



Policy No.	C.1.3
Title	Granting of Credentials
Approving Jurisdiction	Board of Governors
Policy Sponsor	Vice President, Academic, Students & Research
Last Revised/Replaces	April 29, 2004 / March 27, 2008 / May 28, 2014
Effective Date	November 16, 2016
Signed by	Chair, Board of Governors

DEFINITIONS

Credential: A defined program of required and elective courses that has been approved by the Education Council as leading to a particular credential.

Credential Type: The following credentials are recognized by the College and are approved by the Education Council and Board of Governors, unless otherwise dictated by external approval agencies:

Citation: A defined program of study usually involving less than one year of study and consisting of 6-19 credits.

Certificate: A defined program of study usually involving one year of study and consisting of 20-59 credits.

Diploma: A defined program of study usually involving two years of study and consisting of 60-119 credits.

Associate Degree: A defined program of study involving two years of university-level study with an Arts or Science focus and consisting of 60 credits. It is equivalent to the first two years of a four-year baccalaureate degree. Please see the *BC Transfer Guide* for specific requirements.

Degree: A defined program of study in a specific program area usually involving four years of study and consisting of a Diploma equivalent plus an additional 60 credits, or a minimum of 120 credits.

Advanced Certificate: A defined program of study designed to provide students with specialized knowledge that builds on a previous credential, usually involving less than one year of study and consisting of 15-39 credits. A certificate, diploma or Bachelor's degree is required as a pre-requisite.

Advanced Diploma: A defined program of study designed to provide students with specialized knowledge that builds on a previous credential, usually involving one year or more of study and consisting of 40-119 credits. A diploma or Bachelor's degree is required as a pre-requisite.

Post-Degree Diploma: A defined program of study designed to provide students with specialized knowledge that builds on a previous credential, usually requiring two years of study and consisting of 30-60 credits. A Bachelor's degree is required as a pre-requisite.

Cumulative, Program Grade Point Average: A weighted average of grades earned in courses designated as eligible for inclusion in the requirements for a credential.

Insert Student: A student who has previously completed a portion of a VCC program and is returning to complete remaining courses in a program.

Parchment: The physical and legal document awarded to the recipient of a credential.

Prior Learning Assessment & Recognition (PLAR): is assessment by valid and reliable means and by a qualified specialist, of what an individual has learned outside of courses and programs at VCC. Assessment will normally result in credit (assigned or unassigned) being granted to satisfy the graduation requirements of a program offered by the College. Refer to D.3.5 Prior Learning Assessment & Recognition policy.

Statement of Completion: A document awarded for the successful completion of a course or group of courses that do not lead to a credential.

VCC Award of Achievement: A document awarded for the successful completion of a course or group of courses that do not lead to a credential. The course or group of courses will include a minimum of 15 hours of instruction, and successful completion will be based on assessment criteria provided in the course outline(s), including but not limited to, participation or other subject-specific criteria as determined by the program area.

Transfer Credit: refers to the granting of credit for a course successfully completed at another formally recognized educational institution and/or through a professional organization or other agency and/or by recognized foreign credential assessment and/or by formal recognition of course equivalency in a VCC approved course outside the program area. Credit for such learning will be formally acknowledged and noted on a student's formal transcript. Refer to Transfer Credit policy.

PROCEDURES

The Procedures related to the awarding of credentials is organized under the following headings: Determination of form and content of credential; Determination and approval of credentials; Determination of credential requirements; Process to determine eligibility for credential; Multiple credentials; Awarding of credential.

DETERMINATION OF FORM AND CONTENT OF CREDENTIAL

1. The Registrar's Office will determine the parchment to be awarded including the following: Type of paper and presentation format; Content; Signatures; Seal.
2. All credentials will have an official title that is descriptive of the discipline or general area of study, for example: Bachelor of _____; Diploma in _____; Certificate in _____
3. The Registrar will maintain a record of the official names of each credential and will post this information on the College website.

DETERMINATION AND APPROVAL OF CREDENTIALS

4. The process of developing programs and courses leading to credentials is documented in the policy C.3.14 Curriculum Development and Approval Process. Consistent with the College and Institute Act, credentials are approved by the Board, on the advice of Education Council.
5. The Registrar's Office will maintain the master list of credentials offered by the College, including the requirements for successfully completing a credential.

DETERMINATION OF CREDENTIAL REQUIREMENTS

6. All College programs will have the following criteria for determining eligibility for the credential:
 - a. Twenty-five per cent (25%) of the prescribed program credits must be completed at VCC. All of these credits must be obtained within the last half of a program. Credits obtained through PLAR or Transfer Credit may not be counted towards the twenty-five percent.
 - b. A minimum cumulative, program grade point average of 2.0.
 - c. Successful completion of all program requirements as stated in the Program Content Guide at the point of the student's entry to the program.
 - d. All program requirements must be completed within a time period if a time period is specified in the Program Content Guide.
7. Exceptions to these minimum requirements may be considered by Education Council. These exceptions will be specified in the Program Content Guide.
8. Individual programs may be approved for criteria that are above the minimum established by the College. These criteria will be specified in the Program Content Guide.

PROCESS TO DETERMINE ELIGIBILITY FOR CREDENTIAL

9. The Registrar's Office will determine a student's eligibility for a College credential automatically, except for degree programs, insert students and Continuing Studies. The Department Leader of the program will be consulted as required.
 - a. Degree students and insert students must apply for their credential by submitting a Credential Request Form to the Registrar's Office.
 - b. Continuing Studies students must apply for their credential by submitting an Application for Graduation Certificate or Diploma to the Continuing Studies office. Upon receipt of this application, the student's eligibility for a credential will be determined by the department, and a request to issue the relevant credential will be made to the Registrar's Office.
10. The Department Leader may recommend the waiver of certain requirements for graduation. The Registrar has final approval over such waivers.

MULTIPLE CREDENTIALS

11. Credits earned for one credential may be used to meet some of the requirements of a second credential of the same type (e.g. two certificates), provided students complete 50% new course work.
12. In the case of an awarded credential being used to enter a more advanced credential (such as a diploma being used as the first two years towards a degree), credits from that credential cannot be applied as credit in the last two years. Credits can only be applied once within a credential.

AWARDING OF CREDENTIAL

13. All credentials are confirmed at one of the College's convocation ceremonies.

RELATED POLICY

Refer to C.1.3 Granting of Credentials Policy.