

**CÉGEP HERITAGE COLLEGE
POLICY #40**

**CONCERNING THE RECOGNITION OF
ACQUIRED COMPETENCIES**

COMING INTO FORCE: June 19, 2012.
REVISED: N/A
ADMINISTRATOR: Academic Dean

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Preamble

The present policy confirms Cégep Heritage College's intent to comply with the principles outlined in the third orientation of the *Quebec Government Policy on Adult Education and Continuing Education and Training*¹ acknowledging adults' prior learning and competencies through official recognition.

ARTICLE 1

Purpose

The objectives of this policy are to:

- clarify the terms that guarantee the efficacy of its practices while maintaining an individualized approach for candidates²;
- guarantee the right of individuals to be evaluated in a fair and equitable² manner;
- ensure that diplomas and attestations awarded to candidates as a result in part or in whole of the recognition of acquired competencies are valid and equitable; and
- define the rights and responsibilities of all individuals involved with the recognition of acquired competencies.

ARTICLE 2

Application

The present policy applies to all College² personnel involved in the recognition of acquired competencies (RAC) as well as candidates registered in:

- regular career education programs of study³ leading to a Diploma of College Studies (DEC); and
- Continuing Education programs of study³ leading to an Attestation of College Studies (AEC).

ARTICLE 3

Provisions

3.1 Principles Underlying the Recognition of Acquired Competencies

- Individuals should not have to redo, in a formal educational setting, learning they may have already acquired in other contexts or other ways.

- Evaluation activities that are carried out for the purpose of recognizing prior learning and competencies must be fair and equitable. They also must adapt to the generally informal and out-of-school nature of learning² that has been acquired by an individual.

3.2 Norms and Regulations

The process proposed to individuals who come for the recognition of their acquired competencies must correspond to the major steps underlined in Reference Document #P40.1, *RAC Process*.

This process may be adapted depending on the nature of the candidate's application or in response to specific training projects.

RAC can also be offered in response to the specific needs of institutions or businesses. A memorandum of understanding² would be required among all bodies concerned.

3.3 Mechanisms of Evaluation

RAC evaluation activities require the use of instruments² in order to grant credits for out-of-school learning such as work and life experience.

When available, instruments developed by the *Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport* are used. When instruments are not available or the existing instruments do not lend themselves to an individualized and integrated approach for candidates, the College may develop them as needed.

The development of instruments must conform to the related provisions defined in the College Policy #5 Relating to the Evaluation of Student Achievement (IPESA) ensuring coherence between evaluation activities and the competency.

When using evaluation instruments, the College commits to promoting the following criteria:

¹ Quebec Government Policy on Adult Education and Continuing Education and Training, 2002, p. 21.

² See Glossary for definition and other specific terms.

³ See Reference Document #P40.2, *List programs and courses offered through RAC*.

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- conditions for recognition must be established, and candidates must understand them;
- the evaluation of acquired competencies must be coherent with the competency according to the objectives and the standards of the program of study;
- the proposed evaluation activities for the purposes of demonstrating acquired competencies must be carried out in a context that fosters fairness and rigour;
- the instruments must be used in a fair and equitable manner with regards to measuring and evaluating learning; and
- the marking of evaluation activities must be conducted on the basis of clearly defined criteria and marking scheme.

ARTICLE 4 Rights, Roles and Responsibilities

Cégep Heritage College recognizes that all participants have rights, roles, and/or responsibilities with respect to the present policy.

4.1 Board of Governors

The Board of Governors has the responsibility to:

- adopt and implement the present policy, after consultation with the Academic Senate;
- recommend to the Minister the granting of the DEC to students, in accordance with the present policy; and
- grant the Attestation of College Studies (AEC) in accordance with the present policy.

4.2 Academic Senate

The Academic Senate has the responsibility to:

- recommend to Academic Services any changes deemed necessary to the present policy;
- strike an ad-hoc Evaluation Committee to conduct the internal evaluation of the application of the present policy (see Article 5 below); and
- advise the Board of Governors of any matters concerning the present policy.

4.3 Academic Dean

The Academic Dean has the responsibility to:

- disseminate the present policy to all participants;
- ensure that the participants fulfil their responsibilities as defined by the present policy;
- ensure that the Academic Senate initiates the policy revision process;
- coordinate the evaluation of the present policy;
- receive the final results of the evaluations conducted for the purposes of recognizing acquired competencies and process them in the same way as results obtained by students enrolled in regular education programs;
- propose that the Board of Governors recommend to the Minister, and transmit to the Minister, approval for the certification of students who have completed the requirements of a DEC program of studies as a result of RAC; and
- recommend to the Board of Governors, the granting of the AEC to students who have met the learning outcomes and competencies of an AEC program of studies as a result of RAC.

