



Project Management Program Standard

The approved program standard for the Project Management program of instruction leading to an Ontario College Graduate Certificate delivered by Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology. (MTCU funding code 70207)

Ministry of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security
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Introduction

This document is the Program Standard for the Project Management program of instruction leading to an Ontario College Graduate Certificate delivered by Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology (MTCU funding code 70207).

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 Unit of the Ministry of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security has 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 of Applied Arts and Technology across the province of Ontario. 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 from 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 of Ontario 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 Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security will undertake regular reviews of the vocational learning outcomes for this program to ensure that the Project Management 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 Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security](#).

Vocational standard

All graduates of the Project Management program have achieved the [nine vocational learning outcomes \(VLOs\)](#).

Preamble

Graduates of the one-year Project Management Ontario College Graduate Certificate program will be equipped for careers in the diverse and expanding field of **project management**. This in-demand profession involves applying technical knowledge, leadership abilities, and strategic business thinking to **plan** and carry out **projects** in a successful and efficient way. Strong **project management** skills are essential to helping organizations achieve their goals, and there is a growing need for qualified project managers across many industries.

Throughout the program, students study each stage of the **project lifecycle** and learn how to apply key **project management** concepts, strategies, and best practices. They gain practical, creative, and advanced skills to guide a project from its initial idea through planning, execution, monitoring, and completion. The program also covers important topics such as project budgeting and financial analysis, **risk** management, working with **stakeholders**, and aligning people and processes with business goals to support overall project success.

No matter what the industry, the need for professionals with **project management** expertise continues to grow. This program is designed to help both recent graduates and experienced professionals build the skills and confidence needed to lead or contribute to successful **project teams**. Graduates may find employment in a wide range of national, international, profit and non-profit organizations.

[See Glossary](#)

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

Synopsis of the vocational learning outcomes Project Management (Ontario College Graduate Certificate)

The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to:

1. Manage project **constraints**, **deliverables**, performance **criteria**, **quality control** needs, and resource **requirements** to meet project **specifications** and **objectives**.
2. Lead project **teams** to enhance collaboration and achieve project **deliverables**.
3. Facilitate communication, negotiation, and collaboration with relevant parties to achieve project **objectives** and **deliverables**.
4. Conduct project activities in compliance with legal **regulations** and ethical **standards**.
5. Integrate inclusive practices to foster teamwork and achieve **project management** goals in diverse, global environments.
6. Use current **project management** technologies to track and report progress in alignment to goals and timelines.
7. Analyze data, insights and **metrics** to support operational management and decision-making throughout the **project lifecycle**.
8. Develop and implement **project management** strategies and **plans** to align **deliverables** with organizational **objectives**.
9. **Monitor** and **control** project progress to manage **risks** and develop timely solutions.

[See Glossary](#)

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: manage project **constraints**, **deliverables**, performance **criteria**, **quality control** needs, and resource **requirements** to meet project **specifications** and **objectives**.

Elements of the performance

- a. Ensure project **deliverables** meet defined **standards** by planning for **quality**, monitoring performance, and implementing continuous improvement measures.
- b. Clearly establish and maintain project boundaries to ensure all work aligns with approved **objectives** and avoid unnecessary scope expansion.
- c. Proactively assess potential **risks**, develop mitigation strategies, and respond effectively to minimize impact on project goals.
- d. Ensure that project **objectives** directly support the broader goals and long-term strategy of the organization.
- e. Integrate environmental, social, and economic **sustainability** considerations into project processes and decision-making.
- f. **Plans** and uses time efficiently to ensure tasks are completed on schedule and deadlines are met.
- g. Create realistic timelines and use scheduling tools to track progress, adjust activities, and maintain project momentum.
- h. Manage project budget by planning expenditures, monitoring costs, and adjusting stay within financial limits.
- i. Set specific, measurable, and achievable goals, and lead efforts to accomplish them within the defined **constraints** of time, scope, and resources.
- j. Adapt project **management** to project selection, resource management, contract administration, and operations management in a variety of economic sectors.

[See Glossary](#)

2. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to: lead **project teams** to enhance collaboration and achieve project **deliverables**.

Elements of the performance

- a. Ensure project **deliverables** provide **value** beyond completion by contributing to long-term organizational goals and success.
- b. Build, guide, and motivate project **teams** to work collaboratively and efficiently toward shared **objectives**.
- c. Demonstrate respect for leadership and collegial advice by incorporating input and direction into project planning and execution when appropriate.
- d. Work diligently to fulfill agreed-upon project goals, maintaining focus on scope, schedule, and **quality** as defined by the sponsor.
- e. Accept and apply strategic input from senior leaders to align project efforts with broader organizational priorities.
- f. Use input from team members, **stakeholders**, and subject matter experts to make informed decisions and improve project outcomes.
- g. Deliver on defined goals while managing scope changes carefully to avoid unapproved expansion of project boundaries.
- h. Lead effectively whether in-person, online, or in remote/hybrid settings, fostering clear communication, accountability, and team cohesion.

