

Extracts from: Duklas, J., Pesaro, J. (2015). ARUCC PCCAT National Transcript and Transfer Credit Nomenclature Project Phase Two: Consultation Document. Calgary, Alberta: Association of Registrars of the Universities and Colleges of Canada (ARUCC) and Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfer (PCCAT).

Section 3: Exploring the Intricacies of Student Mobility

Subsection 3.1: Defining the Credit Hour <pages 16-17>

Considerations:

Phase 1 of the project and subsequent research indicates the credit hour continues to be the predominate form of representing academic studies at Canadian colleges, institutes, and universities; therefore, it is reasonable to ensure that successful practices are in place.

First, there are numerous definitions for ‘credit’ in use in Canada although many share themes. Further, a select few institutions use the term ‘unit.’ Secondly, the research from Phase 1 indicates that institutions maintain different degrees of transparency and coherency when describing credit weight on the transcript key (i.e., the basic unit of measurement per hour). We learned in the first phase that the situation was impeding successful assessment for admission and transfer. To this point, we also heard an interest in greater transparency regarding course mode of delivery.

Finally, we learned examples do exist in Canada where institutions translate other learning into a credit model, thereby ensuring that transparency and coherency are achieved for a student on their transcript and for their progression. Examples include ‘credit for experience’ and ‘level credit.’ Therefore, the findings suggest that standards need to be developed with a specific focus on transcribing the credit hour.

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Background:

Research is emerging regarding the concept of the credit hour and the “Carnegie Unit,” originally a metric for faculty workload for pension benefits, now a proxy for student learning that is embedded in institutional culture, systems, and more.¹ While having a slightly longer history in the US, in the early 1900s, the credit hour was first introduced in Canada at McGill University. Over the past 100 years, the credit hour has become so deeply entrenched in Canadian (and North American) postsecondary education that it has become the core driver for the shape of institutional student information systems, the postsecondary transcript, and more. Table 2 outlines examples of definitions for credit hour in use in Canada. While somewhat different, the definitions offer similar themes most of which are focused on counting the credit hour.

Table 1: Sample of Definitions for Credit, Unit, and Course in use in Canada

Credit	A unit used to express the value of a course or other training activity in relation to the total requirements for a degree, diploma, or certificate, usually measured in hours of study or achievement of threshold standard or both.
Credit	The value assigned to a course. For example, many courses are valued at three credits. Most credentials specify the number of credits to be earned for the credential to be awarded. See also Unit.

¹Laitinan, A. (September, 2012, Cracking the Credit Hour. Washington, D.C.: New America Foundation. Retrieved March 26, 2015 from <http://www.educationsector.org/publications/cracking-credit-hour>

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Credit	The value given to a course. May be related to the number of hours of instruction. The majority of academic courses are worth three credits. Many degrees require 120 credits. (See also Unit)
Credit	A unit of value assigned to a course for the purpose of counting its value towards a credential such as a certificate, diploma or degree. The number of credits received by students for a course varies widely among Institutions.
Credit	1. The unit of value attached to a given course. 2. The recognition awarded to a student for successfully completing the course's requirements.
Credit	The value given to a course; may be related to the number of hours of instruction.
Credit Course	A course carrying a unit value which can be applied against a program of study's requirements, if the course is completed successfully.
Credit for Experience	The credit awarded for one's work or life experience.
Credit Hour	The unit of value that expresses the quantity of course work required. The number of credit hours of a course is usually determined by the number of hours per week multiplied by the number of weeks in the term or session. One credit hour is usually assigned for each hour which meets per week over a term or session.
Credit hour	The measure used to reflect the relative weight of a given course toward the fulfilment of appropriate degree, diploma, certificate, major, minor, or other program requirements. A weight of one credit hour normally means that the course meets for lectures one hour per week for the duration of a semester or two hours per week for the duration of a session. Unless otherwise indicated, a course normally has a credit value of three credit hours.
Course	A single unit of study offered by an educational institution.
Course	Single unit of study, identified by a title, description and credit value, as well as a unique course number and/or code.
Course	A discrete unit of instruction which is part of a program leading to a credential
Unit	Select institutions in Canada have used a unit rather than credit system to define the value assigned to a course toward a program or credential (3 credit hours = 1.5 institutional units).
Unit	One unit = two credits.

Concepts such as “credit for experience” extend the possibilities and move the definition towards a mobility framework nested in the concept of portability and recognition of prior learning (similar in methodology to the European Credit Transfer System - ECTS). At all levels of credentials there are other examples of learning and concomitant methods to recognize learning such as field work, experiential learning, co-op, PLAR, challenge exams, etc. The findings from Phase 1 confirm evidence exists of these various practices.

The research in Phase 1 also notes that institutions employ different methods to define credit weight and that transcripts are not always sufficiently detailed. This situation is causing problems in the areas of transfer credit and admissions assessment. In addition, it is impeding efficiency as assessors are often required to conduct further research in order to clarify institutional practices. While regulatory and accreditation bodies were not surveyed for this research, it stands to reason that the lack of transparency is also likely impeding at times assessment of credentials towards final accreditation. Therefore, we suggest that institutions should be more transparent on their transcripts and websites about how they assign credit weight.

