

## EDUCATIONAL ACCREDITATION FOR CHILD AND YOUTH CARE IN CANADA: AN APPROACH TO PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF CARE<sup>1</sup>

**Carol Stuart,**

*Vancouver Island University*

**Heather Modlin,**

*Council of Canadian Child and Youth Care Associations, Key Assets, St. John's*

**Varda Mann-Feder,**

*Quebec Association of Educators, Department of Applied Human Sciences, Concordia University*

**Jennifer Cawley-Caruso,**

*Ontario Association of Child and Youth Counsellors, Child and Youth Worker Program, Cambrian College*

**Gerard Bellefeuille,**

*Alberta Association of Child and Youth Care, Child and Youth Care, Grant MacEwan University*

**Bruce Hardy,**

*British Columbia Educator's Consortium, Child and Youth Care, Douglas College*

**Daniel Scott,**

*School of Child and Youth Care, University of Victoria*

**Christine Slavik,**

*Child and Youth Care, University of the Fraser Valley*

To understand this report it is perhaps best to begin with the end. Or rather, the current end as this journal goes to publication. Since this article is about a professional process—developing standards—which is ongoing, what you read here captures only the moment in time that occurred in May of 2010 when the Task Force on Child and Youth Care Educational Accreditation made its final report and recommendation at the preconference educator's day held at the Canadian National Child and Youth Care Conference in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Therefore, the current end of the story is that the founding members of the Child and Youth Care Educational

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<sup>1</sup> This article is based on the final report of the Task Force on Child and Youth Care Educational Accreditation for presented in May 2010. The original documents and updated information on the progress toward implementing the model are available at <http://cyceduaccred.pbworks.com>

Accreditation Board (of Canada) have incorporated as a nonprofit association and begun the process of recruiting membership from the educational and professional sector to determine how best to move forward and implement the model described in this article. Some of the authors of this report and the model for accreditation have remained with the new Board, and others have joined them to move this process forward. In a difficult economy with a climate of increasing regulation and decreasing funding for services for children and families, creating additional standards and costs for programs is challenging but essential. As you will read, the vision is that this model will lead to a standard of quality practice for young people and families based on relationships and reciprocity.

## BACKGROUND

Over the course of convening the National and International Child and Youth Care conferences in 2000 through 2006, the Council of Canadian Child and Youth Care Associations (CCCYCA) hosted a series of preconference meetings on professional regulation and the setting of standards for practice in child and youth care. These meetings, in St. John's, Victoria, Calgary, and Montreal, included people from government, education, front-line practice, and the agencies employing the workers. Each event discussed a variety of options for standard setting including certification and educational accreditation.

The task force on Child and Youth Care Educational Accreditation was created in 2006 at the request of Child and Youth Care educators in Canada who attended the International Child and Youth Care (CYC) conference in Montreal. A flexible model of accreditation for postsecondary CYC programs in Canada was suggested as a mechanism to further the work of enhancing quality of care and service for children, youth, and families in need of social, educational, and health interventions. The leadership of this initiative was delegated to Roy Ferguson at the University of Victoria and Carol Stuart at Ryerson University and the initiative is fully supported by the CCCYCA through a motion of support from the Board. Subsequently, a brief questionnaire was developed and emailed to 119 educators located in CYC programs in postsecondary institutions across Canada. The survey was designed to assess the views of educators in regards to developing an accreditation model for CYC and whether the respondent would be interested in being involved in the process. General comments, thoughts, and suggestions about a CYC accreditation process were also invited.

Forty-nine replies to the survey were received. This represents a 42% response rate, which is reasonably good for an email survey of this type, especially one occurring at the end of an academic year when educators are particularly busy. The support for exploring the development of a CYC accreditation model was unequivocal, with 96% of the respondents indicating that work should begin immediately. Further, 65% of respondents indicated a personal interest in being involved in exploring accreditation options for the CYC field and virtually all indicated that their own program would be interested in participating in an accreditation process. The survey

response indicated strong support for proceeding in the establishment of a small task group to explore options for CYC educational program accreditation. The development of a substantive proposal and model for accreditation began in 2008 and was finalized at the National CYC Conference in May 2010 when the final report of the task force was presented and adopted.

Accreditation of educational programs is but one part of professional regulation. In most regulated professions, authority to practice is legislated through a college of practitioners which licenses individual professionals. Typically a requirement to be licensed is graduation from an education program that is accredited by a body that is recognized with the authority to monitor the quality of educational programs for the profession. The accreditation board may be separate from, or embedded in, the college that legislates practitioners. Both nursing and social work (for example) have national bodies that accredit educational programs, and in those provinces with legislation and/or boards of certification for practice, all professionals who apply to be registered as social workers or nurses must graduate from an accredited program. Inter-provincial differences in scope of practice, legislation, and certification are extensive for CYC, but educational preparation is well developed, extensive, and based on a relatively common understanding of competency for practice.