[See Glossary](#)

3. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to: facilitate communication, negotiation, and collaboration with relevant parties to achieve project **objectives** and **deliverables**.

Elements of the performance

- a. Ensure project activities and decisions consistently support the organization's strategic goals and priorities.
- b. Actively contributes to team success by offering help, sharing knowledge, and fostering a positive and cooperative work environment.
- c. Build and maintain productive relationships with **stakeholders** by understanding their needs, keeping them informed, and involving them in key decisions.
- d. Regularly track project performance, team activity, and **stakeholder** feedback to ensure **objectives** are being met.
- e. Respond flexibly to evolving project demands, adjusting **plans** and approaches needed to maintain progress and effectiveness.
- f. Recognize problems that require higher-level attention and promptly escalate them to the appropriate authority to avoid delays or setbacks.
- g. Identify practical, adaptable solutions that address challenges while maintaining alignment with project goals and **constraints**.
- h. Recognize and respect emotional and cultural differences within the team and **stakeholder** group to foster understanding and inclusiveness.
- i. Handle disagreements or misunderstandings in a calm, respectful manner, aiming for outcomes that maintain team cohesion and project momentum.

[See Glossary](#)

4. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to: conduct project activities in compliance with legal **regulations** and ethical **standards**.

Elements of the performance

- a. Utilize established governance structures to guide decision-making, clarify roles, and ensure accountability throughout the project **lifecycle**.
- b. Follow internal policies, codes of conduct, and operational procedures to ensure consistency, compliance, and ethical behavior.
- c. Demonstrate awareness of and alignment with both company **standards** and regional practices, including legal, cultural, and operational norms.
- d. Consistently act with integrity, responsibility, and reliability in all project activities and **stakeholder** interactions.
- e. Treat all individuals with fairness and dignity, promoting a respectful environment that values diverse perspectives and collaboration.
- f. **Plan** and manage projects to deliver positive outcomes now and in future, including economic **value**, social benefits, and environmental accountability.

[See Glossary](#)

5. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to: integrate inclusive practices to foster teamwork and achieve **project management** goals in diverse, global environments.

Elements of the performance

- a. Consider international trends, global **risks**, and cross-border impacts that may influence the achievement of project goals.
- b. Show respect for and adapt to cultural differences in values, beliefs, and behaviours to foster inclusive and effective collaboration.
- c. Understand and adjust to cultural expectations, etiquette, and workplace practices that vary across regions and teams.
- d. Use clear, respectful, and adaptive communication styles that bridge language and cultural gaps, enhancing understanding and cooperation.
- e. Demonstrate the ability to work effectively in culturally diverse settings by understanding, valuing, and responding appropriately to cultural differences.
- f. Recognize and manage one's own emotions and respond empathetically to others to build trust, resolve conflict, and enhance collaboration.
- g. Engage in fair, respectful, and strategic negotiations that account for cultural and interpersonal dynamics to reach mutually beneficial outcomes.
- h. Create a supportive team culture that values each member's contributions, fosters cooperation, and strengthens group cohesion.
- i. Actively contributes to shared goals by building relationships, valuing diverse perspectives, and encouraging open dialogue.
- j. Integrate global considerations - such as economic trends, regulatory environments, and international **stakeholder** needs - into project decisions and strategies.

[See Glossary](#)

6. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to: use current **project management** technologies to track and report progress in alignment to goals and timelines.

Elements of the performance

- a. Stay up to date with emerging and widely used technologies that support project and workplace demands.
- b. Effectively select and use project-related software tools (ex: planning, collaboration, data analysis) to enhance productivity and outcomes.
- c. Identify and apply AI tools and solutions to optimize decision-making, automate tasks, and improve project efficiency.
- d. Use digital tools strategically to support project planning, communication, tracking, and execution.
- e. Apply technology solutions to improve the efficiency, accuracy, and effectiveness of project activities and **deliverables**.
- f. Demonstrate awareness and appropriate use of tools and systems unique to the industry or sector in which the project operates.
- g. Apply critical thinking to evaluate digital information, communicate effectively online, and use technology responsibly and ethically.
- h. Choose and use technologies that directly support project goals, timelines, and **deliverables** to ensure strategic alignment.

[See Glossary](#)

7. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to: analyze data, insights and **metrics** to support operational management and decision-making throughout the project **lifecycle**.

