or terminated university-level program (which includes degrees, diplomas and certificates) that meets **any** of the following criteria:

- leads to an exit credential; or
- is the equivalent of 30 credits (or one full year) or more of study at the undergraduate level (regardless of whether it leads to an exit credential); or
- is a type to be tracked as per MPHEC decision (which may change from time to time).

2.3.1 Proposals for New Programs

A *new program* includes any program that is not already approved by the MPHEC and that meets any of the criteria outlined above.

When submitting a proposal for a new program, universities **are required** to prepare their proposal according to the **Guidelines and Information Requirements** that best correspond to the type of new program being proposed: undergraduate (Appendix 2A) or graduate (Appendix 2B).

Should the introduction of a new program result in the termination of an existing one, a separate proposal for a program termination is not required. In such a case, information on the transition from the existing to the new program, including a phase-out plan for the program being terminated, can be submitted as part of the proposal for the new program.

2.3.2 Proposals for Modified Programs

A program is considered modified, and a proposal ought to be submitted, when the revisions result in a **significant impact on the program** as designed and approved by the MPHEC, including modifications to:

- program requirements (e.g., duration, admission requirements, practicum/work term requirements, residency requirements);
- program structure (e.g., integrated, sequential, interdisciplinary, full-time only, part-time only);
- program curriculum (e.g., breadth/depth of content areas, number of upper-level credits, thesis component);
- program objectives/outcomes (e.g., preparation for graduate-level study, direct-entry to the labour market);
- delivery mode (e.g., available via distance/online learning);
- target clientele (e.g., mature students only; baccalaureate degree holders only);
- program priority (e.g., continuation of a pilot/term program);
- resources (e.g., full cost-recovery, government-funded).

As a rule, modifications that affect approximately 25% or more of the program, either overall or its component parts, are significant modifications that ought to be submitted for approval.
The MPHEC acknowledges, and expects, that minor modifications will be made to programs as they are implemented and evolve; it does not expect that a proposal will be submitted for *every single* modification. As a general rule, when program changes occur over time, it is the MPHEC's expectation that institutions will monitor, as part of their ongoing quality assurance processes, the evolution of individual programs and submit a proposal for a modified program if the accumulation of small changes over time results in a

program that is significantly different from that originally approved by the MPHEC, or where applicable, from the most recent MPHEC-approved modification.

Universities are encouraged to contact the MPHEC to discuss a program modification early in the proposal development process. In some cases, the extent of the modification may suggest that a proposal is not warranted; in other cases, it may suggest that a proposal be submitted in accordance with the Guidelines and Information Requirements for the Preparation of Proposals for *New* Programs, rather than a proposal for a modified program.

When submitting a proposal for a program modification, universities **are required** to prepare their proposal according to the ***Guidelines and Information Requirements for Proposals to Modify Programs*** (Appendix 2C).

The MPHEC reserves the right to determine through its assessment process that a proposed program modification in fact represents the introduction of a new program; in such a case, the university may be asked to submit additional information and/or a revised program proposal.

2.3.3 Proposals for Terminated Programs

A program is considered terminated when the university intends no longer to admit students into the program and to remove the program from its offerings.

The MPHEC advises that a proposal for a program termination should be submitted when a program has become inactive: that is, the institution(s) has (have) not admitted and/or graduated a student in the program for a period of four years (or the normal timeframe through which one cohort could complete the program).

When submitting a proposal to terminate a program, universities **are required** to prepare their proposal using the ***Guidelines and Information Requirements for Proposals to Terminate Programs*** found under Appendix 2D.

Should a program be terminated as a result of the introduction of a new program, a separate proposal for the termination is not required. In such a circumstance, information on the transition from the existing to the new program, including a phase-out plan for the program being terminated, can be submitted as part of the proposal for the new program.

2.4 Collaborative Programs

In the event that a program is being proposed by two or more institutions (whether two or more universities or a university in partnership with another educational institution), the MPHEC expects that measures will be taken to ensure that the division of responsibilities for all relevant aspects of the program will be determined and agreed upon by all parties during the development process. This determination includes the division of responsibilities for management and/or delivery of the program, the means through which program standards will be maintained, and the channels of authority and accountability that will be in place. Evidence of these inter-institutional agreements is to be provided as part of the program proposal submission; specific requirements are outlined under item 10 of the ***Guidelines and Information Requirements for Proposals for New Programs*** (Appendices 2A (undergraduate programs) and 2B (graduate programs)).

2.4.1 Articulated Programs

An articulated program is defined as a substantively new program that articulates components of a university program with components of a program delivered by another educational partner. The partnership results in the implementation of a program that a university *could not offer/confer* were it not for the participation (and the content) of the partner institution, which does not normally grant degrees

(colleges, hospitals, private providers, etc.). The partner institution's component is normally focussed on a specific area of employment/occupational training, while the university component provides related post-secondary education competencies.

The two (or more) institutions partnering to offer an articulated program will often grant different types (levels) of credentials. The institutions will generally be a community college and a university. However, other education providers (publicly or privately funded) could also be involved. An articulated program can have one or more exit points at varying levels:

- When there is only one level and exit point, the program is delivered by two (or more) institutions, but its completion leads to only one credential.
- When there are two (or more) levels and exit points, the program is delivered by two (or more) institutions, and its completion normally leads to more than one recognized credential, generally at different levels. One credential may be earned as a requirement to earn the other, or they may be earned concurrently or independently.

The objectives of articulated programs, from a public policy point of view, are to provide graduates with more timely access to significant jobs and earnings, and to ensure that they have indeed acquired both occupation-specific and general post-secondary education competencies. To ensure the breadth and depth of knowledge in a practical, applied environment, articulated programs are designed to integrate: (1) the application of skills; (2) critical thinking and communication skills; and (3) the ability to transfer and articulate knowledge. In addition, for degree programs, they must adhere to the standards and expectations outlined in the Maritime Degree Level Qualifications Framework (see Appendix 1).

It is important to note that although articulated programs will probably include provisions for credit transfer, they are more than simply a juxtaposition of existing programs; they **must include integration** between the partners' program offerings as evidenced by coherence in the overall program design. As a result, articulated programs **are not simply a transfer of credit** or an agreement between two institutions to recognize a block transfer of credit into an existing, approved program.

There are four key dimensions that distinguish articulated programs from a program consisting only of credit transfer or a block of transfer credits:

Program content

The structure and content of an articulated program should address the following three components:

- *Occupational* content, i.e., course content directly related to the practice of an occupation in the field;
- *Occupationally* related content, i.e., courses usually delivered, especially at the upper-level, by a university (e.g., English, Political Science, History, Psychology, and Management), where the content has been tailored to the clientele of the program (e.g., English or Political Science for journalists or business courses for students in Tourism and Hospitality); and
- *Other academic* content, i.e., courses on other fields that contribute to the education of the student.

Inter-institutional coordinating mechanism

This mechanism bridges the two (or more) partners in the delivery of the articulated program and can be represented by one or more individuals (e.g., a program coordinator or a coordinating committee). This coordinating mechanism is essential in facilitating student transfer from one institution to the other, especially in the early implementation period of the program. This mechanism is responsible for:

- Establishing the roles and responsibilities of the two (or more) partners delivering the program
- Setting and maintaining common standards in relation to program design and admission requirements
- Setting standards for progression through, and graduation from, the program
- Clarifying cost and revenue-sharing
- Evaluating the program
- Advising students and providing other student services

Labour market linkages

Articulated programs should have a close connection with the practical requirements of the labour market. Labour market linkages are established through an advisory industry group or by members of the inter-institutional group, which includes industry partners. These linkages ensure that the need for the program exists and that its relevancy is maintained. This expertise is especially pertinent in cases where a subset of courses within an articulated program must meet accreditation requirements or standards for a license to practice (e.g., health-related programs, trades and technology programs). Labour market linkages also facilitate opportunities for student placements.

Program evaluation

Given the unique dimensions of an articulated program, clearly defined program evaluation policies and procedures are imperative. The policy must clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each partner, including the designated partner (the partner granting the degree for the articulated program), who will be responsible for the overall management of the assessment process. The coordinating unit responsible for the review of an articulated program must be able to mesh each partner's policies and procedures, frequency of reviews, standards, and scope of program review. The policy should include a graduate follow-up process to measure the success of the program in meeting its major objectives (to provide graduates with a more timely access to significant jobs or earnings and to ensure that they have acquired both occupation-specific and general post-secondary education competencies). The evaluation process, as well as program delivery, should be integrated and cooperative.

2.4.2 Cross-Border and International Programs

To maintain and enhance the reputation of higher education in the Maritimes, the MPHEC and its stakeholders are interested in ensuring that the off-campus delivery of programs offered by Maritime institutions is of the same quality as that delivered on campus. As such, **all** programs in which the institution would award the credential granted (solely or as a joint credential), whether the delivery occurs on-site or elsewhere (wholly or in part), are to be submitted to the MPHEC for approval, if the program meets any of the following criteria: (1) leads to an exit credential; (2) is the equivalent of 30 credits (or one full year) or more of study at the undergraduate level (regardless of whether it leads to an exit credential); and/or (3) is a type to be tracked as per MPHEC decision (which may change from time to time).

Where programs do not meet the requirements for entry into the program assessment process, it is the MPHEC's expectation that measures will be taken to ensure that the programs (or components of programs) delivered off-campus are at least of the same quality as those delivered on-campus through, for example, the establishment of and adherence to inter-institutional agreements between the main institution and its partner(s). The MPHEC reserves the right to seek, from time to time, evidence that this type of action has occurred.

2.5 Programs with Technology-Mediated or Other Distance Delivery

In the event that a program includes a significant[7] technology-mediated and/or other distance delivery mode, the MPHEC expects that the submitting institution(s) will have in place policies and practices pertaining to these modes of delivery to ensure that appropriate human, physical and financial resources are available, and that students and staff are aware of the preparation requirements as well as codes of conduct for learners/educators in this context. Evidence of these policies and practices is to be provided as part of the program proposal submission; specific requirements are outlined under the ***Guidelines and Information Requirements for Proposals for New*** (Appendices 2A and 2B) and for ***Modified Programs*** (Appendix 2C).

[7] A significant technology-mediated and/or other distance delivery mode is defined as, for the purposes of program assessment, approximately 25% or more of the program content.

2.6 How Are Program Proposals Submitted?

Program proposals are to be submitted to the MPHEC (under the signature of the President, Vice–President Academic, or equivalent, of the university), once the appropriate governing bodies (normally Senate or equivalent and the Board of Governors) have approved the new, modified, or terminated program proposal. For programs to be offered jointly by two or more institutions, the proposal is to include the signature of the President, Vice-President Academic, or equivalent, of both institutions, or should be submitted by an identified principal (university) applicant, with a letter of support from the partner institution(s) appended.

Proposals **must meet** the information requirements outlined for the type of proposal submitted (see Appendix 2) to be accepted into the program assessment process or **they will be returned** for revision and resubmission. The MPHEC acknowledges that not all of the information requested will be available for each and every proposal. The absence of information, however, must be noted and explained.

The MPHEC appreciates that the information required for program proposal submissions may rely on proprietary information. In such circumstances, the institution(s) should include this information as an appendix to the proposal and identify it as proprietary. In most instances, proprietary information is only used by staff. In some cases, it may be distributed to the AAU-MPHEC Academic Advisory Committee and to the Commission; it may also be circulated to consultants hired by the MPHEC to assess the proposed program. In every case, the information is always identified as confidential when it is distributed. These are the only instances in which proprietary information, as identified by the submitting institution(s), is distributed.

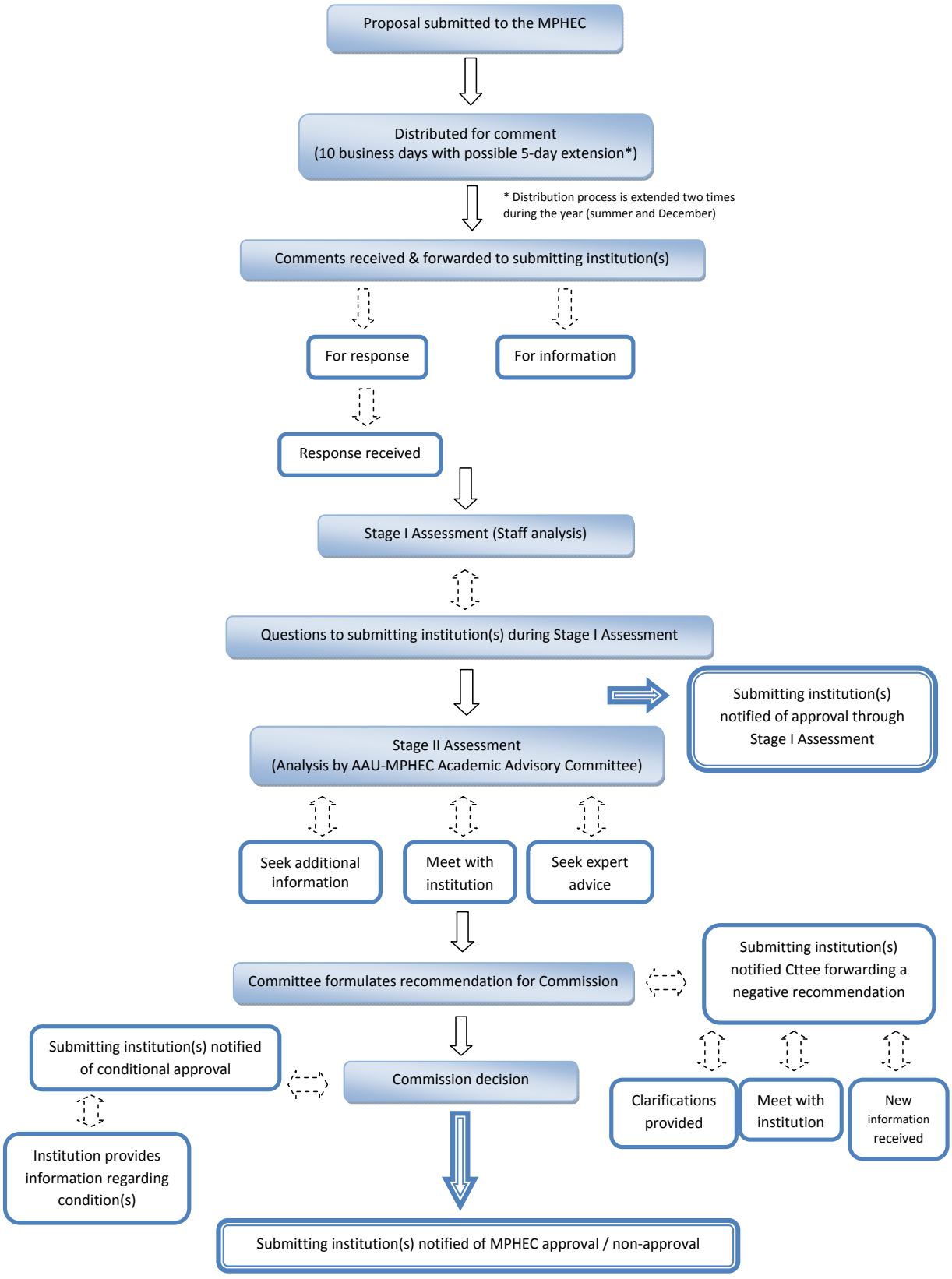
All program proposals **should be submitted** electronically, either via email (proposals@mphec.ca) or via electronic hardware (USB key or other). Normally, appendices are to be included in the electronic submission (scanned PDF files are acceptable); however, in the case of faculty CVs or proprietary information, the submitting institution(s) may elect to submit only a hardcopy of these document(s) to the MPHEC at the following address:

Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission
Attn: Chief Executive Officer
82 Westmorland Street
Suite 401, P.O. Box 6000
Fredericton, New Brunswick
E3B 5H1

3. THE PROGRAM ASSESSMENT PROCESS

This section provides an overview of the steps in the program assessment process, including information on the assessment stages: Stage I and Stage II. It also includes information on the AAU-MPHEC Academic Advisory Committee, which significantly contributes to the program assessment process.

