



Commission d'évaluation
de l'enseignement collégial

EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEMS IN QUÉBEC COLLEGES

Guidelines and Framework

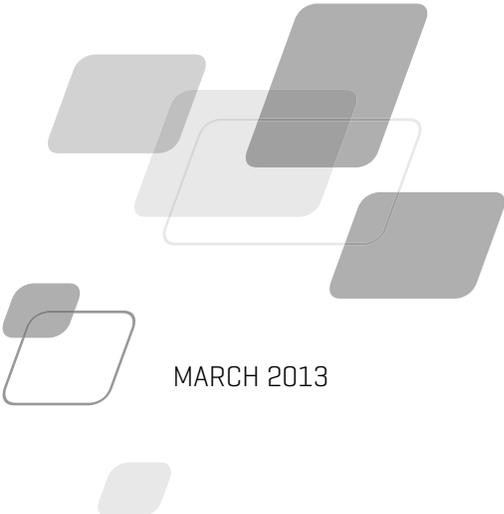




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MARCH 2013

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Introduction

During the first two decades of the Commission's existence, institutions in the Québec college network have developed an array of mechanisms to ensure quality in both their programs of study (and their delivery) as well as in the evaluation of student achievement. They have also begun to measure, in the ongoing pursuit of quality assurance, the effectiveness of these mechanisms themselves. In addition, as part of their responsibilities, cegeps have adopted institutional strategic plans, including success plans, and reviewed the effectiveness of mechanisms that ensure quality management in executing these plans.¹ Subsidized private colleges have also taken similar steps regarding success plans.² Furthermore, as part of their institutional evaluation, colleges³ revisited their mission, organizational and management methods, planning and evaluation processes, outcomes, and internal communication practices.

Established in 1993, the Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial has always operated with a vision that colleges – bolstered by the knowledge and experience acquired and enriched over the years through evaluations carried out both by the Commission and on their own initiative – would ultimately develop an institutional culture of self-



A new approach in keeping with the recognition of the autonomy of colleges and the expertise they have developed over the years, and the evolution in the evaluation practices of the Commission.

evaluation, and become more autonomous in doing so. Faithful to its mission, the Commission is proposing a new evaluation approach that marks a major departure from how it assumes its mandate and how colleges exercise their responsibilities in regards to evaluation. With this approach, the Commission is shifting its focus from evaluating the quality and implementation of programs of study and the effectiveness of policies and plans, to evaluating the effectiveness of the quality assurance system in each institution.

The broad framework of this new approach is in keeping with the Commission's desire to move forward with its evaluation practices, while recognizing the expertise that colleges have developed over the years. The efforts of a working committee comprised of representatives from the Commission and colleges helped establish the conceptual framework for this new operation, identify the components of the quality assurance systems in colleges, and define the various elements – including the Commission's expectations – of the implementation of the operation.

1. In compliance with the 2002 *Act to amend the General and Vocational Colleges Act* and the *Act respecting the Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial*, all cegeps are required to adopt a strategic plan and submit a copy to the Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial.
2. As stipulated in Schedule 039 of the *Régime budgétaire et financier des établissements privés d'ordre collégial*, private institutions that submit their success plan to the Ministère and to the Commission receive funding allocated for the implementation of this plan.
3. Intended for both public and private colleges that offer programs of study leading to a Diploma of College Studies (DEC).

In preparing the evaluation of quality assurance systems and to ensure an approach comparable to international standards in higher education, the Commission carried out an in-depth examination of current quality assurance practices. It also solicited the contributions of respected international specialists in the field to validate the present document's proposed evaluation of the effectiveness of the colleges' quality assurance systems and the evaluation process being proposed.

The implementation of a change of such importance in the evaluation practices of the Commission requires that special attention be given to the needs of the colleges. To that end, the Commission will provide individualized support to each institution. Also, to accommodate any necessary revisions prior to the implementation date established for each college to begin their self-evaluation, the Commission is conducting validation evaluations in four colleges. In accordance with its standard operating procedures, the Commission has struck an advisory committee⁴ which will also contribute to the validation of this new evaluation approach.

The present document contains useful information to assist colleges in evaluating the effectiveness of their quality assurance systems. It is divided into four sections. The first provides an overview of quality assurance in Québec college education. The second introduces the operation of the evaluation of the effectiveness of the quality assurance systems and defines the issues, purpose, conceptual framework and evaluation approach being proposed. The third covers the audit of the quality assurance systems, and defines the system being audited, the expectations in regards to the colleges' self-evaluation processes, the Commission's evaluation criteria and rulings. Lastly, in the fourth section the different stages of the audit cycle are outlined. The appendices contain supplementary information, notably in regards to the self-evaluation report that colleges are required to submit.



