

ALGONQUIN COLLEGE DIRECTIVE	NO. OF PAGES 15	DIRECTIVE NO. E44
	ORIGINATOR Vice President, Academic	
	APPROVED BY President's Executive Committee	
TITLE Essential Employability Skills	EFFECTIVE DATE 2007.09.04	REPLACES New

PREAMBLE

Algonquin College recognizes the importance of preparing its graduates for their careers and ensuring that they are well situated to meet the expectations of their future employers. Essential Employability Skills (EES), as integrated components of post-secondary programs of study, are a tangible sign of the College's academic commitment to relevant, practical and career-oriented education. While it is the case that the inclusion of Essential Employability Skills outcomes is a mandatory requirement for the granting of credentials, the College's decision to level the outcomes in a manner consistent with the credential being granted further augments the knowledge, skills and attitudes that students are required to demonstrate reliably prior to graduation. (See Appendix B for performance expectations of leveled outcomes.)

POLICY

1. All Ontario College Certificate, Ontario College Diploma, and Ontario College Advanced Diploma programs include the Essential Employability Skills (EES) Outcomes (See Appendix A) in compliance with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities' Credentials Framework and College guidelines.
 - 1.1 All programs of study include courses designed so that students can reliably demonstrate their achievement of the EES outcomes at a level appropriate to the credential. (See Appendix B for a description of the expected level of performance for each credential.) Essential Employability Skills are taught and assessed in courses specifically designed for this purpose and/or are embedded in other courses throughout the program of study.
 - 1.2 Curriculum maps demonstrating inclusion of EES outcomes are included in all new program proposals prior to approval.
 - 1.3 The inclusion of EES outcomes are documented at the course level each time a course outline is developed, revised or approved. As well as linking course learning requirements to EES outcomes, learning activities and assessment strategies are aligned with applicable EES outcomes.

- 1.4 The mapping, teaching and assessment of the EES outcomes are reviewed during the cyclical Program Quality Review (PQR) process. Recommendations to ensure continued compliance with provincial and College policies are made and tracked as part of the PQR process.

PROCEDURES, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Responsibility for Implementing the EES Directive at the Course, Program and College Level

- 1.1 It is the responsibility of the faculty member preparing course outlines to document how the EES will be taught and/or assessed and/or how learners will demonstrate achievement of a culminating performance.
- 1.2 It is the responsibility of the faculty member teaching the course to ensure that the EES identified in the course outline are taught and assessed as planned.
- 1.3 It is the responsibility of the program coordinator to ensure that the program courses are mapped against the EES outcomes at the level appropriate for the credential.
- 1.4 It is the responsibility of the program academic administrator to ensure that programs comply with EES requirements outlined in this Directive and that faculty understand how the course is expected to contribute to the achievement of all program learning outcomes, including EES learning outcomes.
- 1.5 It is the responsibility of the Curriculum Review Committee (CRC) to ensure that new programs and programs undergoing revision are planned in accordance with EES requirements and that EES policies, tools and support materials are reviewed and updated as necessary.
- 1.6 It is the responsibility of the senior academic administrators to ensure that the resources needed to implement the EES requirements are in place.
- 1.7 It is the responsibility of the Program Quality Assurance Administrator to ensure that adherence to the EES Directive is included as part of the cyclical PQR process and that appropriate recommendations are made and tracked as a result of the review.

2. Inclusion of EES Learning Outcomes in New Program Development

- 2.1 The College Curriculum Review Committee (CRC) ensures that the curriculum plan for all new programs being developed includes provision for the achievement of the EES learning outcomes in compliance with the MTCU Credentials Framework and College guidelines before recommending approval of the program.

- 2.2 Before recommending final approval, CRC ensures that the curriculum plan for the new program includes:
 - 2.2.1 the EES program learning outcomes (See Appendix A);
 - 2.2.2 course descriptions and course learning requirements that embed the relevant EES learning outcomes; and,
 - 2.2.3 a curriculum map that shows how EES learning outcomes are embedded in courses in the program of study. At least two culminating performances for each EES learning outcome are identified on the EES curriculum map. The EES curriculum map normally includes all core courses in a program of study.
- 2.3 School EES resource people are identified on an annual basis and are available to assist program developers to integrate EES into their curriculum.
- 2.4 The curriculum plan as contained in the program proposal is retained by the Vice-President Academic's Office as well as by the academic department responsible for the program until the program curriculum is revised and remapped. In the case of suspended programs, the curriculum plan is retained for double the length of the program.