3.1 Schematic Overview of Assessment Process



3.2. Distribution of Proposals for Comment

Upon verification that the proposal generally fulfills the appropriate Information Requirements, program proposals, including all appendices (except for those identified as proprietary and those including CVs), are distributed electronically to universities in the region, members of the AAU-MPHEC Academic Advisory Committee and members of the Commission, which include representatives from each of the provincial governments, for comment.

The distribution process is an essential component of the program assessment process as it provides an opportunity for valuable input from universities in the region. Every (publicly-funded) university and government department responsible for higher education in the Maritimes is provided an opportunity to comment on program proposals through this mechanism, and therefore it also contributes to greater transparency in the assessment of academic programs. This is a feature unique to the Maritimes, which speaks to the collective effort of the region's university stakeholders to improve and maintain the reputation of Maritime academic programs. The process also allows for the assessment and approval of a program proposal to occur through a Stage I Assessment (see section 3.3 below), as the comments and responses received often result in the submission of additional information/clarification which allows MPHEC staff to determine that a program proposal does meet MPHEC assessment criteria.

Universities have **10 business days** from the date of distribution to forward any comments to the MPHEC. A five business-day extension to this timeframe can be granted upon request, provided that the request is received within the ten-day distribution period.

The timeframe in which comments can be provided is extended at two points during the year to ensure that adequate time is provided for comments to be submitted:

- Summer: Proposals received between mid-June and late August are distributed upon receipt; comments on these proposals are to be submitted in early September. The exact dates of the extension period are confirmed in April of each year. Reminders to comment on proposals distributed during this period are sent in early August and again in September.
- Winter: Proposals received in December are distributed upon receipt; comments on these proposals are to be submitted in early January. The exact dates of the extension period are confirmed in October of each year. A reminder to comment on proposals distributed during this period is sent in early January.

Comments must represent an institutional/governmental/organizational point of view, and can be submitted electronically via email (proposals@mphec.ca) or fax (506-453-2106) or by mail to the MPHEC office. In all cases, the comments must be submitted **under the signature of the President, Vice President Academic or equivalent of an institution or, where applicable, under the signature of the governmental or organizational head or designate.**

Comments received through the distribution process are forwarded to the submitting institution(s)[8]. When comments are forwarded **for response**, the submitting institution(s) **must provide** a written response to concerns raised, under the signature of the President, Vice-President Academic or equivalent.

No decision will be made about a program proposal prior to the end of the comment period, which includes receipt of the submitting institution(s) response to comments received.

Occasionally, comments that do not warrant a response, such as a congratulatory note, are received through the distribution process; in this case, the comments are forwarded **for information** (i.e., although

[8] Comments from members of the AAU-MPHEC Academic Advisory Committee and the Commission are normally individual in nature and are received for internal use. The one exception is comments from government members; these are forwarded to the submitting institution.

the university has the option of providing a response, a response is not required for the assessment process to continue).

The Commission aims to make its assessment process as transparent as possible. With that goal in mind, any university that raises significant concerns about a particular program proposal through the distribution process will be informed of the final outcome of the assessment. All decisions on program proposals are also noted in the MPHEC's Annual Report and on its website.

3.3 Stages of Assessment

3.3.1 Stage I Assessment

Every program proposal undergoes a Stage I Assessment, defined as the assessment of the proposal against pre-determined criteria, by MPHEC staff. There are two main outcomes of this review: (1) approval and (2) Stage II Assessment.

MPHEC staff may request additional information from the submitting institution(s) in cases where the required clarifications can reasonably be expected to be obtained within a short timeframe and may potentially lead to approval, or are deemed necessary for a Stage II Assessment to occur. Consultation may also occur between MPHEC staff and the Chair of the AAU-MPHEC Academic Advisory Committee and/or the Chair of the Commission.

Proposals for new, modified and terminated programs that meet the pre-determined assessment criteria, and where no major issue arises during the distribution process and staff assessment, are usually granted approval through a Stage I Assessment. Once a program is approved, it is entered in the appropriate MPHEC databases, and the submitting institution(s) is notified of the approval.

Program proposals approved through a Stage I Assessment are not reviewed by the Academic Advisory Committee, nor by members of the Commission, other than through the initial distribution process mentioned above. The Committee and the Commission are informed of the status of received proposals, including Stage I appovals, through regular reporting during meetings. In addition, all program proposals considered in a given year are included in the MPHEC's Annual Report, and are posted on the MPHEC website.

3.3.2 Stage II Assessment

Program proposals that are not approved through a Stage I Assessment are required to undergo a Stage II Assessment: that is, they are referred to the AAU-MPHEC Academic Advisory Committee.

The Academic Advisory Committee is a joint Committee of the Association of Atlantic Universities (AAU) and the MPHEC. Its role is to advise and assist the Commission in assuring the quality of new and modified academic programs in the region, and, specifically, to assess the academic merit of a program proposal that must undergo a Stage II Assessment[9]. The Committee also advises the Commission on the appropriate evolution of policies pertaining to program assessment as well as issues to be researched as they relate to quality assurance and academic planning.

The Academic Advisory Committee is normally comprised of senior academics (Vice President Academic, Dean of Graduate Studies, etc.) from the region's universities, with two membership positions reserved for students. In total, the Committee has a maximum of eight members with three normally appointed by the AAU and three normally appointed by the Chair of the Commission. The Chair of the Academic Advisory Committee is an MPHEC-appointed member, and is designated by the MPHEC Chair. For a list of current members, visit http://www.mphec.ca/about/AcademicAdvisoryCommittee.aspx.

[9] The Terms of Reference for the AAU-MPHEC Academic Advisory Committee can be found under Appendix 3.

Members adhere to a conflict of interest policy (see Appendix 3) which states that at all times they will act in the best interests of the MPHEC rather than particular interests or constituencies. In the event the Committee Chair is in a conflict, an alternate Chair is assigned for consideration of the proposal in question.

The Academic Advisory Committee reviews the program proposal submitted by the institution, comments received through the distribution process, the submitting institution(s) response to comments received, as well as any relevant information obtained by MPHEC staff during the Stage I Assessment process. To aid in concluding the assessment, the Academic Advisory Committee may also choose to:

- request additional information from the submitting institution(s);
- seek the advice of one or more experts in the field, who will assess the program either as a consultant (requiring a site visit) or as a reader (desk review)[10];
- request a meeting with representatives of the submitting institution(s);
- forward suggestions or recommendations to the submitting institution(s) to resolve identified issues; and/or
- identify an alternative next step in its program assessment process.

The Committee formulates a recommendation on the proposed program, and forwards it to the Commission; the Commission in turn makes the final decision. Once a program is approved, it is entered into the appropriate databases, and the submitting institution(s) is formally notified of the approval.

Should the Committee expect to recommend that the Commission not approve a program proposal, the submitting institution(s) will be notified, and will be given an opportunity to exercise one or more of the following options, prior to the recommendation being forwarded to the Commission:

- to provide clarification on the Committee's understanding of the proposal and/or supporting documentation;
- to provide additional information for the Committee to consider in its assessment; and/or
- to meet with the Committee to discuss the proposed program.

If the Commission decides not to approve a proposal, the **submitting institution(s) is required to wait twelve months from the date of the decision** prior to submitting a proposal for the same or a similar program.

3.4 Timelines

Normally, the timeframe for approval through Stage I Assessment averages six weeks, while the timeframe for approval through Stage II Assessment averages four to six months. This timeline will be affected by institutional response time, both during the distribution process and over the course of the assessment.

At any point in the MPHEC's assessment process, the **submitting institution(s) is free to withdraw** a proposal from consideration. Should this option be exercised, a revised program proposal can be submitted to the MPHEC at the institution's discretion.

An **inactive proposal**, defined as a proposal for which an institution has not responded to any request for information within a twelve-month period, **will be returned.** In this case, should the submitting institution(s) wish to submit a proposal for the same or a similar program, it will be required to wait a further twelve months before doing so.

[10] The Committee's selection is guided by the Guidelines for the Selection of (External) Program Assessors found under Appendix 4A.

The MPHEC's program assessment process operates **independently from externally-set deadlines**, regardless of the source. It is the responsibility of the submitting institution(s) to ensure that all of the MPHEC's information requirements are fully addressed and that the proposal is submitted with enough time to proceed through the assessment process prior to implementation. All efforts are made to ensure as timely a review as possible. Proposals that fully address all assessment criteria/information requirements benefit most often from the timeliness of approval through a Stage I Assessment.

3.5 Approval Requirements

All approvals, whether granted through a Stage I or Stage II Assessment, **are valid for two years from the date of approval** – i.e., changes to a program or a new program are to be implemented within two years of the approval date, or the approval becomes null and void. Should a program or program modification not be implemented within that timeframe, the submitting institution(s) will be required to submit a new proposal should it wish to implement the program.

In some cases, programs will be granted **"approval with conditions",** whereby the Commission outlines further evidence and/or action for the approval to be confirmed. The conditions will be outlined by the MPHEC in a letter of conditional approval, and the institution(s) is normally expected to provide the MPHEC with evidence demonstrating how the condition(s) has been met before a final approval is granted.

All approved programs, whether approved through a Stage I or Stage II Assessment, are expected to undergo an external review after one or two cohorts have graduated, normally by year five of operation, to be undertaken by the submitting institution(s). This review would normally be folded into the university's ongoing monitoring of its program offerings. The MPHEC reserves the right to specify an alternative timeframe for the external review to take place, and/or to suggest particular areas of concern to be included in the review. The MPHEC also reserves the right to seek, from time to time, evidence that an external review has occurred.

4. ASSESSMENT STANDARDS

4.1 Maritime Degree Level Qualifications Framework

The Maritime Degree Level Qualifications Framework (see Appendix 1) was adopted by the MPHEC in April 2006. It is an adaptation of the Canadian Degree Qualifications Framework, which was adopted by the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) in 2007 and released as part of the *Ministerial Statement on Degree Education in Canada*[11]. In November 2004, a very early draft of the pan-Canadian Framework had been distributed to institutions on the MPHEC schedule for comment. Following this review, the AAU-MPHEC Academic Advisory Committee, in consultation with the universities, had drafted a *Maritime* Framework to reflect more accurately degree structures within the region.

The purpose of the Framework is to articulate expectations regarding degree-level programs offered in the Maritimes. It is used as a reference tool to promote a common understanding, language, and knowledge of basic degree patterns and structures within the Maritime university system, and to determine whether a proposed degree program appears to meet recognized standards of quality, shared across the region and beyond.

4.2 Assessment Criteria

Program proposals submitted to the MPHEC are subject to several complementary assessment criteria that range from five to seven depending on the type of program that is proposed. These criteria allow MPHEC staff during a Stage I Assessment, and the Academic Advisory Committee and the Commission

[11] http://www.cmec.ca/Publications/Lists/Publications/Attachments/95/QA-Statement-2007.en.pdf

during a Stage II Assessment, to ascertain the suitability of a proposed program in light of its objectives, structure, content, resources, and stated student outcomes and their relevance.

The following **criteria** are used by the MPHEC to assess a program proposal:

Program content, structure and delivery modes reflect a coherent program design that allows for the program objectives and anticipated student outcomes to be achieved, while providing sufficient depth and breadth to meet the standards of quality associated with the credential

The content of the program, in both subject matter and outcome standards, is consistent with the proposed level and field of specialization, reflects the state of knowledge in the field and, for degrees, meets the expectations for the type of degree as outlined within the Maritime Degree Level Qualifications Framework. The curriculum and structure of the program is clearly documented. The chosen delivery mode(s) is documented, with an explanation of how the delivery mode(s) contributes to the learning environment.

Clearly defined and relevant program objectives and anticipated student and graduate outcomes

The program has clearly defined anticipated student and graduate outcomes that focus on student learning and are relevant. For degrees, the outcomes are consistent with those outlined in the Maritime Degree Level Qualifications Framework, but articulated **specifically** for the proposal at hand; for non-degrees, the outcomes are consistent with generally accepted standards for the program in question, including level and discipline. The program has clearly defined program objectives, which can range from overall objectives for the institution, for the profession, for society, etc.; the program components are clearly linked to the program objectives.

Appropriate fit of name, level and content to ensure "truth in advertising" and to facilitate credential recognition

The proposed program name and the credential granted adequately capture the program content and level of study. If a new program name or credential is introduced, its introduction will facilitate recognition of learning outcomes.

Adequate resources (human, physical and financial) to implement and sustain the program

The submitting institution(s) has in place the human, physical and financial resources to implement and sustain the proposed program, and without undue hardship to existing academic programs. This includes administrative and academic staff, supplies and equipment, office space, library holdings, as well as financial resources and technological expertise and support systems. In the event that not all resources are in place at the time of submission, a realistic plan has been developed for putting these resources in place; this plan must include a roll-out of the program as the resources are obtained.

Program need and viability

Student demand and employability favour the implementation of the proposed program.

An academic environment that supports scholarship such as original research, creativity and the advancement of professional knowledge, as relevant to the program
[Criterion for graduate programs only]

The academic environment in which a proposed graduate program is to be offered supports appropriate activities such as original research, scholarship, creativity and the advancement of professional knowledge as relevant to the program. In the context of program assessment at the graduate level, academic environment is characterized as follows:

- A critical mass of research-active faculty and of graduate students;
- Sufficient breadth and depth of disciplinary expertise among faculty;
- An appropriate support network of related programs (normally undergraduate and, where relevant, graduate);
- Capacity to provide a choice of advanced-level graduate courses;
- Evidence of sufficient library resources (as evidenced by holdings ratio among other measures) and access to scholarly communications for a graduate-level program;
- An appropriate structure (such as an Office of Graduate Studies) to support the program, especially in the case of a doctoral program;

In the case of a research-based (master's or doctoral) degree program, an appropriate academic environment is further characterized by:

- A strong research focus within the unit(s) proposing the program (as evidenced by peer reviewed grants and publications, as well as seminars, research colloquia and other programming);
- Evidence of faculty members' ability to provide long-term supervisory capacity and supervisory committee membership;
- A demonstration that an appropriate level of student financial support is available.

The final version of the program proposal has been assessed (through a site visit) by an expert external to the institution prior to submission to the Commission.

Clearly defined collaborative agreements
[Criterion for programs offered by two or more institutions only, including articulated programs]

The program has clearly defined collaborative agreements, outlining the division of responsibilities for all relevant aspects of the program and its management and/or delivery and the means through which the standards of the program will be maintained, and with clear channels of authority and accountability.

4.3 Policy Framework

While academic quality is the primary driver of the program assessment process, the MPHEC must also take into account a number of policies, provincial and regional, which can impact program development, assessment and implementation. If a policy issue is raised, the MPHEC provides the provincial government(s) an opportunity to comment prior to making a final decision on the program. The Commission's current policy framework includes the following:

4.3.1 Cooperative Action

The Maritime Provinces Higher Education Act (2005) states that in addition to its other principal duties, the Commission is to:

> *…to take initiatives to stimulate cooperative action among institutions and the Provinces where such action is likely to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the post-secondary education system in the Provinces, which without limiting the generality of the foregoing may include:*
>
> *i. encouraging initiatives for institutions to offer joint, complementary and regional programs,*
>
> *ii. encouraging administrative, financial and common service arrangements which reduce the overhead costs of programs and the overall cost to students and the Provinces.*

In keeping with this mandate, the Commission expects that institutions will seek to collaborate with other post-secondary institutions, both university and non-university, in the delivery of programs where such collaboration could be beneficial.

4.3.2 Health and Health-related Programs

Submissions of health and health-related program proposals to the MPHEC **must be accompanied by** a letter from the Atlantic Advisory Committee on Health Human Resources (AACHHR), on behalf of the Atlantic Deputy Ministers responsible for Post-Secondary Education and for Health, indicating their support of the proposed program. The MPHEC's program assessment criteria differ from those utilized by the AACHHR; as a result, AACHHR support does not guarantee MPHEC approval.

Notwithstanding the AACHHR's information requirements, all health and health-related proposals **must be drafted using the MPHEC *Guidelines and Information Requirements*** for new, modified, or terminated programs.

