

ACADEMIC CONTINUANCE AND GRADUATION POLICY

Policy Statement

Learners enrolled in Bow Valley College are required to maintain satisfactory academic performance and meet other general program criteria to continue in their programs of study and graduate. The College uses a variety of measures of learners' academic performance to determine:

- learners' academic standing;
- learners' eligibility to continue in their program of study;
- academic warnings and associated requirements for remedial action;
- requirement to withdraw due to unsatisfactory academic performance;
- learners' eligibility for graduation and awarding of program credential.

It is the responsibility of the College to communicate the requirements and criteria, maintain effective procedures for managing them and support learners in meeting the requirements and criteria.

Purpose

1. This policy provides a framework to ensure that practices related to learners meeting the requirements and criteria for continuing in their programs and graduation are applied consistently throughout the College.
2. This policy is in alignment with the College's core values: excellence, learner-centred focus, accountability, concern for people, integrity, respect for diversity, teamwork, and trust.

Scope

This policy applies to all learners enrolled in Bow Valley College credit programs.

Compliance

Employees, contractors, and learners are responsible for knowing, understanding, and complying with Bow Valley College policies, procedures, and any other attached documentation that relate to their position, employment, or enrolment at the College.

Principle Objectives

1. Bow Valley College supports learners' academic performance and ability to graduate successfully.
 - 1.1 Academic standards, requirements and criteria for continuing in and graduating from a program will be published and communicated to learners in a clear and timely way.

- 1.2 The intent of the College's procedures is to support learners' successful completion of programs while maintaining the College's standards.
2. Learners have a responsibility to be aware of their academic standing and other requirements and criteria for continuing in and completing their programs. They are also responsible to take the required action if their ability to continue or successfully complete their programs is at risk.
3. This policy creates a consistent minimum standard for acceptable academic performance, other general requirements and criteria for continuing in a program, and graduation.

Definitions

Academic performance standards: Standards that reflect learners' mastery of the skills and knowledge in a program including grades, grade point averages, pass/fail marks, assessments of ability to meet professional conduct expectations related to area of study, etc. These are separate from general learner conduct expectations which are outlined in the Code of Conduct Policy.

Academic standing: Learners' academic statuses in their programs based on their academic performance. The following are academic standing statuses:

- **Academic probation:** The status assigned to learners who did not meet the required academic performance for their programs but remain in the program and have the opportunity to return to satisfactory academic standing.
- **Satisfactory academic standing:** The academic status of learners who have maintained the required academic performance in the program. This aligns with the graduation requirements of that program.
- **Required to withdraw:** The status assigned to learners who have been required to withdraw from their programs because they did not meet the academic performance requirements for their programs.

Grade Point Definitions:

- **Cumulative program grade point average (CPGPA):** The grade point average for all courses a learner has completed that are part of the program in which he/she is registered.
- **Grade point (GP):** The numerical value assigned to the letter grade received in a course as specified by the College's Grading Policy.
- **Grade point average (GPA):** A weighted average of grade points as defined by the College's Grading Policy.
- **Term program grade point average (TPGPA):** The grade point average for all the courses a learner has completed in a particular term that are part of the program in which he/she is registered.

Active Status: Learners who are currently registered in a College program or course are considered to have active status.

Learner in Good Standing: A learner who has active status in a program or course at the College and meets the following criteria:

- is in satisfactory academic standing and is not on academic probation under the Academic Continuance and Graduation Policy
- is not subject to any current active sanctions under the Learner Code of Conduct Policy
- has no overdue amounts owing to the College under the Learner Financial Accounts policy
- is not under probation or suspension under the Academic Honesty policy and has not had an academic dishonesty sanction enacted against him or her within the last 6 months
- is not subject to a current sanction under any other College policies

Practicum or Work Placement: Any placement (volunteer or otherwise) that is part of a learner's academic program.

Program Graduation Requirements: The courses, assessments, activities and criteria approved as appropriate by the College and the Ministry that need to be successfully completed in order for a learner to be eligible for graduation from a program.

Data Sheet

Accountable Officers

Vice President, Academic and Chief Learning Officer
 Vice President, Learner and College Services and Chief Financial Officer

Responsible Officers

Dean, Centre for Excellence in Foundational learning
 Dean, Centre for Excellence in Immigrant and Intercultural Advancement
 Dean, School of Health and Wellness
 Dean, School of Community Studies and Creative Technologies
 Dean, Chiu School of Business
 Director, Enrolment Services and Registrar

Relevant Dates

Approved	November 27, 2015
Effective	November 2015
Next Review	November 2020
Modification History	

Associated Policies

Admissions (500-1-2)
 Attendance (500-1-10)
 Code of Conduct (500-1-1)
 Grading (500-1-6)
 Learner Appeals (500-1-12)
 Learner Credit Registration (500-1-17)
 Learner Records and Information (200-1-9)
 Prior Learning Assessment (500-1-8)
 Program Addition, Retention and Deletion (500-2-2)

Related Legislation

Post-Secondary Learning Act

ACADEMIC CONTINUANCE AND GRADUATION PROCEDURE

Parent Policy

Academic Continuance and Graduation Policy #500 – 1 - 5

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to implement the Academic Continuance and Graduation Policy.

