



Title	<b>Granting of Credentials</b>
Policy No.	C.1.3
Approval Body	Board of Governors
Policy Sponsor	Vice President, Academic & Research
Last Revised/Replaces	April 29, 2004; March 27, 2008; May 28, 2014; November 17, 2016
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### **CONTEXT AND PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to inform current and prospective students, as well as the College community, of the requirements for the awarding of official credentials.

The term “credential” refers to the confirmation by Vancouver Community College (VCC; the College) of the completion by a student of a defined program of required and elective courses that has been approved by the Education Council.

This Policy and related Procedures identifies the types of credentials issued by VCC and outlines the responsibilities of various bodies within the College for the issuance of credentials.

### **SCOPE AND LIMITS**

This Policy and related Procedures applies to the issuance of all credentials by the College.

This Policy does not apply to Statements of Completion, VCC Awards of Achievement and non-credit courses/programs.

### **STATEMENT OF POLICY PRINCIPLES**

1. The development and approval of all credentials is guided by needs as expressed by the communities served by VCC.
2. In order to maximize student mobility and success, credentials are also guided by Provincial Ministry guidelines, professional and industry association requirements, accreditation bodies and credentialing policies at other postsecondary institutions with which the College may wish to articulate.
3. All credentials are documented and issued through the Registrar’s Office or as delegated.
4. The College identifies the minimum credit requirements for a student to be eligible for each type of VCC credential.
5. The College identifies the minimum requirement (courses to be taken through the College) in order for a student to be eligible for a VCC credential.
6. The College identifies the minimum grades required for graduation.
7. The College will identify a maximum duration a student may work on a credential. Any duration limit will be specified in the Program Content Guide. Normally, duration limits will be: three years for a certificate; five years for a diploma; and seven years for a degree.

Extenuating circumstances may warrant an extension. Students must apply to the Registrar's Office or delegate for an extension. The granting of the extension must be approved by the Dean responsible for the program.

8. The Registrar or delegate has the authority, on a case by case basis and in consultation with the responsible Dean/Department Leader or the Director of Student Services, to make exceptions to the minimum requirements.
9. Programs with approved credentials that do not meet the requirements laid out in this policy will transition to the new policy requirements when the program goes through a formal program renewal process, or at the initiative of the department.

## DEFINITIONS

Course Exemption: refers to the waiving of a pre-requisite or required course. Although direct transfer credit for the course has not been assigned, an exemption granted with unassigned transfer credit will allow students to take courses for which the exempted course is a prerequisite. Because credit for the exempted courses is not earned directly, students may be required to replace the exempted course with an alternate in order to meet program requirements.

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:

Short Certificate: A defined program of study usually involving less than one year of study and consisting of 6-17 credits.

Certificate: A defined program of study usually involving one year of study and consisting of 18-59 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.

## **RELATED LEGISLATION & POLICIES**

### Legislation

*College and Institute Act, (RSBC 1996) Chapter 52*

### Policies

- C.1.1 Grading, Progression and Withdrawal
- C.1.4 Assignment of Credits to Courses
- D.3.5 Prior Learning Assessment & Recognition
- D.4.1 Students with Disabilities
- C.3.14 Curriculum Development and Approval

## **RELATED PROCEDURES**

Refer to C.1.3 Granting of Credentials Procedures