



Graphic Design Program Standard

*The approved program standard for
Advanced Graphic Design program of
instruction leading to an Ontario
Advanced College Diploma delivered by
Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and
Technology (MTCU funding code 61820)*

Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities
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I. Introduction

This document is the Program Standard for the Graphic Design program of instruction leading to an Ontario Advanced College Diploma delivered by Ontario colleges of applied arts and technology (MTCU funding code 61820).

Development of System-Wide Program Standards

In 1993, the Government of Ontario initiated program standards development with the objectives of bringing a greater degree of consistency to college programming offered across the province, broadening the focus of college programs to ensure graduates have the skills to be flexible and to continue to learn and adapt, and providing public accountability for the quality and relevance of college programs.

The Program Standards and Evaluation Unit of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities have responsibility for the development, review and approval of system-wide standards for programs of instruction at Ontario colleges of applied arts and technology.

Program Standards

Program standards apply to all similar programs of instruction offered by colleges across the province. Each program standard for a postsecondary program includes the following elements:

- **Vocational standard** (the vocationally specific learning outcomes which apply to the program of instruction in question),
- **Essential employability skills** (the essential employability skills learning outcomes which apply to all programs of instruction); and
- **General education requirement** (the requirement for general education in postsecondary programs of instruction).

Collectively, these elements outline the essential skills and knowledge that a student must reliably demonstrate in order to graduate from the program.

Individual colleges of applied arts and technology offering the program of instruction determine the specific program structure, delivery methods and other curriculum matters to be used in assisting students to achieve the outcomes articulated in the standard. Individual colleges also determine whether additional local learning outcomes will be required to reflect specific local needs and/or interests.

The Expression of Program Standards as Vocational Learning Outcomes

Vocational learning outcomes represent culminating demonstrations of learning and achievement. They are not simply a listing of discrete skills, nor broad statements of knowledge and comprehension. In addition, vocational learning outcomes are interrelated and cannot be viewed in isolation of one another. As such, they should be viewed as a comprehensive whole. They describe performances that demonstrate that significant integrated learning by graduates of the program has been achieved and verified.

Expressing standards as vocational learning outcomes ensures consistency in the outcomes for program graduates, while leaving to the discretion of individual colleges curriculum matters such as the specific program structure and delivery methods.

The Presentation of the Vocational Learning Outcomes

The vocational learning outcome statements set out the culminating demonstration of learning and achievement that the student must reliably demonstrate before graduation.

The elements of the performance for each outcome define and clarify the level and quality of performance necessary to meet the requirements of the vocational learning outcome. However, it is the performance of the vocational learning outcome itself on which students are evaluated. The elements of performance are indicators of the means by which the student may proceed to satisfactory performance of the vocational learning outcome. The elements of performance do not stand alone but rather in reference to the vocational learning outcome of which they form a part.

The Development of a Program Standard

In establishing the standards development initiative, the Government determined that all postsecondary programs of instruction should include vocational skills coupled with a broader set of essential skills. This combination is considered critical to ensuring that college graduates have the skills required to be successful both upon graduation from the college program and throughout their working and personal lives.

A program standard is developed through a broad consultation process involving a range of stakeholders with a direct interest in the program area, including employers, professional associations, universities, secondary schools and program graduates working in the field, in addition to students, faculty and administrators at the colleges themselves. It represents a consensus of

participating stakeholders on the essential learning that all program graduates should have achieved.

Updating the Program Standard

The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities will undertake regular reviews of the vocational learning outcomes for this program to ensure that the Graphic Design Program Standard remains appropriate and relevant to the needs of students and employers across the Province of Ontario. To confirm that this document is the most up-to-date release, please contact the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities at the address or email address noted on the inside cover page.

II. Vocational Standard

All graduates of Graphic Design programs have achieved the nine (9) vocational learning outcomes (VLOs) listed in the following pages, in addition to achieving the essential employability skills (EES) learning outcomes and meeting the general education (GE) requirement.

