



POLICY NO. 1

ASSESSMENT QUALITY OF EDUCATION

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The use of the male pronoun within this Policy is to facilitate reading only and should be interpreted as referring to either male or female.

Article 1 – PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to ensure the quality of education at John Abbott College by providing guidelines for the assessment of DEC programs, General Education and AECs offered at the College and making recommendations for improvement. Assessments are formative with the following objectives:

- to provide regular, detailed descriptions of each program of study (or set of requirements, such as General Education);
- to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the education offered in these areas of study;
- to ensure students receive a relevant education that meets standards of excellence;
- to recommend actions to improve the education offered.

1.2 Principles

Assessments conducted under this policy will comply with the guidelines for assessment established by the *Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collegial* (program, General Education respectively) and the *Autoévaluation de programmes menant à une AEC* and will adhere to the following underlying principles:

- focus on the program approach and take into consideration the reality in different areas of study;
- respect ethical research standards and confidentiality (see current Institutional Research Policy - IRP);
- be based on criteria that will allow evaluation and comparison with similar programs and/or General Education components;
- make use of qualitative and quantitative data to establish a complete portrait of the components under study;
- result in a general picture of the area being studied at the given point in time, that will lead to a plan of action intended to foster continuous improvement.

1.3 General Objectives of the Policy

The objectives of this policy are to:

- encourage a culture of reflection and assessment of each area of study;
- encourage participation and the incorporation of the perspectives of students, teachers, administration, non-teaching staff and appropriate external individuals;
- provide structure, rigor and objectivity to assessments and abide by assessment standards as set forth in the current IRP;
- ensure that assessments produce realistic, timely and relevant recommendations for the improvement of education and student success.

Article 2 - RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 Responsibility for Implementing and Reviewing the POLICY

The Academic Dean is responsible to the Board of Governors for the implementation of the Policy.

The Assessment Coordination Committee reports to Academic Council on the operation of the policy and its review.

2.1.1 Academic Council will annually ratify the membership of the Assessment Coordination Committee.

2.1.2 Membership of the Assessment Coordination Committee shall be:

- the Academic Dean or delegate (Chair);
- two students, Pre-University, Technologies;
- one professional from the day division;
- six faculty members (a minimum of two from technical programs and a minimum of one from General Education);
- one assessment specialist
- Ex-officio or permanent member from Continuing Education (non-voting)

2.1.3 The mandate of the Assessment Coordination Committee shall be to:

- recommend to Academic Council which areas of study will be assessed in the next year (if any);
- approve an assessment outline, the criteria, and a timetable for each assessment undertaken;
- approve the reports of the Assessment Committees and submit the final reports to Academic Council with recommendations;
- receive the plans of action, stemming from the recommendations;
- and to follow up on the implementation of the recommendations from previous assessments';
- ensure that the ethical guidelines established by the Research Ethics Board of the College are followed;
- produce an annual report of its activities for Academic Council;
- review the Assessment Policy;
- ensure that the policy is functioning according to its underlying principles.

2.2 Responsibility for the Assessment Process

Each assessment will be carried out by an Assessment Committee established by the appropriate:

- Program Committee (DEC), General Education Committee (Gen Ed) or the Director of Continuing Education (AEC).

2.2.1 Membership of Assessment Committees for DEC programs.

Each Assessment Committee will have a majority of faculty members, and will include:

- the Dean responsible for the area of study (Chair);
- a minimum of six faculty including:
- minimum five teachers from disciplines offering required courses and
- one teacher from General Education;
- one student from the program designated by SUJAC or from the Student Association of that program, if one exists;
- one Academic Advisor;
- one Support Staff from the program, if applicable;
- one assessment specialist
- whenever possible at least one member of the external community who is knowledgeable in the appropriate field;

2.2.2 Membership of Assessment Committees for AECs.

Each Assessment Committee will be composed of:

- the Director of Continuing Education or delegate manager (Chair);
- the AEC program coordinator;
- one teacher from the program or 1 Day Division teacher;
- one graduate of the program;
- one assessment specialist;
- at least one member from the relevant industry

2.2.3 Membership of Assessment Committees for General Education:

The Assessment Committee will be composed of:

- The Dean of General Education (Chair);
- 1 faculty representative from Complementaries;
- 1 faculty representative from English;
- 1 faculty representative from French;
- 1 faculty representative from Humanities;
- 1 faculty representative from Physical Education;
- 1 faculty representative from Pre-University Programs
- 1 faculty representative from Technical Programs
- 1 Student (SUJAC representative)
- 1 Academic Advisor
- 1 assessment specialist
- whenever possible at least one member of the external community who is knowledgeable in the appropriate field;

2.2.4 Mandate of an Assessment Committee.

The role of the Assessment Committee is to carry out an assessment of the area of study, in consultation with all concerned parties; namely to:

- prepare an Assessment Outline and Critical Path for the process and submit it to the appropriate:
 - the Program Committee (DEC), or the General Education Committee (Gen.Ed.), or the Director of Continuing Education
- submit the Assessment Outline and Critical Path to the Assessment Coordination Committee;
- select or design methods and tools for data collection and analysis;
- conduct data collection, mainly through questionnaires, meetings, interviews and document analysis;
- inform the Assessment Coordination Committee of its progress through regular status reports as scheduled in the assessment outline or as requested by the ACC;
- consult with the Academic Dean, if necessary;
- write the assessment report;
- submit the assessment report for approval to the appropriate:
 - Program Committee (DEC), General Education Committee (Gen Ed), or the Director of Continuing Education (AEC);
- report to the Assessment Coordination Committee difficulties experienced with and/or recommendation for revision of the Assessment Policy and its process.

