Ontario College Quality Assurance Service

Presentation to INQAAHE Conference
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The development and implementation of a system-wide quality assurance service for public colleges

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Quick facts:
- Education in Canada is a provincial mandate and there is no national/federal education body or authority
- In Ontario there are 24 colleges serving about 200 communities
  - 22 English-language; 2 French-language
- Colleges established by provincial government and operate as crown agencies
- About 500,000 students enrolled per annum
  - 200,000 full-time
  - 300,000 part-time
- Full range of programs offered from basic literacy to baccalaureate degree
24 Colleges across the Province
Programs

- Literacy and Basic Skills
- Apprenticeship
- Certificate, Diploma programs (from 1 – 3 years in length)
  - Preparatory
  - Health Sciences
  - Business
  - Technology
  - Creative and Communications
  - Human Services
- Full and Part–time, including distance education
- Post Diploma and Degree programs
- Joint College–University programs
Ontario College Quality Assurance Service

- **2002**
  - Provincial government mandates the development of a self-regulatory quality assurance mechanism for colleges

- **2005**
  - Quality assurance service begins on two levels with the Credentials Validation Service for program-level quality assurance and the Program Quality Assurance Process Audit at the institutional level

- **2006**
  - External evaluation of service conducted by Dr. Massy
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OCQAS – Responsible to the colleges through an arms-length Management Board

CVS – Program – level Quality Assurance

PQAPA – Institutional – level Quality Assurance
Program Quality Assurance Process Audit

**PQAPA**

- An ‘academic audit’ approach to quality assurance
- Standardizes the way colleges demonstrate and articulate the state of their quality assurance policies and practices
- Measured against a set of 5 internationally recognized ‘quality characteristics’
Program Quality Assurance Process Audit

- **Self-Study Report**
  - Submitted with supporting evidence to an external audit panel
  - All audit panel members selected from a pool of trained auditors
Program Quality Assurance Process Audit

**Site Visit**

- Pre-visit review of documentation
- Visit determines the validity of the self-assessment and evidence
- Exit interview provides initial, high-level feedback
  - Draft Report sent to college for comment
  - Final Draft Report (with college feedback) submitted to Management Board for approval and release
Program Quality Assurance Process Audit

Research:


- Three themes emerged in virtually every college’s response:
  - The value in self-reflection
  - The power of feedback by the audit panel
  - The usefulness of the constructive feedback from the panel
Program Quality Assurance Process Audit

- 24 Audits completed 2006 – 2010 (5 in pilot project and 19 after initial review and evaluation)
- Review of all services of the OCQAS
  - International team of experts chaired by Dr. J. Randall conducted this review and reported to Management Board with 20 recommendations (June 2010)
  - Management Board has considered the recommendations and developed a plan of action to address the relevant recommendations
- Currently undertaking round of audits with 5 colleges from the pilot round using the revised audit process
# Audit Results

## Pilot Round Results

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## Non-Pilot Round Results

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## Total Results

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Criterion distribution of partially met and not met
Randall Report – Recommendations and Response
- Some changes to quality criteria including the addition of one criterion
- Changes to composition of Management Board to include external member and student voice
- More emphasis on ‘descriptive and evaluative narrative’ of Audit Panel reports
- Utilize international partners in monitoring of “off-shore program delivery”
For more information

The Ontario College Quality Assurance Service

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