3. Documenting EES Learning Outcomes at the Course Level

- 3.1 When developing or updating courses, faculty ensure that EES learning outcomes are embedded in the course curriculum. EES outcomes are documented in both course outlines and course section information.
- 3.2 Course academic administrators validate that relevant EES have been included before approving course outlines.

4. Review of EES During Cyclical Program Quality Review (PQR):

- 4.1 As part of the cyclical PQR process, the program faculty team prepares and reviews current curriculum maps that document the inclusion of EES in the program, and also provides evidence of learner achievement of the EES outcomes at a level appropriate for the credential. (See Appendix B.)
- 4.2 The EES resource person identified for the program will support the faculty through the PQR process.
- 4.3 The EES maps are reviewed by the Essential Employability Skills Committee and feedback given to the PQR Team Leader and the Program Quality Assurance Administrator.
- 4.4 Recommendations to ensure continued compliance with provincial and College policies are included in the final Program Quality Review Report and the action plan developed by the PQR team leader. Implementation of the action plan is monitored as outlined in the Program Quality Assurance Directive.

Related Directives

Course Outlines – E33

Evaluation of Student Learning – E1

Program Quality Assurance (under revision) – E25

(original signed by)

Vice-President, Academic

(original signed by)

President

Appendix A: Essential Employability Skills**Essential Employability Skills**

All graduates with the following Ontario College credentials, Ontario College Certificate, Ontario College Diploma and Ontario College Advanced Diploma, must be able to reliably demonstrate the Essential Employability Skills required in each of the following six categories:

SKILL CATEGORY	DEFINING SKILLS: Skill areas to be demonstrated by graduates:	LEARNING OUTCOMES: The levels of achievement required by graduates. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to:
COMMUNICATION	Reading Writing Speaking Listening Presenting Visual literacy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. communicate clearly, concisely and correctly in the written, spoken, and visual form that fulfills the purpose and meets the needs of the audience.</i> <i>2. respond to written, spoken, or visual messages in a manner that ensures effective communication.</i>
NUMERACY	Understanding and applying mathematical concepts and reasoning Analyzing and using numerical data Conceptualizing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>3. execute mathematical operations accurately.</i>
CRITICAL THINKING & PROBLEM SOLVING	Analyzing Synthesizing Evaluating Decision making Creative and innovative thinking	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>4. apply a systematic approach to solve problems.</i> <i>5. use a variety of thinking skills to anticipate and solve problems.</i>
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT	Gathering and managing information Selecting and using appropriate tools and technology for a task or a project Computer literacy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>6. locate, select, organize, and document information using appropriate technology and information systems.</i> <i>7. analyze, evaluate, and apply relevant information from a variety of sources.</i>

	Internet skills	
INTERPERSONAL	<p>Team work</p> <p>Relationship management</p> <p>Conflict resolution</p> <p>Leadership</p> <p>Networking</p>	<p>8. <i>show respect for the diverse opinions, values, belief systems, and contributions of others.</i></p> <p>9. <i>interact with others in groups or teams in ways that contribute to effective working relationships and the achievement of goals.</i></p>
PERSONAL	<p>Managing self</p> <p>Managing change and being flexible and adaptable</p> <p>Engaging in reflective practices</p> <p>Demonstrating personal responsibility</p>	<p>10. <i>manage the use of time and other resources to complete projects.</i></p> <p>11. <i>take responsibility for one's own actions, decisions, and consequences</i></p>

Taken from the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities' *Essential Employability Skills* web site which was last modified February 22, 2006.

Appendix B: EES Outcomes Levelled for Each Credential**Ontario College Certificate*****Communication***

Skill areas to be demonstrated by graduates: reading, writing, speaking, listening, presenting and visual literacy.

1. ***Communicate clearly, concisely and correctly in the written, spoken and visual form that fulfills the purpose and meets the needs of the audience.***
 - Use existing guidelines, to plan, organize, and present communication according to purpose and audience.
 - Ensure that message conforms to the conventions of a format (e.g. letter, report, care plan).
 - Follow models to organize messages in patterns linked to purpose and situation (e.g. organize good and bad news messages differently; convey purpose in opening paragraph, present sections of a report in logical order).
 - Use an acceptable and consistent style, tone, and vocabulary throughout the message.
 - Revise a message, adjusting for errors in content and mechanics (e.g. spelling, sentence structure).
 - Use and respond to appropriate verbal, non-verbal, and visual signals.