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Mode and method of delivery also arose as discussion topics although opinions in terms of transcription are not known. Institutions are delivering learning in-person, online, and in hybrid formats, and are experimenting with alternative approaches such as MOOCs,² experiential learning, flipped classrooms, collaborative learning using learning platforms, and more.

Subsection 3.2: Transcription of Transfer Credit <pages 18-20>

Considerations:

The Canadian registrarial and pathway communities are solidly committed to developing partnerships among institutions locally, and a number advocate for the flexibility to develop them in a customized fashion. There is also strong desire to harmonize institutional policy to avoid ad hoc transcript policies and practices in the area of transfer credit, to develop jurisdictional standards that preserve institutional autonomy, and to ensure transcripts contain information about transfer to enhance mobility. There are differences of opinion regarding principles related to the tension between program autonomy, institutional autonomy, and adoption of standards, and including details regarding studies taken at another institution on the home transcript.

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Background:

During the first phase of the national project, we clearly heard the following principles should guide transcription of transfer credit (2014, pp. 107-108):

- Clarity (source of transfer credit, what was awarded, what type, and how much credit);
- Transparency (display necessary information to ensure other organizations reading the transcript understand what was awarded); and,
- An appropriate level of detail (sufficient information to ensure a clear understanding of how the awarded transfer credit applies to the credential).

As a means to provide additional clarification, select institutions reported providing a supplementary document with the transcript that 'tells the story' of transfer to both the student and other organizations.

The ARUCC 2003 Transcript Guide is clear on transcription of partnerships: *adding the names of all partner institutions is considered "essential" whether the relationship involves degree or non-degree*

² Arizona State University MOOCs example: <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2015/04/23/arizona-state-edx-team-offer-freshman-year-online-through-moocs>

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studies. Having noted this, only 33% indicated this practice is followed. A review of transcript samples reveals a significant lack of transfer credit detail is included on transcripts. Typically, the source institution is noted and transfer credit is indicated as awarded; however, the level of detail varies and institutions are not routinely explicit on transcripts regarding how they calculate credit weight even for their own institution.

In examining the almost equally balanced divisions of perspective identified in the first phase, the foundational principle that appears most in conflict is the tension between preserving the transcript as an academic record that is reflective of that which is controlled and delivered locally by the home institution (i.e., verifiable, subject to local quality control, defensible, monitored) versus facilitating partnerships and transfer by putting another institution's information on the transcript as a means to acknowledge the partnership and/or to enhance clarity and transparency.

The notion that information from another institution should not be featured on home transcripts stands in contrast to many examples where this practice, when carefully thought through, has proven to be in the best interest of the student, mobility, transparency, and efficiencies. In instances where this occurs, one institution typically holds the final "official" record of the student. The researchers found examples across Canada that amplified these principles in action and note partnership type sometimes drives the final outcomes.

A college and university in Alberta have developed a degree completion opportunity wherein the college notes the full four years on the transcript. In this example, all courses are taught on the college campus; however, the upper two years officially comprise the courses owned and taught by the university. The college, therefore, notes that the upper year courses are placed on the college transcript for information purposes and indicates that the "official" transcript outlining the full degree is distributed by the university. This approach has ensured the student is seamlessly supported, the administrators and faculty have a complete record for degree progression review, counselling, and audit, and the student can still access an official version for the purposes of demonstrating completion of a degree program at a university.

Agreement or strong agreement was evident for the following:

- Institutional policy should be harmonized to avoid ad hoc transcript policies and practices (80, 74%);
- A jurisdictional transcript standard should be developed that preserves institutional autonomy (88, 82%);
- Transcripts at receiving and/or sending institutions should contain transfer details to enhance mobility (69, 65%).

There appears to be almost equal division of perspective on the following:

- Partnership types should influence what appears on a transcript;
- Institutions should develop partnerships locally and by program in a customized fashion;
- An institution should not publish partner information from another school;
- One institution should hold the official student record.

Duklas et al. (2014). ARUCC PCCAT Phase 1 Report, p. 100.

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Another example in BC represents a partnership among four institutions wherein the final diploma credential for the degree is signed by all four presidents. The “official record” is managed entirely by one of the partners. The partnership for the degree is supported by a separately incorporated company. There is one transcript distributed. This model demonstrates an example of a partnership model driving the final credential and the subsequent support framework and protocols such as for transcription.

The graduate level provides interesting approaches to partnerships; one example is the Cotutelle. This type of partnership originally emerged in France and has now been adopted by institutions around the world. In this model, a student pursues two doctoral programs simultaneously as a result of first an institutional partnership agreement and then an individual agreement. Many elements are joint: supervision, a shared defence, and recognition of work by two separate institutions at the PhD level. Further, the successful student can receive two degrees upon completion or one joint degree. Transcripts are notated to acknowledge the participation of the doctoral student in a Cotutelle arrangement. The Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance (the “Quality Council”) is one example of a jurisdiction in Canada that has specifically defined Cotutelle³ and specified the expected credential outcomes. A growing number of Canadian institutions are creating locally developed policies to support this type of degree.....