As outlined by the AACHHR, a health or health-related program proposal, for the purposes of program assessment and the required AACHHR support, is one in which one or more of the following attributes apply:

1. The program is aimed at training health practitioners.
2. Provincial governments will become de facto employers of a significant portion of program graduates.
3. The delivery or management of health-related programs may be influenced by the availability of these graduates.
4. The proposed health or health-related education or training program is provided with provincial government support.

The overall goal of the AACHHR is to improve the appropriateness and responsiveness of the health labour force by recommending to the Deputy Ministers how to effectively and efficiently match the human resource requirements of the evolving service delivery system to population health needs. In response to the directive from the Atlantic Deputy Ministers responsible for Post-Secondary Education and for Health, the Committee endeavours to continue to enhance the ongoing joint planning of human resource requirements in the health professions and to promote intra-regional labour mobility and the spirit of Atlantic economic cooperation. As such, **the AACHHR expects to review proposals for health and health-related programs in the early development stages**. Based on its assessment, the AACHHR makes a recommendation about the program to the Atlantic Deputy Ministers responsible for Post-Secondary Education and for Health. Atlantic Deputies in turn consider the recommendation of the AACHHR, and make a final determination on the need for a proposed program. Their determination is forwarded to the Chair of the MPHEC and the institution involved.

For more information about the AACHHR's process, its scope and information requirements, please contact the Secretariat of the Council of Atlantic Premiers, Health Human Resources Sector by mail at 5161 George Street, Suite 1006, P.O. Box 2044, Halifax, NS B3J 2Z1, by telephone at (902) 424-7590 or by e-mailing info@cap-cpma.ca.

4.3.3 Education and Education-related Programs

All education and education-related program proposals are forwarded to the provincial body charged with assessing/awarding teacher certification and upgrading classifications within the province of the submitting institution(s) (or where applicable, the province in which the program is intended to produce graduates) to verify that what is being proposed meets current certification and/or professional development standards as set out by the province.

The MPHEC's program assessment criteria differ from those utilized by the provincial regulating bodies, and therefore approval by one does not guarantee approval by the other.

In the event that questions/concerns are raised through this process, the submitting institution(s) **must** submit a response. Final approval of an education-related program proposal will not be granted until confirmation has been received that the appropriate provincial body has verified that the program as proposed meets certification and/or professional development standards.

4.3.4 Other Provincial Policies

The MPHEC must also take into consideration any provincial policies that affect program delivery/offerings in the region; these policies can change over time. At the time of publication, for example, in Nova Scotia only five institutions are mandated to offer Bachelor of Education programs: Acadia University, Cape Breton University, Mount Saint Vincent University, St. Francis Xavier University and Université Sainte-Anne. As such, University X in Nova Scotia may submit a proposal for an education program that meets all the pre-determined standards of academic quality, however, the MPHEC cannot approve the program on the basis that university X is not allowed to offer the program according to Nova Scotia's provincial policies.

APPENDICES

This section includes key reference documents for the preparation and submission of program proposals and which the Commission, its staff and its Academic Advisory Committee rely upon in carrying out program assessments.

Appendix 1 – Maritime Degree Level Qualifications Framework

Appendix 2 – Guidelines and Information Requirements

- 2A Guidelines and Information Requirements for New Undergraduate Programs
- 2B Guidelines and Information Requirements for New Graduate Programs
- 2C Guidelines and Information Requirements for Proposals to Modify Programs
- 2D Guidelines and Information Requirements for Proposals to Terminate Programs

Appendix 3 – Terms of Reference for the AAU-MPHEC Academic Advisory Committee

Appendix 4 – Guidelines and Terms of Reference for (External) Program Assessors

- 4A Guidelines for the Selection of (External) Program Assessors
- 4B Terms of Reference for External Consultants

Appendix 5 – Guidelines for the Preparation of Faculty Curriculum Vitae

Appendix 1

MARITIME DEGREE LEVEL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

1. UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

1.1 Description of Degree Categories

The following descriptions are intended to capture the most general aspects of each degree level. It is to be understood, however, that each degree and degree level applies to an extremely broad spectrum of disciplines and programme types. Some general and honours/specialization bachelor degrees are in fields that are very practically oriented (e.g., archaeology, chemistry, geology, microbiology, zoology), while some applied programmes are in disciplines that are heavily knowledge and research based (e.g., applied psychology, applied mathematics, applied linguistics, agricultural and applied economics). The applied/non-applied distinction at this level is designed to capture the essential features of the differences between these two types of programmes while respecting the fact that, whether a programme is intended to prepare an individual either for immediate practice/employment in a field of practice or for further study in a discipline, each must meet a substantial and common set of outcomes that have historically been and continue to be critical to and shared by both types of programmes within a degree-level educational environment.

BACCALAUREATE DEGREE: GENERAL	BACCALAUREATE DEGREE: MAJOR/ DOUBLE MAJOR/ADVANCED MAJOR	BACCALAUREATE DEGREE: HONOURS/SPECIALIZATION	BACCALAUREATE DEGREE: PROFESSIONAL AREA OF STUDY	BACCALAUREATE DEGREE: APPLIED AREA OF STUDY
1. Overall Programme Design and Outcome Emphasis				
General Baccalaureate degree programmes are normally designed to require some conceptual sophistication, and specialized knowledge in at least one discipline or field. Such programmes typically require less intensive disciplinary specialization than an honours or specialization programme and less preparation for employment in a field of practice than a programme in an applied area of study.	Baccalaureate degree programmes in this category are normally designed to require more conceptual sophistication, specialized knowledge, and intellectual autonomy than a general degree programme, and a disciplinary knowledge. This is the case in both applied and non-applied areas of study. Students learn by doing, with a focus on deepening their mastery of the knowledge and methods of the discipline in a lesser degree than at the honours/specialization level of study. Such programmes normally do not require the preparation of a terminal research paper, thesis, project exhibition, or other research-based or performance-based exercises that demonstrate methodological competence and capacity for independent intellectual/creative work, but do require a solid discipline based foundational knowledge in which to do so if desired. Note: In some instances in the Maritime University System, the term "advanced major" is also used to denote "honours" within a four-year degree structure, however, in this category it denotes a " major" within a four-year degree structure. i.e. Bachelor of Arts Major/Advanced Major in History.	Baccalaureate degree programmes in this category are normally designed to require more conceptual sophistication, specialized knowledge, and intellectual autonomy than a general degree programme, and a deeper and broader disciplinary knowledge than a baccalaureate degree in an applied area of study. Students will engage in independent and scholarly research aspects of an honours degree, with a focus on deepening their mastery of the knowledge and methods of the discipline. Such programmes normally require students to prepare, under supervision, a terminal research paper, thesis, project, exhibition, or other research-based or performance-based exercises that demonstrate methodological competence and capacity for independent intellectual/creative work.	Baccalaureate degree programmes in this category are normally designed to require a level of conceptual sophistication, specialized knowledge, and intellectual autonomy similar to that in an honours or specialization degree programme but with the disciplinary content oriented to a professional field of practice. Students must complete applied components of the curriculum with a focus on preparing for entry into a professional field of practice. Such programmes incorporate a blend of theory and practice, and normally include a terminal project or other practice-based exercises intended to develop and demonstrate the student's readiness for employment in the professional field of practice. Professions are often practiced within a regulatory framework, and programmes may require accreditation by a regulatory body or professional association.	Baccalaureate degree programmes in this category are normally designed to require a level of conceptual sophistication, specialized knowledge, and intellectual autonomy similar to that in an honours or specialization degree programme but with the disciplinary content oriented to an occupational field of practice. Students must complete applied components of the curriculum with a focus on preparing for entry into a occupational field of practice. Such programmes incorporate a blend of theory and practice, and normally include a terminal project or other practice-based exercises intended to develop and demonstrate the student's readiness for employment in the occupational field of practice.
2. Preparation for Employment and Further Study				
In addition to personal and intellectual growth, the programmes may prepare students for some second-entry professional degree programmes, employment in a variety of fields, or advanced entry into an honours or specialization programme of study in the field. Normally these programmes do not prepare students for direct entry into graduate study.	In addition to personal and intellectual growth, the programmes may prepare students for some second-entry professional degree programmes, employment in a variety of fields, or advanced entry into an honours or specialization programme of study in a field or discipline, or qualifying year to graduate study. Normally these programmes do not prepare students for direct entry into graduate study, however could lead to: 1) a qualifying year of study to graduate study; 2) as a entry to honours certificate for upgrading one's current baccalaureate level of study; and 3) direct entry into post-baccalaureate Professional undergraduate degrees such as a Post-Baccalaureate two-year Bachelor of Education, LLB, M.D. D.V.M., etc.	In addition to personal and intellectual growth, honours and specialization programmes are primarily designed to prepare students for entry into graduate study in the field, second-entry professional degree programmes, or employment in a variety of fields.	In addition to personal and intellectual growth, the programmes are primarily designed to prepare students for employment in the field of practice, second-entry professional degree programmes, or, depending on the content of the programme and the field, entry into either graduate study or bridging studies for an appropriate graduate programme.	In addition to personal and intellectual growth, the programmes are primarily designed to prepare students for employment in the field of practice, second-entry professional degree programmes, or, depending on the content of the programme and the field, entry into either graduate study or bridging studies for an appropriate graduate programme.
3. Length of Programme				
They are typically six to eight semesters in duration (normally 90 to 120 credits, or the equivalent).	They are typically six to eight semesters in duration (normally 90 to 120 credits, or the equivalent with at least 6 - 8 courses (four of which are beyond the second year of study) designated in a subject area/discipline in the case of a Major within a three-year degree programme or 8 - 10 courses (six of which are beyond the second year of study) designated in a subject area/discipline in the case of a major and/or advanced major in a four-year degree programme.	They are typically eight semesters in duration (normally 120 credits, or the equivalent).	Classroom instruction is typically eight semesters or more in duration (normally 120 credits, or the equivalent, and may be supplemented by required professional experience (e.g., supervised practica or internships). This includes second level bachelor's programmes such as post-baccalaureate B.Ed. Programmes, and first professional degrees (such as LLB, etc.); normally 30-90 credits.	Classroom instruction is typically eight semesters in duration (normally 120 credits, or the equivalent) and may be supplemented by required workplace experience (e.g., two to four supervised co-operative work terms).

MARITIME DEGREE LEVEL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

1. UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

1.2 Degree Level Standards

The focus of these degree level standards is on the expectations of graduates of each credential. The standards stipulate the demonstrable transferable learning skills and level of mastery of a body of specialized knowledge in eight dimensions. The shades of distinction between degrees are determined by the capacity of the graduate at each level to act competently, creatively and independently, and by their proximity to the forefront of a discipline and/or profession. Among other things, the degree level standards: (a) guide applicant decisions on the degree standard for their proposals; (b) provide clear learning outcome standards to instructional and programme designers; (c) mitigate any inconsistencies in peer judgement; and, (d) foster an environment propitious for credit transfer and credential recognition.