The Commission's practices are comparable to the best practices of other quality assurance agencies in higher education.

4. The advisory committee is comprised of 18 members representing the college network, the university community and various socio-economic groups.



Quality Assurance in Québec Colleges

Quality assurance in Québec college education⁵ today is assured by the experience institutions have accrued over the years, by the mechanisms put in place to ensure quality, as well as external evaluations performed by an independent body,⁶ the Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial.

1. The Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial

Created in 1993, the Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial is an independent public quality assurance organization whose mission is to contribute to and demonstrate the development of the quality of college education.⁷

The Commission's mission covers all college-level institutions governed by the *College Education Regulations*. Currently this comprises a network of 98 institutions⁸:

- 48 general and vocational colleges (cegeps);
- 4 institutions under the authority of a ministry or a university;
- 22 subsidized private colleges;
- 24 non-subsidized private institutions.

As mandated by law, the primary function of the Commission is to evaluate the following for each institution⁹:

- institutional policies on the evaluation of student achievement, including procedures for the certification of studies, and their implementation;
- institutional policies on program evaluation and their implementation;

5. In Québec, college education falls under the jurisdiction of the [Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur, de la Recherche, de la Science et de la Technologie](#) [Ministry of Higher Learning, Research, Science and Technology].

6. Other regulatory bodies and professional organizations are involved in the accreditation of study programs and contribute their part to quality education standards. The work of these bodies and organizations goes beyond the scope of the present document.

7. [Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial \(2009\)](#), p.11.

8. Data current as of March 25, 2013. Not included in this figure are the total number of campuses, constituent colleges and specialized college centres.

9. The mission and powers of the Commission are established primarily in sections 13 to 19 of the [Act respecting the Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial](#).

- implementation of programs of study authorized by the Minister responsible for the Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur, de la Recherche, de la Science et de la Technologie, taking into account the objectives and standards assigned to them;
- objectives, standards, and implementation of programs of study established by the institution, taking into account the needs these programs are designed to meet.

In addition, amendments in the 2002 *Act to amend the General and Vocational Colleges Act* and the *Act respecting the Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial*¹⁰ modified the scope of the Commission's mandate to include, for cegeps and subsidized private colleges, the evaluation of:

- activities related to their educational mission regarding administrative and academic planning and management as well as instruction and support services; for cegeps this includes an evaluation of their strategic plans.

A new way for the Commission to fulfil its mandate while at the same time working to support college-level institutions.

Furthermore, the Commission has been granted three major powers through legislation: the power to verify, the power to make recommendations, and declaratory powers to make its work publicly available. Operating with a considerable degree of autonomy, the Commission can as a result collect from institutions any relevant information required to do its work, set forth recommendations on actions to improve quality in a specific area, and make its evaluation reports publicly available. For their part, colleges are required to report on any follow-up activities undertaken to address the Commission's recommendations.

2. Evaluation Activities Since 1993

From the outset, the Commission viewed its work as supportive to the growth and development of Québec college education. For this reason, it chose to work progressively through the various elements of its mandate, with an eye to making colleges increasingly autonomous and more responsible in the area of evaluation.¹¹

10. *An Act to amend the General and Vocational Colleges Act and the Act respecting the Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial*.

11. Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial (2009), p.19.

To reach this goal, the Commission first evaluated institutional policies on the evaluation of student achievement concurrently with the most common and popular programs of study offered throughout the Québec college network. The objective of the Commission was to introduce the evaluation process to the largest possible number of stakeholders and institutions, as well as provide colleges with tools to develop their own program evaluation policies, the latter also subject to evaluation by the Commission.

Colleges were then requested to implement their program evaluation policies, and to verify their effectiveness, in the evaluation of a program of study. The Commission also conducted institutional evaluations, the evaluation of success plans and – in the case of cegeps – of strategic plans.

The Commission then proceeded to evaluate the effectiveness of the various components of the quality assurance systems in the colleges. This eventually led to an evaluation of the implementation of institutional policies on the evaluation of student achievement for all colleges in the network, the effectiveness of success plans, and – for cegeps – strategic plans.

Lastly, the Commission launched an operation to provide colleges with an integrated approach for the efficient processing of follow-ups to the recommendations. This exercise also proved useful in establishing an up-to-date picture of these follow-ups.

Appendix A provides a summary of the Commission's evaluation activities to date, as well as their distribution according to the different categories of institutions.