### **ACCREDITATION VALUES**

The following ideals were developed through the annual discussions and consultations with educators at national and international conferences between 2000 and 2009. Consistent with the beliefs and values of CYC as a profession, the proposed model of Accreditation includes the following:

- a transparent and inclusive process
- efficient and cost effective
- graduated process starting with program self-evaluation
- implementation in conjunction with existing program review structures within academic institutions
- representative of an accreditation process that is facilitative and supports capacity building within the academic programs
- close and reciprocal connection between academic and practice sectors within the CYC field

### **MISSION OF CHILD AND YOUTH CARE ACCREDITATION**

The mission of CYC accreditation is to establish and implement a process of continuous assessment of postsecondary CYC education programs in Canada. Accreditation is both a process and an outcome, such that graduates of accredited programs will hold an important credential that will be recognized by licensing bodies,

employers, and the public. The primary objective of the accreditation process is to promote the highest standards of training and pre-service education for the field. These standards will constitute a living document that will be updated regularly to reflect cutting edge advances in CYC, the input of accredited programs, as well as changes to provincially defined norms, including relevant legislation.

### **PRINCIPLES OF CHILD AND YOUTH CARE ACCREDITATION**

Accreditation in CYC will be guided by the following principles:

- Accreditation involves self-reflection and builds upon existing program review structures, to be both iterative and prescriptive in its approach.
- Accreditation is a process guided by the principles of empowerment and engagement.
- Accreditation recognizes the breadth of experience in practice, research, and teaching. An accrediting body should consist of a balance of educators and experienced CYC practitioners who provide an independent review, and thus the overall process includes both self-evaluation and peer review.
- The review process focuses on practical components of educational programs, including field experiences, which promote individualized student outcomes on three levels: development as a learner, development as a practitioner, and development as a professional.
- There will be strong links in the accreditation process to provincially defined standards and licensing requirements in provincial settings.
- Accreditation involves both a quality improvement process to build program capacity as well as minimum standards of accountability for student outcomes.

### **CROSS-CANADA CONSULTATION**

The model developed by the Task Force received wide consultation and feedback across Canada. The background information (above) and the proposed model were distributed through email and posted on a Wiki (<http://cyceduaccred.pbworks.com/>). Task Force members initiated contact and in-depth feedback from the following groups and associations:

- British Columbia Educators Consortium meeting in January 2010
- The Alberta Educators Consortium and the Child and Youth Care Association of Alberta (CYCAA) in August 2009
- Manitoba Educators at Red River College and the Child and Youth Care Workers Association of Manitoba (CYCWAM) in January 2010

- The Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology (CAAT), Child and Youth Work (CYW) Program Coordinators and Ryerson University (Ontario) through teleconference and individual program written submissions between October 2009 and January 2010
- The Ontario Association of Child and Youth Counselors (OACYC) Board in November 2009
- The Quebec Educators Association in November 2009
- Two-year ongoing discussion and feedback from the Council of Canadian Child and Youth Care Associations (CCCYCA)
- Feedback from educators at publically funded community colleges in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia
- A meeting with the Educateur Specialize program at Vanier College, May 2010

The feedback from these consultations is summarized below. Areas were identified that required further discussion and development. Members of the task force felt that these areas should be dealt with in the planning for implementation of the model. Additional feedback led to some specific changes in the accreditation model (included here).

### **General Comments**

Provincial Associations (CYCWAM, CYCAA, OACYC) and the Canadian Council of CYC Associations (CCCYCA) fully supported, in principle, the accreditation model. The OACYC voted to endorse the process of developing and finalizing the model. The professional associations support the principle of a close and reciprocal connection between academic and practice sectors. Strong links to provincially defined standards and licensing requirements are also considered essential. In addition, professional associations are concerned with program credibility and the use of practical competencies and good supervision to ensure the graduation of quality practitioners. Questions were raised such as: What is real and relevant CYC curriculum? Who has the input into curriculum competency outcomes, and how are these linked to certification? There was also some concern about the implications of supervisor qualifications for student supervision when supervisors do not have the appropriate education.

Professional associations suggested that the model be discussed and vetted with the Child and Youth Serving Ministries in various provinces. MCYS in Ontario indicated some positive support, but there was no formal mechanism to express this. The Task Force felt that government support could be elicited when the timing is right, given the current government scrutiny on quality and

validity in the postsecondary educational sector. However, in a cost constrained postsecondary environment accreditation can be an impediment to participation and budgets for postsecondary are reducing. Additional commentary stated that, if the process was not owned by the Academic institution, it could diminish administrative buy-in. How would institutional buy-in be approached? It was recommended that consideration be given to system-wide uptake, which would have more impact. One approach to the task might be to form a National Sector Council recognized through Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC), and that sector Council could promote and develop the accreditation program as its first task.