4.4 Director of Continuing Education

The Director of Continuing Education has the responsibility to:

- disseminate the present policy to all Continuing Education participants;
- receive the final results of the evaluations conducted for the purposes of recognizing acquired competencies and process them in the same way as results obtained by students enrolled in Continuing Education programs; and
- promote the recognition of acquired competencies as a regular service at the College to its various representations, specifically those made to organizations and businesses.

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4.5 RAC Advisor

The role of the RAC Advisor is to act as the principal facilitator of the services offered in the Recognition of Acquired Competencies service.

The RAC Advisor has the responsibility to:

- implement services that make it possible to gradually enhance access to RAC within the framework of the various programs for which the College is authorized;
- recruit content specialists, as needed, in accordance to College procedures⁵;
- use or develop, as required, the instrumentation needed for the RAC process proposed to candidates, as defined in Reference Document #P40.1, *RAC Process*;
- implement all the measures required to ensure the fairness and equivalence of evaluation practices conducted for the purposes of recognizing acquired competencies;
- establish and monitor candidate files and send, for the purposes of certification, the final results of evaluations leading to official recognition to the Academic Dean for regular education programs and to the Director of Continuing Education for Continuing Education programs;
- archive candidate files for which the process has ended or was completed;
- report to the Academic Dean on RAC activities during the academic year as deemed necessary;
- promote the recognition of acquired competencies to the public, organizations and businesses as a regular College service; and
- produce a financial report on revenues and expenditures generated as a result of RAC activities.

4.6 Content Specialists

The role of Content Specialists is to provide expertise in a professional field or a subject area associated with a college program of study.

⁵ See Reference Document #P40.4, *Hiring Content Specialists*.

Their responsibilities may vary and are as follows:

- provide entirely impartial assistance to candidates, offering them timely support in their process, and providing them with all the information required to help them gain a better understanding of the proposed activities or expected results and to thoroughly prepare themselves to demonstrate their competencies;
- respect the confidential nature of certain discussions that may arise with the candidate and demonstrate, throughout the evaluation process, empathy while complying with the professional framework governing his/her duties;
- make a fair and equitable judgment on the level of competencies acquired by an individual beyond the settings of an educational institution by making appropriate use of the instrumentation provided to him/her for this purpose by the RAC Advisor;
- agree to develop or contribute to developing the instrumentation required for applying RAC to a given program of study or to a component of this program when required;
- when evaluation results indicate partial recognition of a competency, formulate a specific recommendation about the missing elements of the competency and the procedures for acquiring those elements that he/she deems most appropriate to allow the candidate to obtain full recognition of this competency and to develop one or more training modules that can be individualized or adapted to the needs of candidates for the various competencies of a given program; and
- ensure the delivery of training to candidates committed to a process of acquiring a missing competency or missing components of a competency and conduct a re-evaluation of their learning in order to attest to or not attest to full mastery of this competency.

4.7 Candidates

Individuals have a right to official recognition of their knowledge or competencies insofar as they are able to provide evidence that they possess them.

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Candidates have the right to:

- receive information concerning the present policy, the RAC process, conditions and requirements;
- receive just, equitable, and pertinent evaluations within a reasonable timeframe;
- receive assistance when experiencing difficulties during the RAC process; and
- confidentiality with regard to personal information, in accordance with the *Law on Access to Documents held by Public Institutions and on the Protection of Personal Information (L.R.Q. c. A-2.1, a.53)*.

The candidate has the responsibility to:

- find out about the requirements and conditions recommended by the RAC Advisor before undertaking a recognition of acquired competencies process;
- complete their candidate file as carefully as possible, by providing all required documents and supporting documents and by carrying out the self-assessment of competencies of the program for which they want to obtain recognition;
- when the application is accepted, commit to the proposed process by completing the various evaluation activities;
- demonstrate autonomy in the proposed process; and
- keep to schedules, honouring appointments and payment of fees⁶.

ARTICLE 5 **Revision**

The present policy will be reviewed at least every five (5) years and revised when deemed necessary.

⁶ See Reference Document #P40.3, *Fees*.