Preamble

Graphic design is a profession aimed at providing innovative, creative and sustainable solutions to visual design problems through the planning and creation of effective visual communications. Graphic designers call upon a broad range of knowledge and skills in areas such as art and design, communications, technology, interactive media, and project management to create communication materials and products that are relevant, functional, appealing and accessible. Today's graphic design services extend far beyond the design of print media, and involve an integrated approach to the design of creative products which can be used in a variety of forms across multiple platforms.

Graduates of the Graphic Design advanced diploma program use the knowledge and skills they've acquired regarding design history and trends, the use of design principles, typography, illustration and photography, as well as the creative design process to create and develop design concepts and provide visual solutions that meet the needs of their clients and employers. They apply critical thinking and problem-solving skills to tackle design problems and propose practical, realistic solutions using digital, print or environmental mediums while remaining within identified timelines and budgetary constraints. Graduates are prepared to assume junior-level positions and related responsibilities in the graphic design industry. They may offer services that include, but are not limited to, the following: pre-press and print production, corporate identity creation, motion graphics, multimedia application design, interactive user interface design, user experience design, web design and front-end web development, advertising, surface design, displays, signage and packaging.

Graduates of the Graphic Design program use their knowledge of design industry trends to plan and create purposeful visual communications, in collaboration with colleagues, supervisors, art or creative directors, project managers, and clients. Graduates can work independently, with attention to project constraints set out by employers and clients. They are capable of using current and relevant technologies to create and develop various media products with a view to optimizing both user interaction and user experience. Graduates of the program also possess knowledge of business practices and legislation that may impact their work (e.g., copyright, trademark, patent and accessibility laws) which allows them to conduct their work ethically and professionally.

Endnote: The Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer (ONCAT) maintains the provincial postsecondary [credit transfer portal](#), ONTransfer and the Ontario Postsecondary Transfer Guide (OPTG).

Synopsis of the Vocational Learning Outcomes

Graphic Design (Ontario Advanced College Diploma)

The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to

- 1. conceptualize and develop design solutions using principles of design to create visual communications that meet the needs of the project.**
- 2. employ the design process to create design solutions that meet the project objectives and the needs of the client and/or user.**
- 3. plan, create and use photography, illustration and typography in design layouts to meet the requirements of the creative brief.**
- 4. design, develop and create a variety of media products using relevant, current and/or emerging technologies.**
- 5. communicate ideas, design concepts and opinions clearly and persuasively to others.**
- 6. use recognized industry practices throughout the design process and related business tasks.**
- 7. plan, implement, and evaluate graphic design projects using project management skills to deliver quality work to clients according to schedule and within budget.**
- 8. complete all work in a professional and ethical manner, and in accordance with all applicable legislation and regulations.**
- 9. keep current with visual media design trends, technologies and industry practices using strategies that enhance work performance and guide professional development.**

Note: The learning outcomes have been numbered as a point of reference; numbering does not imply prioritization, sequencing, nor weighting of significance.

The Vocational Learning Outcomes

1. *The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to*

conceptualize and develop design solutions using principles of design to create visual communications that meet the needs of the project.

Elements of the Performance

- Use a variety of research methods to assess the project or client's needs, market, target audience, demographics, competitors, and/or consumer needs in order to establish the context (e.g., cultural, business, social) for the desired message and/or product;
- Use appropriate design-related and industry terminology;
- Interpret or develop the creative brief, outlining all of the details of the project, from background information and objectives to timelines, milestones, budget and payment schedule;
- Maximize the use of available resources (e.g., time, budget allocations, human resources, materials, equipment) for the development of design solutions;
- Gather and analyze historical and contemporary visual references to inspire creative design solutions;
- Apply knowledge of design and art history to the creation of visual communications;
- Use design principles (e.g., rhythm, harmony, movement, balance, emphasis, proportion, perspective) and the elements of design (e.g., line, space, colour, tone, texture, shape, form) effectively;
- Use various visual elements of the design process to communicate ideas and concepts (e.g., thumbnails, roughs, composites, storyboards, layouts or mock-ups);
- Arrange design elements to create visual priorities and impact in design layouts;
- Employ principles of colour theory to elicit the desired response to visual communication;
- Produce work and complete tasks that support the creation of visual communications (e.g., artwork, comprehensives*, illustration, layouts, typography, image sourcing, photography, basic copy writing or editing, research);
- Execute design concepts according to instructions received (i.e., from senior designers, art directors, creative directors, supervisors, and clients), within identified constraints and in a manner that meets the project's objectives;
- Apply appropriate cross-platform design techniques to accommodate multiple screen sizes (e.g., web, tablet, smartphone) and formats.