BACCALAUREATE DEGREE: GENERAL	BACCALAUREATE DEGREE: MAJOR/DOUBLE MAJOR/ADVANCED MAJOR	**BACCALAUREATE DEGREE:** HONOURS/SPECIALIZATION	**BACCALAUREATE DEGREE: PROFESSIONAL AREA OF STUDY**	**BACCALAUREATE DEGREE: APPLIED AREA OF STUDY**
This degree is awarded to students who have demonstrated:	*This degree is awarded to students who have demonstrated:*	*This degree is awarded to students who have demonstrated:*	*This degree is awarded to students who have demonstrated:*	*This degree is awarded to students who have demonstrated:*
1. Depth and Breadth of Knowledge in the Field				
a. A general knowledge and understanding of: • the principal assumptions, methodologies and applications of the discipline; • the main fields within the discipline; and • the discipline's relationship with other disciplines; b. An ability to evaluate and interpret new material relevant to the discipline's well-established framework of knowledge; and c. Some detailed knowledge in specialized areas;	a. A specialized knowledge and a foundational level of critical understanding of: • the principal assumptions, methodologies and applications of the discipline and the field of practice and of the way in which these have developed • the main fields within the discipline; and • the discipline's relationship and interaction with other disciplines; primarily but not only as these relate to a limited mastery of the discipline, at least some of which is informed by developments made and or established in the discipline; and b. An ability to interpret, critically evaluate, and apply, existing material relevant to the discipline.	a. A specialized knowledge and critical understanding of: • the principal assumptions, methodologies and applications of the discipline and the field of practice and of the way in which these have developed; • the main fields within the discipline; and • the discipline's relationship and interaction with other disciplines;à primarily but not only as these relate to mastery of the discipline, at least some of which is informed by developments at the forefront of the discipline; and b. An ability to interpret, critically evaluate, and apply, new material relevant to the discipline.	a. A specialized knowledge and critical understanding of: • the principal assumptions, methodologies and applications of the discipline and the field of practice and of the way in which these have developed; • the main fields within the discipline; and • the discipline's relationship and interaction with other disciplines; primarily but not only as these relate to mastery of the field of professional practice, at least some of which is informed by developments in or needs of the field of practice and/or trends in the discipline; and b. An ability to interpret and to critically evaluate and apply new material relevant to the field of professional practice.	a. A specialized knowledge and critical understanding of: • the principal assumptions, methodologies and applications of the discipline and the field of practice and of the way in which these have developed; • the main fields within the discipline; and • the discipline's relationship and interaction with other disciplines; primarily but not only as these relate to mastery of the field of occupational practice, at least some of which is informed by developments in or needs of the field of practice and/or trends in the discipline; and b. An ability to interpret and to critically evaluate and apply new material relevant to the field of occupational practice.
2. Depth and Breadth of Knowledge Outside the Field				
a. A more than introductory knowledge of the distinctive assumptions and modes of analysis of a discipline outside their main field of study and of the society and culture in which they live and work.	a. A more than introductory knowledge of the distinctive assumptions and modes of analysis of a discipline outside their main filed of study and of the society and culture in which they live and work.	a. A more than introductory knowledge of the distinctive assumptions and modes of analysis of a discipline outside their main field of study and of the society and culture in which they live and work.	a. A more than introductory knowledge of the distinctive assumptions and modes of analysis of a discipline outside their main field of study and of the society and culture in which they live and work.	a. A more than introductory knowledge of the distinctive assumptions and modes of analysis of a discipline outside their main field of study and of the society and culture in which they live and work.
3. Conceptual and Methodological Awareness				
a. A knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in their subject(s) that enables the student to: • evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems using well-established ideas and techniques in the field of study, and • devise and sustain arguments and/or to solve problems using these methods.	a. A conceptual understanding that enables the student to: • evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems using well-established ideas and techniques in the field of study; • devise and sustain arguments using established ideas and techniques, and • describe and comment upon particular aspects of current research in the discipline.	a. A conceptual understanding that enables the student to: • devise and sustain arguments, and/or to solve problems, using ideas and techniques, some of which are at the forefront of a discipline; and • describe and comment upon particular aspects of current research or equivalent advanced scholarship in the discipline and how these are relevant to the evolution of the discipline.	a. A conceptual understanding that enables the student to: • devise and sustain arguments, and/or to solve practice-related problems, using ideas and techniques, some of which are at the forefront of a discipline or field of practice; and • describe and comment upon particular aspects of current research or equivalent advanced scholarship in the discipline and/or profession and how these are relevant to the field of professional practice.	a. A conceptual understanding that enables the student to: • devise and sustain arguments, and/or to solve practice-related problems, using ideas and techniques, some of which are at the forefront of a discipline or field of practice; and • describe and comment upon particular aspects of current research or equivalent advanced scholarship in the discipline and/or profession and how these are relevant to the field of occupational practice.
4. **Level of Analytical Skill**				
a. The ability to review, present, and interpret quantitative and qualitative data (as appropriate to the area of study): • develop lines of argument; and • to make sound judgements in accordance with the major theories, concepts and methods of the subject(s) of study.	a. The ability to review, present, and to conduct a limited evaluation of qualitative and quantitative data (as appropriate to the area of study) to: • develop lines of argument; • make sound judgements in accordance with the major theories, concepts and methods of the subject of study; and • apply underlying concepts, principles, and techniques of analysis, mostly within the context in which they were first studied and implemented.	a. The ability to review, present, and critically evaluate qualitative and quantitative data (as appropriate to the area of study) to: • develop lines of argument; • make sound judgements in accordance with the major theories, concepts and methods of the subject of study; and • apply underlying concepts, principles, and techniques of analysis, both within and outside the context in which they were first studied and implemented.	a. The ability to review, present, and critically evaluate qualitative and quantitative data (as appropriate to the area of study) to: • develop lines of argument; • make sound judgements in accordance with the major theories, concepts and methods of the subject of study; and • apply underlying concepts, principles, and techniques of analysis, both within and outside the context in which they were first studied and practiced, particularly within a professional field of practice.	a. The ability to review, present, and critically evaluate qualitative and quantitative data (as appropriate to the area of study) to: to: • develop lines of argument; • make sound judgements in accordance with the major theories, concepts and methods of the subject of study; and • apply underlying concepts, principles, and techniques of analysis, both within and outside the context in which they were first studied and practiced, particularly within an occupational field of practice.
5. Level of Application of Knowledge				
a. The ability to use a basic range of established techniques to analyse information evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems related to their area(s) of study and/or work and propose solutions to problems arising from that analysis; b. The ability to make limited use of scholarly reviews and primary sources (e.g., refereed research articles and/or original materials) appropriate to their discipline; c. The ability to develop an appreciation for ethical considerations; and d. The ability to develop a capacity and life-long desire for learning.	a. The ability to use a range of established techniques and bodies of knowledge to initiate and undertake a critical analysis of arguments, assumptions, abstract concepts and data; b. The ability to apply the methods and techniques of the discipline to extend their disciplinary understanding and knowledge; c. The ability to form questions to achieve a solution - or to identify a range of solutions - to a problem or clearly defined research project; d. The ability to carry out clearly defined discipline related projects; e. The ability to make critical use of scholarly reviews appropriate to their discipline; f. The ability to develop an appreciation for ethical considerations; and g. The ability to develop a capacity and life-long desire for learning.	a. The ability to use a range of established techniques and bodies of knowledge to initiate and undertake critical analysis of arguments, assumptions, abstract concepts and data; b. The ability to apply the methods and techniques of the discipline to extend their disciplinary competence; c. The ability to frame appropriate questions to achieve a solution – or to identify a range of solutions – to a problem or research question; d. The ability to initiate and carry out discipline related projects; e. The ability to make critical use of scholarly reviews and primary sources (e.g., refereed research articles and/or original materials) appropriate to their discipline; f. The ability to develop appreciation for ethical consideration; and g. The ability to develop a capacity and life-long desire for learning.	a. The ability to use a range of established techniques and bodies of knowledge to initiate and undertake critical analysis of arguments, assumptions, abstract concepts and data; b. The ability to apply the methods and techniques of the discipline and practice-related experience to extend their professional competence; c. The ability to frame appropriate questions to achieve a solution – or to identify a range of solutions – to a problem in a professional context; d. The ability to initiate and carry out professional projects; e. The ability to make critical use of scholarly and professional reviews and primary sources (e.g., refereed research articles and/or original materials) appropriate to their discipline and field of practice; f. The ability to develop an appreciation for ethical considerations; and g. The ability to develop a capacity and life-long desire for learning.	a. The ability to use a range of established techniques and bodies of knowledge (to initiate and undertake critical analysis of arguments, assumptions, abstract concepts and data; b. The ability to apply the methods and techniques of the discipline and practice-related experience to extend their occupational competence; c. The ability to frame appropriate questions to achieve a solution – or to identify a range of solutions – to a problem in an occupational context; d. The ability to initiate and carry out occupational projects; e. The ability to make critical use of scholarly and professional reviews and primary sources (e.g., refereed research articles and/or original materials) appropriate to their discipline and field of practice; f. The ability to develop an appreciation for ethical considerations; and g. The ability to develop a capacity and life-long desire for learning.
6. Professional Capacity/Autonomy				
a. Qualities and transferable skills necessary to: • employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making in defined areas of accountability; and • acting effectively with peers and under guidance of qualified practitioners. b. The ability to identify and address their own learning needs in changing circumstances, and to select an appropriate programme of further study.	a. Qualities and transferable skills necessary for: • employment requiring the exercise of initiative, responsibility and accountability in a personal context in defined areas of accountability; • acting effectively with peers and under guidance of qualified practitioners; • some appreciation of leadership and management skills required directly related to employed position; and • decision-making in straightforward and somewhat unpredictable contexts. b. The ability to manage their own learning in changing circumstances, both within and outside the discipline, and to select an appropriate programmeme for further study or for profession development.	a. Qualities and transferable skills necessary for: • employment requiring the exercise of initiative, responsibility and accountability in both personal and group contexts; • developing leadership and management skills; and • decision-making in complex and unpredictable contexts; b. The ability to manage their own learning in changing circumstances, both within and outside the discipline, and to select an appropriate programme of further study.	a. Qualities and transferable skills necessary for: • employment requiring the exercise of initiative, responsibility and accountability in both personal and group contexts; • developing leadership and management skills; and • decision-making in complex and unpredictable contexts. b. The ability to manage their own learning in changing circumstances, both within and outside the discipline and profession, and to select an appropriate programme of further study.	a. Qualities and transferable skills necessary for: • employment requiring the exercise of initiative, responsibility and accountability in both personal and group contexts; • developing leadership and management skills; and • decision-making in complex and unpredictable contexts. b. The ability to manage their own learning in changing circumstances, both within and outside the discipline and occupation, and to select an appropriate programme of further study.
7. Level of Communication Skills				
a. The ability to communicate the results of their study/work accurately and reliably, orally and in writing, to non-specialist audiences using structured and coherent arguments.	a. The ability to communicate information, arguments, and analysis accurately and reliably, orally and in writing, to specialist and non-specialist audiences, using structured and coherent arguments.	a. The ability to communicate information, arguments, and analyses accurately and reliably, orally and in writing, to specialist and non-specialist audiences, using structured and coherent arguments, and where appropriate informed by key concepts and techniques of the discipline.	a. The ability to communicate information, arguments, and analyses accurately and reliably, orally and in writing, to employers, team members, clients, consumers, and others, using structured and coherent arguments, and where appropriate informed by key concepts and techniques of the discipline and/or field of practice.	a. The ability to communicate information, arguments, and analyses accurately and reliably, orally and in writing, to employers, team members, clients, consumers, and others, using structured and coherent arguments, and where appropriate informed by key concepts and techniques of the discipline and/or field of practice.
8. Awareness of Limits of Knowledge				
a. An understanding of the limits to their own knowledge and how this might influence their analyses and interpretations.	a. An understanding of the limits to their own knowledge and ability, and an appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits to knowledge and how this might influence analyses and interpretations.	a. An understanding of the limits to their own knowledge and ability, and an appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits to knowledge and how this might influence analyses and interpretations.	a. An understanding of the limits to their own knowledge and ability, and an appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits to knowledge and how this might influence analyses and interpretations.	a. An understanding of the limits to their own knowledge and ability, and an appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits to knowledge and how this might influence analyses and interpretations.

MARITIME DEGREE LEVEL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

2. GRADUATE PROGRAMMES

2.1 Description of Degree Categories

These descriptions are intended to capture the most general aspects of each level. It is to be understood, however, that each degree and degree level applies to an extremely broad spectrum of disciplines and program types.

	MASTER'S DEGREE		DOCTORAL DEGREE	
1. Overall Programme Design and Outcome Emphasis	**Professional**	**Research**	**Professional**	**Research**
	A professional master's degree programme builds on knowledge and competencies acquired during undergraduate study, and requires more specialized knowledge and intellectual autonomy than a bachelor's degree programme. Much of the study undertaken at the master's level will have been at, or informed by, the forefront of an academic or professional discipline. Students will have shown originality in the application of knowledge, and they will understand how the boundaries of knowledge are advanced through research. They will be able to deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, and they will show originality in tackling and solving problems. Students will understand how professional practice is informed by research, and will have developed the skills necessary to keep apprized of the research literature, to evaluate the reliability of research findings and their relevance for professional practice, and to use research findings as a basis for professional practice. Profession-oriented master's programmes normally draw on students holding bachelor's degrees or first professional degrees from varied academic backgrounds and provide them with a selection of courses and exercises intended to prepare them for a particular profession or field of practice or, if they are already involved in the profession or field, to extend their knowledge base and skills as professionals/practitioners. Examples: MSW (Social Work), MHA (Health Administration), MPA (Public Administration), MHRM (Human Resource Management), M. Eng. (Engineering)	A master's degree programme builds on knowledge and competencies acquired during related undergraduate study, and requires more specialized knowledge and intellectual autonomy than a bachelor's degree programme. Much of the study undertaken at the master's level will have been at, or informed by, the forefront of an academic or professional discipline. Students will have shown originality in the application of knowledge, and they will understand how the boundaries of knowledge are advanced through research. They will be able to deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, and they will show originality in tackling and solving problems. Research-oriented master's programmes are typically offered to graduates of related undergraduate or professional programmes in the field or to students who have taken bridging studies to equip them for graduate study in the field; the focus is on developing the research, analytical, methodological, interpretive and expository skills necessary for doctoral studies or for leadership in society. Typically, programmes are thesis-based and require the student to develop and demonstrate advanced research skills under supervision. Some programmes are course-based and require students to demonstrate the necessary research, analytical, interpretative, methodological and expository skills in course exercises. Examples: M.A. programmes in the humanities and social sciences; M.Sc. programmes, MASc. (Engineering)	A doctoral programme builds on the knowledge and competencies in a field or discipline acquired during prior study, usually at the graduate level. Study at the doctoral level is at the forefront of an academic or professional discipline. Holders of the doctoral degree must have demonstrated a high degree of intellectual autonomy, an ability to conceptualize, design and implement projects for the generation of significant new knowledge and/or understanding, and their ability to create and interpret knowledge that extends the forefront of a discipline, usually through original research or creative activity. Practice-oriented doctoral programmes are of a more applied nature, relate to a professional or creative activity and, where there is an internship or exhibition requirement, may also require a dissertation. Doctoral programmes with an orientation to practice typically involve more course work than doctoral programmes with a more theoretical or disciplinary focus. Such programmes lead to the award of a degree designation reflecting the field or discipline. Examples: Ed.D. (Education), Mus. Doc. (Music), Psy.D. (Psychology)	A doctoral programme builds on the knowledge and competencies in a field or discipline acquired during prior study, usually at the graduate level. Study at the doctoral level is at the forefront of an academic or professional discipline. Holders of the doctoral degree must have demonstrated a high degree of intellectual autonomy, an ability to conceptualize, design and implement projects for the generation of significant new knowledge and/or understanding, and their ability to create and interpret knowledge that extends the forefront of a discipline, usually through original research or creative activity. Research-oriented doctoral programmes focus on the development of the conceptual and methodological knowledge and skills required to do original research and to make an original contribution to knowledge in the form of a dissertation. In some fields an internship or exhibition component may be required, but without diluting the significance of the dissertation as the primary demonstration of mastery. Such programmes lead to the award of the Ph.D. Examples: Ph.D. (Psychology), Ph.D. (Education), Ph.D. (Music)
2. Preparation for Employment and Further Study	Graduates will have the qualities needed for employment in circumstances requiring sound judgment, personal responsibility and initiative, in complex and unpredictable professional environments. In the case of research-based programmes, graduates will have received the skills necessary to proceed with further graduate level study (i.e.: doctoral studies).		Holders of doctorates will have the qualities needed for employment requiring the ability to make informed judgements on complex issues in specialist fields, and innovation in tackling and solving problems.	
3. Length of Programme	A master's programme is typically three to five semesters in duration.		A doctoral programme is typically three to five years in length, depending on the field and the speed at which individuals progress through requirements. It may involve course work of varying lengths aimed at cultivating further conceptual depth or breadth.	

MARITIME DEGREE LEVEL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

2. GRADUATE PROGRAMMES

2.2 Degree Level Standards

The focus of these degree standards is on the expectations of graduates of each credential. The standards stipulate the demonstrable transferable learning skills and level of mastery of a body of specialized knowledge in eight dimensions. The shades of distinction between degrees are determined by the capacity of the graduate at each level to act competently, creatively and independently, and by their proximity to the forefront of a discipline and/or profession. Among other things, the degree level standards: (a) guide applicant decisions on the degree standard for their proposals; (b) provide clear learning outcome standards to instructional and program designers; (c) mitigate any inconsistencies in peer judgement; and (d) foster an environment propitious for credit transfer and credential recognition.

MASTER'S DEGREE	DOCTORAL DEGREE
This degree extends the skills associated with the Bachelor's degree and is awarded to students who have demonstrated:	*This degree extends the skills associated with the Master's degree and is awarded to students who have demonstrate:*
1. Depth and Breadth of Knowledge in the Field	
a. A systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study, or area of professional practice.	a. A thorough understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of their academic discipline or area of professional practice.
2. Depth and Breadth of Knowledge Outside the Field	
a. A sufficient breadth and depth of knowledge outside the field and/or discipline, as appropriate, for research projects or solutions to professional problems.	a. A sufficient breadth and depth of knowledge outside the field and/or discipline, as appropriate, for research projects or solutions to professional problems.
3. Conceptual and Methodological Awareness	
a. Originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and inquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline; b. Competence in a range of standard and specialized research or equivalent tools and techniques of enquiry; and c. A conceptual understanding that enables: • a critical evaluation of current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline; and • a critical evaluation of methodologies and, where appropriate, proposal of new hypotheses and/or interpretations.	a. The ability to conceptualize, design, and implement projects for the generation of new knowledge, applications, or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems; b. A significant range of skills, techniques, tools, practices and/or materials which are associated with the field of learning; c. The ability to develop new skills, techniques, tools, practices, and/or materials; and d. A detailed conceptual and practical understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic inquiry.
4. Level of Analytical Skill	
a. A comprehensive understanding and creative application of concepts, principles and techniques in their own research, advanced scholarship or field of practice; and b. The ability to deal with complex issues and make judgements based on established principles and techniques.	a. The ability to make informed judgements on complex issues in specialist fields, often in the absence of complete data and sometimes requiring new methods or hypotheses; and b. The ability to create and interpret new knowledge, through original research, or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of the discipline, and to merit publication.
5. Level of Application of Knowledge	
a. Self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems; and b. The ability to act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level.	a. The capacity to: • undertake pure and/or applied research and development at an advanced level; and • contribute to the development of academic or professional skills, techniques, tools, practices, ideas, approaches, and/or materials.
6. Professional Capacity/Autonomy	
a. The ability to self-evaluate and take responsibility to continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level; and b. The qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility and accountability, decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations, and the independent learning required for continuing professional development.	a. The independence to remain academically and professionally engaged and current, including the ability to evaluate the broader implications of applying knowledge to particular contexts; and b. The qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex and unpredictable situations, in professional or equivalent environments.
7. Level of Communication Skills	
a. The ability to communicate issues and conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences.	a. The ability to communicate complex and/or ambiguous ideas and conclusions clearly and effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences.
8. Awareness of Limits of Knowledge	
a. An appreciation of the complexity of knowledge and understanding and of the potential contributions made by diverse interpretations, methods, and disciplines.	a. A full appreciation of the complexity of knowledge and understanding and of the potential contributions made by diverse interpretations, methods, and disciplines.

Appendix 2A
Guidelines and Information Requirements for Proposals for New Undergraduate Programs

GUIDELINES

The purpose of these Guidelines and Information Requirements is to outline the information required to allow an external reader to assess that a proposed undergraduate program meets the following assessment criteria:

- Program content, structure and delivery modes reflect a coherent program design that allows for the program objectives and anticipated student outcomes to be achieved, while providing sufficient depth and breadth to meet the standards of quality associated with the credential
- Clearly defined and relevant program objectives and anticipated student and graduate outcomes
- Appropriate fit of name, level and content to ensure "truth in advertising" and to facilitate credential recognition
- Adequate resources (human, physical and financial) to implement and sustain the program
- Program need and viability
- Clearly defined collaborative agreements *[Criterion for programs offered by two or more institutions only, including articulated programs]*

For articulated programs it is important to demonstrate that the proposed program is more than simply a juxtaposition or addition of two programs. The proposed program must show that the program will **integrate** the component parts, providing students with a cohesive program of study and a smooth transition between the two (or more) partner institutions (see the Policy for further details).