Evaluating the Effectiveness of Quality Assurance Systems in Québec Colleges

The evaluation of the effectiveness of quality assurance systems in Québec colleges marks an important change in the approach to evaluation for the Commission in the years to come. This approach is founded on the knowledge and experience accrued by colleges in the area of evaluation and the gradual evolution of the Commission's own activities over the course of the past two decades.

1. Issues

The Commission continues to pursue its mission and fulfil its mandate in a context of systemic and cyclical evaluation that respects the autonomy and acknowledges the responsibilities of colleges. Fully aware of the need to take into account institutional particularities, the Commission understands that the implementation of this new evaluation will need to be adapted to the context of each institution for the latter to reap the benefit of such an exercise. This change in approach will require the Commission to adapt its evaluation practices and processes to take into account the expertise developed in the colleges.

For colleges, this new approach will entail a greater reliance on an institutional culture of quality, driven by a management style aimed at continuous quality improvement. Colleges are therefore expected to define a quality assurance system and apply it as an integrated management tool. To this end, the implementation of an institutional information system, unique to the college, that can accurately track and demonstrate the effectiveness of the quality assurance system, is imperative.

This new approach will entail a greater reliance on management aimed at continuous quality improvement.

The cyclical nature of this evaluation will help colleges plan their evaluation activities, as on-site visits, based on a pre-determined audit cycle, are scheduled according to a calendar announced at the beginning of the cycle. The evaluation of the effectiveness of quality assurance systems and the implementation of the related procedures, underscore the importance of the institutional responsibility for the management of quality and aim at consolidating the evaluation practices in the colleges.

2. Purpose

Having recognized that a culture of evaluation has taken root in colleges, the Commission is henceforth shifting the focus of its activities to evaluating the effectiveness of quality assurance systems. The purpose of doing so is to contribute to and demonstrate the development of the quality of college education.

The purpose of this new approach is to contribute to and demonstrate the development of quality in college education.

3. Conceptual Framework

The Commission's conceptual framework for this evaluation is based on its own expertise in the field and is rooted in the context of college education. It also emerges from research conducted by the Commission¹² and consultation with partners in the college community.

In this evaluation, the Commission defines the concept of “**quality**” as being aligned with objectives (“fitness for purpose”), in other words, the ability of an institution to reach its stated objectives and fulfil its mission.

As for “quality assurance,” this can be defined in terms of two processes: **internal quality assurance**, which refers to an ongoing process implemented by an institution to ensure reaching stated objectives; and **external quality assurance**, which refers to a process implemented by an external body to evaluate, based on agreed and predetermined criteria, the ability of an institution's quality assurance processes to ensure meeting its objectives.

The Commission defines the concept of “quality” as being aligned with objectives.

A **quality assurance system** consists of a structured yet dynamic organization of different quality assurance mechanisms, including an information system, established by the institution to ensure and demonstrate continuous improvement.

Lastly, the **effectiveness of a quality assurance system** refers to the ability of the system to ensure continuous quality improvement.

12. See the References section for a complete list of works consulted by Commission.

4. Evaluation Approach

The approach adopted by the Commission to evaluate the effectiveness of quality assurance systems in colleges takes the form of an audit based on agreed and predetermined criteria. The implementation of this approach is deeply rooted in an institutional culture of values, principles, and evaluation methods that allows each college to demonstrate its ability to meet its set objectives.

The audit process itself is both systemic and cyclical, and implemented according to a pre-determined calendar. Thus every five years, each college receives an on-site visit from the Commission based on a calendar announced at the start of an audit cycle. Following the audit visit, the college is required, in some cases, to provide a follow-up to the Commission's recommendations, within a specified time frame.¹³



The approach adopted takes the form of a systemic and cyclical audit based on agreed and predetermined criteria.

13. The different stages of the audit cycle are outlined in greater detail on pages 23-25.



Quality Assurance Systems in Québec Colleges: the Audit Process

The audit process adopted by the Commission to assess the quality assurance system of a college starts with the institution's self-evaluation and the resulting report. The Commission isolates the components of the quality assurance system to be audited, defines the criteria to be applied, and presents its ruling at the end of the audit.

1. The Quality Assurance System Submitted to an Audit

Depending on their specific characteristics, colleges have over the years adopted a range of mechanisms to ensure quality in meeting the various aspects of their mission. Mindful of the scope and diversity of these mechanisms, the Commission focuses its attention only on those that form the quality assurance system being audited.

This system is comprised of mechanisms for which colleges have developed an expertise in evaluating their implementation and effectiveness. The Commission examines the effectiveness of those mechanisms ensuring quality for:

- programs of study;
- the evaluation of student achievement;
- strategic planning within a context of results-based management;
- success planning within a context of results-based management.