The consultation identified the need for preliminary discussion of implementation while the model was developed, since many questions and comments during the consultation related to implementation rather than the model. While the model identified that an accreditation peer review team would be integrated with the regular institutional process of program review, this was not apparent throughout the consultation and needed ongoing emphasis. The consultation also recommended that the final review processes and who would participate be clarified. Additional explanation about how this process layers on top of existing program review processes is required as the model was moved forward. An outline of different models (internal review team with community consultation and an external and internal review team) and how an Accreditation Board or organization would participate in those different processes and make an independent decision about quality would be beneficial. There were also many questions about the structures of accreditation:

- How do the program and Accreditation body interact to agree to decide who the external review representing accreditation is?
- Can the program release their self-study and final review reports and recommendations to the Accreditation Board for review?
- Does the external review team complete a report, which is part of the package, or does the program take notes from a group feedback session and incorporate that into the review package? (This is a college model)

For people unfamiliar with the self-study process, it is important to describe in the introduction that the self-study is a process of demonstrating and describing how the program meets these standards, and how they intend to improve based on their self-evaluation. It is less like a final judgment and more like a commitment to the quality enhancement process.

During the consultation the originally proposed model was revised to reflect specific comments about the nature of the standards that were outlined and the revised model is included here.

### SUMMARY OF OUTSTANDING ISSUES

This section describes issues that still need to be resolved as the CYCEAB moves forward. Some issues require discussion and additional changes to the model, and in such cases a decision needs to be made about what the standard is. The model needs to be revised to reflect this standard. These types of issues are identified under nomenclature and definitions, curriculum, and outcomes. The Task Force did not feel ready to make specific recommendations on these issues in May 2010, and where additional discussion is warranted there was often conflicting feedback during the consultation. Other feedback was clear, and changes were incorporated in the model outlined here and presented in May 2010. The accreditation model was revised and approved in principle by educators and other professionals who were present in May 2010. Implementation issues that are outlined below need to be resolved by the CYCEAB when they establish the authority to implement the model and define the standards.

#### Nomenclature, Definitions, and Regional Variation

- *Terminology.* Define: “Practitioner”, “Worker”, “Child and Youth Care”, “Child and Youth Worker”, “Child and Youth Counsellor”.
- *Meaning of CYC education.* Which scope of practice statements is appropriate (or is there only one), and how does this translate into curriculum?
- *Impact of regional variation.* The program inputs, 7.4 and 7.5, describe the use of competency measures. Program structure and course sequencing is based on those competencies. Currently, different regions or provinces use different competency-based outcomes to guide curriculum. What are these competencies? How do these competencies compare to each other? Some regions (e.g., Manitoba) are not connected with a broader educator’s consortium that has defined competencies for their membership.
- *Defining the accreditation board.* Who will sit on this board, and how will it interface with the self-study report and the accreditation peer review report. These things need to have some preliminary description, as discussed in previous conferences.

#### Curriculum Issues

- *Admission requirements.* Standards for admission are a point of conflict with the administration for many educational programs. Some educators would like to require experience and personal suitability for entry to the program. Can accreditation be used to require additional nonacademic expectations, such as volunteer hours, police record checks, and reference letters?

- *Residency.* There is a statement that students must complete a half of their program or semester hours at the institution providing the graduating credential. In several circumstances, for example, Ontario colleges, British Columbia and Alberta universities with a college history—the minimum residency is 25-35%. Discussion is required. How can students maximize credit for their past education and still learn the competencies expected? Should there be an expectation that students finish within a certain amount of time in order to be current?
- *What is an appropriate practicum or internship?* Should the standards specify what an appropriate practicum entails, for example, direct work with clients that is clinically supervised. Or is it acceptable to leave that decision to the program and ask for justification in terms of the program's particular specialization or orientation?
- *Graduate program requirements.* Can students exit a master degree without doing any practicum or a research project? Can the program consist of course work only? Discussion is required.
- *Minimum hours.* Courses and practicum needs to be standardized to fit with multiple institutional methods of describing the time requirements of courses and field experiences. The use of hours as a unit of measurement also assumes that time in the classroom is a standardized measure of student learning efforts.
- *Flexibility.* How can programs construct curriculum based on an agreed to set of competencies? Competencies and the general outcomes (domains) they fall under should not need to be translated to coursework in an identical manner by each institution, even within the same region. If the program is required through the self-study to show how each of the competencies is measured, they will need to develop competency crosswalks that demonstrate how that competency is assessed, for example, by means of a field experience, test, or assignment, and within which courses. (Section 7.4). An accrediting body could provide the tools to do this.
- *Preparation of diploma students for university work.* How can this be done within the current curriculum?

## Outcome Standards

- *Measurement of outcomes.* The proposed model uses outcomes, (i.e., how well students do after graduation) as well as process and program standards (e.g., entry-level grades, academic preparation of faculty, and minimum hours of curriculum content). Outcomes can be difficult to gather data on (Alberta), and questions have been raised about whether they are appro-



priate in the beginning phases. Other feedback indicates that gathering student outcomes, (Ontario, British Columbia) is easy to do and essential to demonstrating quality programming. Student surveys are already built into institutional program reviews. (7.1, 7.12 to 7.17). With respect to the outcome-based focus of the model, at what point is student and graduate performance addressed independently of employer satisfaction and graduate satisfaction and the other measures outlined? Self-report or independent measures? Self-report data is most common, and examples of the types of questions to ask to get this information, as well as whom to survey, are essential. Is self-report data acceptable? How can one measure outcomes of Distance Learning? Discussion is required about the focus on outcomes as well as inputs and processes.