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GLOSSARY

College: Cégep Heritage College

**Fair and
Equitable⁶:**

Fair implies an evaluation that is both just and accurate. A fair and equitable evaluation fulfills three requirements: justice, accuracy and equity. Justice means the absence of arbitrary decisions in conformity with agreement on lines of conduct, suitable rules, and the right of recourse should someone perceive the evaluation as either unfair or not equitable. Accuracy is the quality of proper targeting, of assigning the rightful and exact value. Its purpose is to evaluate effectively what one seeks to evaluate (validation), to evaluate the object of evaluation with accuracy (reliability), and to judge based on a sufficient amount of data. **Equity** means the judgment is impartial, it treats all individuals equally, and the process of evaluation is free of discrimination, at all levels. The process of judgment is written out, illustrated and executed in a manner that ensures the greatest possible objectivity, impartiality and stability. Measures are taken to ensure equivalence as much as possible in the evaluation from one classroom-group to another, from one teacher to another.

Candidate: A candidate is referred to as an individual going through the RAC process.

**Informal
learning:**

Learning resulting from daily work or life related activities. It is not organized or structured (in terms of course objectives or program outcomes). Informal learning is in most cases unintentional from the learner's perspective.

**Memorandum
of**

understanding: A document describing an agreement between the College and an organization that establishes a partnership and clarifies the terms of the RAC project and scope of the services.

Instruments: Instruments are referred to as documents that are used in all 6 steps of the proposed RAC process outlined in Reference Document #P40.1, *RAC Process*. These documents are used to conduct evaluations (i.e. assignments), relay information, provide instructions, inform candidates of results, etc.

⁶ The Evaluation of Learning. Learning Kit #8. Le Carrefour de la Réussite au Collégial, March 2008, p. 136.

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Related Document(s)

This document is to be used in conjunction with:

- Reference Document #P40.1, *RAC Process*¹
- Reference Document #P40.2, *List of Programs Offered Through RAC*²
- Reference Document #P40.3, *Fees*³
- Reference Document #P40.4, *Hiring Content Specialists*⁴

¹ Copies of this document are available from Academic Services.

² Copies of this document are available from Academic Services.

³ Copies of this document are available from Academic Services.

⁴ Copies of this document are available from Academic Services.

REFERENCE DOCUMENT #P40.1
*(Supporting Material for Cégep Heritage College Policy #40
Relating to the Recognition of Acquired Competencies)*

RAC Process:

1. **Initial meeting** – to provide individuals with information about RAC, the process and the requirements;
2. **Application** – the candidate completes a self-assessment of their competencies, applies to the College and assembles all required documents;
3. **File analysis** – the application is reviewed by the College to determine eligibility and to prepare the validation interview (see point 4 below);
4. **Validation interview** – to validate the candidate’s competencies based on his/her self-assessment and determine the next steps (i.e. recommend the evaluation of competency or formal training);
5. **Evaluation activities** – the candidate demonstrates his/her acquired competencies and is evaluated; and
6. **Certification or training** – depending on the outcome of the evaluation, the candidate receives certification or is provided with formal training to complete any outstanding competencies.

REFERENCE DOCUMENT #P40.2
*(Supporting Material for Cégep Heritage College Policy #40
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List of programs offered through RAC:

- Accounting and Management Technology (DEC)
- Computer Science (DEC)
- Early Childhood and Care Education (AEC and DEC)
- Bilingual Office Administration (AEC)
- MicroSoft Networks and Security Administrator (AEC)
- Web and Desktop Programming (AEC)
- Accounting Principles and Software Applications (AEC)

Cégep Heritage College may consider offering RAC for other programs and general education courses on a case by case basis.

REFERENCE DOCUMENT #P40.3
*(Supporting Material for Cégep Heritage College Policy #40
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RAC Fees:

- Admission: \$30
- File Review/Analysis \$30
- Evaluation of competency or group of competencies: \$50
Maximum of \$600 for an AEC
Maximum of \$1,200 for a DEC

REFERENCE DOCUMENT #P40.4
*(Supporting Material for Cégep Heritage College Policy #40
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Hiring Content Specialists:

Content Specialists are usually recruited through the Department. If a Content Specialist from the Department is not available, the RAC Advisor may recruit outside the College.

Rates

Content Specialists who conduct evaluation activities are hired on a contract basis and are paid a flat rate of \$35/hour.

Content Specialists who provide formal training as a result of partial recognition of a competency are paid the non-credit teaching usual hourly rate.