* See *Glossary*

2. *The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to*

employ the design process to create design solutions that meet the project objectives and the needs of the client and/or user.

Elements of the Performance

- Engage in all steps of the design process (i.e., project and problem definition, needs assessment, research and analysis, brainstorming, concept design, prototyping and testing, final design solution, and execution);
- Determine the most appropriate and effective visual communications strategy for the nature and scope of the message or information to be conveyed;
- Determine the most appropriate medium or media to use in order to meet the goals of the project, the needs of the target audience and budgetary constraints;
- Generate ideas using a variety of verbal and visual techniques and collaborative activities such as word association, brainstorming and mind mapping;
- Plan and develop the information architecture required to allow efficient navigation and access to primary and secondary information (e.g., wireframing* web content);
- Make appropriate image choices based on budget allowances (e.g., stock images versus custom photography/illustration and/or videography services);
- Use analytical and design thinking skills to address problems of various complexity levels and propose meaningful and relevant solutions;
- Check work produced against the requirements of the creative brief at regular intervals over the course of the entire project.

* See *Glossary*

3. *The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to*

Plan, create and use photography, illustration and typography in design layouts to meet the requirements of the creative brief.

Elements of the Performance

- Compose and capture photographic images in a variety of settings using principles of design, lighting and colour theory;
- Use basic camera functions and appropriate settings to adjust various photographic elements, such as focus, exposure, shutter speed, aperture, brightness range, lighting, and depth of field;
- Employ fundamental lighting skills and principles, as required, when creating illustrations and still or motion image capture;
- Save, transfer and import images in appropriate file formats to and from different sources, devices or formats;
- Produce a variety of hand-drawn and/or digital illustrations;
- Select and use drawing tools, techniques and media best suited to the task and purpose;
- Apply principles of design and composition to the creation of illustrations, photography and typography (e.g., unity, balance, scale/proportion, perspective, emphasis, pattern and rhythm, proximity);
- Use correct terminology related to photography, illustration and typography;
- Differentiate between typeface classifications (i.e., Old Style, Transitional, Modern) and their families to make appropriate typeface choices;
- Use typography skills, rules and conventions and apply legibility principles to enhance readability as well as functionality of text;
- Make design choices that are appropriate, compatible and scalable for use with all types of media (e.g., print, web, digital);
- Consider design elements and principles when setting type, making font and font style choices or creating logotypes, decorative and expressive type;
- Make design and typography choices that are compliant with the regulations set out by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005*.

4. *The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to*

design, develop and create a variety of media products using relevant, current and/or emerging technologies.

Elements of the Performance

- Use relevant industry software and hardware proficiently;
- Prepare and set files for the production of print media using knowledge of prepress production methods and printing requirements;
- Use website production tools and apply knowledge of relevant web authoring languages in the creation of web products;
- Use appropriate digital asset management techniques to organize, save, archive, and convert, and optimize files;
- Select and use appropriate technological tools and protocols for a variety of tasks and processes (e.g., format and transfer files, edit or optimize images, generate animation or motion graphics, and update, curate and format online content);
- Create, manipulate, edit and compose images for design purposes;
- Evaluate compatibility of digital media content between new and previous technology platforms and devices;
- Create and populate digital content keeping usability and functionality at the forefront of all considerations and decision-making;
- Adapt digital media content for use and navigation across multiple platforms and devices;
- Evaluate the functionality, usability and accessibility of digital media content and user interfaces (e.g., wayfinding, signage, e-books, interactive displays, apps, websites) and apply corrective measures, as required;
- Create artwork, layouts and other visual content for various media types, including print, web and mobile applications (e.g., packaging, surface design, web ads, motion graphics, navigational tools, etc.);
- Design and develop websites, mobile applications, and/or interactive displays;
- Apply research techniques to conduct user testing at various stages of the design and development processes;