- *Varied pathways of graduates.* Outcome measures can be affected when graduates do not enter directly into the field but go on to further education or take a break for parenting or other lifestyle related reasons. The collection of outcome information on employment, job advancement, and employer satisfaction could be significantly affected.

### Implementation Issues

- *Motivation.* For programs to become accredited, motivation could be minimal if the local employers are not responsive to hiring practitioners from accredited programs only. Work needs to be done with government and employers so that they support the accredited programs. Work also needs to be done with educational programs to outline the value of accreditation to the field and to the individual program.
- *Institutional support.* At the college level, the chair and the dean must first approve the implementation of an outcomes assessment accreditation model, and senior academic support is required. At the university level, the approval for departmental participation in accreditation tends to be directed to the department, but the senior administration may not support the budget required for the costs of applying for accreditation and bringing in peer reviewers, and hence, departments would then be forced to fund this from operating dollars.
- *Private colleges.* Graduates who are not recognized by the Ministry of Advanced Education in the province cannot receive advanced standing in university programs. It is unclear whether a graduate of a private college would receive credit for prior learning in a publicly funded college. The question of whether private college programs should be able to participate in CYC accreditation requires further discussion. (7.1)

- *Interprovincial Labour Mobility Agreements*. The Task Force reviewed the agreement which enable people to move between provinces and expect to be eligible to apply for similar positions based on educational qualifications in the province in which they graduated. Some issues may need to be identified and discussed relative to curriculum competencies (e.g., Child protection competencies that are currently part of curriculums in British Columbia).

## Recommendation

The final recommendation of the Task Force was to create a founding board to incorporate an organization responsible for educational accreditation. The founding board should consist of eight members, who should represent an equal balance of colleges and universities. At least one member should have a graduate program, and six educator members with regional representation from West, Atlantic, Central, and two professional members representing the CCCYCA. The founding board was charged with creating the initial bylaws for membership of the organization, governance structure (i.e., board of directors) incorporating and guiding the initial work of the organization.

The founding board membership was expanded slightly in May 2010, and the current members of the board are:

**Chair:** Carol Stuart, *Health and Human Services, Vancouver Island University, Nanaimo, British Columbia*

**Secretary:** Dawne MacKay-Chiddenton, *Red River College, Child and Youth Care Program*

### Members of the Board:

- Heather Modlin, *Key Assets Newfoundland and Labrador, Memorial University of Newfoundland, CYC Development Committee*
- Varda Mann-Feder, *Quebec Association of Educators, Department of Applied Human Sciences, Concordia University, Quebec*
- David Connolly, *Council of Canadian Child and Youth Care Associations, Child and Youth Worker Program, Seneca College, Ontario*
- Wendy Weninger, *Child and Youth Care Diploma Program, Lethbridge College, Alberta*
- Rob Bates, *British Columbia Child and Youth Care Association, Douglas College Child and Youth Care Diploma and Degree Program*
- Doug Magnuson, *School of Child and Youth Care, University of Victoria, British Columbia*
- Kelly Shaw, *Nova Scotia Child and Youth Care Association, Nova Scotia Community College, Child and Youth Care Diploma*

- Anne Black, *Ontario, George Brown College, Child and Youth Work Diploma*
- Margaret Sullivan, *New Brunswick, New Brunswick Community College, Child and Youth Work Diploma*

## OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT ACCREDITATION MODEL FOR CHILD AND YOUTH CARE PROGRAMS<sup>2</sup>

### Preamble and Rationale

In Canada all publically funded postsecondary educational institutions are accredited according to a set of standards, which are set provincially through legislation for postsecondary education. In addition, British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island have a second-level quality assurance authority for publically funded degree granting colleges and universities. ([http://www.aucc.ca/qa/\\_pdf/reg\\_prov\\_overview\\_e.pdf](http://www.aucc.ca/qa/_pdf/reg_prov_overview_e.pdf)).

The quality assurance process requires that all new degree programs for any profession or discipline be reviewed by the qualifications authority prior to admitting students and again on a regular program review cycle (5 to 7 years). The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada ([www.aucc.ca](http://www.aucc.ca)) and the Association of Canadian Community Colleges ([www.acc.ca](http://www.acc.ca)) do not play a specific standard setting role but various professional disciplines, such as nursing, education, medicine, engineering, social work, law, health services, etc., have separate educational accreditation boards that set standards and review programs for compliance to ensure that professionals in the field are trained to a specific standard of competence. CETAC licenses private career colleges across Canada and has just released a new set of standards for licensing these colleges. There are several private colleges offering CYW programs (e.g., Eastern College), but with the exception of Newfoundland, private colleges are not reviewed by the same qualifications authority and do not meet the same standards and expectations as publically funded programs. There are over 50 different publically funded postsecondary institutions offering Child and Youth Care (CYC) and Child and Youth Work (CYW) education in Canada. CYC and CYW educators believe that quality of care and service to young people and their families will be enhanced by setting standards for educational programs and thereby assuring both the public and aspiring professionals that graduates of those programs will have a common base of knowledge and skill.