Respondents to the national survey conducted in Phase 1 were asked to identify which of the following transfer credit items should be on a transcript. The total percentage that chose optional, recommended, and essential is noted for each item; of this, the percentage that identified the item as essential is identified in brackets:

- Block transfer credit – 90% (49% essential)
- Grades earned from equivalent experience (e.g., PLAR) – 78% (26% essential)
- Failed grades – 63% (21% essential)
- Passed grades – 80% (40% essential)
- Transfer credit source – 88% (22% essential)
- Identity of sending institution – 95% (66% essential)
- Name of sending program – 79% (22% essential)
- Actual grades from sending institution – 60% (14% essential; 38% NOT recommended)
- Grade equivalents – 56% (11% essential; 36% NOT recommended)
- Course-specific transfer credit – 89% (55% essential)
- Type of inter-institutional partnership – 83% (14% essential)

Duklas et al. (2014). ARUCC PCCAT Phase 1 Report, p. 107.

³ A customized program of doctoral study developed jointly by two institutions for an individual student in which the requirements of each university’s doctoral programs are upheld, but the student working with supervisors at each institution prepares a single thesis which is then examined by a committee whose members are drawn from

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Subsection 3.4: Defining Inter-institutional Agreements <pages 23-28>

Considerations:

There are many different types of agreements in place at colleges, institutes, and universities in Canada. Their characteristics vary although thematic similarities are evident. Agreements affecting the area of transfer can be university wide, faculty/school specific, program specific, or at the level of courses such as for cross-registration initiatives. These agreements can also have legal ramifications.

The findings from Phase 1 indicate that numerous institutions do not notate partnership information on a transcript despite the *Essential* recommendation in the 2003 ARUCC Transcript Guide (33% reported notating partnerships on transcripts). Further, there is evidence that the variety of agreement types is causing confusion and negatively impacting attempts to reach a holistic understanding regarding the breadth and depth of joint programs in Canada. There were also suggestions that agreements in place between institutions in one province were not necessarily honoured in another province (i.e., an issue of reciprocity arose). While likely small, the suggestion is that there is a potential negative impact on inter-provincial student mobility. There were also comments made regarding intra-provincial reciprocity issues.

While some of these findings do begin to stray beyond the scope of the ARUCC PCCAT Project, the research suggests that transcription standards need to be identified and amplified. Further, establishing an agreement nomenclature framework might potentially reduce confusion. It is also worth stating that certain institutions and governing organizations have approved specific partnership agreement terminology. In light of the project's commitment to the principles of institutional autonomy and provincial authority, it is important to respect these formally approved protocols. In so doing, the project is seeking to identify common practices that might inform promising practices in the area of transfer nomenclature glossary development.

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both institutions. The student is awarded two degree documents though there is a notation on the transcripts indicating that the student completed his or her thesis under Cotutelle arrangements (Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance, 2010, p. 6).

Extracts from: Duklas, J., Pesaro, J. (2015). ARUCC PCCAT National Transcript and Transfer Credit Nomenclature Project Phase Two: Consultation Document. Calgary, Alberta: Association of Registrars of the Universities and Colleges of Canada (ARUCC) and Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfer (PCCAT).

Background:

Evidence from Phase 1 indicates institutions and jurisdictions use variable approaches to describe inter-institutional partnerships. Given the evidence, it would be fair to say that it is difficult to point to a national standard; however, there are jurisdictional examples. As the research of Dr. Jane Knight illustrates (2008, 2011), this challenge is not unique to Canada or Canadian institutions.

Although the terms in the call out within this section are most commonly used at Canadian postsecondary institutions, none of the glossaries examined provided definitions for all the options; typically, “Block Transfer Agreement” and “Articulated Agreements” were defined.

A review of terms culled from glossaries created by institutions, allied organizations, and governments reveal that formal definitions for agreement types do not always appear to exist in current glossaries. Table 3 highlights some of the terms in use in Canada.

The most common agreement terms used in Canada are listed in order of popularity below. The italicized terms were also found to be common in the BCCAT *Credentialing Practices for Joint Program* study (Duklas, 2013, p. 11).

- Memoranda of Understanding;
- *Block transfer agreements*;
- *Articulated agreements*;
- *Pathway agreements*;
- *Numeric titling agreements*;
- Bridge/bridging programs or agreements.

Duklas et al. (2014). ARUCC PCCAT Phase 1 Report, pp. 102-103.

Table 2: Agreement Terms in Use in Canada

Term	Definition
Degree Partnership	An agreement between two institutions that allows students to earn credit toward a credential at one institution while enrolled at the other institution. May also be called ‘dual enrollment’.
Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)	A formal agreement of intent between two or more institutions to accept courses (or clusters of courses) for credit. Generally MOU's also incorporate other factors such as recognition of co-op placements, reduced course load (beyond what is accepted for advanced credit) for completion, etc. that is not normally found in a Transfer Agreement.
Reciprocal Bilateral Transfer Agreement	A transfer agreement that has been negotiated between two institutions whereby Institution A agrees to accept the course (or cluster of courses) taken at Institution B in lieu of its own course (or cluster of courses) and reciprocally, Institution B agrees to accept the course (or cluster of courses) taken at Institution A in lieu of its own course (or cluster of courses). Therefore, reciprocal bilateral agreements are always two-way agreements (see unidirectional bilateral transfer agreement).

