

POST-SECONDARY QUALITY ASSURANCE PRACTICES

Prepared for the Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association

by

Nancy Morgan – Barrister and Solicitor
& Melissa Louie – Law Student

January 23, 2006

POST-SECONDARY QUALITY ASSURANCE PRACTICES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	1
1.0 Introduction	3
1.1 Glossary of Terms.....	3
2.0 Background	5
3.0 Legislation	6
3.1 <i>College and Institute Act</i>	6
3.2 <i>University Act</i>	7
3.3 <i>Degree Authorization Act</i>	7
3.4 <i>Private Career Training Institutions Act</i>	8
3.5 American Legislation.....	8
3.6 New Zealand Legislation.....	8
4.0 Legal and Policy Foundation for Quality Assurance Practices	9
4.1 Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada.....	9
4.2 B.C Ministry of Advanced Education.....	10
4.2.1 Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework.....	13
4.3 Canadian Council of Technicians and Technologists.....	15
4.4 First Nations Adult and Higher Education Consortium.....	16
4.5 Aboriginal Institutes' Consortium.....	18
4.6 Private Career Training Institutions Agency of B.C.....	19

4.7	Other.....	21
4.7.1	The Association of Aboriginal Post-Secondary Institutions.....	21
4.7.2	The First Nations Schools Assessment Project.....	22
4.8	American Indian Higher Education Consortium.....	23
4.9	The New Zealand Process.....	25
4.10	World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium.....	28
5.0	Characteristics Common to All Quality Assurance Processes.....	31
6.0	Conclusion.....	32
	List of Acronyms.....	33
	Bibliography.....	34

The Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association would like to acknowledge and thank the Indian Studies Support Program Committee for providing support and funding for this research project.

POST-SECONDARY QUALITY ASSURANCE PRACTICES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper is a general overview of some of the different methods of post-secondary accreditation in Canada, the United States and New Zealand. It is not meant to serve as an exhaustive list of all accreditation processes, but rather, it is meant to give the reader a general understanding of such processes.

In Canada, public post-secondary institutions are established by legislation and receive public funds to maintain daily operations. Included in this category are public universities, colleges, university-colleges, institutes, community colleges, regional colleges, colleges of applied arts and learning centres.

Public post-secondary institutions, as well as a small number of private institutions, have the authority to grant degrees, diplomas, and certificates through specific legislation. When an institution has this level of authority it is considered to be a “recognized” institute.

Most private institutions are not “recognized”, but are registered or licensed through provincial or territorial government authority. Registered or licensed institutions issue diplomas or certificates that are **not authorized** by specific legislation. Quality assurance methods are in place that correspond to the level of authority (e.g. the ability to grant degrees) and status of specific institutions.

Quality assurance relates to the achievement of educational program standards established by institutions, professional organizations, government, and/or standard-setting bodies established by government. Quality assurance mechanisms are the processes by which the achievement of these standards is measured. Although quality assurance processes vary by country, they share a number of common characteristics.

Common characteristics generally shared by the various accreditation models and processes include:

- Institutions apply for accreditation by first submitting an application or letter of interest to an appropriate accrediting body or association. Then the facilitation of program/course accreditation is done through consultation and cooperation of the agency, the institutions, government and businesses.
- Once the application is submitted and accepted by the accrediting agency or body, the institutions must conduct their own internal audit processes and submit various reports to the agency or body.

- All reports are subsequently reviewed and followed by an on-site accreditation team's visit to the institution for a comprehensive review of the institution's self-study report and a review of the facility.
- Public institutions are generally required to be authorized or recognized under provincial legislation in order to grant degrees, diplomas, and certificates.
- Private institutions are usually registered or licensed institutions that apply for quality assurance review and articulation.

It is important to note the absence of a formal, national system of accreditation for post-secondary education providers in Canada. This makes it challenging to obtain a clear picture of how quality is assured at both the institutional and program levels. As the mobility of people and programs increases and the use of information technology expands, mechanisms for maintaining quality are becoming increasingly important.

Aboriginal institutions seeking to ensure the quality of their institution and of the programs they offer may obtain accreditation of programs through a number of processes.

One option is the indirect accreditation of programs or courses through an affiliation agreement with an accredited University or College. This method is generally used for a single course or program. In the alternative, an institution may seek to obtain accreditation of programs through provincially established accreditation agencies or bodies. At this time, Aboriginal post-secondary institutions generally obtain accreditation through affiliation agreements with public institutions as a pre-requisite to receiving provincial funding.

Institutions may also wish to apply to various agencies such as a non-governmental, not-for-profit organization (e.g. the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada). Membership in these types of agencies, such as in the AUCC, coupled with a university's provincial government charter, is generally deemed to be the equivalent of a formal accreditation system.

The First Nations Accreditation Board is another option of pursuing accreditation; however the current status of this Board is unclear. Alternatively, institutions may wish to apply for accreditation under the World Indigenous Higher Education Consortium. Establishing a First Nations-driven accreditation process may be a possible future direction.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This paper contains a general overview of some of the different methods of accreditation in Canada, the United States and New Zealand. It is not meant to serve as an exhaustive listing of all accreditation processes; rather it is meant to give the reader a general understanding of such processes.

A glossary of key terms is provided to allow for a better understanding of the terms used in this paper. Following the glossary is a brief background of the various quality assurance processes. The paper includes an overview of legislation that provides authority for institutions seeking accreditation.

There are many different accreditation processes throughout the world. This paper contains a selection of several processes used in Canada, the United States and New Zealand. Several characteristics common to all processes have been identified and highlighted in the last portion of the paper.

The paper concludes with a summary of potential options for institutions seeking accreditation.

1.1 GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Accreditation of Professional Programs	At the provincial and national levels, Canadian regulatory bodies participate in the establishment and review of post-secondary curriculum standards which leads to professional accreditation of specific programs (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. "PSE Program Evaluation Report". October 31 st , 2004).
Affiliated	Non-degree-granting institutions delivering degree granting programs through a formal arrangement whereby graduates are granted degrees by degree granting institutions (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. "PSE Program Evaluation Report". October 31 st , 2004).
Articulation	Formal agreements between institutions of mutually acceptable program delivery and credit awards in specific programs in advance of their delivery (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. "PSE Program Evaluation Report". October 31 st , 2004).
Certificate	A qualification awarded upon successful completion of a university program that is usually one year in length (http://www.aucc.ca/can_uni/student_info/can_student/glossary_e.html).

Doctoral or PhD	Doctoral programs require a minimum of three years of full-time study beyond the master's level degree. At least one of year must be spent on campus (http://www.aucc.ca/can_uni/general_info/degrees_e.html).
Diploma	A qualification awarded on the basis of one or two years of successful study. Usually it is at less than degree level, but some diplomas are at the graduate level (http://www.aucc.ca/can_uni/student_info/can_student/glossary_e.html).
Licensed	Private post-secondary education and training providers licensed by provincial or territorial government authorities (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. "PSE Program Evaluation Report. October 31 st , 2004).
Master's	Master's degrees generally require at least one year of full-time study beyond the undergraduate degree. It entails developing a thesis (a long essay based on original research), practicum or research paper (http://www.aucc.ca/can_uni/general_info/degrees_e.html).
Recognized	Post-secondary institutions given authority to grant degrees, diplomas, and certificates, through specific provincial or territorial legislation (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. "PSE Program Evaluation Report. October 31 st , 2004).
Registered	Private post-secondary education and training providers registered by provincial or territorial government authorities (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. "PSE Program Evaluation Report. October 31 st , 2004).
Undergraduate	Undergraduate programs leading to a bachelor's degree generally require three or four years of full-time study, depending on the province. An honours degree usually involves a higher level of concentration and achievement within the honours subject and may require additional credits. This is also known as a baccalaureate degree (http://www.aucc.ca/can_uni/general_info/degrees_e.html).
Universities	Universities offer bachelor's, master's and doctoral (usually a PhD) degree programs in subject areas as diverse as business, astronomy, genetics and fine arts. These degrees prepare students for a variety of professions and careers and offer opportunities for academic study (http://www.aucc.ca/can_uni/general_info/schools_e.html).

