

MPHEC Release – Updated Assessment Standards and Information Requirements for Program Proposals: Academic Program Assessment

July 18, 2025

The Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission (MPHEC) is pleased to release updated Assessment Standards and Criteria for its program assessment process. Included with this update are: (1) revised Information Requirements for New Degrees and (2) revised Information Requirements for New Certificates and Diplomas¹. These documents replace the assessment standards and information requirements included within the 2013 policy, *Academic Program Assessment Prior to Implementation*².

The updated documents were developed through iterative consultation and revision including examining the program assessment process using Lean Six Sigma methodologies, researching policies and practices used by other Canadian quality assurance agencies, addressing feedback from universities and other interested parties, and incorporating lessons learned based on the experiences of AAU-MPHEC Quality Assurance Committee members and MPHEC staff. **The MPHEC thanks all those who contributed to this work!**

Both the standards and the requirements are now more direct and specific, with the goal of making program assessment more straightforward for both users and assessors. The most notable change is the addition of criteria to each of the standards, which clarify expectations for program development and for program assessment, making the MPHEC's assessment process more transparent and allowing for clearer alignment between the standards and the information requirements. It is hoped that these changes will also reduce the number of follow-up questions asked during the assessment process, leading to faster time to decision.

Other substantive changes include reduced information requirements for certificates and diplomas compared to degrees, streamlined requirements to eliminate redundancy, and incorporation of "Tips" to assist users in completing their program proposals.

The MPHEC is committed to supporting equity. Although standards for equity practices have not been established, the updated information requirements also include questions about how equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility and applicable recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission will be implemented within the proposed program(s). This information will be gathered to document different institutional and departmental approaches and may be used to inform future standards and criteria.

The MPHEC's assessment standards and criteria as well as the associated information requirements are intended to be living documents. To that end, **users are encouraged to complete the brief survey embedded within each set of information requirements following the submission of their proposal.** MPHEC staff will compile the feedback received and communicate clarifications and changes (or consult on possible changes) as the need arises.

Please note the updated assessment standards and criteria are effective immediately. Although we expect most programs are already aligned with these standards and criteria, any existing programs not currently aligned should be reviewed and modified as part of, or prior to, their next cyclical review. The associated information requirements are also effective immediately; however, proposals using the previous information requirements will be accepted until March 31, 2026. After that, all proposals must follow the revised (2025) information requirements.

¹ Revised information requirements for proposals for program modifications are currently under development and will be released in the coming months.

² The MPHEC is updating its policy documents; to facilitate timelier updates, and with a view to making relevant documentation more user-friendly and accessible, the updates are being made in phases.