For further information on the Commission's program assessment process, including detail on the above-noted criteria, please refer to the full policy document, *Policy on Quality Assurance: Academic Program Assessment Prior to Implementation*. Institutions are also encouraged to contact MPHEC staff should they have questions regarding their program proposal.

The MPHEC acknowledges that institutions may not be able to meet every information requirement. The absence of information must, however, be noted and explained.

INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Program Identification

1.1 Submitting institution(s)

1.2 Faculty (-ies)

1.3 School(s)

1.4 Department(s)

1.5 Program name

1.6 Program type (e.g., bachelor's degree, post-baccalaureate certificate)

1.7 Credential(s) granted

1.8 Proposed starting date

1.9 Dates of Senate (or equivalent) and Board approval of the proposed program

2. Program Description

2.1 Description of the overall program structure including a term-by-term roll-out of the program, its range of options and its various components (e.g., work placement, thesis major project); program duration should be stated as well as justified.

2.1.1 In the case of an articulated or other collaborative program, identify the institution at which the student is enrolled during each term; when students will be straddling more than one institution at one point in the program, or throughout, outline how students should be considered for enrolment count purposes. If two or more credentials can be earned through program completion, identify the exit point(s) for each credential.

2.2 List of courses to be included in the program, using the following summary table.

Course no.	Name	# of credits	Existent or New?	Required or Elective?	Prerequisite(s)
e.g., COMM 105	Introduction to Public Speaking	3	Exist.	Required	None
e.g., ANTH 260	Quantitative Research Methods	6	New	Required	Anth/Soc 110

2.3 A brief description (e.g., calendar entry) of **each course** is to be appended to the proposal and should include an indication of the types of learning activities (e.g. laboratories, group projects, seminar discussions, independent reading, student-led presentations/exhibits) and the assessment tools to be used within the course.

2.4 A description of the various program requirements, including:

2.4.1 The maximum number of introductory-level (1000-level or equivalent) courses that can be completed as part of the program.

2.4.2 The minimum number of upper-level (3000/4000-level or equivalent) courses that must be completed during the course of the program.

2.4.3 Whether the program includes a work placement, and, if applicable, whether the work placement is compulsory or optional; a description of the expectations for the work placement is to be included (i.e., what will students be doing?).

2.4.4 Whether a thesis, research paper, project, exhibit, etc. is required, and, if applicable, a description of the requirements for this component.

2.4.5 How practical, hands-on training is integrated into the program, particularly in the case of an applied or an articulated program.

2.4.6 Language requirements, if any.

2.4.7 Promotion/qualification standards (e.g., completion of a clinical practice or practicum component by the end of second year, minimum average in specific courses/the overall program).

2.4.8 Any additional program requirements

2.5 Comparison of the proposed program with other comparable programs offered elsewhere in the Maritimes, Canada or the United States.

2.6 In the case of **an articulated** program, a description of how the university and partner institution's program components are **integrated**, thereby creating a coherent program of study (i.e., integration of: course content that is directly related to the practice of an occupation in the field; courses usually delivered, especially at the upper-level, by a university where the content has been tailored to the

clientele of the program (e.g., Political Science for journalists); courses in other fields that contribute to the education of the student).

2.7 A description of how the program ensures the balance of breadth and depth appropriate to the level and field of study.

2.8 A description of the program name, including:

2.8.1 A rationale for the choice of program name and credential(s) to be granted, including comment on the process of selecting the name and credential(s).

2.8.2 A description of how the proposed program name and credential(s) compare to those of similar or equivalent programs within and/or outside the region.

2.8.3 Where applicable, justification for the introduction of a credential that is not granted by any other university within or outside the region

2.9 Admission requirements and standards, including, where applicable, a description of the various admission routes (e.g., prior learning assessment, credit transfer arrangements) and an indication of whether the province of residence would constitute a criterion for admission or exclusion.

2.10 A description of the delivery mode(s) to be used (e.g., traditional classroom, technology-mediated, other distance education methods [please specify], experiential learning, and labs) and in what proportion. The proposal must also:

2.10.1 Provide a rationale for the choice of delivery mode(s).

2.10.2 Provide a description of how the delivery mode(s) will contribute to and enhance learning and create a community, both among students and between students and faculty.

2.10.3 In the case of technology-mediated and/or other distance delivery modes, describe policies pertaining to: student and instructor interaction and feedback, including expectations in terms of timeliness, types of interactions; assuring the authentication of student identity and the integrity of student work, particularly for programs to be delivered entirely via distance.

3. Program Objectives, Student Outcomes and Their Relevance

3.1 A description of program objectives, including an explanation of how the course and curriculum requirements will be integrated to contribute to the intended objectives of the program.

3.2 Identification of learning outcomes and their relevance to the proposed program, such as critical thinking skills, breadth and depth of knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, analytical/problem-solving skills, occupational/licensing/accreditation requirements, and communication skills. If applicable, provide evidence that the proposed learning outcomes are in line with the requirements of professional and accrediting bodies in their field of practice.

3.3 Provide a mapping of program and curriculum content to the outcomes, considering level and discipline.

3.4 Identification of graduates' outcomes and their relevance to the proposed program, such as further education or graduate study, employability, licensing, and accreditation. Evidence (e.g., letter of support from potential admitting institutions and/or employers) that the program, as designed, will achieve these outcomes is to be appended to the proposal.

3.5 Identification of other outcomes and their relevance to the proposed program, such as team building, leadership, and social citizenship.

4. Human Resource Implications

4.1 A list of the **core** faculty involved, including: rank (e.g., Assistant, Associate, Professor); status (e.g., part-time/full-time; tenured/ tenure-track/contract); the highest degree held by each professor, the name of the university that granted it and the year obtained; and the specific field in which each professor excels, for example, by virtue of his/her education, teaching experience, and/or juried research.

*(Institution(s) are encouraged to submit the CV of each professor; in that case, refer to Appendix 5 for Guidelines for the Preparation of Faculty Curriculum Vitae. Written consent to share the CVs of faculty **must be** provided).*

The following summary table must be completed for all core faculty members (last seven years; please specify which years are included):

Name, Rank, Status	Highest Degree held, University that granted it, year obtained	Specialty	List of courses taught (with course #)	# of supervisions (Bachelor; Master; PhD), underway vs completed	Source of Grants Received	Total ($) Amount of Grants	# of refereed publications
e.g., John Doe Assoc. Prof. Part-time Contract	PhD University X 1979	Bus. Mgmt	Bus 296 Bus 425 Etc.	Undergrad (5; 3 complete) Masters (1; 0 complete) PhD (none)	University SSHRC	$18,500	10

4.2 A description of additional human resources that will be drawn upon to support the program (e.g., adjunct faculty, guest lecturers, administrative support.)

4.3 Human resource deployment plan for the first five years that takes into account the proposed program as well as current offerings. The plan should outline the impact that the introduction of this new program will have on existing programs (e.g., larger class sizes, reduction in number and/or rotation of electives), and describe faculty workload and any course release for supervisory or administrative duties.

4.4 Additional information to demonstrate that a critical mass of faculty exists and that the current (or planned) faculty complement provides sufficient breadth of disciplinary expertise.

4.5 Describe and append, where applicable, policies with regard to the faculty that will support the program, including:

4.5.1 Academic/professional credentials required of present and future faculty teaching courses in the program.

4.5.2 Academic/professional credentials required of faculty acting as research/clinical/exhibition supervisors.

4.5.3 The regular review of faculty performance, including student evaluation of teaching and supervision.

4.5.4 The means for ensuring the currency of faculty knowledge in the field.

4.5.5 Faculty teaching, mentoring and supervision loads.

4.5.6 Faculty availability to students.

4.5.7 Other professional development of faculty including the promotion of curricular and instructional innovation as well as technological skills, where appropriate.

4.6 A description of technical assistance for students and faculty, where applicable.

4.7 Estimate of additional human resource needs beyond the first five years.

5. Physical Resource Implications

5.1 Describe the physical resources required to implement the proposed program for **each** year and where the final year results in a steady state for the program (i.e., when the program is fully operational, usually by year five of program operation for undergraduate programs). In preparing your response, comment on the following areas:

5.1.1 Facilities (e.g., classroom space, laboratories, work stations, student gathering locations)

5.1.2 Equipment (e.g., hardware, software, instruments)

5.1.3 Library (e.g., periodicals, texts, electronic publications, study space)

5.1.4 Support and back-up services (e.g., computer back-up, technician back-up, technical assistance)

5.1.5 Any other physical resource needs

5.2 Describe current physical resources that will be used to meet the needs identified in each of the areas identified under bullet 5.1 above, for each year.

5.3 Describe how the additional physical resources needed for the program, and not provided through current resources, will be obtained in each of the areas identified under bullet 5.1 above, for each year.

5.4 Impact of the use of resources for the proposed program on other existing programs, including the elimination or the reduction of the scope of programs to accommodate the new one.

5.5 Describe and append, where applicable, the institution's policies, guidelines and practices pertaining to technology-mediated and other distance delivery modes, where such modes are to be used to deliver the proposed program, to ensure:

- that faculty have sufficient technical and pedagogical expertise
- prospective students are notified of the required level of preparation (technical knowledge, motivation, and independence)
- student protection measures (e.g. intellectual property, privacy)
- appropriate and timely student and instructor interaction and feedback
- reliable, sufficient, and scalable course-management systems
- appropriate hardware, software, and other technological resources and media
- well-maintained and current technology and equipment
- sufficient infrastructure to support existing services and expansion of online offerings
- sufficient opportunities to interact with faculty and other students
- safeguards are in place to assure the authentication of student identity and the integrity of student work, particularly for programs delivered entirely via distance
- mechanisms are in place to assure and deal with all copyright and intellectual property issues, such as digital rights management and the use of object learning repositories

6. Financial Resource Implications

6.1 A detailed budget that outlines the costs/revenues in **each** of the first years of implementation where the final year demonstrates a steady state for the program (i.e., when the program is fully operational, usually by year five of program operation for undergraduate programs). The budget is to include an accounting of:

- Full and incremental costs of the program in **each** of the first years of implementation, broken down by major cost areas (e.g. academic salaries, other salaries, equipment, capital requirements, library acquisitions, and space) and taking into consideration the financial implications on current offerings.
- Sources of revenue to cover the costs identified above for **each** of the first years of implementation, broken down by major funding source (e.g. tuition, (new) government funding,

reallocation of resources, other contributions) and indicating the amounts expected from each source. The budget should identify which source(s) and amounts have been confirmed and which are tentative (Evidence of funding commitment to be appended to the proposal).

6.2 If external resources are not in place at the time of submission, a detailed, credible plan outlining how the funding will be acquired, along with letters of support from potential contributors, is to be submitted. This documentation may be labelled as proprietary which would limit circulation.

6.3 A description of the impact that the use of financial resources for the proposed program will have on other existing programs, including the elimination or reduction of the scope of programs to accommodate the new program. (For example, an accounting of funding for course release for existing faculty members to teach, supervise or provide administrative support for this new program.)

6.4 An indication of whether the program is full-cost recovery.

7. Program Development Process

7.1 Description of the institutional development process leading to the submission of the proposal.

7.2 Each external expert involved in program development should be identified, and their written assessment or comments on the proposed program should be appended to the proposal[12]. Examples of experts include: employers, professional associations, program advisory committee(s), peer reviewers, and academic consultants.

7.3 Description of how comments from experts were addressed.

7.4 Description of any accreditation requirements.

7.5 Identification of possibilities of collaboration with other institutions in the region (university or non-university), or elsewhere in Canada, in the delivery of the program and the steps taken to that effect.

7.6 Evidence of consultation with institutions offering similar or equivalent or comparable programs in the region. At a minimum, details on the consultation process and evidence of communications sent to other institutions requesting input are to be submitted; preferably, written comments from these institutions will be appended to the proposal.

7.7 Description of the evaluation procedure and cycle that would follow the implementation of the program (including frequency and timelines; what methodologies will be used; the data that will be collected; the unit(s) responsible; etc.). For **articulated or other collaborative programs**, the evaluation procedure should address how the institution will take into account the components offered by **each** institution. An integrated and cooperative mechanism should be in place to evaluate **the entire program** (i.e., the program as a whole, including transition between institutions) while addressing each partner's policies and procedures, frequency of reviews, standards and scope of program review. For articulated programs in particular, the policy should include a graduate follow-up process to measure the success of the program in meeting its objectives (to provide graduates with a more timely access to significant jobs or earnings and to ensure that they have acquired both occupation-specific and general post-secondary education competencies).

[12] The timeframe for the MPHEC's assessment process will probably be reduced if an external program assessment (see Appendix 4) is undertaken for significantly new undergraduate programs.

8. Program Need and Viability

8.1 Description of the target clientele of the program.

8.2 Evidence of student demand (e.g., survey results, pilot projects, related course enrolments).

8.3 Chart outlining anticipated enrolments for the first five years of the program, including: expected enrolments by year, enrolment limits or expected minimum/maximum enrolment.

8.4 A description of the social (local, regional, national) need(s) met by graduates from such programs (e.g., evolution of the discipline, demand for graduates). This evidence should rely on external sources (e.g. leading scholars, government agencies, employers, professional organizations). For **articulated programs**, provide evidence of need for broader-based training that would include general university-level competencies.

8.5 Evidence of consultation with employers and/or professional organizations as to the current and anticipated job market and the suitability of the program to meet employer needs. For **articulated programs**, include evidence of consultation with *an advisory industry group* (see section 2.4.1 of the *Policy*) comprising a variety of employers and practitioners from the relevant field(s) on the program design and labour market place requirements.

9. Additional Information (General)

9.1 Any other information the submitting institution(s) believes would assist the Commission in completing its assessment of the proposed new program.

10. Additional Information Requirements for Collaborative Programs

10.1 Description of the main components that each institution brings to the program (e.g., disciplinary expertise, practical experience).

10.2 Priority within each institution's program structure and development.

10.3 Describe and append the signed inter-institutional agreement(s) that are in place to assure the quality of the proposed program and that outline the division of responsibilities for all relevant aspects of the program, including its management and/or delivery, and the means through which the standards of the program will be maintained, with clear channels of authority and accountability. In addition to any other information that may be provided, the agreements ought to address the following:

10.3.1 The units responsible, at each participating institution, for the academic leadership of the program, detailing the various levels and types of responsibilities. This can include, but is not limited to, responsibility for overall management of the program, and its component parts; quality assurance monitoring and program review; defining procedures and assessment criteria to ensure proper follow-up; and communications within and outside the institutions.

10.3.2 The units responsible, at each participating institution, for administrative functions for the program, detailing the various levels and types of responsibilities. This can include, but is not limited to: registration; enrolment reporting; student advising/services; and decisions relating to an individual's progress through the program (e.g., assessment and appeals).

10.3.3 Cost and revenue-sharing, both in terms of the short-term (implementation of the program) and the long term (maintenance and upgrades). This includes an agreement to the effect that each institution will be funded directly for the part of the program they deliver; when students are registered with and pay fees to the particular institution where they are taking the courses. When students are moving from one institution to the other, in any given term or year, other arrangements should be made and outlined.

10.3.4 Procedures/standards for student admissions and progression through, and graduation from, the program(s) and the harmonization of these components across the two (or more) institutions.

10.3.5 Information and reporting requirements for the transcripts and credential(s) to be granted at both (all) institutions.

10.3.6 Procedures for resolving any differences that might arise between the parties to this collaborative agreement.

10.3.7 Procedures for the protection of students should the arrangement be terminated.

10.4 For **articulated** programs, describe the **inter-institutional coordinating mechanism** (see section 2.4.1 of the *Policy*) and append its Terms of Reference as well as list of members.