University College In British Columbia and Nova Scotia, these institutions combine university and college traditions to offer students both degree programs and college diplomas and certificates with the latter often "laddering" into the former (http://www.aucc.ca/can_uni/general_info/schools_e.html).

2.0 BACKGROUND

In Canada, public institutions are established through legislation and receive public funds to maintain daily operations. Included in this category are universities, colleges, university-colleges, institutes, community colleges, regional colleges, colleges of applied arts and learning centres.

Public post-secondary institutions, as well as a small number of private institutions, have the authority to grant certificates, diplomas, and degrees through specific legislation. When an institution has this level of authority it is deemed to be a "recognized" institute.

Universities, colleges, institutes, and schools may also be categorized as private post-secondary institutions, which are not established under public legislation. For the most part, private institutions do not receive public funding to maintain daily operations.

Most private institutions are not recognized, but are registered or licensed through provincial or territorial government authority. Registered or licensed institutions issue diplomas or certificates that are not authorized by specific legislation. Quality assurance methods are in place that correspond to the level of authority (e.g. the ability to grant degrees) and status of specific institutions.

Quality assurance relates to the achievement of educational program standards established by institutions, professional organizations, government, and/or standard-setting bodies established by government. Quality assurance mechanisms are the processes by which the achievement of these standards is measured (<http://www.cicic.ca/postsec/accreditation/accreditation.en.stm>).

The term "accreditation" refers to the approval of a post-secondary institution or program that has been found by an accreditation body to meet predetermined standards through a recognized process of validation (<http://www.cicic.ca/postsec/accreditation/accreditation.en.stm>).

However, the term "accreditation" has a very limited meaning in Canada. It is used mostly by professional bodies when referring to their evaluation of specific university and college programs. The term may also be used in a few instances by governments in validating private sector education and training organizations. Very few other organizations use the term, although the quality assurance methods they employ may achieve similar outcomes (<http://www.cicic.ca/postsec/accreditation/accreditation.en.stm>).

In addition to professional organizations or standard-setting bodies established by government, Canadian professional regulatory bodies (for example, in the fields of nursing, architecture, and engineering) participate in the establishment and review of postsecondary curriculum standards. These regulatory bodies also consult on other professional issues governing students' preparations for entry into professions at both the provincial and national levels.

3.0 LEGISLATION

Legislation is used, to some extent, by the British Columbia Government and other governments to establish, govern, recognize and ensure the quality of post-secondary education. Under specific legislation, programs and their standards may be established by government or require government approval.

3.1 College and Institute Act, R.S.B.C. 1996 c. 52

The *College and Institute Act* is a comprehensive act dealing with colleges, university-colleges, the British Columbia Institute of Technology, and Provincial Institutes.

The act covers a wide variety of issues regarding the creation, objectives, maintenance, and evaluation of all courses and programs offered by the institutions covered under this act.

The provisions in section 3 permit the Minister of Advanced Education to establish articulation committees, to require an institution to participate in the work of an articulation committee, and to require that an institution accept as equivalent a course from another institution which the Minister has decided is equivalent. Section 50 of this act proclaims that an institution under this act is for all its purposes an agent of the government. This is an important statement to note as it may have implications for the extent of involvement of the government within the institution or influence and involvement on the institution's governing board.

Amendments to the *College and Institute Act* and the *Institute of Technology Act* allow colleges to offer applied baccalaureate degrees, and university colleges and provincial institutes to offer applied degrees at the master's level, with approval by the Lieutenant Governor in Council. The required legislated changes were included in the "Consequential and Related Amendments" section of the *Degree Authorization Act*, which was passed by the B.C. legislature in May 2002. The amendments were brought into force by regulation on May 16, 2003.

3.2 University Act, R.S.B.C. 1996 c. 468

This act is limited in scope to Universities in British Columbia. The general focus of the legislation is on the structure or organization of Universities (e.g. convocation, the Chancellor, the Board of Governors, the Senate, the Faculty, and the powers and duties of a university).

Although universities enjoy a greater level of autonomy than colleges or university-colleges, there are some limitations placed on universities regarding the offering of a new degree program.

Section 48(1)(2) reads as follows:

- (2) Despite subsection (1), a university must not establish a new degree program without the approval of the minister.

In British Columbia, new degree program proposals are now subject to the *Degree Authorization Act*.

3.3 Degree Authorization Act, S.B.C. 2002 c. 24

The *Degree Authorization Act* requires a quality assessment process to be established that provides the basis for ministerial consent to allow private and out-of-province public post-secondary institutions to grant degrees, provide or advertise degree programs, and/or use the word "university" in British Columbia.

This act also increases degree-granting opportunities at British Columbia public post-secondary institutions.

The *Degree Authorization Act* provides an exemption from the consent requirements for up to five years for those institutions that were registered with the Private Post-Secondary Education Commission on April 11, 2002, and who were granting degrees, providing or advertising degree programs, or using the word "university" at that time. However, should an institution begin to grant certificates, diplomas or advertise the offering of such programs, the institution may be required to register with the Private Career Training Institutions Agency (<http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/degree-authorization/faqs.htm#q8>).

3.4 Private Career Training Institutions Act, S.B.C. 2003 c. 79

In most circumstances, unless an institution requests in writing that it come under the *Private Career Training Institutions Act* sooner, the institution's registration under the new Act will take effect when its PPSEC registration certificate expires.

3.5 American Legislation

Executive Order on Tribal Colleges and Universities

The Executive Order ("Order") on Tribal Colleges and Universities was initially issued on October 19, 1996 (No. 13021) by President Clinton, followed by President Bush signing on July 3, 2002 (No.13270). The Order reaffirms the role Tribal Colleges play in reservation development by directing all Federal departments and Agencies to increase their support to the colleges.

The Executive Order also promotes tribal college participation in programs throughout the Federal Government and elevates the American Indian Higher Education Consortium's (AIHEC) profile as the accrediting body for higher education institutions (http://www.aihec.org/PolicyComponents.html#Executive_Order).

The order makes the education of American Indians part of a larger national mandate, one that all leaders and policymakers have a responsibility to fulfill. Toward this end, all accrediting agencies must prepare strategic plans and issue annual reports on the progress made in collaborating with the tribal colleges, and they must also create a body to monitor that progress. To oversee this work, an independent Presidential Board of Advisors was appointed. For further information, see the White House Initiative on Tribal Colleges and Universities website (http://www.aihec.org/PolicyComponents.html#Executive_Order).

3.6 New Zealand Legislation

Education Act 1989, no 80

The *Education Act* provides the authority to establish the New Zealand Qualifications Authority which provides an overarching role in quality assured qualifications and to coordinate national qualifications in New Zealand.

Universities Act 1961

This legislation provides the authority for the establishment of the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee which is a Crown entity representing eight of New

Zealand's Universities. This legislation also provides the authority for the Committee to accredit university programs and courses and to conduct internal audits on the universities.