Scope

This procedure applies to all Bow Valley College learners enrolled in credit programs.

Compliance

Employees, contractors, and learners are responsible for knowing, understanding, and complying with Bow Valley College policies, procedures, and any other documentation that relate to their position, employment, or enrolment at the College.

Procedures

1. General

- 1.1. These procedures set out the general requirements for Bow Valley College ministry-approved programs.
- 1.2. As noted below, programs may have additional or different academic performance standards for graduation, maintaining satisfactory academic standing, academic probation, being required to withdraw for unsatisfactory academic performance, and readmission after being required to withdraw. Any changes from current academic performance standards in a program require the recommendation of the Learning Services Team and Academic Council and the approval of the Vice President, Academic and Chief Learning Officer. The following provisions apply to programs with standards and requirements that differ from the normal ones:
 - 1.2.1. The standards and requirements must provide learners with a period of academic probation and notice of that probation before learners can be required to withdraw.
 - 1.2.2. The program-specific standards must be communicated to applicants and learners in the program.
 - 1.2.3. Program areas are responsible to monitor and undertake their own processes for academic standing, academic probation and being required to withdraw processes,

including the notification to learners. The program areas also need to provide the information about learners who are put on academic probation and being required to withdraw to the Office of the Registrar for posting on the student record.

- 1.3. The Office of the Registrar maintains a record of the programs that have different requirements including those requirements.
- 1.4. Learners receiving financial assistance may be required by the terms of that assistance to meet different standards than the minimum required by the College. However, this does not impact these learners' academic standing with the College and failing to meet the standards for financial assistance does not have a bearing on academic probation or being required to withdraw for unsatisfactory academic performance.
- 1.5. The Registrar has the authority to approve exceptions to these procedures where extenuating circumstances warrant.
- 1.6. Learners who wish to appeal an academic probation or an unsatisfactory academic performance withdrawal decision can do so by following steps provided for in the Learner Appeals Policy and Procedures.

2. Calculation of GPA (Grade point average)

2.1. The cumulative program GPA and term program GPA are determined at the end of each program term after final grades have been entered on the learner information system by the academic departments. In program offerings that have term dates that differ from the regular College term dates, the GPAs will be determined after the end of the term and include the courses that have been completed by the term end date. The Office of the Registrar makes the cumulative program GPA and term program GPA information available to learners through their unofficial transcripts on the learner portal

2.2. The grade point average (GPA) is calculated by

- Multiplying the grade point achieved in each of the courses taken by the number of credits assigned to each of those courses. This generates a weighted grade point for each course.
- Dividing the total weighted grade points for the set of courses taken by the total credit value of those courses. This generates the grade point average.

Note: When learners have completed a course more than once, the grade used for the GPA calculation is the highest final mark achieved. However, all enrolments in a course and the associated grades will appear on the learners' transcripts.

2.3. Cumulative program and term program GPA for purposes of academic standing is based on courses that have been completed during that particular term (and prior to in the case of cumulative program GPA), regardless of the course start dates. This allows the GPA to be

calculated and academic standing processes to be done in a timely way without needing to wait for the completion of courses which may have a later end date.

2.4. The following are included in cumulative program and term program GPA calculation and the determination of academic standing:

- Courses that were credited through a challenge exam and provided with a grade.

2.5. The following are not included in cumulative program and term program GPA calculation:

- Courses graded with Pass/Fail; however, these courses can determine academic standing since failing a required course places learners on academic probation
- Courses that were given credit through prior learning assessment and given a PL grade (Prior Learning)
- Courses that are taken as part of another Bow Valley College program and will not be used to meet the program graduation requirements of the program for which the GPA is calculated
- Courses taken at other institutions which receive transfer credit at Bow Valley College

2.6. Courses that are taken through Open Studies at Bow Valley College are not included in the cumulative program GPA for purposes of academic probation. However, the marks in all courses taken at Bow Valley College that are used to meet the graduation requirements of a program are included in the calculation of the cumulative program GPA required for graduation.