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Term	Definition
Unidirectional Bilateral Transfer Agreement	A transfer agreement negotiated between a sending institution and a receiving institution which is primarily intended to be one-way. In practice, advance credit for courses involved in an agreement usually will be awarded at either institution, particularly when the agreement involves courses that are part of a university transfer program. However, in some cases credit will not be awarded in the opposite direction; for example, Institution A may agree to accept Institution B's cluster of transferable courses in lieu of one of its own courses and have the agreement entered in the Transfer Guide. However, it might not be appropriate for Institution B conversely to award transfer credits for the cluster of courses if a student with the one course from Institution A presented it for advanced credit assessment (see reciprocal bilateral transfer agreement).
Transfer Agreement	Formal agreement between postsecondary institutions that specifies how courses and credits completed at the sending institution will be accepted and applied at the receiving institution.
	An agreement between two institutions (a sender and a receiver) that specifies how the sending institution's course or program will be accepted for (transfer) credit at the receiving institution.
Articulation Agreement	An agreement, typically between two institutions but also between an institution and an organization such as an occupational body, that authorizes studies undertaken in specific programs to be credited toward direct entry and/or Advanced Standing into a specific program at the receiving institution.
	A formal agreement between one or more colleges and one or more educational institutions or boards of education that recognizes learning achievement, facilitates student progress, minimizes curriculum duplication, and eases the transition from one institution to the other.
	Official agreement between two (bilateral) or more (multilateral) postsecondary institutions that defines the terms and conditions enabling students to transfer between specific programs. May also determine which courses or programs taken at the sending institution will apply to graduation requirements at the receiving institution.
Block Transfer Agreement	A transfer agreement in which a predetermined number of transfer credits is granted to transferring students who have successfully completed a certificate, diploma or cluster of courses at another institution. Generally, block transfer is used to award credit for courses that, as a group, are recognized as having an academic wholeness or integrity and that collectively satisfy part of the requirements for another credential.
Laddering	"Laddering": A process which allows you to build upon previously earned credits or credentials, either from secondary or postsecondary institutions.
	"Career Laddering": using a previously earned postsecondary credential to enter another program at a higher level.
Transfer Pathway	Defined route from one program or institution to another program or institution that specifies eligibility requirements and how transfer credits will be accepted and applied at the receiving institution. Usually applies to multiple sending institutions and one or more receiving institutions Does not require formal signed agreement between institutions.

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Term	Definition
Cotutelle (graduate doctoral agreement)	A customized program of doctoral study developed jointly by two institutions for an individual student in which the requirements of each university's doctoral programs are upheld, but the student working with supervisors at each institution prepares a single thesis that is then examined by a committee whose members are drawn from both institutions. The student is awarded two degree documents though there is a notation on the transcripts indicating that the student completed his or her thesis under Cotutelle arrangements.

While the practice might be to use a particular term and, perhaps, entrench it in institutional policy or publish it on a provincial glossary, that does not necessarily mean it is commonly used, understood, or defined. The same term could be used to mean different things as the example in Table 4 for 'block credit' illustrates. Sometimes this term is defined as a type of an agreement, a process, a form of articulation, a type of credit, etc.

Table 3: Analysis of "Block Credit" and its different Categories of Usage across Canada

Category of Use for Block Credit	Definition
Type of agreement	A transfer agreement in which a predetermined number of transfer credits is granted to transferring students who have successfully completed a certificate, diploma or cluster of courses at another institution. Generally, block transfer is used to award credit for courses that, as a group, are recognized as having an academic wholeness or integrity and that collectively satisfy part of the requirements for another credential.
Timing and what a student obtains	Block Transfer occurs when a group of courses, often in the form of a certificate or diploma, is recognized for transfer credit. You should be able to transfer directly into the second or third year of the degree program depending on the agreement. Block transfer works well if you complete the entire diploma. If you don't complete the entire diploma, you'll probably still receive some transfer credit if the individual courses are listed.
Type of articulation	Block transfer articulation occurs where institutions compare whole programs and award credit on the basis of total hours or credits, rather than for individual courses. This form of articulation is used, for example, in granting credit for a diploma completed at one institution toward a degree program at another institution.
Type of credit granted	Credit granted based on completion of the transfer credential.
Type of credit granted	Advanced Standing for a group of credits or courses at one institution based on their equivalence to a defined set of course or program learning outcomes at another institution. Block credit enables students to enter a program at a receiving institution at an advanced level.
Type of courses accepted for credit	A group of courses, such as a completed certificate or diploma program, that are accepted for transfer credit into a degree program.