To that end, the Task Force on Educational Accreditation recommended the adoption of the following model for accreditation of CYC and CYW postsecondary programs. The specific standards and model had an extensive, comprehensive

<sup>2</sup> This outline is based upon the "Outcomes Assessment Accreditation Model for Industrial Technology Programs" (revised December 2008) available at <http://www.nait.org/>. The model follows the trend in the United States towards outcome assessment in postsecondary program accreditation as well as outlining a logic model for accreditation that provides a structure for identifying the standards that are important and assessable. The specific standards are a framework for language and areas to include that is relatively comprehensive.

review and adjustment based on the feedback of educators and professional associations across Canada. The model is intended to be implemented in conjunction with existing provincial and institutional program approval and program review processes. As new CYC programs develop and as existing programs undertake their regular cycle of review and evaluation, the model may define additional data that needs to be collected or inputs and processes that must be documented within a self-assessment process.

Outcomes assessment as part of accreditation means that programs must demonstrate that their institutions have plans in place for assessing educational outcomes. They must show evidence that the results of these assessments have led to the improvement of teaching and learning processes and improved preparation of program graduates to enter professional positions upon graduation. Accrediting bodies are moving away from input models that prescribe specific courses, credit hours, etc., to the examination of output that has been validated by advisory committees and program graduates. They must have operational processes that ensure that students have demonstrated competence and will be safe and successful in their professional work following graduation. The proposed accreditation model needs to be supported by tools and specific guidelines developed by an accreditation council. Given the extent of additional work required for implementation, the formation of a council to undertake the development of structures and processes for implementation is essential.

### **Definition of Terms**

*Program title.* The official, approved title of the degree program being considered for accreditation.

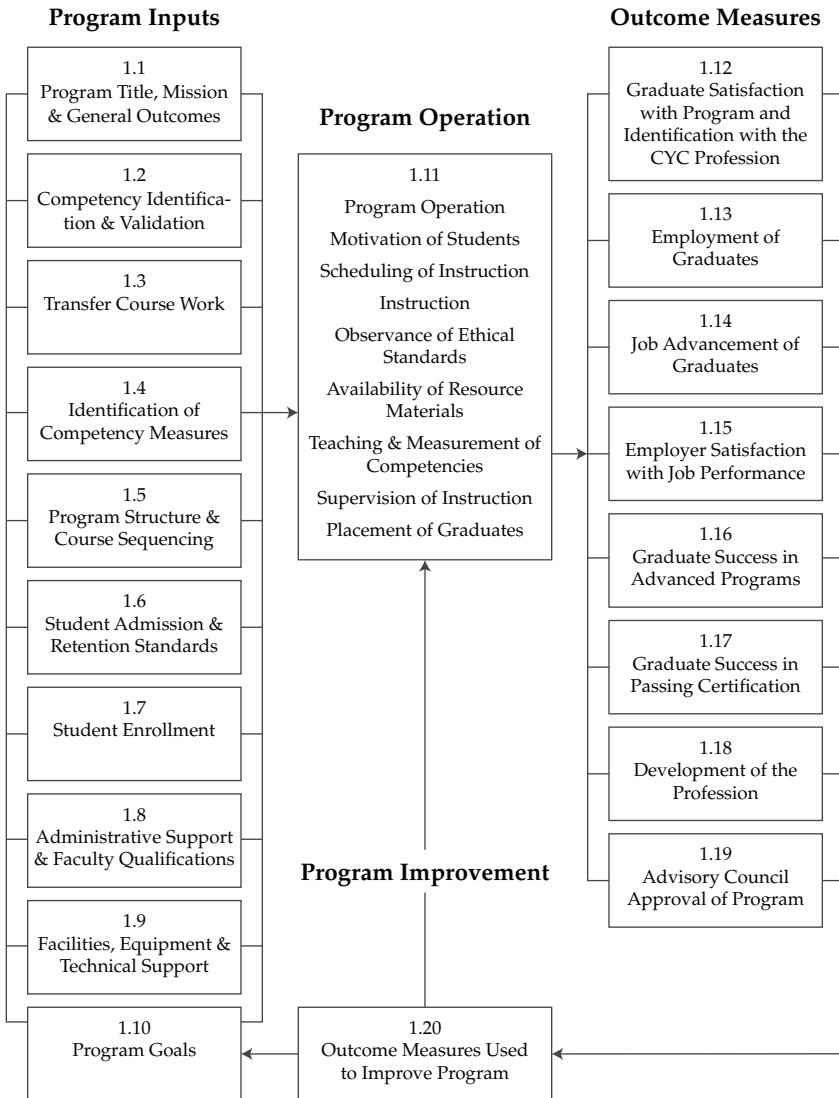
*Program mission.* A general statement that identifies the broad purpose of a program.