3. Satisfactory academic standing

3.1. The following minimum academic performance is required to maintain Satisfactory academic standing:

3.1.1. No final grades of F (Failure) or WF (Withdrawal Failure) during the period of that College term.

- In post-secondary credit programs: a cumulative program GPA and term program GPA that is at the level required for program graduation (see “Graduation” section below..)
- In Centres for Excellence credit programs: a cumulative program GPA and term program GPA of .67 (or other approved GPA criteria—see “General” section above).

3.1.2. Additional academic performance standards as required by specific programs.

3.2. Satisfactory academic standing qualifies learners for continuance in a program and program completion.

- 3.3. Satisfactory academic standing is one of the components of being a “Learner in Good Standing”.

4. Academic Probation

- 4.1. Learners who do not meet the minimum academic standards of the program will be placed on academic probation for their next term of study. Learners will remain on academic probation until they return to satisfactory academic standing regardless of whether they enroll in courses in the following term(s) or not.
- 4.2. Academic probation processes are undertaken at the end of each standard College term (trimester).
- 4.3. The marks from all required and elective courses that are taken as part of the program that ended during that term or earlier are used in the determination of academic probation, regardless of the length or start date of the course. Courses taken prior to start date of program are not included in the determination of academic probation.
- 4.4. The Office of the Registrar notifies the learners in writing that they have been placed on academic probation. The notification includes a recommendation for the learners to meet with a program representative to discuss strategies and actions for success. The desired outcome of academic probation is improvement in the learners’ academic performance. As feasible and appropriate, academic departments and Learner Success Services will provide supports and assistance to learners on academic probation.
- 4.5. The Office of the Registrar places the learners on academic probation on the student information system and forwards reports of learners to be put on probation or required to the program Dean or Dean’s delegate.
- 4.6. Academic probation is not noted on learners’ transcripts.
- 4.7. A learner on academic probation is not considered to be a “Learner in Good Standing”.
- 4.8. Learners on academic probation may be disqualified from participating in certain Bow Valley College activities. Limits on activities for learners on academic probation are determined by either a Dean or Director.

5. Withdrawal Due to Unsatisfactory Academic Performance

- 5.1. Learners who are on academic probation will be required to withdraw for unsatisfactory academic performance after the end of the probationary term if they have failed to do one or more of the following:

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- 5.1.1. Achieve both the minimum cumulative program GPA and term program GPA required for satisfactory academic standing. A learner must have taken at least three courses in the program before failure to achieve the minimum cumulative program GPA will result in being required to withdraw.
 - 5.1.2. Pass a course that is part of the program for which they have received a failing grade previously. Failing a course for a second time will result in being required to withdraw even if the learners are not currently on academic probation. A withdrawal from a course after the withdrawal deadline is considered a failure. In exceptional circumstances, the Dean or Dean's delegate may authorize a third attempt.
 - 5.1.3. Achieve any additional academic performance standards as required by specific programs.
 - 5.1.4. Meet the relevant professional and industry standards of behavior and performance of a required practicum or work placement in a significant way. Failure to meet those standards may lead to a withdrawal from the program at any time during the course or after its completion. A withdrawal in these circumstances requires the approval of the Dean.
- 5.2. A learner must have attempted at least 9 credits in the program before being required to withdraw for unsatisfactory academic performance.
- 5.3. The Office of the Registrar provides the academic departments with reports of learners who meet the conditions of being required to withdraw. The Program Coordinator must confirm the learners that are to be withdrawn. The Office of the Registrar will process the withdrawals and inform the learners of the withdrawal in writing and process their withdrawals.
- 5.4. In exceptional circumstances, the Dean or Dean's delegate may authorize a learner to remain in the program despite the learner meeting the criteria for being required to withdraw due to unsatisfactory academic performance. The learner will continue to be on academic probation.
- 5.5. Being required to withdraw for unsatisfactory academic performance will be permanently noted on the learner's transcript.

6. Readmission of Learners Who Were Withdrawn Due to Unsatisfactory Academic Performance

- 6.1. Learners who have been required to withdraw and wish to apply to any program of studies at the College for which the admission requirements are equivalent or higher than the program from which they were withdrawn will need to:
 - submit a request to be admitted to a College program to the Office of the Registrar and provide supporting information for why they feel they will now be successful
 - receive the approval of the Dean of the program to which they are applying