Elements of the performance

- a. Gather accurate and timely data from various sources and conduct thorough analysis to support project needs.
- b. Share critical information clearly and appropriately with **stakeholders**, ensuring the right people have access to the right data at the right time.
- c. Apply budgeting, forecasting, and cost **control** practices to manage project financials and ensure responsible resource use.
- d. Provide clear, evidence-based recommendations that guide decisions aligned with project and organizational goals.
- e. Translate complex data into clear, engaging reports and visual indicators (ex: dashboards, charts) to inform and influence **stakeholders**.
- f. Deliver on defined tasks and goals within specified timeframes, maintaining focus on scope, schedule, and **quality**.
- g. Interpret performance **metrics** and trends to uncover meaningful insights that inform strategic planning and continuous improvement.
- h. Transform analysis into practical actions, using insights to adjust strategies, improve outcomes, and drive project success.
- i. Use the **Development Approach** to create and evolve the product, service, or result during the project life cycle.

[See Glossary](#)

8. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to: develop and implement **project management** strategies and **plans** to align **deliverables** with organizational **objectives**.

Elements of the performance

- a. Ensure that all project outputs directly support and reflect the strategic goals and priorities of the organization.
- b. Deliver results that meet or exceed expected outcomes, providing tangible **value** and benefits to **stakeholders**.
- c. Regularly assess project status, adjust **plans** as needed, and track key performance indicators to maintain alignment with **objectives**.
- d. Continuously align project activities, resources, and decisions with business strategies, from initiation through to completion.
- e. Demonstrate a clear understanding of the project **lifecycle** phases and apply this knowledge to guide project planning, execution, and closure.
- f. Select and apply the right methods and tools to manage project tasks efficiently and achieve desired organizational outcomes.
- g. Promote clear communication and collaboration to ensure all team members understand project goals, roles, and processes.

[See Glossary](#)

9. The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to: **monitor** and **control** project progress to manage **risks** and develop timely solutions.

Elements of the performance

- a. Demonstrate the ability to proactively recognize potential **risks** and issues that may impact project success.
- b. Effectively manage identified **risks** and take timely, appropriate action to resolve issues.
- c. Develop and follow comprehensive project **plans** that support goals, timelines, and resource **requirements**.
- d. Apply strategies to reduce **risk** impact and actively seek opportunities to improve outcomes and add **value**.
- e. Managing potentially disruptive changes to a project already underway.
- f. Analyze problems critically and propose effective, practical, and innovative solutions aligned with project **objectives**.
- g. Take the initiative to correct deviations from the project **plan**, ensuring that corrective measures are implemented promptly and effectively.
- h. Take responsibility for outcomes and remain aware of project context, **stakeholder** needs, and changes in scope or environment.

[See Glossary](#)

Glossary

Constraint: A limiting factor that affects the execution of a project, program, portfolio, or process.

Control: The process of comparing actual performance with planned performance, analyzing variances, assessing trends to effect process improvements, evaluating possible alternatives, and recommending appropriate corrective action as needed.

Criteria: Standards, rules, or tests on which a judgment or decision can be based or by which a product, service, result, or process can be evaluated.

Deliverable: Any unique and verifiable product, result, or capability to perform a service that is required to be produced to complete a process, phase, or project.

Development Approach: A method used to create and evolve the product, service, or result during the project life cycle, such as a predictive, iterative, incremental, agile, or hybrid method.

Metric: A description of a project or product attribute and how to measure it.

Monitor: Collect project performance data, produce performance measures, and report and disseminate performance information.

Objective: Something toward which work is to be directed, a strategic position to be attained, a purpose to be achieved, a result to be obtained, a product to be produced, or a service to be performed.

Plan: A proposed means of accomplishing something.

Project: A temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product, service, or result.

Project Lifecycle: The series of phases that a project passes through from its start to its completion.

Project Management: The application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to project activities to meet the project requirements.

Project Team: A group of individuals performing the work of the project to achieve its objectives.

Quality: The degree to which a set of inherent characteristics fulfills requirements.

Regulations: Requirements imposed by a governmental body. These requirements can establish product, process, or service characteristics, including applicable administrative provisions that have government-mandated compliance.

Requirement: A condition or capability that is necessary to be present in a product, service, or result to satisfy a business need.

Risk: An uncertain event or condition that, if it occurs, has a positive or negative effect on one or more project objectives.

Specification: A precise statement of the needs to be satisfied and the essential characteristics that are required.

Stakeholder: An individual, group, or organization that may affect, be affected by, or perceive itself to be affected positively or negatively by a decision, activity, or outcome of a project, program, or portfolio.

Standard: A document established by an authority, custom, or consensus as a model or example.

Sustainability (in Project Management): The practice of planning, executing, and closing projects in a way that considers and balances environmental, social, and economic impacts. It involves making decisions that support long-term value, reduce negative impacts on the environment and society, and align with ethical and responsible resource use.

Value: The worth, importance and usefulness of something.

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