*General outcomes.* A list of general expectations for what you expect students to achieve in the form of knowledge and skills that can be demonstrated in the field. These outcomes exist already in many regions of Canada and consist of certification competencies, vocational outcomes, and field-based competence or standards documents that define the domains of practice and performance standards.

*Competency measures.* The activities used within the educational program to determine if students have achieved a competency such as written tests, demonstrations & observations, case studies & discussion groups, exemplars, peer reviews, self assessments and work placement portfolios, presentations, mock events, and monitors.

*Outcome measures.* A series of activities, using instruments such as surveys, undertaken after students have completed a program, to determine the overall effectiveness of the outcomes and competencies identified and covered in the program.

### Outcomes Assessment Accreditation Model



<sup>2</sup>For a new program proposal the proposal must address inputs and describe operational methods to receive provisional accreditation.

Figure 1: Outcome Assessment Accreditation Model for Child and Youth Care

The objective of accreditation is to ensure that programs in CYC meet or exceed established standards for service in the field and that outcome measures are used to

continuously improve programs. The Outcomes Assessment Accreditation Model outlined in Figure 1 requires that consideration be given to both the qualitative and quantitative criteria set forth in these standards.

The Self-Study Report shall follow the guidelines established by the Accreditation Council and be completed by a Program Review committee which includes a representative portion of the institution's administrative staff, teaching faculty, and students. In addition to meeting the institution's requirements for reviewing program quality, the Self-Study Report shall show how each program and program option meets each standard<sup>2</sup>.

## Standards for Accreditation

### Program Inputs:

**1.1 Program Title<sup>3</sup>, Mission, and General Outcomes:** The program or option title, definition, and mission shall be compatible with the definition of Child and Youth Care described by either the provincial professional association or the CCCYA. Outcomes will ensure that graduates are capable of the scope of practice required in the province. The program or option shall lead to a diploma (community college) or a degree at the bachelors, masters, or doctoral level. Definitions for programs are as follows:

- a) **Diploma:** Two- or three-year programs or options that prepare individuals for front-line positions to work with children, youth, and families.
- b) **Baccalaureate Degree:** Four-year programs or options (including post-diploma or degree completion tracs) that prepare individuals for front-line positions as well as those that involve program design and evaluation, management, clinical work, and preparation for advanced degrees related to clinical intervention and research.
- c) **Master Degree:** Programs or options that prepare individuals for career advancement that involving advanced clinical intervention, postsecondary teaching or research.
- d) **PhD:** Programs or options that prepare individuals for postsecondary teaching or research.

General outcomes shall be established for each program or option that provides a framework for the development of specific measurable competencies. Validation of the general outcomes may be accomplished through a variety of mechanisms. In provinces where educational or vocational outcomes or certification boards exist, the general outcomes for the educational program should match local norms. In jurisdictions where there is no formal body or consortium that has agreed to general

<sup>3</sup> Each program of study or program option shall have appropriate titles consistent with the definition of Child and Youth Care.

outcomes, then a combination of external experts, program advisory committee, and, after the program is in operation, follow up studies of graduates should review and validate the defined general outcomes.

Only institutions legally authorized under applicable provincial law to provide diploma or degree programs beyond the secondary level and that are recognized by the appropriate provincial postsecondary institutional accrediting body are considered for CYC accreditation. Evidence must exist that the programs are understood and accepted by the university or college community, as well as the human services community.

**1.2 Competency Identification and Validation:** Methods for assessing practice competencies shall be identified and validated for each program or option. These competencies must closely relate to the general outcomes established for the program/option and validated in a similar manner. Assessment methods could include practicum evaluations, case studies, skill-based assignments, and written assignments throughout the course of the program. Professional identity is encouraged through an exploration of the value-base that CYC holds as important and communication of those values to students. Students are expected to assess and explore professional and personal values within their coursework. Programs should lead the field in developing new competency in practice (see outcome measures).

**1.3 Transfer Course Work or Prior Learning Assessment:** The institution shall have policies regarding coursework transferred to the program from previous postsecondary education. Previous coursework should be evaluated and approved by faculty or instructors knowledgeable in the courses for which credit is provided. Elective courses should be approved within the appropriate departments.<sup>4</sup> All transfer credits must meet the minimum course requirements for the program (hours of instruction and assessment methods).

Accelerated diploma programs, articulated or collaborative undergraduate degree programs, and undergraduate degree completion programs have mechanisms in place to determine how previous education is recognized and to assess the relevance of previous education to the portion of the program recognized for prior learning. Prior learning assessment follows a standardized process that provides recognized credit for work experience and prior learning when transfer credit is not possible. Students must successfully complete 50% of their program at the institution providing the graduating certificate.

**1.4 Identification of Competency Measures:** Assessment measures exist for each of the measurable CYC outcomes identified for the program or option and the program or option is able to demonstrate how competence is assessed.