5. *The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to*

communicate ideas, design concepts and opinions clearly and persuasively to others.

Elements of the Performance

- Use effective verbal communication techniques (e.g., intonation, lead-ins, visual support) to engage the audience in the delivery of the message or information to be shared;
- Speak in a clear, articulate voice using simple and concise terms;
- Plan, organize and deliver effective presentations to target audiences;
- Pitch ideas and concepts in a persuasive and credible manner using logic and rationale to support proposed design ideas;
- Apply active listening skills to interpret verbal messages, gauge audience response, and respond appropriately (e.g., to feedback, questions or concerns raised);
- Use appropriate nonverbal communication techniques (e.g., posture, body language, tone, gestures, demeanor, attire) to present oneself with confidence and in a professional manner as the situation and/or audience requires;
- Communicate in a respectful and assertive manner with colleagues, team members, supervisors and clients;
- Prepare a variety of written materials (e.g., correspondence, presentation material, reports, proposals, briefs, blog posts, social media content) using appropriate tools and resources to ensure that they are error-free (e.g., spelling, grammar or typographical errors);
- Target communications to specific audiences using appropriate resources and techniques;
- Use terminology and language (e.g., tone, level) appropriate to the situation and audience;
- Develop, edit, or proofread written copy used for project materials, as required;
- Prepare effective proposals or reports for clients, supervisors and team;
- Correctly cite sources for facts or data obtained from research used in written or oral presentation materials;
- Apply appropriate business etiquette in all professional communications.

6. *The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to*

use recognized industry practices throughout the design process and related business tasks.

Elements of the Performance

- Prepare or assist in the preparation of submissions in response to requests for proposals (RFPs);
- Use competitive and equitable quoting, pricing and billing practices in keeping with accepted industry practices;
- Cost out work fairly and ethically and prepare estimates accordingly;
- Contribute to the design integrity of all aspects of work produced by applying consistent and effective quality control and efficiency measures;
- Distinguish the roles, responsibilities and impact of freelance graphic designers within the graphic design industry;
- Contribute to a fair, equitable and sustainable work environment in a manner that meets industry expectations and upholds the standards established by the agency, company or organization.

7. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to

plan, implement, and evaluate graphic design projects using project management skills to deliver quality work to clients according to schedule and within budget.

Elements of the Performance

- Prepare or interpret the creative brief detailing all components of the project: client background information, project goals, scope of work requested, required resources, deliverables, timelines, milestones, budgets, costs and payment schedules;
- Apply time management skills using tools such as timesheets and docketts to remain on schedule, track daily progress and time spent on individual tasks, meet established deadlines and achieve project goals;
- Use teamwork skills to collaborate and communicate effectively with colleagues, supervisors, directors, clients, third-party providers, etc.;
- Identify roles and responsibilities within the project team;
- Use critical thinking and analytical skills to anticipate potential challenges and solve problems as they arise throughout the design process;
- Contribute to the assessment of strengths and weaknesses, obstacles, challenges or risks associated with the project and make recommendations accordingly;
- Take direction and complete tasks as instructed;
- Set up, organize and manage files and project assets;
- Assist in tracking project costs and production workflow;
- Participate in team and/or client debriefings on project updates and incorporate feedback into subsequent revisions;
- Seek out feedback regularly throughout each step of the design process to test and/or refine the design product.

8. *The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to*

complete all work in a professional and ethical manner, and in accordance with all applicable legislation and regulations.