4.0 LEGAL AND POLICY FOUNDATION FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES

4.1 ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES OF CANADA

Overview

The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada ("AUCC") is not an accrediting body. It is a non-governmental, not-for-profit organization that is funded through membership fees and revenues from contract management services and publications. The provinces and territories are responsible for all levels of education including universities. There is no federal ministry of education or formal accreditation system. Instead, **membership in the AUCC, coupled with the college or university's provincial government charter, is generally deemed the equivalent of a formal accreditation system** (http://www.aucc.ca/can_uni/general_info/overview_e.html).

The AUCC represents over 90 Canadian public and private not-for-profit universities and university-degree level colleges. Included in this membership is the First Nations University of Canada who has been a member of the AUCC since 1994. The AUCC membership ranges from small, undergraduate liberal arts institutions to large, urban multi-campus universities offering a broad selection of undergraduate, graduate and professional programs. Its mandate is to facilitate the growth of public policy on higher education by developing proposals and communicating the perspectives of members to government, business and community leaders. The AUCC also encourages cooperation among universities and governments, industry, communities, and institutions in other countries (http://www.aucc.ca/about_us/index_e.html).

The priorities of the AUCC include: improved funding for Canada's universities; enhanced support for research; increased internationalization of higher education in Canada; improved student assistance policies; and intellectual property policies that allow university education and scholarship to flourish. This is achieved by sharing expertise, information and the perspectives of their members with government, industry and community leaders.

The criteria for admission to Institutional Membership of the AUCC are as follows. A member institution must be: degree-granting through legislative

authority; have as its primary mission university-level education; be committed to research, scholarship and academic inquiry; have an appropriate governance structure including academic decision making vested in academic staff; and satisfy the AUCC Board of Directors and membership, after receiving a report by a Visiting Committee, that it is providing education of university standard. A further elaboration of these criteria is available for viewing on the AUCC website (http://www.aucc.ca/qa/pdf/reg_prov_overview_e.pdf).

4.2 B.C MINISTRY OF ADVANCED EDUCATION

Overview

Under the legislation governing public post-secondary institutions, the Minister of Advanced Education must approve all new degree programs, applications for use of the word "university" and applications for exempt status.

Institutional policies may stand alone, or they may operate in an environment which includes an additional level of institutional quality assurance, as is the case in British Columbia.

All applications for ministerial consent or approval must be submitted through the Post-secondary Institution Proposal System. The Post-secondary Institution Proposal System is a web-based application for the submission and review of degree program proposals, applications for exempt status, and use of the word "university" (<http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/degree-authorization/apply-here.htm>).

Degree Quality Assessment Board

The Province of British Columbia has appointed a Degree Quality Assessment Board and established criteria to be applied when a private institution or an out-of-province public institution applies for consent to provide degree programs or use the word "university" in the province. The board also recommends to the Minister of Advanced Education the policies, criteria and guidelines that will apply for the purposes of giving or refusing consent, or for attaching terms and conditions to consent. The board is composed of up to 11 voting members appointed by the Minister of Advanced Education and includes a chair and vice-chair.

Using the same criteria, the Degree Quality Assessment Board also conducts quality assessment reviews of new degree programs proposed by the province's public institutions. A British Columbia public institution with a proven track record (a 10-year history enrolling students in programs at a particular degree level) and appropriate governance mechanisms may apply for "exempt status" at a specific degree level (<http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/degree-authorization/apply-here.htm>).

When a public institution submits a new degree proposal or if an institution has been granted exempt status and later wishes to submit proposals for new degree programs at the same level, it will go directly to the Minister for approval following a 30-day Notice of Intent. The notice must summarize the purpose and key objectives of the application and will be posted on the Ministry's website during the 30 day period. The purpose of the Notice of Intent is to provide the public with an opportunity to view an application and provide comments. In addition, institutions will submit a completed Ministry Review Template to the Ministry prior to, or concurrent with, posting the full program proposal on the Post-Secondary Institution Proposal System (PSIPS) website (<http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/degree-authorization/bcpublic/policy-framework.htm>).

The Ministry Review will address the institution's readiness to offer applied degree programs and will focus on four issues:

1. benefits for students;
2. impact on the existing certificate and diploma programs offered by the institution;
3. extent to which related industries and employers support the intent of the applied degree program and view the program as meeting their needs; and
4. implications of the proposed applied degree for system capacity and coordination.

The Degree Quality Assessment Board will not review proposals from institutions granted exempt status unless the Minister has concerns about it and refers it to the Board (http://sam.educ.gov.bc.ca/servlet/page?_pageid=60&_dad=sam&_schema=SAM).

The Degree Quality Assessment Board approves new degree programs and reviews such programs for quality assurance and acts within the legislative scope of the *Degree Authorization Act*.

British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer

Pre-dating the Degree Quality Assessment Board is an agency which deals with the transferability of existing courses and programs between public and private institutions in BC. This agency, known as the British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer ("BCCAT"), was specifically created to formalize and to provide more consistency to the function of coordinating course transferability in B.C.

This agency is funded by the provincial government and Council membership is made up of non-governmental, post-secondary institutional representatives.

BCCAT was not given any legislative authority by government to carry out its mandate but was created as an arm's length agency whose role was to facilitate collaborative efforts among autonomous institutions in a differentiated post-secondary system. Transfer and articulation in BC have always been the responsibility of individual institutions, and BCCAT has coordinated and managed the processes involved

<http://66.102.7.104/u/bccat?q=cache:eV2deggZ7aoJ:www.bccat.bc.ca/pubs/bccataccountability.pdf+legislative+authority+for+bccat&hl=en&ie=UTF-8>).

The main roles of BCCAT are to encourage institutions to develop policies and practices that facilitate the transferability of post-secondary credit courses so that credit granted at one institution can be applied toward credentials at other institutions. It also examines issues pertaining to capacity, demand, and student mobility and recommends policies and practices that facilitate the admission process for direct entry and transfer students.

The Council also publishes the B.C. Transfer Guide which, together with the Online Transfer Guide, is the definitive authority on transfer in B.C. Together, these two resources contain information on the formal and informal criteria, policy, processes, regulations and agreements for transfer in B.C.

An interesting piece of work undertaken by BCCAT entitled, "The Articulation Costing Report, Phase II" examined all aspects of articulation work, including that which occurs at various levels in institutions, that which occurs in articulation committees, and the supporting work of BCCAT

<http://66.102.7.104/u/bccat?q=cache:eV2deggZ7aoJ:www.bccat.bc.ca/pubs/bccataccountability.pdf+legislative+authority+for+bccat&hl=en&ie=UTF-8>).

The researcher derived cost estimates for all phases of this activity. It was determined that articulation costs the BC Transfer System about \$6 million a year, or about \$120 per articulation agreement. While maintenance of articulation committees costs about \$2 million per year. It was also found that dealing with non-articulated courses is much more expensive than dealing with those that have been articulated

<http://66.102.7.104/u/bccat?q=cache:eV2deggZ7aoJ:www.bccat.bc.ca/pubs/bccataccountability.pdf+legislative+authority+for+bccat&hl=en&ie=UTF-8>).

In addition to this system established by the Provincial Government, community colleges offering technical programs or technical institutions may also seek accreditation through another body.

4.2.1 Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Policy Framework

Strategic priorities of the Ministry of Education in supporting the Provincial Government's Aboriginal policy and program initiatives include increasing participation, retention and success in post-secondary education for Aboriginal people. These priorities are intended to be realized through the development and implementation of a comprehensive policy framework (<http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/aboriginal/framewrk.htm>).

The Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework (the "policy framework") may be defined within four strategic goals that include:

- Relevance and quality of post-secondary education programming that is responsive to the needs of Aboriginal learners;
- Access to post-secondary education and promoting choice for Aboriginal students in location, method of delivery and programming;
- Affordability; and
- Ensuring that post-secondary education governance structures are representative, accountable and sensitive to Aboriginal learners' needs, while maintaining educational quality and student mobility (<http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/aboriginal/framewrk.htm>).