APPENDICES

Please ensure that **each** of the following are appended, as applicable, when submitting a completed program proposal:

- ✓ Course descriptions for each course in the program
- ✓ Mapping of program and curriculum content to the outcomes
- ✓ Letters of support from potential admitting institutions
- ✓ Letters of support from potential employers (for articulated programs, from an advisory industry group)
- ✓ Written consent to share faculty CVs (for each faculty member)
- ✓ Faculty CVs
- ✓ Policies with regard to faculty participation in the program (item 4.5 of the Information Requirements)
- ✓ Policies, guidelines and practices pertaining to technology-mediated and other distance delivery modes (if applicable)
- ✓ Detailed budget
- ✓ Letters from external sources of funding commitment/intent to fund
- ✓ Written correspondence/reports from external experts consulted during program development
- ✓ Written correspondence (as evidence of consultation) from post-secondary institutions within and outside the region that offer similar, equivalent, or comparable programs
- ✓ Evidence of student demand (e.g., survey results; analysis of a pilot project)
- ✓ Signed inter-institutional agreements (for articulated and other collaborative programs)
- ✓ Terms of Reference, and list of members, for the inter-institutional coordinating mechanism (for articulated programs)
- ✓ Letter of AACHHR support (for health-related programs)

CHECKLIST

- ☐ All of the information requirements have been addressed
- ☐ All relevant appendices are attached
- ☐ Table of courses to be included in the program is complete
- ☐ Table of core faculty is complete
- ☐ Human resources deployment plan is provided
- ☐ An explanation of how comments from experts/assessors/consultants etc. were addressed is included in the proposal
- ☐ Any additional information to help the MPHEC assess the quality of the proposed program
- ☐ Signature (or appended letter) confirming the collaborative submission, Appeand principal applicant, where applicable

Appendix 2B
Guidelines and Information Requirements for Proposals for New Graduate Programs

GUIDELINES

The purpose of these Guidelines and Information Requirements is to outline the information required to allow the MPHEC, an external reader, to assess that a proposed graduate program meets the following assessment criteria:

- Program content, structure and delivery modes reflect a coherent program design that allows for the program objectives and anticipated student outcomes to be achieved, while providing sufficient depth and breadth to meet the standards of quality associated with the credential
- Clearly defined and relevant program objectives and anticipated student and graduate outcomes
- Appropriate fit of name, level and content to ensure "truth in advertising" and to facilitate credential recognition
- Adequate resources (human, physical and financial) to implement and sustain the program
- Program need and viability
- An academic environment that supports scholarship such as original research, creativity and the advancement of professional knowledge, as relevant to the program
- Clearly defined collaborative agreements *[Criterion for programs offered by two or more institutions only, including articulated programs]*

For further information on the Commission's program assessment process, including detail on the above-noted criteria, please refer to the full policy document, *Policy on Quality Assurance: Academic Program Assessment Prior to Implementation*. Institutions are also encouraged to contact MPHEC staff should they have questions regarding their program proposal.

Please note that the final version of a program proposal for any new graduate-level program must have been assessed (including a site visit) by an expert external to the institution prior to submission to the Commission. It is also important to specify at the outset of a proposal for a new degree program, whether the program is designed as a research-based or professional-based graduate degree.

The MPHEC acknowledges that institutions may not be able to meet every information requirement. The absence of information must, however, be noted and explained.

INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Program Identification

1.1 Submitting institution(s)

1.2 Faculty (-ies)

1.3 School(s)

1.4 Department(s)

1.5 Program name

1.6 Program type (e.g., graduate certificate, master's, doctoral)

1.7 Credential(s) granted

1.8 Proposed starting date

1.9 Dates of Senate (or equivalent) and Board approval of the proposed program

2. Program Description

2.1 Description of the overall program structure including a term-by-term roll-out of the program, its range of options and its various components linked to the orientation of the program (i.e., research or professional); program duration should be stated as well as justified.

2.1.1 In the case of articulated and other collaborative programs, identify the institution at which the student is enrolled during each term; when students will be straddling more than one institution at one point in the program, or throughout, outline how students should be considered for enrolment count purposes. If two or more credentials can be earned through program completion, identify the exit point(s) for each credential.

2.2 List of courses to be included in the program, using the following summary table.

Course no.	Name	# of credits	Existent or New?	Required or Elective?	Prerequisite(s)
e.g., ENGL 700	Theory and Criticism	0.5 units	Exist.	Required	None
e.g., ENGL 793	Rhetoric	0.5 units	New	Required	None

2.3 A brief description (e.g., calendar entry) of **each course** is to be appended to the proposal and should include an indication of the types of learning activities (e.g., laboratories, group projects, seminar discussions, independent reading, student-led presentations/exhibits) and the assessment tools to be used within the course.

2.4 Description of the various program requirements, including:

2.4.1 Whether a thesis, research paper or dissertation is required, and if applicable, a description of the requirements for this component. The description is to include parameters for: the thesis/dissertation proposal, the thesis/dissertation itself, any public or closed-door defence or publication requirements, and members of the thesis/dissertation committee.

2.4.2 An indication of whether a major project is required, and if applicable, a description of the requirements for this component. The description is to include parameters for: a proposal where required, the project itself, any public or closed-door presentation, and members of the evaluating committee.

2.4.3 Comprehensive exams

2.4.4 Language requirements

2.4.5 Residency requirements (i.e., required number of terms studying on-site)

2.4.6 Service requirements (e.g., teaching in undergraduate programs, teaching assistantships/research assistantships, volunteer with the community)

2.4.7 Whether the program includes a work placement, and, if applicable, whether the work placement is compulsory or optional; a description of the expectations of the work placement is to be included (i.e., what will the students be doing?).

2.4.8 How practical, hands-on training is integrated into the program, particularly in the case of an applied or an articulated program.

2.4.9 Promotion/qualification standards (e.g., completion of comprehensive exams by end of sixth term, minimum average in specific courses/the overall program; thesis proposal approved by end of first year)

2.4.10 Any additional program requirements

2.5 Comparison of the proposed program with other comparable programs offered elsewhere in the Maritimes, Canada or the United States.

2.6 In the case of an **articulated** program, a description of how the university and partner institution's program components are **integrated**, thereby creating a coherent program of study (i.e., integration of course content that is directly related to the practice of an occupation in the field; courses usually delivered by a university where the content has been tailored to the clientele of the program; courses in other fields that contribute to the education of the student).

2.7 A description of the program name, including:

2.7.1 A rationale for the choice of program name and credential(s) to be granted, including comment on the process of selecting the name and credential(s).

2.7.2 A description of how the proposed program name and credential(s) compare to those of similar or equivalent programs within and/or outside the region.

2.7.3 Where applicable, justification for the introduction of a credential that is not granted by any other university within or outside the region

2.8 Admission requirements and standards, including where applicable, a description of the various admission routes (e.g., opportunity for admission to a Ph.D. program direct from a bachelor's; admission to a master's program after completion of a bachelor's degree in a relevant field; or specified minimum number of years of direct experience), and an indication of whether province of residence would constitute a criterion for admission or exclusion.

2.9 A description of the delivery mode(s) to be used (e.g., traditional classroom, technology-mediated, other distance education methods (please specify), experiential learning, and labs), and in what proportion. The proposal must:

2.9.1 Provide a rationale for the choice of delivery mode(s).

2.9.2 Provide a description of how the delivery mode(s) will contribute to and enhance learning and create a community, both among students and between students and faculty.

2.9.3 In the case of technology-mediated and/or other distance delivery modes, describe policies pertaining to: student and instructor interaction and feedback, including expectations in terms of timeliness and types of interactions; assuring the authentication of student identity and the integrity of student work, particularly for programs to be delivered entirely via distance.

3. Program Objectives, Student Outcomes and Their Relevance

3.1 A description of program objectives, including an explanation of how the course and curriculum requirements will be integrated to contribute to the intended objectives of the program.

3.2 Identification of learning outcomes and their relevance to the proposed program, such as critical thinking skills, breadth and depth of knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, analytical/problem-solving skills, occupational/licensing/accreditation requirements, and communication skills. If applicable, provide evidence that the proposed learning outcomes are in line with the requirements of professional and accrediting bodies in their field of practice.

3.3 Provide a mapping of program and curriculum content to the outcomes consistent with generally accepted standards for the program being proposed, including level and discipline.

3.4 Identification of graduates' outcomes and their relevance to the proposed program, such as further education, employability, licensing, and accreditation. Evidence (e.g., letter of support from potential admitting institutions and/or employers) that the program, as designed, will achieve these outcomes is to be appended to the proposal.

3.5 Identification of other outcomes and their relevance to the proposed program, such as team building, leaderships, and social citizenship.

4. Human Resource Implications

4.1 A list of the faculty involved, including: rank (e.g., Adjunct, Assistant, Associate, Professor); status (e.g., part-time/full-time; tenured/ tenure-track/contract); the highest degree held by each professor, the name of the university that granted it and the year obtained; and the specific field in which each professor excels by virtue, for example, of his/her education, teaching experience, and/or juried research.

The following summary table must be completed for all faculty members (last seven years; please specify which years are included):

Name, Rank, Status	Highest Degree held, University that granted it, year obtained	Specialty	List of courses taught (with course #)	# of supervisions (Bachelor; Masters; PhD), underway vs completed	Source of Grants Received	Total ($) Amount of Grants	# of refereed publications
e.g., Jane Doe Assoc. Prof. Tenured	PhD University X 1990	Biology	Bio 792 Bio 750 Etc.	Undergrad (8; 7 complete) Masters (5; 3 complete) PhD (2; 0 complete)	University NSERC CIHR	$1.5 million	35

4.2 Include the CVs, prepared according to the guidelines under Appendix 5, for all faculty to be directly involved in the program. Written consent to share the CVs of faculty **must be** provided.

4.3 Additional information required to demonstrate, particularly in the case of research-based degree programs, faculty's ability to provide long-term supervisory capacity and supervisory committee membership.

4.4 A description of additional staff resources that will be drawn upon to support the program (e.g., adjunct faculty, guest lecturers, administrative support).

4.5 A description/evidence that an appropriate structure(s) (such as an Office of Graduate Studies) is in place to support the program.

4.6 Human resource deployment plan for the first five years that takes into account the proposed program as well as current offerings. The plan should outline the impact that the introduction of this new program will have on existing programs (e.g., larger class sizes in undergraduate programs, reduction in number and/or rotation of electives for existing graduate or undergraduate courses), and describe faculty workload and any course release for supervisory or administrative duties.

4.7 Additional information to demonstrate that a critical mass of faculty exists and that the current (or planned) faculty complement provides sufficient breadth of disciplinary expertise.

4.8 Describe and append, where applicable, policies with regard to the faculty that will support the program, including:

4.8.1 Academic/professional credentials required of present and future faculty teaching courses in the program;

4.8.2 Academic/professional credentials required of faculty acting as research/clinical/exhibition supervisors;

4.8.3 The regular review of faculty performance, including student evaluation of teaching and supervision;

4.8.4 The means for ensuring the currency of faculty knowledge in the field;

4.8.5 Faculty teaching, mentoring and supervision loads;

4.8.6 Faculty availability to students; and

4.8.7 Other professional development of faculty, including the promotion of curricular and instructional innovation as well as technological skills, where appropriate.

4.9 Description of technical assistance for students and faculty, where applicable.

5. Physical Resource Implications

5.1 Describe the physical resources required to implement the proposed program for each year where the final year results in a steady state for the program (i.e., when the program is fully operational, usually by year three for master's level programs and year five for doctoral-level programs). In preparing your response, comment on the following areas:

5.1.1 Facilities (e.g., classroom space, laboratories, work stations, student gathering locations)

5.1.2 Equipment (e.g., hardware, software, instruments)

5.1.3 Library (e.g., periodicals, texts, electronic publications, study space)

5.1.4 Support and back-up services (e.g., computer back-up, technician back-up, technical assistance)

5.1.5 Any other physical resource needs

Note: Relevant reports (e.g., an analysis of library resources) are to be appended.

5.2 Describe current physical resources that will be used to meet the needs identified in each of the areas identified under bullet 5.1 above, for each year.

5.3 Describe how the additional physical resources needed for the program, and not provided through current resources, will be obtained in each of the areas identified under 5.1 above, for each year.

5.4 Impact of the use of resources for the proposed program on other existing programs, including the elimination or the reduction of the scope of programs to accommodate the new one.

5.5 Describe and append, where applicable, the institution's policies, guidelines and practices pertaining to technology-mediated and other distance delivery modes, where such modes are to be used to deliver the proposed program, to ensure:

- faculty have sufficient technical and pedagogical expertise
- prospective students are notified of the required level of preparation (technical knowledge, motivation, and independence)
- student protection measures (e.g. intellectual property, privacy)
- appropriate and timely student and instructor interaction and feedback
- reliable, sufficient, and scalable course-management systems
- appropriate hardware, software, and other technological resources and media
- well-maintained and current technology and equipment
- sufficient infrastructure to support existing services and expansion of online offerings
- sufficient opportunities to interact with faculty and other students
- safeguards are in place to assure the authentication of student identity and the integrity of student work, particularly for programs delivered entirely via distance
- mechanisms are in place to assure and deal with all copyright and intellectual property issues, such as digital rights management and the use of object learning repositories

6. Financial Resource Implications

6.1 A detailed budget that outlines the costs/revenues in **each** of the first years of implementation where the final year demonstrates a steady state for the program (i.e., when the program is fully operational, usually

by year three for master's level programs and year five for doctoral-level programs). The budget is to include an accounting of:

- Full and incremental costs of the program in **each** of the first years of implementation, broken down by major cost areas (e.g. academic salaries, other salaries, equipment, library acquisitions, space, student financial support, and teaching/research assistantships) and taking into consideration the financial implications on current offerings.
- Sources of revenue to cover the costs identified above for **each** of the first years of implementation, broken down by major funding source (e.g. tuition, (new) government funding, reallocation of resources, other contributions) and indicating the amounts expected from each source. The budget should identify which source(s) and amounts have been confirmed and which are tentative (Evidence of funding commitment is to be appended to the proposal).

6.2 A description of student financial support available, especially in the case of a doctoral program, including a description of available sources (including amounts) for financial student support.

6.3 If resources are not in place at the time of submission, a detailed, credible plan outlining how the funding will be acquired, along with letters of support from potential contributors, is to be submitted. This documentation may be labelled as proprietary which would limit circulation.

6.4 A description of the impact that the use of financial resources for the proposed program will have on other existing programs, including the elimination or reduction of the scope of programs to accommodate the new one. (For example, an accounting of funding for course release for existing faculty members to teach, supervise or provide administrative support for this new program.)

6.5 An indication of whether the program is full-cost-recovery.

7. Program Development Process

7.1 Description of the institutional development process leading to the submission of the proposal.

7.2 Each external expert involved in the program development should be identified, and their written assessment on comments on the proposed program should be appended to the proposal. Examples of experts include employers, professional associations, program advisory committee(s), peer reviewers, and academic consultants.

7.3 Description of how comments from experts were addressed.

7.4 Evidence that a review of the proposed program was conducted by an expert, external to the institution and selected according to established standards (see Appendix 4A). The expert's Terms of Reference are expected to cover at a minimum the elements highlighted in the MPHEC's Generic Terms of Reference for **External Consultants** (see Appendix 4B). The consultant's report is to be appended to the proposal.

7.5 Description of how comments from the external consultant were addressed.

7.6 Description of any accreditation requirements.

7.7 Evidence of consultation with institutions offering similar or equivalent or comparable programs. At a minimum, details on the consultation process and evidence of communications sent to other institutions requesting input are to be submitted; preferably, written comments from these institutions will be appended to the proposal.

7.8 Description of the evaluation procedure and cycle that would follow the implementation of the program (including frequency and timeline; what methodologies will be used; the data that will be collected; the unit(s) responsible; etc.). For **articulated or other collaborative programs**, the evaluation procedure should address how the institution will take into account the components offered by **each** institution. An integrated and cooperative mechanism should be in place to evaluate **the entire program** (i.e., the program as a whole, including transition between institutions) and must be able to mesh each partner's

policies and procedures, frequency of reviews, standards and scope of program review. For articulated programs in particular, the policy should include a graduate follow-up process to measure the success of the program in meeting its objectives (to provide graduates with a more timely access to significant jobs or earnings and to ensure that they have acquired both occupation-specific and general post-secondary education competencies).