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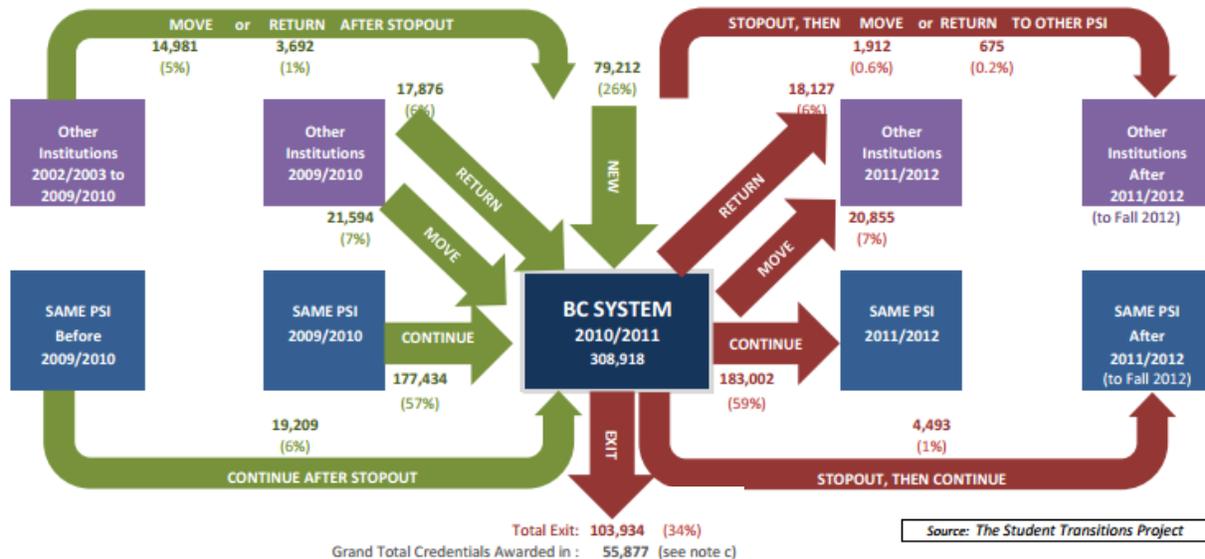
Category of Use for Block Credit	Definition
A process	The process whereby a block of credits is granted to students who have successfully completed a cluster of courses, certificate or diploma, recognized as having an academic wholeness or integrity, and related in a meaningful way to part of the degree program.

Of relevance to this section is the focus in some of the agreement definitions on ‘senders’ and ‘receivers’ (e.g., “unidirectional” agreements). The ARUCC PCCAT Phase 1 report highlighted the findings of a Student Transitions study by the BC provincial government. It, along with other research, is fundamentally changing perceptions regarding discrete distinctions between ‘senders’ and ‘receivers.’ The relevant data for British Columbia demonstrating this shift is highlighted in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 provides an overview of student mobility numbers from British Columbia’s Student Transitions project (BC Ministry of Advanced Education, n.d.). While comparable data is not available from other Canadian provinces, it demonstrates that students are combining attendance at a number of schools all the way through their educational journey; suggesting that a shift is occurring with regard to long-held understandings regarding the concepts surrounding transfer, transcript standards, and transfer credit nomenclature more generally (Rob Fleming; Robert Adamoski, personal communication, January 23, 2014).

Duklas et al. (2014). ARUCC PCCAT Phase 1 Report, p. 35.

Figure 1: Student Pathways to BC Public PSE Institutions 2010/2011 and Future Student Pathways, up to Fall 2012

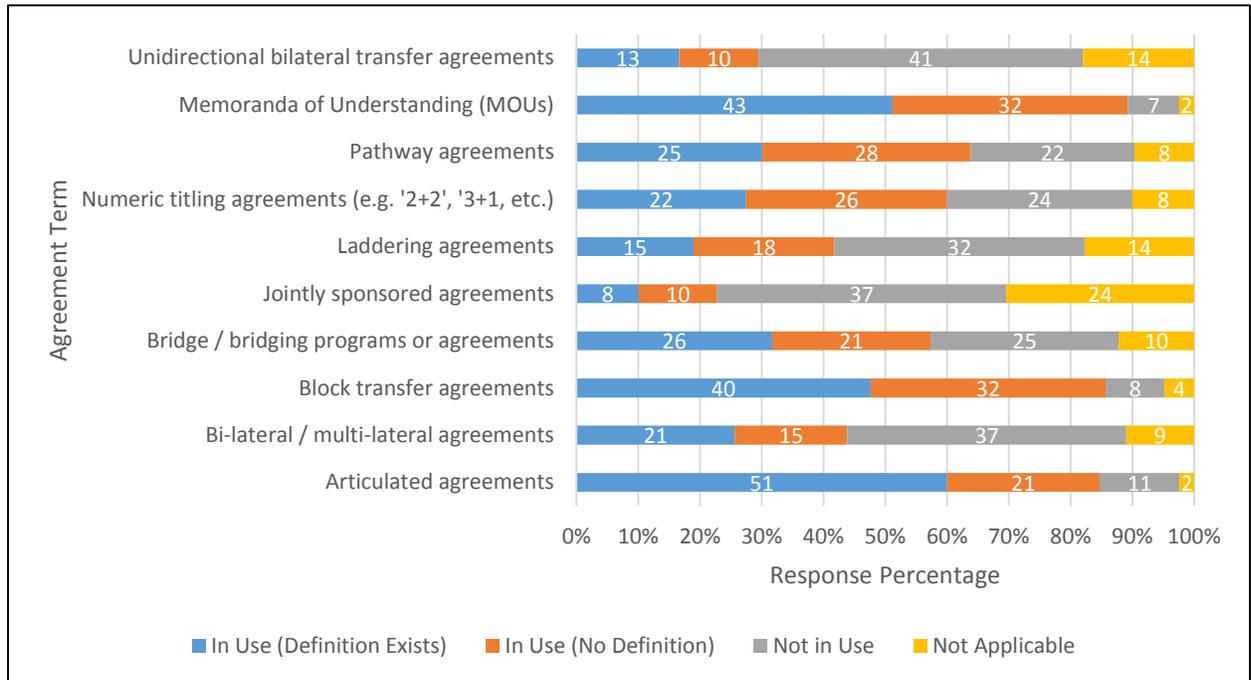


Source: BC Ministry of Advanced Education. (n.d.). *The Student Transitions Project*. http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/student_transitions/

Extracts from: Duklas, J., Pesaro, J. (2015). ARUCC PCCAT National Transcript and Transfer Credit Nomenclature Project Phase Two: Consultation Document. Calgary, Alberta: Association of Registrars of the Universities and Colleges of Canada (ARUCC) and Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfer (PCCAT).