Within the policy framework, the public post-secondary system will retain responsibility for all its constituents, including Aboriginal learners. Specifically, the policy framework is based upon the assumption that it will work within the existing post-secondary education system and legislative framework (<http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/aboriginal/framewrk.htm>).

Under the existing legislative framework and within the existing post-secondary education system are institutions which have entered into partnerships or affiliation agreements with public institutions. These partnerships provide the prerequisite to obtaining provincial funding and aim at ensuring that courses and programs under Aboriginal management are culturally relevant in content and delivery. Additionally, these partnerships ensure that the quality control mechanisms of public universities, colleges and institutes with respect to accreditation, articulation and accountability are provided for (<http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/aboriginal/framewrk.htm>).

Examples of partnerships or affiliation agreements include the Native Education Centre which has operated for over 38 years and is affiliated with Vancouver Community College and Langara College for accreditation and Chemainus Native College which is affiliated with Malaspina University-College (<http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/aboriginal/framewrk.htm>).

Another potential initiative under this policy framework is to establish provincial Aboriginal-controlled institutions. These institutions will be recognized by establishing a framework to designate an Aboriginal post-secondary institution as “independent” under the *College and Institute Act*. Designation under the Act will be determined in accordance with criteria established by the Province. The application of these criteria will ensure that Aboriginal-controlled institutions achieve articulation and accreditation standards equivalent to public post-secondary institutions (<http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/aboriginal/framewrk.htm>).

Criteria established within this policy framework for designation as an independent accredited Aboriginal institute under the *College and Institute Act* require that the institution has:

- Goals that are supported by Aboriginal leadership and aim to develop autonomy and self-reliance;
- A governance structure comparable to that of a public institution under the *College and Institute Act*;
- An established affiliation agreement with a public institution for a minimum period of five years;
- An established student population of 300 students for a minimum period of five years;
- Demonstrated standards required for articulation with public institutions and recognized levels of accreditation;
- An institutional evaluation demonstrating accountability, quality curriculum standards and teaching practices; and
- A statement of purpose with a formalized educational plan of programming to achieve its mandate, goals and objectives and fiscal plans for achieving these purposes (<http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/aboriginal/framewrk.htm>).

All requests for designation as an accredited, independent Aboriginal institution will also be assessed in the context of Province-wide criteria which include:

- The geographic distribution of Aboriginal-controlled institutions, the numbers of students served and the extent to which programs for Aboriginal learners are available from public and private institutions;
- Participation rates and the extent to which participation is being met by public institutions; and

- Fiscal considerations (<http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/aboriginal/framewrk.htm>).

These guidelines and criteria contain a provision to allow smaller institutions that are not eligible for a stand-alone designation to form a consortium with a provincially-designated Aboriginal institution under a common governance structure, subject to the approval of the Lieutenant Governor in Council. Two Aboriginal institutions were provincially-recognized in 1995: the Institute of Indigenous Government (“IIG”) and the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology (“NVIT”). The mechanism used to designate both the IIG and NVIT as Provincial Institutions under the *College and Institutes Act* was an order-in-council (<http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/aboriginal/framewrk.htm>).

4.3 CANADIAN COUNCIL OF TECHNICIANS AND TECHNOLOGISTS

Overview

The Canadian Council of Technicians and Technologists (“CCTT”) establishes and maintains national competency standards for certifying members with a “quality seal of approval” in 14 applied science and engineering technology disciplines: bioscience, industrial, building, instrumentation, chemical, mechanical, civil, mining, electrical, petroleum, electronics, geo-matics, forestry, and information technology. Examples of member institutions include British Columbia Institute of Technology, Selkirk College, and the University College of Malaspina (<http://www.cctt.ca/english/about/index.html>).

Once accredited and certified by CCTT, technicians and technologists may use one of the following professional designations: CET (Certified Engineering Technologist); ASCT (Applied Science Technologist); CTech (Certified Technician); RET (Registered Engineering Technologist); and TP (technologue professionnel).

National accreditation is the desired outcome in a process in which technology programs at Canadian community colleges and educational agencies are measured against a set of national standards - the Canadian Technology Standards (“CTS”).

National accreditation is quality assurance. A diploma from a nationally accredited program is an assurance that the graduate meets the educational standards for certification used by the CCTT provincial constituent members. Certification earns an individual the privilege of using the letters ASCT, CTech, CET, RET, CCIT or TP (<http://www.cctt.ca/english/about/index.html>).

Accreditation Process

The Canadian Technology Accreditation Board (“CTAB”) is a standing committee of the Canadian Council of Technicians and Technologists, created in 1982 from CCTT's national standards committee. CTAB provides a national accreditation program.

In general terms, the following steps must occur for an institution to obtain accreditation:

1. The educational agency requests accreditation for a particular engineering or applied science or engineering technology program by completing an application available from CCTT's website. Then the program staff complete and submit the required documentation.
2. Upon review and approval, CTAB, in cooperation with the related provincial constituent member associations, assembles an accreditation team to visit the school and assess the program in question. The visiting team examines every facet of the program, including content, facilities, student services, and professional development of faculty, with program outcome of primary importance. CTAB bases its evaluation on the competencies of the students upon graduation (<http://www.cctt.ca/english/accred/process.html>).
3. The accreditation team submits a written report detailing the results of its comparison of the program to the established national standards and if necessary makes recommendations for program improvements.
4. Once the institute earns national accreditation status for a program, this status will last for a specific term. At the expiry of that term and then bi-annually, the institute must submit a self-assessment report highlighting all changes made to the program since the previous evaluation (<http://www.cctt.ca/english/accred/process.html>).

4.4 FIRST NATIONS ADULT AND HIGHER EDUCATION CONSORTIUM

First Nations Adult and Higher Education Consortium (“FNAHEC”) currently has 10 members in its organization consisting of First Nation Colleges and Adult Training Centers. The member institutes are primarily located in Alberta and one in Manitoba. Some examples of member institutions include Blue Quills First Nations College, Bullhead Adult Education Centre, Maskwachees Cultural College, Old Sun Community College, Yellowhead Tribal College, and Yellowquill College (<http://www.fnahec.org/>).

The purpose of the FNAHEC is to provide quality adult and higher education, controlled by First Nations people (<http://www.fnahec.org/>).

FNAHEC is a non-profit organization that strives for First Nation success through education. The aim is to promote control of First Nations standards of excellence in education through support of our own accreditation processes and mechanisms.

Accreditation Process: The First Nations Accreditation Board

The First Nations Accreditation Board's accreditation process includes four major steps. Under this process, all costs associated with the application of the accreditation process are borne by the institution. These costs may include, but are not limited to, related fees, the costs associated with an on-site visit, and the financial costs of hosting the on-site evaluation team (<http://www.fnahec.org/>).

The first step in the process begins with the institution submitting an application and fee. The examining officer will review the application and send written acknowledgement to the institute. The acknowledgement will also include a written request for a preliminary report. A sample outline for the report will also be provided to the applicant institute.

Once received, the examining officer will review the preliminary report and may contact outside organizations or professions for validation of the areas covered in the report. When this step is complete the report is then passed to the executive director of the board for review. After review and discussion, if the report is deemed acceptable, the institute will be advised to begin work on its self-study report.

The institute will be provided with a timeline to complete the report. Once this report is completed, the examining officer will review the report to ensure compliance with established criteria. The executive director will then review the report and make the final determination as to its acceptability. The institute is then contacted and an on-site audit is conducted.