Elements of the Performance

- Apply general knowledge of relevant legislation pertaining to intellectual property rights (e.g., copyrights, trademarks, patents), consumer rights, accessibility regulations (e.g., Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005), and basic human rights (e.g., Ontario Human Rights Code, Canadian Human Rights Act);
- Explore and discuss common issues pertaining to industry practices surrounding intellectual property, patents and trademarks, client confidentiality, etc.;
- Engage in sustainable practices which benefit the industry, the environment and society (e.g., reducing carbon footprints, promoting social responsibility, pro bono/community work, etc.);
- Complete work in consideration of widely accepted best practices that reduce adverse environmental, cultural or economic impacts;
- Respect and protect the right to privacy of clients with regards to use of their personal and business information;
- Prepare contracts for use with clients and releases related to subjects (e.g., models, property, artwork) to be photographed, videotaped, recorded or illustrated for use in project work;
- Adhere to ethical guidelines and codes of conduct which are recognized and widely accepted by graphic design professionals;
- Examine, discuss and resolve common and current issues surrounding the professional and ethical conduct of graphic designers (e.g., soliciting or providing speculative* or “spec” work);
- Keep best interests of clients, consumers, colleagues, fellow graphic design professionals and employers at the forefront of all tasks and work performed;
- Respect the terms of agreements and contracts entered into with clients, third-party service providers, and suppliers;
- Maintain a professional attitude and demeanor reflective of the expectations of the graphic design profession.

* See Glossary

9. *The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to*

keep current with visual media design trends, technologies and industry practices using strategies that enhance work performance and guide professional development.

Elements of the Performance

- Update skills on an ongoing basis to remain current and relevant within the graphic design industry;
- Seek out mentorship and/or internship opportunities to further develop skills and benefit from mentors' experience and feedback;
- Solicit and accept critique of one's creative work and designs from peers, supervisors and clients, respond appropriately and integrate feedback, as necessary, to enhance quality of work;
- Evaluate one's own work and that of others on an ongoing basis using project criteria outlined in the creative brief;
- Keep abreast of work done by others in the art and design industries to identify new trends and practices;
- Be flexible, adaptable and willing to explore and adopt new design skills and related technologies;
- Identify means and opportunities to network with members of the industry and professional organizations (e.g., Association of Registered Graphic Designers of Ontario (RGD), Society of Graphic Designers of Canada (GDC), International Council of Communication Design (Icograda), American Institute of Graphic Artists (AIGA));
- Use social media (e.g., social networks, blogs, forums) to establish and maintain an online presence, develop a personal learning network and share or exchange ideas, expertise, feedback and opinions with industry professionals;
- Develop, organize and compile a body of work in a portfolio format for the purpose of marketing and self-promotion;
- Design, adapt and tailor different portfolios to target specific markets or audiences;
- Review and update portfolio contents on a regular basis.

Glossary

Comprehensive: commonly referred to as a “comp”; a detailed preliminary model or prototype, prepared at various stages of the design process and representing a visual layout of the final design product, including positioning of text, illustrations and other elements.

Speculative (“spec”) work: refers to design work submitted on a purely “speculative basis” to a prospective client, for which no fees, rights or terms have been committed to by either party; this practice is widely regarded by the graphic design industry as exploitative and unethical, and is considered to devalue the work of graphic design professionals as a whole.

Wireframing: a method used in the development process of a web page, website or application to visualize its content structure for the purpose of testing user experience and information architecture.

III. Essential Employability Skills

All graduates of the advanced Graphic Design program of instruction must have reliably demonstrated the essential employability skills learning outcomes listed on the following pages, in addition to achieving the vocational learning outcomes and meeting the general education requirement.

Context

Essential Employability Skills (EES) are skills that, regardless of a student's program or discipline, are critical for success in the workplace, in day-to-day living and for lifelong learning.