The range of findings regarding agreement nomenclature from the first phase is included in Figure 2 below (ARUCC PCCAT Phase 1 Report, 2014, p. 11).

Figure 2: Agreement Nomenclature in Use in Canada



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Subsection 3.5: Defining Inter-institutional Programs <pages 29-31>

Considerations:

The findings from Phase 1 reveal a variety of terms in use in Canada to describe inter-institutional programs; nine are for joint and collaborative programs alone. This variety is causing confusion and there is demonstrable evidence that it is creating problems for researchers when analyzing Canada’s success in the area of inter-institutional partnerships.

It is the aspiration of Phase 2 to establish a taxonomy of terminology to facilitate common term usage across Canada in the area of inter-institutional program definitions while also ensuring awareness of those terms that have been approved by governing bodies. Plus, prior research suggests a partial framework for resolving this area of consideration.

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Background:

Phase 1 of the national study indicates the most popular terms used to describe transfer credit programs include the following: degree/diploma completion programs; joint programs; collaborative programs; and dual/double credential programs. Table 5 provides a summary of the findings from a review of glossaries in use at institutions and allied organizations.

Table 4: Terms Used to Describe Program Types in Canada

Term	Definition
Bridge course / program	Course or set of courses that students take to fill gaps in their learning from one program in order to enter another program, for example from a diploma to a degree program in the same area of study. Some bridging courses/programs are designed to prepare internationally educated professionals to write certification examinations to practice in Canada.
Conjoint Program	A program of study, offered by a postsecondary institution that is affiliated, federated or collaborating with a university, which is approved by the university’s Senate or equivalent body, and for which a single degree document signed by both Institutions is awarded.
Integrated Program	Two or more distinct, approved, free-standing programs of instruction, in one or more institutions, amalgamated into one program of instruction for enrolment, curricula, examination, and administrative purposes and for which the eligible enrolment is reported on the basis of the institution-of-registration. The program of instruction is planned, maintained, and delivered by one or more institutions from each sector and culminates in one credential, normally a baccalaureate degree.
Joint Degree Program	A program of study offered by two or more universities or by a university and a college or institute, including an Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning, in which successful completion of the requirements is confirmed by a single degree document .
	A joint degree program awards one joint qualification upon completion of the collaborative program requirements established by the partner Institutions.

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Term	Definition
	"A joint degree program awards one joint qualification upon completion of the collaborative program requirements established by the partner institution." ⁴
Joint / Integrated Program	A program offered co-operatively by university and college partners. May integrate two or more distinct programs also offered independently by partner institutions. Students study at both institutions either sequentially or concurrently .
	Graduates receive one or more credentials from partner institutions, for example, a student might receive both a diploma in media arts and a degree in communications. May sometimes describe an educational program developed and delivered by two different academic programs or departments at the same institution, or concurrent programs offered within the same institution.
Collaborative and Joint Degree Programs	Collaborative programs are offered jointly by a college and a partnering university. Students may earn either one or two credentials - one from the college and/or one from the university.
Collaborative Program	Generally, an academic or vocational program of instruction that has been developed cooperatively by university and college partners to facilitate learners' efficient progression towards one or more credentials for which the learning has been achieved in both a college and a university. Collaborative programs of instruction ensure that learning that has already been achieved will be recognized by the receiving institution according to the terms outlined in the articulation agreement. There are a number of models for collaborative programs of instruction.
	Programs offered jointly by two or more institutions.
	A collaborative program is an intra-university graduate program that provides an additional multidisciplinary experience for students enrolled in and completing the degree requirements for one of a number of approved programs. Students meet the admission requirements of and register in the participating (or "home") program but complete, in addition to the degree requirements of that program, the additional requirements specified by the collaborative program. The degree conferred is that of the home program, and the completion of the collaborative program is indicated by a transcript notation indicating the additional specialization that has been attained (e.g., MA in Political Science with specialization in American Studies).
	An academic program offered jointly by university and college partners. The partners have agreed on a defined sharing of responsibility for curriculum that is recognized by both institutions as earning credit toward one or more credentials. Some collaborative programs offer graduates a diploma and a degree.
Degree Completion Program	A program offered by a college or university that awards transfer credit to graduates of a college diploma or advanced diploma program in order to enter a degree program at a specified level. May require completion of bridge courses where applicable. Specifies additional credits necessary to qualify for a degree. Subject to conditions such as academic standing or minimum grades. Example: College Advanced Diploma in Chemical Engineering Technology to Bachelor of Science in Chemistry

⁴ Knight, J. (2008). Joint and Double Degree Programmes: Vexing Questions and Issues. London: The Observatory on Borderless Higher Education.