The executive director appoints an audit team to attend the institution to conduct a comprehensive review. Each team member is provided with copies of the self-study report, the self-study guide, and the team guide. The examining officer ensures that the audit team chair submits a report to the executive director within 30 days of the on-site visit.

The executive director will review the report and send a copy to the applicant institution. The examining officer then must ensure that the applicant is aware of and responds to the report.

Should the team and the executive director agree to accredit the applicant, a certificate of accreditation and letter confirming accreditation status will be sent to the institute.

4.5 ABORIGINAL INSTITUTES' CONSORTIUM

Overview

The Aboriginal Institutes' Consortium ("AIC") is the collective voice that advocates and negotiates recognition and resources for the benefit of Aboriginal post-secondary education and training institutes in Ontario. Currently the Aboriginal Institutes' Consortium represents eight member institutes in the province of Ontario. Some examples of member institutes include the First Nations Technical Institute, Anishinabek Education Institute, and Six Nations Polytechnic (<http://www.aboriginalinstitute.com/>).

The Chiefs, communities and the AIC member institutes together provide provincial recognition for its members. The AIC is committed to assisting its members to achieve recognition as legitimate public post-secondary institutes operating within the province of Ontario. Generally institutions obtain accreditation of programs through affiliation agreements with various Universities and obtain accreditation under the provincial system. The work of the Aboriginal Institutes' Consortium has been sponsored in part by: Human Resources Development Canada-Industrial Adjustment Services, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities ("MTCU")-Adjustment Advisory Committee, MTCU-Aboriginal Education and Training Strategy, and Indian & Northern Affairs Canada.

In seeking accreditation one AIC member institute is currently going through the World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium process.

Generally, institutions in Ontario wishing to offer degrees, or programs leading to degrees, must comply with the *Post-secondary Education Choice & Excellence Act 2000* S.O. 2000, c. 36 which governs degree-granting Institutions. The Act prevents institutions from granting degrees, providing programs of post-secondary study leading to a degree, or being known as universities, unless they are authorized by an Act of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario or have the consent of the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. All organizations, whether in Ontario or out-of-province, public or private for-profit, or not-for-profit require either an act of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario or the consent of the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities to grant a degree and to provide a program or part of a program of post-secondary study leading to a degree to be conferred by a person inside or outside Ontario, to use the term university (http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/priv_deg.html).

Private career colleges (“PCC”) are privately owned and are operated as commercial enterprises. They must be registered under the *Private Career Colleges Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c.26 administered by the Ministry of Education and Training. The PCC Act outlines requirements for registration, fees, tuition fee refunds, student contracts, financial security, instructional staff and advertising. The primary focus of the PCC Act is to license businesses and provide a basic level of consumer protection for PCC students (<http://pccreview.edu.gov.on.ca/>).

4.6 PRIVATE CAREER TRAINING INSTITUTIONS AGENCY OF B.C

Overview

On November 22, 2004, the Private Post-Secondary Education Commission (PPSEC) became the Private Career Training Institutions Agency, operating under a new Act, the *Private Career Training Institutions Act*.

The Private Career Training Institutions Agency (“PCTIA”) has responsibility under the Private Career Training Institutions Act to: provide consumer protection to the students and prospective students of registered institutions; and establish standards of quality that must be met by accredited institutions.

The PCTIA Institutional Accreditation Report was developed as a method to achieve the above noted obligation. This document, which provides the template for the submission of an institutional accreditation report, includes quality standards grouped under six headings related to different dimensions of instructional activity (<http://www.pctia.bc.ca/documents/PCTIA%20Newsletter%20Vol%201%20No%202%20April%202005.pdf>).

The quality standards, which are also included in the template for Institutional Accreditation Annual Reports, seek to define the standards against which accredited institutions in the private career-training sector operate in the interests of their students and stakeholders and in accordance with legislation. They are designed to be enabling rather than prescriptive. Wherever possible, they do not describe processes, but rather identify areas of activity where instructional quality must be addressed systematically.

In keeping with the assumption that each accredited institution accepts responsibility for monitoring and reviewing its own effectiveness and improvement against the quality standards, accredited institutions are expected to develop their own quality policies and processes to meet these standards. (<http://www.pctia.bc.ca/documents/PCTIA%20Newsletter%20Vol%201%20No%202%20April%202005.pdf>).

Accreditation Process

A registered institution that has actively operated as a registered institution for a period of a year or more in British Columbia, or for a similar period of time as a government-regulated institution in another province or territory in Canada or in the United States may submit an application form and fee to begin the PCTIA accreditation process.

A registration officer will then conduct a compliance on-site visit and, if found to be compliant, will pass the file to the accreditation department which will begin the process of accreditation.

Applications for accreditation will only be accepted if the institution is found to be in compliance with the requirements of a registered institution, as set out in the Act, the Regulations and these Bylaws. Otherwise the institute stays registered (but not accredited) until compliance issues are resolved (PCTIA By-Laws Part V).

Accreditation staff will then inform and permit the institute to continue with the process. At this point the institute must prepare and submit an Institutional Report, which is prepared with the assistance of an accreditation officer. The Institutional Accreditation Report must contain the following six sections:

- Mission statement
- Administrative Capacity
- Facilities and Institutional Resources
- Instructors and Facilitators
- Academic Policies and Student Services
- Program Delivery

An accreditation team will be assembled by the accreditation officer and a site visit will be commenced. The site-visit team will validate an institutional self-study and prepare a report assessing the institution against standards of quality established by PCTIA By-laws. The team will make recommendations to the Registrar and the results will be provided to the institute once the report is accepted.

Once accredited, each institution will submit annual reports to the Agency, and complete a formal program review for each program offered, at least once in each five-year period. An accreditation team will also be appointed to visit an accredited institution at least once in each five-year period. Accreditation teams will use information from the institution's annual reports, the formal program-review reports, and on-site visits in the preparation of the team's report to the Agency.

Some deliverables and outcomes to consider in the data collection required for a proper program review include:

- Program objectives, duration, description, and credential awarded
- Admission requirements, practical or work placements, graduation requirements
- Course outline histories
- Enrolment, wait list, retention/attrition, graduation, grade distribution, graduate employment statistics
- External accreditations (e.g. nursing)
- Employer input
- Analysis of physical facilities, library/resource materials
- Program budget
- Resumes of faculty to determine changing qualifications
- Analysis of program weaknesses and strengths as seen by the faculty

4.7 OTHER

4.7.1 The Association of Aboriginal Post-Secondary Institutes

The Association of Aboriginal Post-Secondary Institutes (“AAPSI”), formerly known as the “Association of First Nations Post-Secondary Institutes”, was founded by the En’owkin Centre, the Native Education Centre and the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology. Although AAPSI no longer exists, it developed a useful model for accreditation, which we will discuss below.

AAPSI Overview

According to AAPSI, in order to achieve independent public authority for operation of First Nations Post-Secondary Institutions there must be a public policy framework developed through open consultation. Creation of a public framework would also assist institutions in pursuit of provincial funding that is available to public colleges and universities (Association of Aboriginal Post-Secondary Institutes Board of Directors Retreat, March 1997, Developing a Corporate Vision and Values).

AAPSI recommended that an Aboriginal Accreditation Board be established and subsequently funded by the province. This Board would be constructed to enhance the delivery of services to smaller Aboriginal institutions, to monitor education programming, and to distribute the funds to the various institutions.

The association also recommended the creation of an accreditation committee under the Accreditation Board. This committee would be responsible for maintaining and monitoring educational programming, managing accreditation standards, and granting accreditation status to these smaller institutions.