The teaching and attainment of these EES for students in, and graduates from, Ontario's colleges of applied arts and technology are anchored in a set of three fundamental assumptions:

- these skills are important for every adult to function successfully in society today;
- our colleges are well equipped and well positioned to prepare graduates with these skills;
- these skills are equally valuable for all graduates, regardless of the level of their credential, whether they pursue a career path, or they pursue further education.

Skill Categories

To capture these skills, the following six categories define the essential areas where graduates must demonstrate skills and knowledge.

- Communication
- Numeracy
- Critical Thinking & Problem Solving
- Information Management
- Interpersonal
- Personal

Application and Implementation

In each of the six skill categories, there are a number of defining skills, or sub skills, identified to further articulate the requisite skills identified in the main skill categories. The following chart illustrates the relationship between the skill categories, the defining skills within the categories and learning outcomes to be achieved by graduates from all postsecondary programs of instruction that lead to an Ontario College credential.

EES may be embedded in General Education or vocational courses, or developed through discrete courses. However these skills are developed, all graduates with Ontario College credentials must be able to reliably demonstrate the essential skills required in each of the six categories.

SKILL CATEGORY	DEFINING SKILLS: Skill areas to be demonstrated by graduates:	LEARNING OUTCOMES: The levels of achievement required by graduates. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to:
COMMUNICATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading • Writing • Speaking • Listening • Presenting • Visual literacy 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. communicate clearly, concisely and correctly in the written, spoken and visual form that fulfills the purpose and meets the needs of the audience. 2. respond to written, spoken or visual messages in a manner that ensures effective communication.
NUMERACY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding and applying mathematical concepts and reasoning • Analyzing and using numerical data • Conceptualizing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. execute mathematical operations accurately.
CRITICAL THINKING & PROBLEM SOLVING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyzing • Synthesizing • Evaluating • Decision making • Creative and innovative thinking 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. apply a systematic approach to solve problems. 2. use a variety of thinking skills to anticipate and solve problems.

SKILL CATEGORY	DEFINING SKILLS: Skill areas to be demonstrated by graduates:	LEARNING OUTCOMES: The levels of achievement required by graduates. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to:
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gathering and managing information • Selecting and using appropriate tools and technology for a task or a project • Computer literacy • Internet skills 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>locate, select, organize and document information using appropriate technology and information systems.</i> 2. <i>analyze, evaluate and apply relevant information from a variety of sources.</i>
INTERPERSONAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teamwork • Relationship management • Conflict resolution • Leadership • Networking 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>show respect for the diverse opinions, values, belief systems and contributions of others.</i> 2. <i>interact with others in groups or teams in ways that contribute to effective working relationships and the achievement of goals.</i>
PERSONAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing self • Managing change and being flexible and adaptable • Engaging in reflective practices • Demonstrating personal responsibility 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>manage the use of time and other resources to complete projects.</i> 2. <i>take responsibility for one's own actions, decisions and their consequences.</i>

IV. General Education Requirement

All graduates of the advanced Graphic Design program must have met the general education requirement described on the following pages, in addition to achieving the vocational and essential employability skills learning outcomes.

Requirement

The General Education Requirement for programs of instruction is stipulated in the Credentials Framework (Appendix A in the Minister's Binding Policy Directive *Framework for Programs of Instruction*).

In programs of instruction leading to either an Ontario College Diploma or an Ontario College Advanced Diploma, it is required that graduates have been engaged in learning that exposes them to at least one discipline outside their main field of study and increases their awareness of the society and culture in which they live and work. This will typically be accomplished by students taking 3 to 5 courses (or the equivalent) designed discretely and separately from vocational learning opportunities.

This general education learning would normally be delivered using a combination of required and elective processes.

Purpose

The purpose of General Education in the Ontario college system is to contribute to the development of citizens who are conscious of the diversity, complexity and richness of the human experience; who are able to establish meaning through this consciousness; and who, as a result, are able to contribute thoughtfully, creatively and positively to the society in which they live and work.