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Term	Definition
Consecutive Degree Program	"A consecutive degree program awards two different qualifications at consecutive levels upon completion of the collaborative program requirements established by the partner institutions." ⁵
University Transfer Program	Several college systems offer university transfer programs, providing the first two years of a university undergraduate program. Universities and colleges also cooperate on integrated programs for which graduates receive both a degree and a diploma. Cooperative education is part of many programs, with work placements being a requirement in addition to academic study.
	First 2 years of a degree level program taken at a college before transferring to a university of private college with accredited degree program.
Multiple Degree Program	"A multiple degree program awards three or more individual qualifications at equivalent levels upon completion of the collaborative program requirements established by the three or more partner institutions." ⁶
Dual Credential Program	A program of study offered by two or more universities or by a university and a college or institute, including Institutes of Technology and Advanced Learning, in which successful completion of the requirements is confirmed by a separate and different degree/diploma document being awarded by each of the participating institutions.
Dual Degree Program	Two separate awards from two institutions. Also called a double degree.
Double Degree Program	"A double degree program awards two individual qualifications at equivalent levels upon completion of the collaborative program requirements established by the two partner institutions." ⁷
	A double degree program awards two individual qualifications at equivalent levels upon completion of the collaborative program requirements established by the two partner institutions.

Subsection 3.6: Operational Transfer Credit Nomenclature Usage <pages 32-34>

Considerations:

There is a tremendous variety of transfer credit terminology used in Canada to describe the particulars of transfer credit, blocks or clusters of courses, the nature of the credit assigned for past studies as it relates to the program to which the student is seeking access, whether or not it directly applies to a particular discipline (such as a major), and so forth. Phase 1 findings indicate this variety is having an impact on administrators, policy developers, and students. We encourage you to read the 2014 study by Christine Helen Arnold, Transfer Literacy: Assessing Informational Symmetries and Asymmetries, which provides another lens on the challenge.⁸

⁵ Knight, J., 2008

⁶ Knight, J., 2008

⁷ Knight, J., 2008

⁸ http://www.oncat.ca/files_docs/content/pdf/en/oncat_research_reports/2012-2_ChristineArnold-Transfer-literacy-assessing-informational-symmetries-and-asymmetries.pdf

Extracts from: Duklas, J., Pesaro, J. (2015). ARUCC PCCAT National Transcript and Transfer Credit Nomenclature Project Phase Two: Consultation Document. Calgary, Alberta: Association of Registrars of the Universities and Colleges of Canada (ARUCC) and Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfer (PCCAT).

Principles which appear to drive the choice of a term or phrase appear to vary. For example, we learned in the first phase from institutional feedback that attempts were routinely made to simplify language and enhance transparency for students when choosing a particular term. Others indicated a desire to find or create terms that conveyed the core purpose of a particular action in an effort to simplify and clarify the nomenclature. And still others indicated a desire to ensure the chosen nomenclature sufficiently categorized an array of mutual exclusivity between opposite actions (e.g., specified and unspecified). Most of the terms in use derive in some fashion from the expectation that the item in question is a course shaped by credit hours or relates in some fashion to a course credit framework. When not explicitly about a course shaped by credit hours, some institutions appear to be attempting to translate the knowledge gained in prior studies or experience into the credit hour framework. This is similar to the methodology employed by the ECTS credit system in Europe.

The research from Phase 1 highlighted common and successful practices that are worth considering. However, the bigger challenge appears to be identifying best practice and, further, encouraging adoption. This section is intended to address these areas.

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Background:

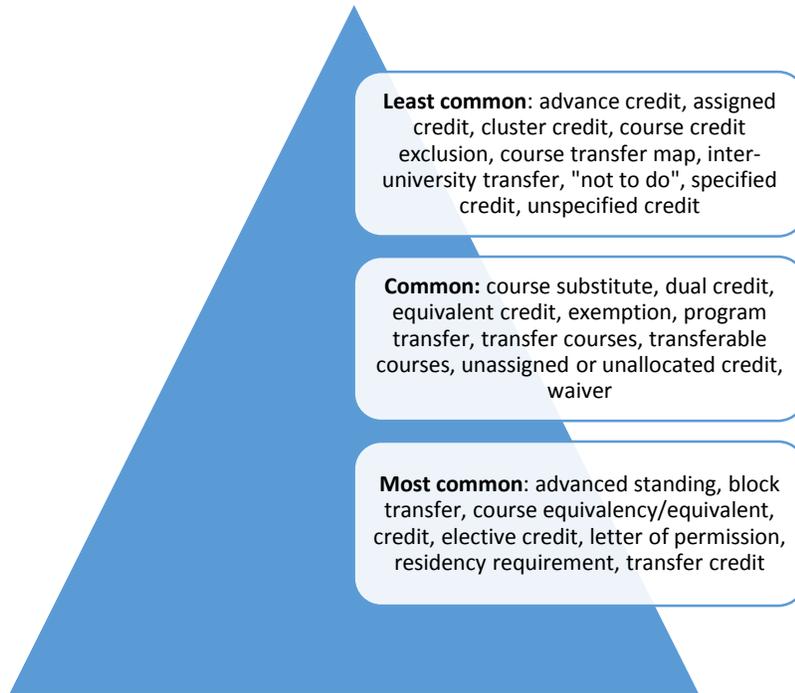
In addition to the aforementioned tables, Figure 3 provides a high level overview of some of the program and course specific findings from Phase 1. Additional research of Canadian glossaries and institutional policies indicate that any one of these words is defined differently by different organizations. In some instances, there are four different definitions evident across Canada for the same term (and sometimes more). An example is “advanced standing.” Table 5 provides sample definitions for select unique items some of which demonstrate the array of approaches.