8. Program Need and Viability

8.1 Description of the target clientele of the program

8.2 Evidence of student demand (e.g., survey results, pilot projects, requests from former students, related course/program enrolments)

8.3 Evidence of the existence of an appropriate support network of related programs (undergraduate and as relevant, graduate) at the submitting institution.

8.4 Description of anticipated enrolments for the first five years of the program, including: expected enrolments by year, enrolment limits or expected minimum/maximum enrolment

8.5 Description of the social (local, regional, national) need(s) met by graduates from such programs (e.g., evolution of the discipline, demand for graduates). This evidence should rely on external sources (e.g., leading scholars, government agencies, employers, professional organizations). For **articulated programs**, provide evidence of need for broader-based training that would include university-level competencies.

8.6 Evidence of consultation with employers and/or professional organizations as to the current and anticipated job market and the suitability of the program to meet employer needs. For **articulated programs**, include evidence of consultation with *an advisory industry group* (see section 2.4.1 of the *Policy*), comprising a variety of employers and practitioners from the relevant field(s), on the program design and market place requirements.

9. Additional Information (General)

9.1 Any additional information to demonstrate that the academic environment in which the proposed program is to be offered supports scholarship, such as original research, creativity and the advancement of professional knowledge as relevant to the program.

9.2 Any other information the submitting institution believes would assist the MPHEC in completing its assessment of the proposed new graduate program.

10. Additional Information Requirements for Collaborative Programs

10.1 Description of the main components that each institution brings to the program (e.g., disciplinary expertise, faculty resources, a variety of graduate-level courses, supervisory capacity, practical experience).

10.2 Priority within each institution's program structure and development

10.3 Describe and append the signed inter-institutional agreement(s) that are in place to assure the quality of the proposed program and that outline the division of responsibilities for all relevant aspects of the program, including its management and/or delivery and the means through which the standards of the program will be maintained, with clear channels of authority and accountability. In addition to any other information that may be provided, the proposal is to include a description of agreements pertaining to the following:

10.3.1 The units responsible, at each participating institution, for the academic leadership of the program, detailing the various levels and types of responsibilities. This can include, but is not

limited to, responsibility for overall management of the program and its component parts; quality assurance monitoring and program review; defining procedures and assessment criteria to ensure proper follow-up; and communications within and outside the institutions.

10.3.2 The units responsible, at each participating institution, for administrative functions for the program, detailing the various levels and types of responsibilities. This can include, but is not limited to: registration; enrolment reporting; student advising/services; and decisions relating to an individual's progress through the program (e.g. assessment and appeals).

10.3.3 Cost and revenue-sharing, both in terms of the short-term (implementation of the program) and the long term (maintenance and upgrades). This includes an agreement to the effect that each institution will be funded directly for the part of the program they deliver; when students are registered with and pay fees to the particular institution where they are taking the courses. When students are moving from one institution to the other, in any given term or year, other arrangements should be made and outlined.

10.3.4 Procedures/standards for student admissions and progression through, and graduation from, the program(s), and the harmonization of these components across the two (or more) institutions.

10.3.5 Information and reporting requirements for the transcripts and credential(s) to be granted at both (all) institutions.

10.3.6 Procedures for resolving any differences that might arise between the parties to this collaborative agreement.

10.3.7 Procedures for the protection of students should the arrangement be terminated.

10.4 For articulated programs, describe the **inter-institutional coordinating mechanism** (see section 2.4.1 of the *Policy*) and append its Terms of Reference as well as list of members.

APPENDICES

Please ensure that **each** of the following are appended, as applicable, when submitting a completed program proposal:

- ✓ Course descriptions for each course in the program
- ✓ Mapping of program and curriculum content to the outcomes
- ✓ Letters of support from potential admitting institutions
- ✓ Letters of support from potential employers (for articulated programs, from an advisory industry group)
- ✓ Written consent to share faculty CVs (for each faculty member)
- ✓ Faculty CVs
- ✓ Policies with regard to faculty participation in the program (item 4.8 of the Information Requirements)
- ✓ Policies, guidelines and practices pertaining to technology-mediated and other distance delivery modes (if applicable)
- ✓ Library resources report
- ✓ Detailed budget
- ✓ Letters from external sources of funding commitment/intent to fund
- ✓ Written correspondence/reports from external experts consulted during program development
- ✓ Written correspondence (as evidence of consultation) from post-secondary institutions within and outside the region that offer similar, equivalent, or comparable programs
- ✓ Report(s) from external consultant(s)
- ✓ Evidence of student demand (e.g., survey results; analysis of a pilot project)
- ✓ Signed inter-institutional agreements (for articulated and other collaborative programs)
- ✓ Terms of Reference, and list of members, for the inter-institutional coordinating mechanism (for articulated programs)
- ✓ Letter of AACHHR support (for health-related programs)

CHECKLIST

- ☐ All of the information requirements have been addressed
- ☐ All relevant appendices are attached
- ☐ Indication of whether the program is research or professional-based
- ☐ Table of courses to be included in the program is complete
- ☐ Table of faculty is complete
- ☐ Human resources deployment plan is provided
- ☐ The proposal demonstrates that there is an appropriate academic environment to support the proposed program
- ☐ An explanation of how comments from experts/assessors/consultants etc. were addressed is included in the proposal
- ☐ Any additional information to help the MPHEC assess the quality of the proposed program
- ☐ Signature (or appended letter) confirming the collaborative submission, and principal applicant, where applicable

Appendix 2C
Guidelines and Information Requirements for Proposals to Modify Programs

GUIDELINES

The purpose of these Guidelines and Information Requirements is to outline the information required to allow the MPHEC, an external reader, to assess that a proposed modified program will continue meet the following assessment criteria:

- Program content, structure and delivery modes reflect a coherent program design that allows for the program objectives and anticipated student outcomes to be achieved, while providing sufficient depth and breadth to meet the standards of quality associated with the credential
- Clearly defined and relevant program objectives and anticipated student and graduate outcomes
- Appropriate fit of name, level and content to ensure "truth in advertising" and to facilitate credential recognition
- Adequate resources (human, physical and financial) to implement and sustain the program
- Program need and viability
- An academic environment that supports scholarship such as original research, creativity and the advancement of professional knowledge, as relevant to the program *[Criterion for graduate programs only]*
- Clearly defined collaborative agreements *[Criterion for programs offered by two or more institutions only, including articulated programs]*

For further information on the Commission's program assessment process, including detail on the above-noted criteria, please refer to the full policy document, *Policy on Quality Assurance: Academic Program Assessment Prior to Implementation*. Institutions are also encouraged to contact MPHEC staff should they have questions regarding their program proposal.

The MPHEC often receives questions as to whether program modifications ought to be submitted for approval, and whether modifications ought to be submitted using the ***Guidelines and Information Requirements for Proposals for New Programs***. As a rule, modifications that affect approximately 25% or more of the program, either overall or its component parts, require submission. Normally, these modifications ought to be submitted using the ***Guidelines and Information Requirements for Proposals to Modify Programs***. In some instances, however, the modification ought to be submitted as a proposal for a new program given the extent of the change; for example, normally, if the proposal is to introduce, a new major or stream within an existing degree program, the proposal ought to be submitted following the Guidelines and Information Requirements for Proposals for *New* Programs.

The MPHEC acknowledges that institutions may not be able to meet every information requirement. The absence of information must, however, be noted and explained.

INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Program Identification

1.1 Submitting institution(s)

1.2 Faculty(ies)

1.3 School(s)

1.4 Department(s)

1.5 Program name (where applicable, former and proposed)

1.6 Program type (e.g., undergraduate, post-baccalaureate, master's, doctoral)

1.7 Credential(s) granted (where applicable, former and proposed)

1.8 Description of the timeframe/phase-out plan for the existing program and students/phase-in plan for the modifications, where applicable

- 1.8.1 Proposed start date for modified program
- 1.8.2 Anticipated date of completion of last student enrolled in existing program
- 1.8.3 Any other information to assist the MPHEC in understanding how the program will transition from the existing, MPHEC-approved program, to that being proposed.

1.9 Institutional program code(s), as stored in the post-secondary institution's administrative files, that is reported under PSIS (Post-Secondary Student Information System) (element IP 2000) (where applicable, former and proposed)

1.10 Dates of Senate (or equivalent) and Board approval of the proposed program modification

2. Description of the Proposed Program Modification

2.1 Description of the type of change (e.g., course change, addition of work placement, change to online delivery).

2.2 Description of the purpose of the change (e.g., following the evolution of the discipline, accommodating the clientele to be served, establishing a better focus, resulting from an external review (provide details)).

2.3 **Side-by-side** comparison between the current and the modified programs of:

- 2.3.1 Overall program structure, including term-by-term roll-out for the existing and modified programs
- 2.3.2 Anticipated student/graduate outcomes
- 2.3.3 Admission requirements and standards
- 2.3.4 Promotion/qualification and graduation standards
- 2.3.5 Other program requirements such as: comprehensive exams, thesis, dissertation, practicum, apprenticeship, language requirements, minimum number of upper-level credits to obtain the degree, etc.
- 2.3.6 Method of program delivery (e.g., traditional classroom, distance education, a combination of the above) and in what proportion

2.4 List of courses for the existing and modified program using the summary table below and indicating whether each course is existing (E), modified (M) or new (N):

Existing program	Modified program
Year 1 (Fall) *(a) Required courses*: LIST *(b) Elective Courses:* LIST *(c) Other special requirements:* LIST **Year 1 (Winter)** *(a) Required courses*: LIST *(b) Elective Courses:* LIST *(c) Other special requirements:* LIST	**Year 1 (Fall)** *(a) Required courses*: LIST *(b) Elective Courses:* LIST *(c) Other special requirements:* LIST **Year 1 (Winter)** *(a) Required courses*: LIST *(b) Elective Courses:* LIST *(c) Other special requirements:* LIST
Year 2 (Fall) Etc.	**Year 2 (Fall)** Etc.

2.5 A brief description (e.g., calendar entry) of **each course** to be included in the modified program is to be appended to the proposal and should include an indication of the types of learning activities (e.g., laboratories, group projects, seminar discussions, independent reading, student-led presentations) and the assessment tools to be used within the course.

2.6 In the case of **articulated or other collaborative programs**, changes to the inter-institutional agreements (or equivalent) should be stated and explained; a copy of the revised agreement is to be appended to the proposal.

2.7 Description of the impact the proposed modification will have on the resources that support the program and how this impact will be addressed. If no impact is anticipated, provide a rationale for this conclusion. The description is to address the following:

2.7.1 Human resources (e.g., faculty, administrative staff, support staff)

2.7.2 Physical resources (e.g., facilities, equipment, library, support and back-up services)

2.7.3 Financial resources (e.g., costs, revenues, student financial support)

2.8 Potential impact of the change on other programs at the institution or at other institutions in the region.

2.9 An indication of other institutions involved, or that have been consulted.

2.10 Description of the accreditation requirements and/or implications resulting from the modification.

2.11 In the event the modification includes a name change, the following should be provided:

2.11.1 Rationale for the choice of program name and credential(s) to be granted, including comment on the process of selecting the name and credential(s);

2.11.2 Description of how the proposed program name and credential(s) compare to those of similar or equivalent programs within and/or outside the region, as compared to the name that currently exists;

2.11.3 Justification for the introduction of a new credential that is not granted at any other university within or outside the region.

2.12 In the event the modification includes a change in delivery mode to include technologically-mediated or other distance delivery:

2.12.1 Describe and append, where applicable, the institution's policies, guidelines and practices pertaining to technology-based, computer-based, and web-based learning modes of delivery to ensure:

- faculty have sufficient technical and pedagogical expertise
- prospective students are notified of the required level of preparation (technical knowledge, motivation, and independence)
- student protection measures (e.g. intellectual property, privacy)
- reliable, sufficient, and scalable course-management systems
- accessible technical assistance for students and faculty
- appropriate hardware, software, and other technological resources and media
- well-maintained and current technology and equipment
- sufficient infrastructure to support existing services and expansion of online offerings
- sufficient opportunities to interact with faculty and other students

2.12.2 Describe how the delivery mode(s) will contribute to and enhance the creation of academic community both among students and between students and faculty.

3. Additional Information

3.1 Any other information that the institution feels will assist the MPHEC in its understanding and assessment of the proposed modification. Reports of internal or external assessments, and a summary of the response, where applicable, would be helpful.

APPENDICES

Please ensure that **each** of the following are appended, as applicable, when submitting a completed program proposal:

- ✓ Course descriptions for each course in the program
- ✓ Written correspondence/reports from (internal or) external experts consulted during program development
- ✓ (Revised) Budget, where applicable
- ✓ Policies, guidelines and practices pertaining to technology-mediated and other distance delivery modes
- ✓ (Revised) Signed inter-institutional agreements (for articulated and other collaborative programs)
- ✓ Letter of AACHHR support (for health-related programs)

CHECKLIST

- ☐ All of the information requirements have been addressed
- ☐ All relevant appendices are attached
- ☐ Phase-in/phase-out plan has been provided
- ☐ Institutional program codes have been provided
- ☐ Side-by-side comparisons are complete
- ☐ An explanation of how comments from experts/assessors/consultants etc. were addressed is included in the proposal

- ☐ Any additional information to help the MPHEC assess the quality of the proposed program
- ☐ Signature (or appended letter) confirming the collaborative submission, and principal applicant, where applicable

Appendix 2D
Guidelines and Information Requirements for Proposals to Terminate Programs

GUIDELINES

The purpose of these Guidelines and Information Requirements is to outline the information required to allow an external reader to assess that the proposed program termination appears warranted.

A proposal for a program termination should be submitted when the university intends to no longer admit students and to remove the program from its offerings. A proposal should also be submitted when a program has become inactive: that is, the institution(s) has (have) not admitted and/or graduated a student in the program for a period of four years (or the normal timeframe through which one cohort could complete the program). Please note that should a program be terminated as a result of the introduction of a new program, a separate proposal for the termination is not required, provided the information on the transition from the existing to the new program, including a phase-out plan for the program being terminated, has been submitted as part of the proposal for the new program.

For further information on the Commission's program assessment process, please refer to the full policy document, *Policy on Quality Assurance: Academic Program Assessment Prior to Implementation*. Institutions are also encouraged to contact MPHEC staff should they have questions regarding their program proposal.

The MPHEC acknowledges that institutions may not be able to meet every information requirement. The absence of information must, however, be noted and explained.

INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Program Identification

1.1 Submitting institution(s)

1.2 Faculty(ies)

1.3 School(s)

1.4 Department(s)

1.5 Program name

1.6 Program type (e.g., undergraduate, master's, doctorate, etc.)

1.7 Credential(s) granted

1.8 Proposed termination date

1.9 Institutional program code, as stored in the post-secondary institution's administrative files, that is reported under the Post-Secondary Student Information System (PSIS) (element IP 2000)

1.10 Dates of Senate (or equivalent) and Board approval of the proposed program termination

2. Description of the Proposed Program Termination

2.1 Rationale for the program termination

2.2 Description of the timeframe/phase-out plan for the existing program and students

2.2.1 Date new registrations will no longer be permitted/accepted

2.2.2 Anticipated date of completion of last student

2.2.3 Alternative programs for existing students, if any

2.3 Describe the impact the termination of this program will have on existing programs at the University (e.g., a reduction in elective offerings or cross-listed courses) and how this will be addressed.

2.4 In the case of professional, semi-professional, articulated, other collaborative, and programs requiring a work placement, other stakeholders and/or partners may be involved. Stakeholders may play a role in many ways, for example, in program delivery, accreditation, or student placements, and, in some instances, be responsible for the supply side of graduates from particular programs (e.g., teacher education programs, health and health-related programs, law, social work, criminology, foods and nutrition programs, articulated programs). In general for these types of programs, or other programs which directly involve other stakeholders, institutions must provide:

2.4.1 Evidence that other institutions and stakeholders involved have been consulted

2.4.2 Verification/confirmation from stakeholders that planned program terminations are known and agreed upon. (This could include governments, public and private institutions, community colleges, other universities.)