2. ***Respond to written, spoken or visual messages in a manner that ensures effective communication.***
 - Use established strategies to read, listen and observe effectively (e.g. note-taking, skimming, asking for clarification).
 - Present an accurate spoken or written report of what has been read, heard and/or observed.
 - Examine the material used to support claims, distinguishing between fact and opinion.
 - Follow instructions to complete tasks, making use of the messages received.
 - Employ effective listening, visual and reading skills to gather feedback about one's communication.

Numeracy

Skill areas to be determined by graduates: understanding and applying mathematical concepts and reasoning, analyzing and using numerical data, and conceptualizing.

3. ***Executive mathematical operations accurately.***
 - Apply common mathematical terms, facts, methods, procedures, concepts and principles in an accurate manner to simple problems and routine situations.
 - Observe and record data using pre-determined methods, tools, and technology.
 - Use calculators or other designed technological tools to perform calculations, estimates, and measurements precisely.
 - Link verbal problems to require mathematical operations.
 - Decide what needs to be measured or calculated.

Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving

Skill areas to be demonstrated by graduates: analyzing, synthesizing, evaluating, decision making and creative and innovative thinking.

4. ***Apply a systematic approach to solve problems.***
 - Distinguish between fact and opinion in a problem-solving situation.
 - Recognize or anticipate simple problems and apply given strategies in routine situations.
 - Solve simple problems providing a rationale for solution.
5. ***Use a variety of thinking skills to anticipate and solve problems.***
 - Identify at least two thinking skills used to anticipate and solve problems.

Information Management

Skill areas to be demonstrated by graduates: Gathering and managing information, selecting and using appropriate tools and technology for a task or a project, computer literacy and internet skills.

6. ***Locate, select, organize, and document information using appropriate technology, and information systems.***
 - Follow guidelines to gather and select the appropriate information from a prescribed list of sources, including the Internet, to meet the purpose of the message.
 - Document, using correct documentation format, sources of information.
 - Follow guidelines to use a computer for storage and retrieval of electronic information.
 - Follow guidelines for using an established protocol to manage sensitive documents with security and confidentiality in an electronic environment.
7. ***Analyze, evaluate and apply relevant information from a variety of sources.***
 - Use given criteria to evaluate information obtained and use information to take action
 - Use given technology and tools to analyze and evaluate information.
 - Summarize and present information drawn from a prescribed list of sources.

Interpersonal

Skill areas to be demonstrated by graduates: team work, relationship management, conflict resolution, leadership and networking.

8. ***Show respect for the diverse opinions, values, belief systems, and contributions of others.***
 - Treat others equitably and fairly within established guidelines.
 - Link one's own values and beliefs to actions and decisions.
 - Acknowledge contributions made by others.
9. ***Interact with others in groups or teams in ways that contribute to effective working relationships and the achievement of goals.***
 - List the common roles/tasks needed for any team to function effectively.
 - Fulfill the role of an effective team member.
 - Follow given guidelines to contribute to the work of a team.

Personal

Skill areas to be demonstrated by graduates: managing self, managing change and being flexible and adaptable, engaging in reflective practices and demonstrating personal responsibility.

10. Manage the use of time and other resources to complete projects.

- Use established planning tools to achieve goals.
- Use identified resources efficiently to accomplish the task.
- Recognize the impact changes in the environment may have on one's ability to accomplish the task.

11. Take responsibility for one's own actions, decisions, and consequences.

- Review the results of one's actions and self evaluate performance.
- Identify and act on constructive feedback.
- Function within given guidelines that identify rights and responsibilities of self and others.

Ontario College Diploma**Communication**

Skill areas to be demonstrated by graduates: reading, writing, speaking, listening, presenting and visual literacy.

1. Communicate clearly, concisely and correctly in the written, spoken, and visual form that fulfills the purpose and meets the needs of the audience.

- Plan, organize, and present communication according to purpose and audience.
- Choose format appropriate to purpose (e.g. memo, video, personal interview).
- Use strategies to convey conventional organizational pattern to audience (e.g. transitional phrases, summaries, overviews).
- Select and use style, tone, and vocabulary appropriate to a message, its situation, and its audience.
- Revise to improve structure, tone, content, and ensure that material is free from mechanical errors.
- Use and respond to appropriate verbal, non-verbal, and visual signals, and match non-verbal and visual signals to content of message.