Some widely used words such as *equivalency* also encourage additional reflection. For example, this word suggests equal value, function, meaning, etc. Its use, although wide, is open to challenge. For example, is it a truly sufficient term to identify what usually amounts to overlap but not sameness? What might be an alternate term? And what about its opposite? There seem to be many derivations of the latter. The variety of words and definitions creates some confusion.

It is also worth stating that very few of the examples provided spoke to other forms of learning beyond course work. The exceptions would be forms of prior learning assessment and assessment approaches such as a “challenge test”; however, it is not clear from the first phase findings that institutions routinely award transfer credit for non-course based learning. The researchers did find examples of institutions that award credit for PLAR; however, it would appear this is not common across Canada. Further, the approach to transcribing varies as there is no standard for PLAR.

Extracts from: Duklas, J., Pesaro, J. (2015). ARUCC PCCAT National Transcript and Transfer Credit Nomenclature Project Phase Two: Consultation Document. Calgary, Alberta: Association of Registrars of the Universities and Colleges of Canada (ARUCC) and Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfer (PCCAT).

Figure 3: Degree of Usage - Terms of Relevance to Transfer Credit



Extracts from: Duklas, J., Pesaro, J. (2015). ARUCC PCCAT National Transcript and Transfer Credit Nomenclature Project Phase Two: Consultation Document. Calgary, Alberta: Association of Registrars of the Universities and Colleges of Canada (ARUCC) and Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfer (PCCAT).

Table 5: Sample Definitions

Term	Definition
Cluster Credit	The credit awarded when two or more courses must be combined, at either the sending or the receiving institution, in order to obtain credit for a single equivalent course at the receiving institution.
Equivalency (similar terms: Equivalent Credit, Course Credit Equivalency)	<p>A relationship of parity between one system, jurisdiction, or institution and another with respect to the value and significance of courses, diplomas, certificates, licences, and/or degrees.</p> <p>Recognition of the equivalent value of courses, programs, sections of programs, degrees, or training. Applies to assessments provided, for example, by regulatory bodies to determine eligibility to practice.</p> <p>Equivalent means “equal in value, amount, function, [or] meaning.” A course submitted for evaluation for articulation purposes will likely never be completely identical to the corresponding course at the receiving institution. The assessment of equivalence involves identifying the degree to which the courses match in content or outcomes.</p> <p>The degree of similarity between the courses should be close enough so that students receiving transfer credit will have the necessary knowledge and background to be successful in more advanced courses. Conditions and restrictions on transfer (such as requiring a minimum grade in the course for credit to be transferable) should not be included unless those same restrictions apply to the equivalent course at the receiving institution, or unless there are clear and defensible reasons for doing so.</p> <p>Transfer of course credit from one postsecondary institution to another where courses are considered equal in content or academic value.</p>
Assigned Credit (similar term: Level Credit)	<p>The credit value that is ‘assigned’ to a course at a sending institution when it is assessed as being equivalent to a course at a receiving institution.</p> <p>If a course at a receiving institution is determined to be equivalent to the course for which transfer credit is being requested, the transfer credit request form is filled in with the name, code and number of credits of the matching course and, if applicable, the effective start date. This is referred to as assigned credit.</p>
Assigned Disciplinary Credit (similar terms: Assigned Credit, Level Credit)	Placement at a certain level of study when entering a program or course, based on assessment of previous [academic] work, or on achievement in a placement test.
Unassigned Credit (similar term: Level Credit)	<p>Credit given when a course is considered worthy of credit but does not have a direct equivalent. It may be recorded as credit within a particular discipline or as general unassigned credit.</p> <p>A form of transfer credit that can be awarded when a course is assessed as not being equivalent to a specific course at a receiving institution. Unassigned credit is usually specified as applying toward the requirements of a particular discipline or program, e.g., BUS 1xx (3). May be called level credit at some Institutions.</p>

Extracts from: Duklas, J., Pesaro, J. (2015). ARUCC PCCAT National Transcript and Transfer Credit Nomenclature Project Phase Two: Consultation Document. Calgary, Alberta: Association of Registrars of the Universities and Colleges of Canada (ARUCC) and Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions and Transfer (PCCAT).

Term	Definition
	If a transfer credit request involves a course which is appropriate for credit in the discipline, but which does not closely match the topic, structure, content, or format of the courses in the department at the receiving institution, then unassigned discipline-specific transfer credit can be awarded. This type of credit verifies that the course is taught at the expected level and standard for the program it is being awarded credit in; that it conforms to the norms of the discipline; and that it is suitable for meeting elective credit requirements within a degree program. However, the course does not transfer with direct credit for a course at the receiving institution.
	Recognition of learning where the course doesn't have a specific equivalent at the receiving institution.