3. Additional Information

3.1 Any other information the institution feels will assist the MPHEC in its understanding of the proposed termination. Reports of internal and external review would be helpful.

APPENDICES

Please ensure that **each** of the following are appended, as applicable, when submitting a completed program proposal:

- ✓ Reports from internal or external assessments
- ✓ Letter of support for the proposed program termination from other involved partners
- ✓ Letter of AACHHR support (for health-related programs)

CHECKLIST

- ☐ All the information requirements have been addressed
- ☐ All relevant appendices are enclosed
- ☐ The phase-out plan has been described
- ☐ List of program codes is provided
- ☐ Any additional information that might help the MPHEC in its understanding of the proposed program termination
- ☐ Signature (or appended letter) confirming the collaborative submission, and principal applicant, where applicable

Appendix 3
Terms of Reference of the AAU-MPHEC Academic Advisory Committee

PURPOSE

1. To advise and assist the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission, an agency of the Council of Maritime Premiers, in assuring the quality of new and modified academic programs at post-secondary institutions included within its scope and as defined below.

FUNCTION

2. To that end, the Committee shall:

- Carry out in-depth assessments of new or modified post-secondary programs, within the parameters established by the Commission as described in the Policy on Quality Assurance.
- As appropriate, review and comment on the institutional assessment of programs approved by the MPHEC through a cursory review process.
- Advise the Commission on the appropriate evolution of the Policy on Quality Assurance, in the light of experience.
- Advise the Commission on issues to be researched and assist in carrying out projects deemed necessary and appropriate, by the Committee and/or the Commission, as they relate to quality assurance or academic planning.

OBJECTIVE OF THE PROGRAM ASSESSMENT PROCESS

3. The overall objective of the program assessment process, as stated in the Commission's Policy on Quality Assurance, is to ascertain the suitability of the program given its objectives, structure, institutional appropriateness, resources, stated student outcomes and their relevance through, as required, an interative process.

ASSESSMENT PROCESS

4. Stage II program assessments, for which the Academic Advisory Committee is responsible, may be undertaken when a program proposal does not satisfactorily meet the criteria for Stage I approval. The process is as follows:

- Staff prepares an analysis of the proposal and identifies any issues which arise.
- The Academic Advisory Committee reviews the proposal and any comments received from other institutions and other stakeholder groups.
- The Committee may request additional information and/or the advice of experts in the field.
- The Committee may elect to forward suggestions or recommendations to the institution to resolve the issues. Once the issues are resolved, or once the Committee concludes that resolution is not possible, the Committee then forwards its final recommendation to the Commission.

RESPONSIBILITY OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

5. In addition to carrying out Stage II assessments and reviewing institutional program assessments, Committee members are also responsible to review and comment when appropriate, on an individual basis, on all program proposals being assessed through a Stage I assessment, given that these proposals will not be discussed in Committee meetings.

MEMBERSHIP

6. The Committee is composed of eight members, including the Chair.
7. Three members are appointed by the Chair of the Commission, for a term of three years.
8. Three members are appointed by the Association of Atlantic Universities (AAU), for a term of three years.
9. Two Committee members are students of which one is selected by the AAU and the other by the MPHEC following a joint process for nominations.
10. At least one of the members has expertise with community college programs or university/college articulation.
11. The terms should overlap to ensure continuity.

CHAIR

12. The Chair of the Committee is a Commission member appointed to the Committee and designated by the Chair of the Commission.

QUORUM

13. A majority of members (half plus one Committee member) represents quorum.

COMMITTEE'S SCOPE OF AUTHORITY

14. Committees are instruments of the Commission. A committee's work products are the property of the Commission.
15. Committee members and chairs may not speak or act for the Commission except when formally given such authority for specific and time-limited purposes. Such authority will be carefully stated in order not to conflict with the authority delegated to the Chair of the Commission and the Chief Executive Officer of the Commission. Committee members and chairs cannot exercise authority over staff, and normally have no direct dealings with staff operations. Extraordinary requests for resources made by a committee must be approved by the Commission.

LINK TO AAU

16. The AAU representatives to this Committee shall report to the AAU Secretariat any issues/opportunities that require the action/involvement of the member institutions. Minutes of meetings shall be forwarded to the AAU in a timely fashion.

STAFFING

17. The attendance of the Chief Executive Officer, or designate (normally, a staff member), at all committee meetings as a resource and staff support is essential to the effective work of committees and to ensure proper and on-going alignment with the Commission's business plan. However, staff's primary accountability is to the Commission as a whole even when assigned the role of committee resource.

18. The Committee has the authority to engage outside consultants as required to assist in its functions.

POLICY ON CONFLICT OF INTEREST

19. As relevant, the Commission's Policy on Conflict of Interest applies to the Committee:

> *Members shall act at all times in the best interests of the Commission rather than particular interests or constituencies. This means setting aside personal self-interest and performing their duties in transaction of the affairs of the Commission in such a manner that promotes public confidence and trust in the integrity, objectivity and impartiality of the governing body.*
>
> *No member shall directly or indirectly receive any profit from his/her position as such, provided that members may be paid reasonable expenses incurred by them in the performance of their duties and the honorarium, as set by the Premiers (new legislation: Ministers). The interests of immediate family members or close personal or business associates of a member are considered to also be the interests of the member.*
>
> *Members are expected to avoid conflicts or the appearance of conflicts between their duties as a public appointee and their personal or business interest.*
>
> *An actual or potential conflict of interest arises when a member is placed in a situation in which his or her personal interests, financial or otherwise, or the interests of an immediate family member or of a person with whom there exists, or has recently existed, an intimate relationship, conflict or appear to conflict with the member's responsibilities to the Commission, and the public interest.*
>
> *Members shall not use information obtained as a result of their appointment for personal or commercial benefit.*
>
> *A conflict of interest may be "real", "potential" or "perceived"; the same duty to disclose applies to each.*
>
> *Full disclosure, in itself, does not remove a conflict of interest.*
>
> ***Principles for managing conflicts of interests***
>
> In consultation with the member, and in the light of the specific nature of the conflict, the Chair and member may determine the appropriate response to the circumstance, as follows:
>
> - the member must withdraw from any discussion or decision-making process leading to a recommendation on the proposal; or
> - the member may remain in the meeting and participate in the discussion but refrain from voting; or,
> - the member may remain in the meeting and participate in the discussion and in the voting.

In all cases the Chair will advise the governing body as a whole of the conflict, and of the outcome above, with reasons.

Should the Chair be in a conflict of interest, the Chair will either (a) withdraw from any discussion or decision-making process leading to a recommendation on the proposal, or (b) ask the governing body to decide whether the Chair may remain in the meeting, participate in the discussion while refraining from voting, or remain in the meeting, participate in the discussion and in the voting.

It is the responsibility of other members who are aware of a real, potential or perceived conflict of interest on the part of a fellow member to raise the issue for clarification, first with the member and, if still unresolved, with the Chair.

Rules with regards to program proposals or specific funding request/issue

When Commission members (or Committee members) are directly associated with the university whose program proposal or funding request is under consideration, the member must, at a minimum, abstain from the final vote (or final recommendation/advice to Commission in the case of a committee). The abstention is noted in the minutes if requested by the member or Chair. In the event that this member is the Committee Chair, an alternate Chair is assigned for the consideration of the program proposal in question.

Approved November 18, 1998
Modified April 12, 1999
Revised October 4, 2004
Reviewed by Academic Advisory Committee February 7, 2005
Reviewed by AAU on April 13, 2005
Modification approved by MPHEC: April 25, 2005
Modification approved: by MPHEC: June 20, 2005
Modification approved by MPHEC: November 24, 2008
Confirmation by AAU received January 21, 2009

Appendix 4A
Guidelines for the Selection of (External) Program Assessors

The following Guidelines are used by the MPHEC when consulting with experts in the field (either consultants or readers) during the assessment process (see the *Policy*). Institutions are encouraged to follow these same Guidelines when hiring consultants to assess a program prior to submission to the MPHEC. As noted in the Policy, institutions are required to consult with an expert in the field, who is asked to carry out a site visit, when submitting a proposal for a new graduate-level program.

1. External assessors should possess an advanced academic credential (normally a doctoral or terminal degree) in the discipline, and hold or have held an academic appointment at the senior level (normally at the rank of full professor).

2. External assessors should have experience in the design, delivery or administration of a similar program offered at a degree-granting institution and, preferably, experience in conducting program assessments in the discipline (e.g., as an appraiser for an accrediting body, or as a reviewer of a degree program).

3. External assessors should possess relevant professional credentials and/or related work experiences of substantial depth and range that relate to the proposed program.

4. In addition, an external assessor would (preferably, for an undergraduate program; particularly, for a graduate program):

    - Have experience in graduate teaching and, as appropriate, graduate thesis supervision and/or graduate clinical or applied studies supervision, and
    - Be experienced in the administration of graduate programs (e.g., as Chair of a department with graduate programs, graduate program coordinator, Chair of the graduate studies committee, member of a faculty or university graduate or research council/committee)

5. In order to avoid potential conflict of interest and to ensure objective assessments, any connection between an external assessor and the submitting institution/its staff must be disclosed to determine whether steps are necessary to avoid (potential) conflict of interest situations. At a minimum, an assessor would be considered in a conflict of interest, and therefore be excluded from consideration, were any of the following to apply:

    - The assessor is from the same immediate department, institution, research group, centre, institute, company or other type of institutional subdivision as any university or partner institution/organization directly involved with the proposed program.
    - The assessor has worked for, studied at, or collaborated/published with the university or any partner institution/organization directly involved with the proposed program within the last seven (7) years.
    - The assessor has been a colleague or supervisor of any faculty/staff referenced within the submission as directly involved with the proposed program within the last seven (7) years.
    - The assessor is or has been a close personal friend, or is a relative of a member of the faculty/staff associated with a proposed program.
    - The assessor has had longstanding or serious professional or personal differences with the faculty/staff associated with the proposed program.
    - The assessor for some other reason believes that s/he cannot in good faith provide an objective review of the proposed program.

6. External assessors will be provided with terms of reference (Generic Terms are provided in Appendix 4B which can be amended as circumstances require) to conduct the review, including specific issues/areas to be addressed.

Appendix 4B
Generic Terms of Reference for External Consultants

The following Generic Terms of Reference for External Consultants are used by the MPHEC when consulting with experts in the field during the assessment process who are asked to carry out a site visit as part of the review.(see *Policy*). Institutions are encouraged to follow these Terms of Reference when hiring consultants to assess a program prior to submission to the MPHEC. These Terms of Reference are amended as circumstances require; a slightly modified version of the Terms of Reference are used when the AAU-MPHEC Academic Advisory Committee chooses to consult with an *external reader*.

1. The consultant is asked to provide a report.

2. The report is to be based on:

   2.1 A one-to-two day site visit organized by the submitting institution and the consultant. The site visit would normally include consultations with: senior academic staff (e.g., the Vice-President Academic, Dean(s)); the Department Chair; faculty/staff associated with the proposed program; prospective students; librarian/library liaison.

   2.2 The evaluation of the program proposal submitted by the institution, as well as any other pertinent information provided to or procured by the consultant.

   2.3 The consultant's expertise in the field and knowledge of similar programs elsewhere in Canada or the United States.

3. The report will range from five to fifteen pages.

4. Standard elements of the assessment will include:

   4.1 Assessment of program content, structure, and requirements in relation to normally accepted standards of similar programs and graduates, in Canada and elsewhere, as well as in relation to program title and credential awarded. The assessment will include a comment on the appropriateness of the proposed level of study to respond to identified needs, as well as the proposed delivery mode(s).

   4.2 As appropriate, a comparison with other comparable programs.

   4.3 Evaluation of the adequacy of human resources available for program implementation and operation and, as appropriate, for the areas of specialization identified. Specifically, the report should provide answers to:
   - Is there an appropriate distribution of expertise and strengths for the proposed program?
   - Does the faculty complement provide sufficient breadth and depth of research expertise and linkages with both the national (and/ international, as appropriate) research community and practitioners to provide an appropriate intellectual environment for graduate students, given the program area and level?
   - In your view, can the current (or planned) faculty complement successfully operate the proposed graduate program?

   4.4 Evaluation of the adequacy of physical resources (e.g., library holdings, research space) available for program implementation and operation, in light of the projected enrolments. Specifically, are the equipment, services, libraries and other associated facilities adequate for the proposed program?

   4.5 Evaluation of the appropriateness of the organizational environment in providing this program. Specifically, the report should comment on whether or not adequate procedures have been put in place for regular review and evaluation of the quality of the graduate program.

   4.6 Comment on the likely stability of the program and the financial resources allocated to it.

4.7 Opportunities presented by current and anticipated labour market trends to graduates of the program, given the proposed focus.

5. The consultant is asked to comment, as appropriate, on the following assessment criteria which the Commission uses in its assessment of program proposals (see the *Policy* for further information on each assessment criterion):

- Program content, structure and delivery modes reflect a coherent program design that allows for the program objectives and anticipated student outcomes to be achieved, while providing sufficient depth and breadth to meet the standards of quality associated with the credential
- Clearly defined and relevant program objectives and anticipated student and graduate outcomes
- Appropriate fit of name, level and content to ensure "truth in advertising" and to facilitate credential recognition
- Adequate resources (human, physical and financial) to implement and sustain the program
- Program need and viability
- An academic environment that supports scholarship such as original research, creativity and the advancement of professional knowledge, as relevant to the program
  [Criterion for graduate-level programs only]
- Clearly defined *collaborative agreements*
  [Criterion for programs offered by two or more institutions only]

6. The report should conclude with one of the following recommendations, with additional comments as deemed useful by the consultant:

- I recommend approval of the program as presented.
- I recommend approval of the program with the following changes (please specify).
- I recommend that a revised program proposal be drafted, prior to a decision being made, to include (please specify).
- I recommend that the program not be approved.

7. The report can include specific recommendations regarding any of the elements noted above, including resources, opportunities for collaboration, periodic program review, etc. as the consultant would judge important and useful.

8. Any additional comments judged important or useful by the consultant.

Appendix 5
Guidelines for the Preparation of Faculty Curriculum Vitae

Written consent to append the CV must be submitted for each faculty member.

1. Name: with rank, status (tenured, contract, etc.)
2. Degrees: designation, institution, department, year
3. Employment history: dates, rank/position, department, institution/firm, including current full-time position and link to the program under review
4. Academic honours: such as F.R.S., F.R.S.C., Governor General's Award, honorary degrees, or equivalent
5. Scholarly and professional academic activities: past seven years only (e.g., executive and editorial positions but **not** memberships**; invited** presentations at national or international conferences. Please do not list manuscript and grant application reviews)
6. Graduate supervisions: career numbers – master's/doctoral; completed/in progress. Please distinguish between supervisions in the program under review and in other programs, if appropriate. Provide a list of the theses or projects supervised (not participation on supervisory committees) during the last seven years with the name of the student, title of the thesis or project (specify), date of first registration and date of completion
7. Graduate courses: past seven years, by year
8. **External** research funding: past seven years only, by year, indicating source (granting councils, industry, government, foundations, other external); amount; purpose (operating, travel, publication, equipment, etc.); if group grant, indicate the number of grantees and whether principal or co-applicant.
9. **Internal** research funding. This includes university funds, SSHRC minor grants awarded through the university, etc.
10. **Publications**
    - Life-time summary (count) according to the following categories
      - Scholarly books
      - Chapters in books
      - Papers in **refereed** journals
      - Papers in **refereed** conference proceedings
      - Major invited contributions and/or technical reports
      - Abstracts and/or papers read
      - Others (e.g., workshops presented, other types of publications)
    - Details for the past seven years (same categories as above), in chronological order. Please give full citation, including page numbers for books, chapters and journal articles and names of authors in the order in which they appear on the publication.

Note: For some faculty members (e.g., in the performing arts) it may be more appropriate to list exhibitions/performances, by year indicating the nature of the exhibition/performance (e.g., juried; local/international; public/competition; and so forth.