**1.5 Program Structure and Course Sequencing:** Each program or option shall meet minimum foundation requirements. Programs or options may exceed maximum foundation requirements specified in each area, but appropriate justifica-

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<sup>4</sup> Transfer Credits may be assessed on a student-by-student basis, or institution-to-institution basis or, a combination of these.

tion should be provided. A specific list of courses and hours of classroom time that are being counted toward each course shall be included in the Self-Study Report. Minimum and maximum foundation requirements for degree programs or options are listed below:

- a) **Diploma:** Programs shall be a minimum of 2 years (equivalent 20 single semester courses averaging 36 hours per course), and shall meet the following minimum to maximum foundation requirements:

Communications and Counseling (oral and written)	2-3 courses
Therapeutic Activities and Group Work	1-3 courses
Family Studies	1-2 courses
Theory*	1-2 courses
Practicum or Internship	750-1500 hours
General Electives	1-3 courses

\*Theory may include study in other disciplines such as psychology, or sociology.

Students must successfully complete 50% of their program at the institution providing the graduating certificate.

- b) **Bachelor Degree:** Major programs or options shall be a minimum of 4 years (equivalent to 40 single semester courses averaging 36 hours), and shall meet the following minimum to maximum foundation requirements:

Communications and Counseling (oral and written)	2-3 courses
Therapeutic Interventions and Group Work	2-4 courses
Family Studies	1-3 courses
Theory*	4-6 courses
Practicum or Internship	750-1500 hours
Research and Evaluation (could include thesis work)	2-4 courses
Liberal Arts	4-6 courses
Professional Electives/Specialization	2-4 courses

\*Theory may include study in other disciplines such as psychology or sociology.

Appropriate skill-based laboratory activities shall be included in the program or option, and a reasonable balance shall be maintained between the practical application of "how" and the conceptual application of "why." Focus is on praxis. There shall be evidence of appropriate sequencing of courses in each major program or option to ensure that advanced-level courses build upon concepts covered in beginning level courses. Students must successfully complete 50% of their program at the institution providing graduating certificate.

- c) **Master Degree:** Major programs or options shall be a minimum of 1 year (equivalent to 10 single semester courses), and shall meet the following



minimum to maximum foundation requirements:

Research Methods	2-4 courses
Communications or Therapeutic Intervention	2-4 courses
Professional Theory	3-6 courses
Major Research Project or Thesis	2-4 courses

Students must successfully complete 75% of their program at the institution providing graduating certificate.

- d) **Doctoral Degree:** Major programs or options shall be a minimum of 2 years (equivalent to a combined total of 15-20 single semester courses), including the dissertation requiring independent research and an oral defense. The program shall meet the following minimum to maximum foundation requirements:

Research Methods	2-4 courses
Professional Theory	2-4 courses
Dissertation	5-7 courses

**1.6 Student Admission and Retention Standards:** There shall be evidence showing that the quality of CYC students is comparable to the quality of students enrolled in other programs at the institution. Admission standards must include a minimum entering average from the prerequisite standard (high school, undergraduate degree, etc.) with the provision for an alternative method of demonstrating academic potential. Sources of admission information may include test scores and grade rankings. Student retention and graduation from the program is comparable to institutional standards. Sources of retention information may include general grade point averages and average length of time to completion for CYC students compared to majors in other programs.

**1.7 Student Advising:** Students have access to academic advising to help them complete the program in a timely fashion. Advising is provided regarding career and future educational opportunities. Students are adequately prepared for the demands of advanced educational programming within the program curriculum, and competency measures (1.4) demonstrate how this preparation is accomplished.

**1.8 Administrative Support and Faculty Qualifications:** There must be evidence of appropriate administrative support from the institution for the CYC program or option including appropriately qualified administrators, an adequate number of full time faculty members, and budgets sufficient to support program or option goals. Financial and personnel resources should not be significantly different from the institutional standard and should be comparable to the standards of similar institutions and programs or options. Full-time faculty assigned to teach courses in the CYC program or option must be appropriately qualified. Faculty qualifications shall include an emphasis upon the extent, currency, and pertinence of (a) aca-

demic preparation, (b) professional experience, (c) membership and participation in appropriate professional organizations, and (d) scholarly activities. The following minimum qualifications for full-time faculty are required:

- a) **Diploma:** The minimum academic qualifications for a regular full-time faculty member are a bachelor's degree in CYC or a bachelor degree in a related discipline with a diploma in CYC. For documented reasons, a combination of education and experience plus professional certification as a CYC practitioner may be substituted. Membership and participation in the provincial CYC association is expected. A minimum of 75% of full-time faculty members should meet this qualification.
- b) **Bachelor Degree:** The minimum academic qualifications for regular tenure track or full-time faculty members shall be a master degree in CYC or a discipline closely related to the instructional assignment with practice experience. A minimum of 50% of the regular tenure track, or full-time faculty members assigned to teach in the program of study content area(s) shall have a PhD in a related field. Membership and participation in the provincial CYC association is expected. Active professional involvement or scholarly activity in CYC is expected. Exceptions may be granted to this standard if the institution has a program in place that will bring the faculty demographics into compliance within a reasonable period of time.
- c) **Master Degree:** A PhD in a discipline closely related to the faculty member's instructional assignment. Membership and participation in the provincial Child and Youth Care Association is expected. Active professional involvement and scholarly activity in child and youth care is expected.
- d) **Doctoral Degree:** A PhD in a discipline closely related to the faculty member's instructional assignment and an active research program contributing to the knowledge base in CYC. Membership and participation in the provincial CYC association is expected.