2.2.5 Mandate of the Program Committee General Education Committee Director of Continuing Education

The role of the Program Committee, General Education Committee or the Director of Continuing Education is to:

- select members for the Assessment Committee
- provide feedback to the Assessment Committee
- receive the Assessment Outline and Critical Path for review and approval;
- receive the Assessment Report for review and approval;
- participate in the presentation of the assessment report to the Board of Governors;
- prepare the follow-up plan of action, and submit it to the Assessment Coordination Committee for review. (timing, etc. go to procedural part of 5.3)

Article 3 – TIMING OF ASSESSMENTS

The Assessment Coordination Committee is responsible for scheduling assessments. It will submit to Academic Council, by December 1st, the area(s) of study to begin their assessment in the following academic year, if any.

The Assessment Coordination Committee will recommend assessments of a program, aspects of a program, or other area if:

- The program is new with a minimum of one graduating cohort;
- The program or area of study has undergone revision and subsequently has had a minimum of one graduating cohort;
- The Dean or program committee or area of study has identified issues that need to be examined, including, but not limited to:
 - major changes concerning enrolment, graduate placement or relevance of program;
 - program data that raise concerns about some important aspect of the program;
 - there are major changes made to the area of study;
 - other special circumstances.

Article 4 – ASSESSMENT CRITERIA AND DATA

4.1 For DEC and AEC Programs:

All programs will address the following criteria.

Programs may put greater weight on particular criteria according to their particular concerns, but all criteria must be addressed.

Programs will be assessed using the following criteria:

1. relevance of the program;
2. coherence of the program;
3. suitability of teaching methods and support for student learning;
4. appropriateness of human, material and financial resources to educational needs;
5. effectiveness of the program;
6. quality of program management.

See appropriate appendices for details

4.2 For General Education:

General Education areas will address the following criteria.

Greater weight may be put on particular criteria according to particular concerns, but all criteria must be addressed.

General Education (Blocks A-B-C) will be assessed using the following criteria:

1. relevance;
2. coherence;
3. effectiveness;
4. suitability of teaching methods and support for student learning;

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5. appropriateness of human, material and financial resources to educational needs;

6. quality of General Education management.

See appropriate appendices for details.

Article 5 – ASSESSMENT REPORT AND APPROVAL

5.1 The Assessment Report for DEC and AEC Programs:

Each assessment report will include, but will not be limited to, the following:

- an executive summary;
- a description of the program;
- the program's exit profile;
- the program's short and long term objectives;
- a description of the assessment design and process;
- the sources of data, the analysis and the conclusions for each criterion;
- a listing of recommendations, along with a proposed responsibility assignment for implementation;
- relevant appendices with sample questionnaires, course outlines, etc.

5.2 The Assessment Report for General Education:

Each assessment report will include:

- an executive summary;
- a description of General Education and its components;
- the exit profile;
- the short and long term objectives;
- a description of the assessment design and process;
- the sources of data, the analysis and the conclusions for each criterion;
- a listing of recommendations, along with a proposed responsibility assignment for implementation;
- relevant appendices with sample questionnaires, course outlines, etc.

No information of a personal nature collected from identifiable individuals will be released in an assessment report.

5.3 Institutional Approval

1. The Dean responsible for the area of study or the Director of Continuing Education will submit the assessment report to the Assessment Coordination Committee for approval;

2. The Assessment Coordination Committee will meet with representatives of the Assessment Committee to discuss the process and the report;
3. The Assessment Coordination Committee may recommend changes prior to submitting the report to Academic Council;
4. Academic Council will make a recommendation to the Board of Governors concerning the final Assessment Report.

5.4 Follow-Up

Upon approval at the Board of Governors, the Program Committee will prepare the plan of action.

This plan translates the recommendations contained in the assessment report into concrete actions targeted at specific objectives.

The plan of action will be submitted to the Assessment Coordination Committee within two(2) to four (4) working months of the adoption of the final assessment report by the Board of governors.

5.5 Dissemination of the Results of the Assessment

The report and other results of the assessment shall be public and available to all members of the College community.

Article 6 – POLICY REVIEW MECHANISM

- 6.1 After each evaluation, the Assessment Committee will inform the Assessment Coordination Committee of any changes it wishes to recommend to the Assessment Policy and to the process.
- 6.2 The Assessment Coordination Committee shall monitor the functioning of this policy and be responsible for recommending changes to Academic Council. Academic Council will forward its recommendations to the Board of Governors.
- 6.3 At least once every five years, a systematic review of all aspects of this policy will be carried out by the Assessment Coordination Committee.