In order to distribute the funds to the institutions, the association also recommended the establishment of an allocation committee to be charged with the responsibility of allocating funds to the approved institutions (Association of Aboriginal Post-Secondary Institutes Board of Directors Retreat March 1997 Developing a Corporate Vision and Values).

Institutions wishing to apply to AAPSI would be required to meet the various criteria established by AAPSI. The institution would have to have a foundation to develop autonomy and have the support of a First Nation. The institution would also have to be in compliance with provincial legislation which sets out requirements for public institutions.

Additionally, the applicant must also have been in affiliation with a recognized public educational institute for a period of 5 years and demonstrated sound management and educational practices. Applicants must also have a membership of 200 students or an enrollment appropriate to the level of specialty. Accountability measures must also be in place such as a governing structure and those measures required by the Province for the expenditure of public funds (Association of Aboriginal Post-Secondary Institutes Board of Directors Retreat, March 1997, Developing a Corporate Vision and Values).

4.7.2 The First Nations Schools Assessment Project

Overview

Under this school assessment process, First Nations schools are required to provide the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (“DIAND”) with proof of evaluation every five years.

First Nations schools that complete the First Nations Schools Association (“FNSA”) School Assessment Project will be deemed to have met the evaluation requirements. The FNSA has created a framework specifically designed to assess First Nations kindergarten to grade 12 schools. This framework has been deemed to be equivalent to that of an evaluation through the provincial Independent Schools Branch (First Nations Schools Association Assessment Project Master Binder, September 2003).

First Nations School Assessment

The assessment process is intended to enable First Nations schools and the First Nations Adult Education Program Assessment Project to undertake a meaningful review of its operations. The first step in the FNSA evaluation is for the school to submit a letter of interest. Interested schools will then be supported financially and will receive support through various workshops and mentoring efforts.

An internal and external evaluation will also take place. Schools that enroll 45 or more students are required to arrange for a team of at least two evaluators. Schools with fewer students have the option of involving an external team or an individual assessor. Prior to the assessment team's visit, the school must prepare for the assessment, as there are several things that the assessment team will request (e.g. a school map, timetable, staff/student handbook, the budget, internal assessment report, list of the school board, school policy, contact information for the Band Council, and names of parents for contact).

Completed reports of such evaluations must be submitted to the FNSA and to DIAND. Schools will also be provided with a First Nations Schools Assessment Guide for completion. Schools must assess their operation at the program administration level, assess education programs, and submit a growth plan (First Nations Schools Association Assessment Project Master Binder, September 2003).

4.8 AMERICAN INDIAN HIGHER EDUCATION CONSORTIUM

Overview

The American Indian Higher Education Consortium ("AIHEC") was founded in 1972 by the presidents of the first six Tribal Colleges in the United States, as an informal collaboration among member colleges. Today, AIHEC has grown to represent 34 colleges in the United States and one Canadian institution. Unlike most professional associations, it is governed jointly by each member institution.

All Tribal Colleges are fully accredited by one of the more than 55 regional accrediting agencies. Examples of regional accrediting agencies include: the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges; and the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. One Canadian College, Red Crow Community College ("RCCC"), has also been accredited through a regional accrediting process, the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. The RCCC was founded in 1986 and placed under the direction of the Blood Tribe Education Committee (<http://www.aihec.org/>).

AIHEC's mission is to support the work of these colleges and the national movement for tribal self-determination. Its mission statement, adopted in 1973, identifies four objectives which include maintaining commonly held standards of quality in American Indian education, supporting the development of new tribally controlled colleges, promoting and assisting in the development of legislation to support American Indian higher education, and to encourage greater participation by American Indians in the development of higher education policy (<http://www.aihec.org/>).

AIHEC works to preserve and increase funding through the *Tribally Controlled College or University Assistance Act* and other relevant legislation, and to find new sources of funding throughout the Federal Government. Unlike public colleges and universities, Tribal Colleges are located on federal trust territories and receive little or no funding from state or local governments. Instead, the Tribal Colleges' special relationship with the Federal government and the financial support it provides continue to be essential for their survival.

Accreditation Processes

Accreditation Process of Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges

The initial step for a developing postsecondary institution is to seek recognition as a Candidate for Accreditation. While candidacy does not ensure accreditation, it is a status of affiliation with the Commission on Colleges that indicates that an institution has achieved initial recognition and is progressing toward accreditation. The Accreditation Procedural Guide provides complete information on becoming a Candidate for Accreditation.

A very mature postsecondary institution may submit the basic application materials and request approval from the Commission on Colleges to bypass Candidate status and proceed with a comprehensive self-study and evaluation for accreditation. Maturity and stability are emphasized. Most institutions are expected to seek Candidate status first.

When granted, accreditation is not partial. It applies to the entire institution in operation at the time of the most recent full-scale evaluation. It indicates that each constituent or related unit has been examined and has been found to be achieving its own particular purposes satisfactorily, although not necessarily all at the same level of quality.

North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

The accreditation process for the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools includes a five-step comprehensive evaluation process to determine continued accredited status.

The organization engages in a self-study process for approximately two years and prepares a report of its findings in accordance with Commission expectations. The Commission then sends an evaluation team of Consultant-Evaluators to conduct a comprehensive visit for continued accreditation and to write a report containing the team's recommendations. The documents relating to the comprehensive visit are reviewed by a Readers Panel or, in some situations, a Review Committee.

The IAC takes action on the Readers Panel's recommendation. (If a Review Committee reviewed the visit, the Review Committee takes action.) The Board of Trustees will then validate the work of IAC or a Review Committee, finalizing the action.

Evaluations for initial and continued candidacy and initial accreditation also follow the processes outlined above.

4.9 THE NEW ZEALAND PROCESS

Overview

The New Zealand Qualifications Authority ("NZQA") was established in 1990 to provide an overarching role in quality assured qualifications and to coordinate national qualifications in New Zealand (<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/index.html>).

The Qualifications Authority deals with the provision and quality of qualifications. It works in partnership with all education providers and national groups representing education and training in industry and business.

NZQA is a Crown Entity established under the *Education Act 1989*. The Authority is appointed by the Minister of Education, and is accountable through the Minister to Parliament.

The NZQA administers post-secondary qualifications and education providers in non-degree granting institutions such as: polytechnics and colleges of education to the Institute of Technology and Polytechnic Quality and the Association of Colleges of Education in New Zealand. Generally these institutions grant certificates and diplomas.

The authority also evaluates overseas qualifications and administers the New Zealand Register of Quality Assured Qualifications and the National Qualifications Framework. It is under the framework that institutions may apply for and obtain accreditation of an institution (<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/index.html>).

The NZQA operates within the National Qualifications Framework that it developed. This framework has various levels at which an institution may apply for registration. The first level is similar to the Canadian standard of basic trades where an individual may obtain a certificate. Progressing on the continuum, an institution may apply to award diplomas and, at the highest level, may apply to award degrees.

Quality assurance in university programs is the responsibility of the New Zealand Vice Chancellors' Committee (NZVCC).

Accreditation Process: The New Zealand Qualifications Authority

The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) was designed by the Qualifications Authority to provide nationally recognized, consistent standards and qualifications.

NQF qualifications are quality assured and nationally recognized. Administered by the Qualifications Authority, the NQF is a way of structuring national qualifications.

The NQF is a three-pronged quality system where national standards are registered on the framework and followed by institutions applying for accreditation and by accredited organizations. A moderation system works within this framework to ensure national consistency.

All registered standards have an Accreditation and Moderation Plan for applicants to follow. This plan states the requirements that education organizations must meet to ensure that there is national consistency of assessment against the NQF standards.

To become registered, the institution must meet the requirements of Quality Assurance Standard One. Additional information on Quality Assurance Standard One is available on the Qualifications Authority's website (<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers/aaa/resources.html>).

