

# **Strategic Plan**

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## **Purpose and Application**

Section 4 of the [Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Act, 2002](#), (the *OCAAT Act*) authorizes the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities to issue binding policy directives to colleges. Pursuant to that authority, the Minister has issued a Binding Policy Directive on Governance and Accountability. Section 8 of [O. Reg. 34/03](#) under the [Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Act, 2002](#) specifies that a college is to submit to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities a strategic plan and make it available to the public.

A strategic plan sets out the broad direction in which a college is going within the overall framework of the colleges' objects as set out in the [Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Act, 2002](#), and allows this information to be shared with the college's community, the general public, and the government. The strategic planning process allows a college to chart its future, anticipate and respond appropriately to the changing environment, examine critically the strengths and weaknesses of the organization, and to develop consensus among the board members and other key members of the college community.

In addition, the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities uses the information provided in the colleges' strategic plans to advise and inform government planning and policy-making.

The strategic plan takes into consideration the college's broad environment, including legislation (e.g., [Post-secondary Choice and Excellence Act, 2000](#)), overall government directions and priorities for postsecondary education, and provincial financial commitments. The government's directions and priorities for postsecondary education are available from such documents as the Throne Speech, the Budget, and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities' Annual Business Plan. The Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities also meets regularly with the General Assembly of Colleges Ontario to convey this information. It is recognized that the college environment contains many unknowns or factors that may change (e.g., the economy, the fiscal position of the government, and enrolment levels, to name a few). The strategic plan is, therefore, not a static document.

This operating procedure, which sets out the minimum requirements for a strategic plan, applies to all colleges.

## **Requirements**

Each college is to have in place a current strategic plan approved by the board of governors. The time frame the plan is intended to cover should be clearly stated, with the start and end dates covering a minimum of three years. Revisions will be made as deemed necessary by the board of governors.

This public document is to identify the vision, core businesses, and long-term goals for the college as established by the college board of governors. In so doing, the strategic plan is to articulate to its communities the relative emphasis it will place on specific areas of specialization, such as local or regional focus, industry or sector focus, and the needs of specific types or groups of students.

When preparing a strategic plan, the college is to seek broad input and consider the views of persons and organizations both within and outside the college that may have an interest in its activities.

The college is to determine the appropriate process(es) so that this input reflects local culture and circumstances. The format of the Strategic Plan will follow the Table of Contents and Guidelines in Appendix A to this operating procedure.

It is recognized that in protecting its competitive position the college will need to balance the need for transparency with the protection of any proprietary information.

### **Publication of Strategic Plan**

The strategic plan is to be made available to the public on the college web site and by allowing people who do not have Internet access to obtain the plan at no cost.

### **Submission of Strategic Plan**

Once approved by the board of governors, the college's strategic plan is to be e-mailed to the Postsecondary Accountability Branch Director, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities at [colleges.branch@ontario.ca](mailto:colleges.branch@ontario.ca),

The plan is to be updated as needed and completely reviewed at least once every five years. Updated versions are to be submitted to the Ministry as well as posted on the college website. For further information regarding this operating procedure, click on the Contact link to consult with the appropriate [ministry contact](#), listed in the Contacts section on the web site.

## **Summary of Responsibilities**

### **Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology**

The board of governors is responsible for ensuring that:

- The college community is involved in the development of the strategic plan.
- The strategic plan reflects the colleges legislated mandate to offer a comprehensive program of career-oriented, post-secondary education and training to assist individuals in finding and keeping employment, to meet the needs of employers and the changing work environment and to support the economic and social development of their local and diverse communities.
- The strategic plan is developed and implemented in a way consistent with government directions and priorities.
- The strategic plan is made available to the public.
- Updated versions of the strategic plan are submitted to the Ministry and the College Compensation and Appointments Council.
- The strategic plan and the yearly planning cycle of the business plan and annual report are integrated.

### **Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities**

The Ministry is responsible for:

- Using strategic plans to advise and inform government planning and policy-making.
- Ensuring that colleges collectively contribute to the achievement of the government's goals for colleges and to the economic and social needs of the province.
- Engaging in dialogue with college boards of governors to identify appropriate corrective action where gaps or unmet needs at the community level are identified.
- Working with the college system or individual colleges to facilitate corrective action where provincial priorities or expected outcomes are not being achieved.

## Appendix A

### **College Strategic Plan Format and Content Guidelines**

The table of contents will guide colleges in constructing Strategic Plans that are comprehensive and consistent for the respective purposes of each college community and the Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities. Physical format should be as follows:

- 8 ½" x 11";
- Portrait page set-up (no brochures, no fold-outs);
- To be posted on college website in one .pdf file (not separate chapters).

### **College Strategic Plan: Table of Contents**

#### Message from the Board Chair

General comments outlining the college's recent strategic past and changes that have occurred over that period of time and the general intended direction of the college. Outline of the thematic approach and nature of the current strategic plan.

#### Message from the President

More specific than the Message from the Board Chair, this section should detail some of the highlights achieved previously and some likely challenges in moving the college forward strategically. It could include enrolment trends, demographic factors, partnerships, financial issues that relate to the colleges strategic plans. It could act as an executive summary of the Strategic Plan.

#### Vision, Mission, Values

This section is intended to identify the college's strategic philosophical foundation.

#### Environmental Scan

This section sets the internal / external context for the strategic plan. Its components act as the impetuses for strategic planning. It assesses the internal and external strengths, weaknesses, opportunities / gaps faced by the college, including demographics, financial issues, external economic issues, etc.

#### Report of previous year(s) goals

This section outlines progress, failures, and achieved success of previous strategic objectives. It should include a highlight of some key successes and challenges from the previous period and some indication of lessons learned.

#### Strategic Priorities

This section should include a brief summary followed by detailed description of major specific strategic plans and priorities for the upcoming period. The strategic priorities should include KPI's and milestones that establish targeted benchmarks for successful execution of the Strategic Plan as a whole and with regard to each particular priority.

Implementation Strategy

Colleges should indicate phasing plans, timelines, and milestones as methods for measuring success and to anticipate and plan for recalibration, if necessary. It can discuss how the strategies are marketed internally and externally and how the plan is budgeted and how it will fit within the broader financial responsibilities of the college.

Appendix

List of Board of Governors, Executive officers, Academic Deans, Administrative Deans, Local bargaining unit presidents, students' federation executives, and other partners, as appropriate.