

TYPE:	Academic
TITLE:	General Education
NO.:	ACAD-103
RESPONSIBILITY:	Vice-President, Academic and Students
APPROVED BY:	Durham College Leadership Team
EFFECTIVE DATE:	June 2025

1. Introduction

Durham College (DC) strives to ensure that graduates from its post-secondary programs are employable in their field of study, equipped to grow in their careers through lifelong learning, and prepared to contribute positively to the communities where they live and work.

General education provides an opportunity for students to learn more about themselves and the robust world they live in by better preparing them with the durable skills needed for their chosen career and life in general, along with greater breadth of understanding for current or future studies.

2. Purpose

This policy and procedure will provide a mechanism for complying with the Ministry of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security's (MCURES) Minister's Binding Policy Directive Framework for Programs of Instruction. This directive requires each program of study to provide students with vocational, essential employability and general education courses.

3. Definitions

Refer to [Durham College's Standard Definitions](#).

4. Policy statements

- 4.1. General Education is intended to engage the student in learning that incorporates breadth of study beyond the vocational field of study.
- 4.2. Students in Ontario College diploma and advanced diploma programs must complete a minimum of three elective general education courses in order to graduate.
- 4.3. In some programs, a mandatory Indigenous general education credit will be required for graduation as part of the College's response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.

- 4.4. Students in Ontario College certificate programs may be required to complete one or more general education courses in their program of studies, based on unique program needs.
- 4.5. This policy does not apply to students in Ontario College graduate certificate programs.
- 4.6. All new programs being submitted to the Credentials Validation Service (CVS) will comply with MCURES's Binding Policy Directive, Framework for Programs of Instruction – General Education requirements.
- 4.7. As curricular changes are discussed and implemented, the Manager, Academic Quality Assurance, will ensure the program is compliant with this policy.
- 4.8. This policy does not apply to degree programs. Breadth requirements in degree programs are established by the Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board and informed by the Durham College Degree Breadth Policy and Procedure (ACAD-133).
- 4.9. General education courses must be at least 42 hours in length. Exceptions to this requirement must be approved by the Vice President, Academic and Students.
- 4.10. General education courses must not require a prerequisite.
- 4.11. General education course credits may be transferrable among DC's programs of study. Recognition of previous credit is addressed through the Durham College Credit Transfer and Letter of Permission (ADMIN-252) Policy and Procedure.
- 4.12. Any changes to curriculum through program review and renewal processes must ensure continued compliance with this policy.

5. Procedure

5.1 New course development

- 5.1.1 Periodically, and in considering a range of criteria, including the total number of GNED courses currently available, the Executive Dean, Associate Dean or designate in the Faculty of Liberal Studies, may issue a call for proposals to college faculty for the development of new general education courses. Proposals will be submitted on the college-approved General Education or Degree Breadth Course Proposal Form template, and compiled for review by the General Education Committee.
- 5.1.2. Proposed general education courses will be vetted through the General Education Committee to ensure general education requirements are met. The Faculty of Liberal Studies will maintain a detailed, up-to-date record of the status of all proposals.

5.1.3. The Committee will assess proposals based on criteria including, but not limited to subject area, content, student workload, and perceived interest to students. The Committee may seek clarification on or provide feedback about proposals, as appropriate.

5.1.4. The Committee will make recommendations for course development to the Executive Dean, Associate Dean or designate in the Faculty of Liberal Studies. Any newly developed course(s) will be included in a list of potential offerings for upcoming academic semesters.

5.1.5. The Executive Dean, Associate Dean or designate in the Faculty of Liberal Studies will provide a report to the Academic Leadership Team (ALT) of newly developed general education courses and the roster of elective general education courses will be distributed to the Office of the Registrar and other departments, as appropriate.

5.2. Program of Study changes

5.2.1. The Executive Dean, Associate Dean or designate in the Faculty of Liberal Studies will be notified of all approved program of study changes affecting general education.

5.3. Professional and Part-time Learning courses

5.3.1. The Faculty of Liberal Studies may be asked, on an ad hoc basis, to review/approve General Elective courses offered through the Professional and Part-Time Learning (PPL) department.

6. Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act considerations

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) standards have been considered in the development of this policy and procedure and it adheres to the principles outlined in the College's commitment to accessibility as demonstrated by the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

7. Non-compliance implications

Failure to comply with this policy and procedure risks the College's reputation for high-quality education and students' ability to meet the necessary requirements to obtain their credentials. It also puts the College in conflict with the Minister's directive and at risk of actions by the government.

8. Related forms, legislation or external resources

- MCURES Binding Policy Directive: Framework for Programs of Instruction
- MCURES Program Standards
- Ontario Qualifications Framework
- General Education or Degree Breadth Course Proposal Form Template