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- wait a minimum of twelve months after the end of their last term of studies at the College before the start date of commencing courses again
- 6.2. Learners who have been required to withdraw and wish to apply to a program of studies at the College for which the admission requirements are lower than the program from which they were withdrawn will need to:
- submit a request to be admitted to a College program to the Office of the Registrar and provide supporting information for why they feel they will now be successful
 - receive the approval of the Program Coordinator of the program to which they are applying
- 6.3. Learners who have been required to withdraw from the College's post-secondary programs and wish to enroll in Open Studies, upgrading or English language learning courses will follow normal admission and registration processes for those areas unless otherwise specified.
- 6.4. Some programs may have different requirements for readmission of learners who were required to withdraw. A program's requirement for a longer period before readmission must be recommended by the Learning Services Team and Academic Council and approved by the Vice President, Academic and Chief Learning Officer.
- 6.5. Learners who have obtained the necessary approval to reapply must submit a new application for admission. They will have to meet the admission, program and graduation requirements that are in effect at the point of reentry into the program. Their previous course work at the College will be subject to the normal requirements for advance standing for the program (e.g. requirements for recency of course, etc.). For purposes of continuance in the program, final grades of F (Failure) or WF (Withdrawal Failure) for courses taken before readmission are not taken into account for purposes of probation or being required to withdraw. Also, the cumulative GPA will be calculated only on courses taken since readmission to the program. For purposes of graduation, the cumulative GPA will include all courses taken at BVC which are used to meet the graduation requirements of the program. This may mean that readmitted learners will have to retake some course to raise their cumulative GPA.
- 6.6. If learners have applied or been admitted to another college program and subsequently are required to withdraw due to unsatisfactory academic performance in their current program, their application for, admission to, and/or course registrations in the other college program will be cancelled unless the learners have met the requirements for readmission and have received approval as specified above. Learners who had been admitted to another program earlier and have completed at least one course that is not common to both programs will not be required to withdraw from that program when they are being required to withdraw from the other program.
- 6.7. The above provisions for learners who have been required to withdraw also apply to learners on academic probation who withdrew themselves from the program and had course grades of either WF or F in the term in which they withdrew.
- 6.8. Learners who have been readmitted after being required to withdraw for unsatisfactory academic performance are on probation during their first term of studies.

7. Maintaining Active Status in a Program

- 7.1. Learners are expected to maintain active status in their program until graduation.
- 7.2. Learners in their first term of studies who fail to register in any courses or drop/withdraw from all courses will not be considered to have active status and will be withdrawn from the program. They will need to reapply for admission if they wish to return to studies.
- 7.3. Learners who have completed at least one term of studies are eligible to take a break of up to nine months from the end date of the last course taken to the start of the next course and maintain their active status. Taking a course that is outside of the requirements of the program is not applicable to being considered active in the program. Learners who have a longer break will no longer be considered to have active status in their program and will be withdrawn. They will need to reapply for admission if they wish to return to studies in the program.
Program Coordinator
- 7.4. Exceptions to active status requirements must be approved by a Program Coordinator.
- 7.5. Programs may set different criteria for maintaining active status and different readmission requirements for learners who have failed to maintain active status. These program-specific criteria and requirements need the recommendation of the Learning Services Team and Academic Council and the approval of the Vice President, Academic and Chief Learning Officer.

8. Time Allowed to Complete Program

- 8.1. Bow Valley College limits the period of time learners have to complete post-secondary certificate and diploma programs. Learners are provided with three years and five years respectively for certificate and diploma program completion. This is inclusive of periods of time when the learners are not taking any courses.
- 8.2. Learners who do not complete their program within the required time limits will be withdrawn from the program.
- 8.3. Learners may request to have these limits extended if there are exceptional extenuating circumstances. Such extensions must be approved by the Dean of the program area.
- 8.4. Learners who are withdrawn due to failure to complete the program within the required time limits may reapply to the program. They will have to go through normal admission processes and meet the admission, program and graduation requirements that are in effect at the point of reentry into the program. Their previous course work at the College will be subject to the normal requirements for advance standing for the program (e.g. requirements for recency of course, etc.)

- 8.5. Programs may set different limits for periods of time for program completion. These limits require the recommendation of the Learning Services Team and Academic Council and the approval of the Vice President, Academic and Chief Learning Officer.