Applications for registration are reviewed by a Quality Auditor and, if all required documentation meets the approval of the Auditor, an on site visit is conducted. If the institution meets all requirements, the registration is granted. Generally, newly registered providers are granted either a six-month or one-year audit cycle to enable close monitoring.

Once an institution is registered, it may then apply for accreditation to award credits from the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and for approval of courses and accreditation to deliver them.

Registered providers may deliver courses that are not yet approved by the Qualifications Authority to domestic students, but students will not be able to access loans and allowances and the provider will not be eligible for government funding. However, program accreditation is required for all courses that enroll international students. Additionally there are exceptions which allow an institution to begin offering courses and programs that have gone through the process of accreditation but have not yet received the final stamp of approval. Generally this is because the accreditation committee may not be scheduled to meet before the course is scheduled to begin.

The Qualifications Authority checks that providers are continuing to meet the requirements of Quality Assurance Standard One through quality audit at set intervals. A standard audit involves four key stages – planning, fieldwork, reporting and post-audit follow-up.

Prior to the audit, the Qualifications Authority requires a provider to have planned and systematic processes in place to objectively review its performance and report the findings. A Self-Evaluation Guide and Workbook is available on the Qualifications Authority website to assist providers to evaluate their performance. However, providers are encouraged to develop internal audit review processes that suit the special characteristics of their own institution.

Accreditation Process: Vice Chancellors' Committee

The New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee (NZVCC) is a Crown entity that was established by the *Universities Act 1961*. Currently, the Committee represents the interests of New Zealand's eight universities: Auckland, Auckland University of Technology, Waikato, Massey, Victoria, Canterbury, Lincoln and Otago. Institutions seeking accreditation submit applications to the Committee on University Academic Programmes ("CUAP").

The CUAP is charged with setting up and applying inter-university course approval, accreditation and moderation procedures. It is the body to which universities must submit any proposals to offer new qualifications or make substantial changes to existing qualifications. All proposals are subjected to scrutiny through a peer review process.

Once an institution is approved, an independent body set up by the Vice Chancellors' Committee known as The New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit (NZUAAU) supports universities in their continuing achievement of standards of excellence. The NZUAAU conducts institutional audits on the university campus. The audit begins with a process of self-review within the institution. The audit panel reviews the self-review and takes the institution further into its plans for future improvement (<http://www.nzvcc.ac.nz/default.aspx?l=1&p=5>).

Maori Tertiary Education

Working within this framework are the Maori people of New Zealand.

Educational reforms under the Ministry of Education's *Tomorrow's Schools* policy included the provision for special character schools. Additionally, the Maori had a treaty right to education which was incorporated into the *Education Amendment*

Act, 1990. The act allowed for the establishment of colleges of education, polytechnics, universities and wananga (their own centre of higher learning).

The act states that a wananga is characterized by teaching and research that maintains, advances and disseminates knowledge and develops intellectual independence, and assists the application of knowledge regarding ahuatanga Maori (Maori tradition) according to takanga Maori (Maori custom).

Three wananga were accredited by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority under the legislation. These institutions include Te Wananga-o-Raukawa (based in Otaki), Te Wananga o Aotearoa (based in Te Awamutu) and Te Wananga o Awanuiarangi (based in Whakatane).

Degree proposals from wananga are subjected to a rigorous process of scrutiny and accreditation by the NZQA. Wananga have to convince a panel of stakeholders in tertiary education, including polytechnics institutions, colleges of education and universities that they are capable of teaching degree-level programs. Degree requirements that must be met by the wananga are established by the NZQA (Ranginui Walker, "Quality assurance in tertiary education from a Maori (Indigenous) Perspective" Indigenous knowledge - W I N H E C Journal (August 2005), online: World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium (<http://www.win-hec.org/docs/pdfs/Journal/Ranginui%20Walker.pdf>).

It is important to note that not all institutions in New Zealand agree with one method of accreditation. The Te Whare Wananga incorporate cultural elements into their accreditation process which is affirmed by WINHEC. Additionally, this institution works under an affiliation agreement with the University of Auckland and accreditation of programs and courses is also obtained through both the NZQA and the NZVCC.

4.10 WORLD INDIGENOUS NATIONS HIGHER EDUCATION CONSORTIUM

Overview

The World Indigenous Higher Education Consortium ("WINHEC") was officially launched in Calgary, Alberta during the World Indigenous Peoples Conference on Education in August 2002. The founding states/countries present were Australia, the states of Hawaii and Alaska, the American Indian Higher Education Consortium of the United States, Canada, the Wānanga of Aotearoa of New Zealand, and Saamiland of North Norway. The WINHEC Accreditation Authority will serve as a vehicle for strengthening and validating Indigenous higher education institutions and programs based on standards and procedures developed and implemented by WINHEC member institutions. At this time, it is unclear as to the number of member institutes represented by WINHEC.

An underlying consideration in the implementation of this accreditation process is the inherent diversity of Indigenous cultural histories, traditions and worldviews. These underlying considerations are acknowledged, recognized and celebrated and serve as one of the fundamental premises on which the accreditation process rests (<http://www.win-hec.org/>).

Institutions seeking initial accreditation are provided copies of the WINHEC Handbook to guide their application, self-study and other preparations for a site visit by an external review team (elements of this Handbook are adapted from the U.S. Northwest Association of Colleges and Universities Accreditation Handbook).

Accreditation Process

The accrediting process requires institutions and programs to examine their own goals, operations, and achievements, and then provides the expert critiques and suggestions of an external review team, and the recommendations of the accrediting body. Since the accreditation is reviewed periodically, continued self-study and improvement are encouraged.

When granted, accreditation applies to the entire institution/program in operation at the time of the most recent full-scale review. It indicates that the institution/program has been carefully and thoroughly examined and has been found to be achieving its own particular purposes in a satisfactory manner.

The criteria for accreditation review will be founded upon the diverse Indigenous language and cultural beliefs, protocols, laws and practices that provide the epistemological and pedagogical basis for the institutions and programs under review. Additionally, the accreditation review process will include the role of locally respected Elders and recognized cultural practitioners, and the use of the heritage language(s) as reflected in the institution/program under review.

Applicants for accreditation shall submit an application portfolio to the WINHEC Accreditation Authority, which will be reviewed by the accreditation authority. If accepted, the applicant institution must prepare a self-study addressing the criteria for review outlined in the guidelines. Applicants may be either an Indigenous-serving institution (e.g. a Tribal College or Wananga), or an Indigenous-serving program contained within a mainstream institution, and the review process will be adjusted accordingly. Programs will be assessed with regard to their integrity and support in the context of the host institution (<http://www.win-hec.org/docs/pdfs/Accreditation%20Handbook.pdf>).

The WINHEC Accreditation Authority will appoint an accreditation review team made up of representatives from at least four member institutions/programs, two

of which will be from the same national context as the applicant institution or program. The review team will include a minimum of one Elder who has been associated with the applicant program or institution. A representative of the Authority will conduct a preliminary visit to the institution/program 6 to 12 months before a review team visit.

Review team members study the institutional self-study report, visit the Institution or program and prepare a written report. A draft report from the review team will be prepared and sent to the institution/program chair. The chair will then be given an opportunity to respond to the review team's written report before the final report is prepared (<http://www.winhec.org/docs/pdfs/Accreditation%20Handbook.pdf>).

The team's final report is then mailed to the chair and the Accreditation Authority board members four to six weeks before the next scheduled board meeting. The WINHEC Accreditation Authority Board will review the institution/program self-study and the review team's report, interview the review team chair and, if necessary, the person in charge of the institution/program, and take action on the basis of information obtained.