General Education strengthens students' essential employability skills, such as critical analysis, problem solving and communication, in the context of an exploration of topics with broad-based personal and/or societal importance.

Themes

The themes listed below will be used to provide direction to colleges in the development and identification of courses that are designed to fulfill the General Education Requirement for programs of instructions.

Each theme provides a statement of Rationale and offers suggestions related to more specific topic areas that could be explored within each area. These suggestions are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive. They are included to provide guidance regarding the nature and scope of content that would be judged as meeting the intent and overall goals of General Education.

1. Arts in Society:

Rationale:

The capacity of a person to recognize and evaluate artistic and creative achievements is useful in many aspects of his/her life. Since artistic expression is a fundamentally human activity, which both reflects and anticipates developments in the larger culture, its study will enhance the student's cultural and self-awareness.

Content:

Courses in this area should provide students with an understanding of the importance of visual and creative arts in human affairs, of the artist's and writer's perceptions of the world and the means by which those perceptions are translated into the language of literature and artistic expression. They will also provide an appreciation of the aesthetic values used in examining works of art and possibly, a direct experience in expressing perceptions in an artistic medium.

2. Civic Life:

Rationale:

In order for individuals to live responsibly and to reach their potential as individuals and as citizens of society, they need to understand the patterns of human relationships that underlie the orderly interactions of a society's various structural units. Informed people will have knowledge of the meaning of civic life in relation to diverse communities at the local, national and global level and an awareness of international issues and the effects of these on Canada, as well as Canada's place in the international community.

Content:

Courses in this area should provide students with an understanding of the meaning of freedoms, rights and participation in community and public life, in addition to a working knowledge of the structure and function of various levels of government (municipal, provincial, national) in a Canadian and/or in an international context. They may also provide an historical understanding of major political issues affecting relations between the various levels of government in Canada and their constituents.

3. Social and Cultural Understanding:

Rationale:

Knowledge of the patterns and precedents of the past provide the means for a person to gain an awareness of his or her place in contemporary culture and society. In addition to this awareness, students will acquire a sense of the main currents of their culture and that of other cultures over an extended period of time in order to link personal history to the broader study of culture.

Content:

Courses in this area are those that deal broadly with major social and cultural themes. These courses may also stress the nature and validity of historical evidence and the variety of historical interpretation of events. Courses will provide the students with a view and understanding of the impact of cultural, social, ethnic or linguistic characteristics.

4. Personal Understanding:

Rationale:

Educated people are equipped for life-long understanding and development of themselves as integrated physiological and psychological entities. They are aware of the ideal need to be fully functioning persons: mentally, physically, emotionally, socially, spiritually and vocationally.

Content:

Courses in this area will focus on understanding the individual: his or her evolution; situation; relationship with others; place in the environment and universe; achievements and problems; and his or her meaning and purpose. They will also allow students the opportunity to study institutionalized human social behaviour in a systematic way. Courses fulfilling this requirement may be oriented to the study of the individual within a variety of contexts.

5. Science and Technology:

Rationale:

Matter and energy are universal concepts in science, forming a basis for understanding the interactions that occur in living and non-living systems in our universe. Study in this area provides an understanding of the behaviour of matter that provides a foundation for further scientific study and the creation of broader understanding about natural phenomena

Similarly, the various applications and developments in the area of technology have an increasing impact on all aspects of human endeavour and have numerous social, economic and philosophical implications. For example, the operation of computers to process data at high speed has invoked an interaction between machines and the human mind that is unique in human history. This and other technological developments have a powerful impact on how we deal with many of the complex questions in our society.

Content:

Courses in this area should stress scientific inquiry and deal with basic or fundamental questions of science rather than applied ones. They may be formulated from traditional basic courses in such areas of study as biology, chemistry, physics, astronomy, geology or agriculture. As well, courses related to understanding the role and functions of computers (e.g., data management and information processing) and assorted computer-related technologies should be offered in a non-applied manner to provide students with an opportunity to explore the impact of these concepts and practices on their lives.