2. Respond to written, spoken, or visual messages in a manner that ensures effective communication.

- Develop and use strategies to read, listen, and observe effectively in order to meet the specific purpose (e.g. skimming, highlighting, writing down complex verbal instructions).
- Reframe original message in other formats to reflect content, proportions, and emphasis of original (e.g. written and spoken summaries, tables, diagrams, photographs and computer-generated graphics).
- Distinguish between main and supporting points accurately to summarize or restate key points.
- React appropriately to information (e.g. complete a work order, install equipment, prepare brief, make a decision).
- Employ effective listening, visual, and reading skills to gather feedback and to confirm that message has been received and understood.

Numeracy

Skill areas to be demonstrated by graduates: understanding and applying mathematical concepts and reasoning, analyzing and using numerical data, and conceptualizing.

3. Execute mathematical operations accurately.

- Apply common mathematical terms, facts, methods, procedures, concepts, and principles in an accurate manner to a variety of problems and situations.
- Observe, record, and analyze data using pre-determined methods, tools, and technology.
- Select the appropriate measurement tools, calculate and verify calculations, estimates, and measurements for precision.
- Translate verbal material into formulas.
- Decide what needs to be measured or calculated.

Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving

Skill areas to be demonstrated by graduates: analyzing, synthesizing, evaluating, decision making and creative and innovative thinking.

4. Apply a systematic approach to solve problems.

- Analyze facts, opinions and inferences in a problem-solving situation.
- Evaluate and choose problem solving models appropriate to a particular context.
- Evaluate one's own problem solving process for biases.

5. Use a variety of thinking skills to anticipate and solve problems.

- Analyze a novel situation for potential causal factors and devise and apply several innovative strategies for solution.
- Analyze one's own creative thinking process, identify blocks and create strategies to deal with them.

Information Management

Skill areas to be demonstrated by graduates: gathering and managing information, selecting and using appropriate tools and technology for a task or a project, computer literacy and internet skills.

6. Locate, select, organize, and document information using appropriate technology and information systems.

- Gather and select appropriate information independently from a variety of sources, including the Internet, to meet the needs of the situation, the audience, and the time frame.
- Document, using correct documentation format, sources of information.
- Use a computer independently for storage and retrieval of electronic information.
- Use an established protocol independently to manage sensitive documents with security and confidentiality in an electronic environment.

7. Analyze, evaluate and apply relevant information from a variety of sources.

- Evaluate information independently and use information to take action.
- Choose appropriate technology and tools to analyze and evaluate information.
- Integrate, reframe, introduce, and explain the information to meet the needs of the message and audience.

Interpersonal

Skill areas to be demonstrated by graduates: team work, relationship management, conflict resolution, leadership and networking.

8. **Show respect for the diverse opinions, values, belief systems, and contributions of others.**
 - Contribute one's own ideas, opinions and information while demonstrating respect for those of others.
 - Employ techniques intended to bring about the resolution of conflicts.
 - Solicit and acknowledge contributions and opinions of others.
 - Establish and maintain rapport with peers and co-workers.

9. **Interact with others in groups or teams in ways that contribute to effective working relationships and the achievement of goals.**
 - Compare the roles and tasks of group or team members in a variety of contexts and situations.
 - Fulfill a variety of roles in a team including team coordinator for stable teams with identified goals.
 - Adapt strategies to accomplish team tasks and goals.

Personal

Skill areas to be demonstrated by graduates: managing self, managing change and being flexible and adaptable, engaging in reflective practices and demonstrating personal responsibility.

10. **Manage the use of time and other resources to complete projects.**
 - Monitor the process and goals and respond to change.
 - Allocate the use of resources efficiently to accomplish tasks.
 - Reflect on processes and practices used and identify how they can be adapted in a changing environment.

11. **Take responsibility for one's own actions, decisions, and consequences.**
 - Explain/justify decisions made and actions taken.
 - Use an ethical decision-making model to resolve ethical issues.
 - Accept accountability for one's own decisions, actions and subsequent consequences.

Ontario College Advanced Diploma

Communication

Skill areas to be demonstrated by graduates: reading, writing, speaking, listening, presenting and visual literacy.

1. **Communicate clearly, concisely and correctly in the written, spoken, and visual form that fulfills the purpose and meets the needs of the audience.**
 - Plan, organize and present communication, which is innovative, accurate, and relevant, to respond to the needs, purposes, and skills of a variety of audiences.
 - Choose the appropriate format from a wide range (e.g. web page, news story, script, professional journal article).
 - Use a wide variety of organizational patterns to achieve purpose and meet needs of audience (e.g. create suspense, create an executive summary).
 - Select and use a range of stylistic techniques to achieve desired results.
 - Revise own and others' work to polish structure, tone, content, and sentences.