9. Graduation

- 9.1. In order to be eligible to graduate, learners must
- 9.1.1. have been admitted to the program or be in Open Studies
 - 9.1.2. have completed all program graduation requirements
 - 9.1.3. have the required cumulative program Grade point average based on all courses taken at BVC which are used to meet the graduation requirements of the program, regardless of whether those courses were taken prior to being admitted to the program or not:
 - 2.0 for post-secondary credit programs or
 - 0.67 for Centre for Excellence credit programs that have graduation requirements or
 - other approved academic performance requirements as per “General” section above
 - 9.1.4. not have any outstanding monies owing to the College and
 - 9.1.5. not be currently suspended from studies due to academic, financial or other non-academic reasons.
- 9.2. The program requirements that were in effect on the date that the learner began the program are normally those that need to be fulfilled in order to graduate from the program. In situations where the program requirements have changed since the learner began and the college is no longer able to deliver some of the courses or other program components that were part of the requirements when the learner started, the college will make reasonable efforts to provide alternative means to complete the program that will not disadvantage the learner.
- 9.3. In exceptional circumstances, a graduation requirement may be waived or altered for a learner. This requires the approval of the program Dean and the Registrar.
- 9.4. The usual residency requirement for graduation is 25% of the credits required for program graduation have been taken at Bow Valley College. Learners are allowed to receive up to 75% of program credits toward a Bow Valley College certificate or diploma through courses taken elsewhere or through courses credited through prior learning. Changes to current program residency requirements must be recommended by the Learning Services Team and Academic Council and approved by the Vice President, Academic and Chief Learning Officer.

- 9.5. Learners who take more than one post-secondary credit program at the College are allowed to utilize course work completed in one program be applied to the graduation requirements of another program. However, practicums, co-ops, and work experience courses or placements from one program cannot be applied to another program.
- 9.6. There is no limit on how many credit courses can be used to meet the program requirements of a second program if it is a higher credential (e.g. certificate program and diploma program). However, there is a limit to the amount of time elapsed since a course was completed that is the same as the elapsed time allowed for courses to receive transfer credits.
- 9.7. Once a learner has graduated with a higher level credential in a program area (e.g. diploma), the learner cannot also be given the lower level credential (e.g. certificate).
- 9.8. Learners may graduate with multiple specializations in the same program. Those specializations must be completed before the point of graduation. If learners wish to take additional specializations after graduation, they must reapply to the program. They will have to meet the admission, program and graduation requirements that are in effect at the point of reentry into the program. Their previous course work at the College will be subject to the normal requirements for advance standing for the program (e.g. requirements for recency of course, etc.). An additional, separate parchment will be issued upon graduation.

10. Posthumous Awarding of Credentials

- 10.1. In order to recognize learners' academic achievements, posthumous credentials may be awarded to learners who pass away before scheduled times for graduation. The College may authorize the posthumous issuance of the appropriate credential where the learners have successfully completed at least three quarters of their program, and had been meeting the satisfactory academic performance requirements.
 - 10.1.1. A request to have a posthumous credential granted may be made in writing to the Registrar by the deceased learner's family member, friend or member of the College community.
 - 10.1.2. The Registrar, with the permission of the family, will recommend the posthumous awarding of the credential to the Vice President, Academic and Chief Learning Officer. The Vice President, in consultation with the program's Dean/Director, will make the final decision in the best interest of the College and the deceased learner, and advise the Office the Registrar and Enrolment Services of the decision.
 - 10.1.3. Under special or exceptional circumstances, the Vice President, Academic and Chief Learning Officer, in consultation with the program Dean/Director may recommend to the President and Chief Executive Officer for approval the granting of a posthumous credential for a learner who has completed less than three quarters of the program course work.

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- 10.1.4. The family of the deceased learner will be invited to attend the graduation ceremony at which the deceased would have been recognized.
 - 10.1.5. The deceased learner’s name may be read aloud at the graduation ceremony and will be published in the graduation program followed by ‘posthumously granted’ upon approval of the deceased learner’s family.
 - 10.1.6. A credential granted posthumously will be recorded on the learner’s parchment as “posthumously granted”.
 - 10.1.7. A credential granted posthumously will be recorded on the learner’s transcript along with a notation that the credential was awarded posthumously.
- 10.2. The College may recognize a deceased learner’s efforts at the College’s graduation ceremony even if the deceased learner is not awarded a posthumous credential.

DATA SHEET

Responsible Officers

Dean, Centre for Excellence in Foundational Learning
 Dean, Centre for Excellence in Immigrant and Intercultural Advancement
 Dean, Health and Wellness
 Dean, Community Studies and Creative Technologies
 Dean, School of Business
 Director, Enrolment Services and Registrar

Relevant Dates

Approved	November 27, 2015
Effective	November 2015
Next Review	November 2020
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Related Policy

Academic standing Policy #500 -1-5

Associated Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines

Admissions (500-1-2)
 Attendance (500-1-10)
 Code of Conduct (500-1-1)
 Grading (500-1-6)
 Learner Appeals (500-1-12)
 Learner Credit Registration (500-1-17)
 Learner Records and Information (200-1-9)
 Prior Learning Assessment (500-1-8)
 Program Addition, Retention and Deletion (500-2-2)

Related Legislation

Post-Secondary Learning Act