Variation from these standards must be explained and justified, and the need for such variation should consider a balanced equivalent of education and experience, and demonstrate that faculty members are supported to upgrade their qualifications. Policies and procedures for faculty selection, appointment, reappointment, and tenure shall be clearly specified and shall be conducive to the maintenance of high quality instruction. Faculty teaching, advising, and service loads shall be reasonable and comparable to the faculty in other professional program areas.

**1.9 Facilities, Equipment, and Technical Support:** Facilities and equipment, including the technical personnel support necessary for maintenance, shall be adequate to support program or option goals. Evidence shall be presented showing the availability of library resources, student support and counseling, audio and video

equipment, computer equipment, and software programs to facilitate student success in each program area. Facility and equipment needs shall be included in the long-range goals for the program.

**1.10 Program Goals:** Each program shall have current short- and long-range goals, and plans for achieving these goals.

### **Program Operation:**

**1.11 Program or Option Operation:** Evidence shall be described in the self-study, showing the adequacy of instruction including (a) motivation and counseling of students, (b) scheduling of instruction, (c) quality of instruction, (d) observance of ethical standards, (e) availability of resource materials, (f) teaching and measurement of competencies (specific measurable competencies or outcomes shall be identified for each course along with the assessment measures used to determine student mastery of the competencies), (g) supervision of instruction, and (h) placement services available to students for work experience. Course syllabi must be presented which clearly describe appropriate course objectives, content, references utilized, student activities, and evaluation criteria.

### **Outcome Measures:**

**1.12 Graduate Satisfaction with Program or Option:** Graduate evaluations of the program or option shall be sought on a regular basis. These evaluations shall include questions related to the importance of the general outcomes and specific competencies identified for the program or option. Summary data shall be available for graduate evaluations of the program or option. (Graduate Survey)

**1.13 Employment of Graduates:** Information on job placement, titles, and salaries of graduates shall be collected on a regular basis. The jobs held by graduates will be consistent with program or option goals and outcomes. Summary data shall be available for the employment of graduates. (Graduate Survey, Employer Survey)

**1.14 Job Advancement of Graduates:** Information on the career advancement of graduates shall be collected on a regular basis to demonstrate promotion to positions of increasing responsibility. Summary data shall be available for the career advancement of graduates. (Graduate Survey, Employer Survey)

**1.15 Employer Satisfaction with Job Performance:** Information on employer satisfaction with the job performance of graduates shall be collected on a regular basis including employer attitudes related to the importance of the specific competencies identified for the program. Summary data shall be available showing employer satisfaction with the job performance of graduates. (Employer Survey)

**1.16 Graduate Success in Advanced Program:** If a goal of the program or option is to prepare students for advanced studies, then the success of graduates in applying to, being admitted, and completing advanced study programs shall be tracked and confirmed. Summary data shall be available showing graduate success in advanced programs (Faculty Member Survey, Graduate Survey.)

**1.17 Graduate Success in Passing Certification Requirements:** If a goal of the program or option is to prepare students to pass certification requirements, then the success in passing these (examinations) shall be tracked and confirmed. Summary data shall be available showing success in achieving certification. (Graduate Survey, Professional Association Survey)

**1.18 Development of the Profession:** Dissemination of current and new knowledge to the field occurs through students as they graduate. Research productivity of some faculty will focus on field competencies and faculty members will demonstrate a leadership role in the field through community outreach. College and teaching focused university programs are linked to research-based universities, and summary data is provided, which demonstrates how the faculty members contribute to the development of knowledge and skill in the profession. (Faculty Member Survey, Graduate Survey, Employer Survey, Professional Association Survey)

**1.19 Advisory Council Approval of Overall Program:** An advisory council shall exist for the program or option and shall have responsibility for general outcome and competency validation and the review and evaluation of overall program success. Guidelines for the advisory council shall exist that include (a) criteria for member selection that demonstrates representative expertise in the field and student participation, (b) procedures for selecting members, including student or graduate membership, (c) length of member appointment, (d) council responsibilities, (e) frequency of meetings (at least one per year), and (f) methods of conducting business. Minutes of advisory council meetings shall be available which will demonstrate that the council has reviewed and approved the program or option and any changes. (Faculty Member Survey, Student Survey, Advisory Council Meeting minutes)

**1.20 Outcome Measures Used to Improve Program:** Evidence shall be presented showing how outcome measures (identified above) have been used to improve the overall program or option. (Quality Enhancement Plan and Goals for the Future)