- Interact with audience through a range of verbal, visual, and non-verbal signals, and guide others to identify and act on these signals.

2. *Respond to written, spoken, or visual messages in a manner that ensures effective communication.*

- Draw on a wide range of strategies to read and listen as accurately and efficiently as the situation and purpose demand.
- Reframe messages accurately and in a variety of formats to fulfill a number of different purposes, and evaluate representations for consistency of meaning.
- Recognize emphasis and purpose of messages, distinguishing between main and subordinate ideas.
- Seek feedback on message and delivery, in a variety of ways, and act appropriately on it.

Numeracy

Skill areas to be demonstrated by graduates: understanding and applying mathematical concepts and reasoning, analyzing and using numerical data, and conceptualizing.

3. *Execute mathematical operations accurately.*

- Apply a wide variety of mathematical terms, facts, methods, procedures, concepts, and principles in an accurate manner to solve complex problems and make decisions.
- Observe, record, analyze and evaluate the relevancy and adequacy of the methods, tools, and technology.
- Determine the degree of precision required for calculations, estimates, and measurements and perform appropriate calculations.
- Translate verbal material into formulas.
- Decide what needs to be measured or calculated.

Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving

Skill areas to be demonstrated by graduates: analyzing, synthesizing, evaluating, decision making and creative and innovative thinking.

4. *Apply a systematic approach to solve problems.*

- Analyze and evaluate elements in a problem-solving situation and create, apply and evaluate logical solutions to those problems.
- Create and evaluate problem solving models to be applied in a variety of contexts.
- Evaluate how one's own values, assumptions, and biases affect one's problem solving process.

5. *Use a variety of thinking skills to anticipate and solve problems.*

- Evaluate a complex decision-making situation and devise, apply and evaluate several possible innovative solutions.
- Evaluate one's own creative thinking process, identifying causes of blocks and potential strategies for overcoming them.

Information Management

Skill areas to be demonstrated by graduates: gathering and managing information, selecting and using appropriate tools and technology for a task or a project, computer literacy and internet skills.

6. *Locate, select, organize, and document information using appropriate technology and information systems.*

- Develop and use a research plan to identify appropriate information from a wide range of sources, including the Internet, and perform an extensive search to achieve a specific desired result.
- Document sources using correct documentation format and explain the unique contribution of each source of information.
- Use a computer independently for storage and retrieval of electronic information.
- Develop a procedure to manage sensitive documents with security and confidentiality in an electronic environment.

7. *Analyze, evaluate and apply relevant information from a variety of sources.*

- Evaluate information independently and use information to take action and direct others.
- Choose appropriate technology and tools to analyze and evaluate information.
- Evaluate, integrate and reframe information in a variety of formats to meet the needs of audiences and situations and provide the audiences with a detailed framework for interpreting information.

Interpersonal

Skill areas to be demonstrated by graduates: team work, relationship management, conflict resolution, leadership and networking.

8. *Show respect for the diverse opinions, values, belief systems, and contributions of others.*

- Identify situations that can influence fair treatment of others and recommend/ implement changes to ensure equity.
- Employ techniques intended to bring about the resolution of conflicts.
- Anticipate situations likely to generate conflict and plan appropriate strategies to manage.
- Advocate for others when their rights are affected.

9. *Interact with others in groups or teams in ways that contribute to effective working relationships and the achievement of goals.*

- Match the compositions of groups or teams to an analysis of required tasks and team resources.
- Lead groups and teams in dynamic situations.
- Assume accountability for self and others in achieving the outcomes for a team.

Personal

Skill areas to be demonstrated by graduates: managing self, managing change and being flexible and adaptable, engaging in reflective practices and demonstrating personal responsibility.

10. *Manage the use of time and other resources to complete projects.*

- Define reasonable and realistic goals.
- Monitor progress and use of resources, and anticipate future needs and possible changes to allocation of resources, to ensure work stays on schedule.

11. *Take responsibility for one's own actions, decisions, and consequences.*

- Evaluate outcomes against goals and determine ways to increase efficiency and effectiveness.
- Select and use an ethical decision-making model to resolve ethical issues.
- Accept accountability for one's own decisions, actions and subsequent consequences.