These actions may include the granting of full accreditation with all rights and privileges, which will be subject to renewal in 10 years. In the alternative, the Authority may grant a provisional accreditation, stipulating specific adjustments and modifications required and a timeframe in which they must be addressed. If the modifications are met in the specified time, full accreditation will be granted. If the modifications are not, the Authority may withdraw further recognition, or extend the provisional status until the modifications are met (<http://www.winhec.org/docs/pdfs/Accreditation%20Handbook.pdf>).

If, at any time during the 10-year full accreditation period, the Accreditation Authority is notified that an accredited institution/program no longer meets the minimal conditions under which it was originally accredited, the Authority will review the information to determine if it warrants investigation. If so, an investigation will be conducted and recommendations will be presented to the Accreditation Board for action. If deemed appropriate, the Authority reserves the right to rescind accreditation under its auspices. The institution/program involved may appeal such action to the WINHEC Executive Board for further consideration.

Institutions/programs that receive full accreditation are required to submit an Interim Report to the WINHEC Accreditation Authority at the 5-year mark of the 10-year period of full accreditation. The review process is a major undertaking, and a full academic year is considered to be the minimum working time needed. Preparation should normally begin more than a year before the date of the site visit. The Authority permits the withdrawal of a request for accreditation at any

time (even after evaluation) prior to final action (<http://www.win-hec.org/docs/pdfs/Accreditation%20Handbook.pdf>).

The logistical costs (travel, lodging, meals, etc.) of a WINHEC Accreditation Authority review process are the responsibility of the applicant institution or program. A projected budget for such expenses is to be submitted at the time of the initial application and is considered in conjunction with other conditions for determining acceptance as an Applicant for Accreditation. In addition, a \$1000 application fee (in US Currency) is to be paid by the institution/program to the Accreditation Authority. This covers the administrative and communication costs associated with the review, including the recruitment of review team members and the cost of printing and distributing the report of the self-study committee to the review team. The application fee also includes the first-year Accreditation Authority membership dues, if approved for accreditation (<http://www.win-hec.org/docs/pdfs/Accreditation%20Handbook.pdf>).

5.0 CHARACTERISTICS COMMON TO ALL QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES

Some of the common characteristics to all quality assurance processes include:

- Institutions apply for accreditation by first submitting an application or letter of interest to an appropriate accrediting body or association.
- Facilitation of program/course accreditation is done through consultation and cooperation of the agency, the institutions, government and businesses.
- The institutions conduct their own internal audit processes and submit corresponding reports and accreditation reports to the agency or body.
- All reports are subsequently reviewed and followed by an on-site accreditation team's visit to the institution for a comprehensive review of the institution's self-study report and a review of the facility.
- Public institutions are generally required to be authorized or recognized under provincial legislation to grant degrees, diplomas, and certificates.
- Private Institutions are usually registered or licensed institutions that apply for quality assurance review and articulation.

6.0 CONCLUSION

It is important to note the absence of a formal, national system of accreditation for post-secondary education providers in Canada. This makes it challenging to obtain a clear picture of how quality is assured at both the institutional and program levels.

As the mobility of people and programs increases and the use of information technology expands, mechanisms for maintaining quality are becoming increasingly important.

Aboriginal institutions seeking to ensure the quality of their institution and of the programs they offer may obtain accreditation of programs through a number of processes.

One option is the indirect accreditation through an affiliation agreement with an accredited University or College. This method is generally used for a single course or program. In the alternative, an institution may seek to obtain accreditation of programs through provincially established accreditation agencies or bodies. At this time, Aboriginal post-secondary institutions generally obtain accreditation through affiliation agreements.

Institutions may also wish to apply to various agencies such as a non-governmental, not-for-profit organization (the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada). Membership in these types of agencies, such as in the AUCC, coupled with a university's provincial government charter, is generally deemed to be the equivalent of a formal accreditation system.

The First Nations Accreditation Board is one option of pursuing accreditation; however, the current status of this Board is unclear. Alternatively, institutions may wish to apply for accreditation under the World Indigenous Higher Education Consortium. Establishing a First Nations-driven accreditation process may be a possible future direction.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AAPSI:	Association of Aboriginal Post-Secondary Institutes
AIC:	Aboriginal Institutes' Consortium (http://www.aboriginalinstitute.com/)
AIHEC:	American Indian Higher Education Consortium (http://www.aihec.org/)
AUCC:	Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (http://www.aucc.ca/index_e.html).
BCCAT:	British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer (http://www.bccat.bc.ca/)
CCTT:	Canadian Council of Technicians and Technologists (http://www.cctt.ca/)
FNAB:	First Nations Accreditation Board
FNSA:	First Nations Schools Association (http://www.fnsa.ca/)
FNAHEC:	First Nations Adult Higher Education Consortium (http://www.fnahec.org/)
NAIHL:	National Association of Indigenous Institutes of Higher Learning (http://www.tyendinaga.net/naiihl/)
NZQA:	New Zealand Qualifications Authority (http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/)
PCTIA:	Private Career Training Institute Agency (http://www.pctia.bc.ca/)
WINHEC:	World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium (http://www.win-hec.org/)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES

Canadian Legislation

College and Institute Act, R.S.B.C. 1996 c.52
(http://www.qp.gov.bc.ca/statreg/stat/C/96052_01.htm).

Degree Authorization Act, S.B.C. 2002 c. 24
(http://www.qp.gov.bc.ca/statreg/stat/D/02024_01.htm).

Private Career Training Institutions Act, S.B.C. 2003 c. 79
(http://www.qp.gov.bc.ca/statreg/stat/P/03079_01.htm).

University Act, R.S.B.C. 1996 c.468
(http://www.qp.gov.bc.ca/statreg/stat/U/96468_01.htm).

American Legislation

The Executive Order (“Order”) on Tribal Colleges and Universities, no.13270
(<http://www.va.gov/dmeeeo/exec/13270.htm>).

New Zealand Legislation

Education Act 1989, no 80
(http://www.legislation.co.nz/browse_vw.asp?content-set=pal_statutes).

Universities Act, 1961

SECONDARY SOURCES

Association of Aboriginal Post-Secondary Institutes Board of Directors Retreat, March 1997. Developing a Corporate Vision and Values.

First Nations Schools Association Assessment Project Master Binder, September 2003.

ONLINE SOURCES

Aboriginal Institutes' Consortium (<http://www.aboriginalinstitute.com/>).

American Indian Higher Education Consortium (<http://www.aihec.org/>).

Association of Accrediting Agencies of Canada (<http://www.aaac.ca/>).

Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada
(http://www.aucc.ca/index_e.html).

British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer (<http://www.bccat.bc.ca/>).

B.C. Ministry of Advanced Education
(http://www.gov.bc.ca/bvprd/bc/channel.do?action=ministry&channelID=-8376&navId=NAV_ID_province.)

Canadian Council of Technicians and Technologists
(<http://www.cctt.ca/english/index.html>).

Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials (<http://www.cicic.ca/>).

Council for Higher Education Accreditation (USA) (<http://www.chea.org/>).

First Nations Adult Higher Education Consortium (<http://www.fnahec.org/>).

Indigenous Higher Education (Alaska Native Knowledge Network)
(<http://www.ankn.uaf.edu/IEW/ihe.html>).

National Association of Indigenous Institutes of Higher Learning
(<http://www.tyendinaga.net/naiihl/>).

New Zealand Qualifications Authority
(<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/qualifications/index.html>).

Private Career Training Institute Agency (<http://www.pctia.bc.ca/>).

World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium (<http://www.winhec.org/>).