The specific components constituting the quality assurance system being audited will vary according to the status of the institution; the table on the following page illustrates these components in greater detail.



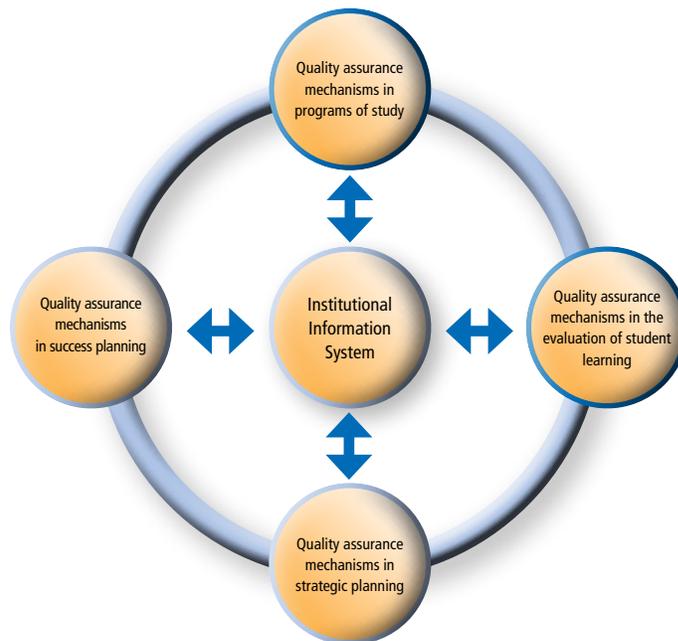
A quality assurance system consists of a structured and dynamic organization of different quality assurance mechanisms, including an information system, established by the institution to ensure and demonstrate continuous quality improvement.

Quality Assurance Mechanisms Assessed, by Component and Status of Institution

STATUS OF INSTITUTION	QUALITY ASSURANCE MECHANISMS FOR:			
	Programs of Study	Evaluation of Student Achievement	Strategic Planning	Success Planning
Cegep	✓	✓	✓	✓
Subsidized Private College	✓	✓		✓ ¹⁴
Non-subsidized Private Institution	✓	✓		
Institution under the authority of a Ministry or a University	✓	✓		

The quality assurance system includes an institutional information system designed to collect the data required to demonstrate the implementation of these mechanisms and their effectiveness.

The figure below illustrates the quality assurance system being audited.



14. Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (2011).

1.1 The Quality Assurance Mechanisms

In a college, the quality assurance mechanisms can take many shapes and forms, and cover different aspects of its mission. For the Commission, a **quality assurance mechanism** is both binding and guiding from an institutional perspective. It most often takes the form of policies, plans, by-laws or practices that have been documented and implemented.¹⁵ The Commission specifies three general categories of quality assurance mechanisms that colleges can include in their demonstration:

- 1) institutional mechanisms governed by regulations related to the Commission's mandate;
- 2) other institutional mechanisms, such as policies, programs, by-laws, etc.;
- 3) institutional practices adopted in relation to the implementation of a given policy or other institutional mechanism.

A quality assurance mechanism is both binding and guiding from an institutional perspective.

1.2 The Institutional Information System

The information system is the institutional repository of information demonstrating the effectiveness of its quality assurance mechanisms.

An information system is defined by the Commission as an institutional quality management tool for the collection of data required to support decision making and ensure effective quality management. In the audit process, it can also serve as a database to store the information required for a college to document the effectiveness of its quality assurance mechanisms and provide evidence thereof in its self-evaluation report.

Each college can adapt the organization of its information system to its institutional practices.

15. Examples of these mechanisms can be found in Appendix C.

2. The College Self-Evaluation Process

Each college is required to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the effectiveness of its quality assurance system, according to the criteria articulated in this section, and demonstrate their results in a self-evaluation report.¹⁶

To do so, the Commission expects the college to first establish a self-evaluation plan to steer its operation. This plan should define the main issues, the distribution of duties and responsibilities, data collection and analysis procedures, methods of consultation, as well as a time frame for completing the self-evaluation process.

Through its information system, the college can collect data documenting the implementation of its quality assurance mechanisms as well as any corrective measures undertaken to improve quality. The analysis of this data will allow the college to track and review the effectiveness of its mechanisms. This analysis must be based on valid and sufficient data to provide an effective critical assessment and demonstration of strengths and areas for improvement in the effectiveness of its quality assurance mechanisms. Based on the results of this exercise, the college can then draw conclusions for each component of its quality assurance system. Furthermore, it assesses the overall effectiveness of the quality assurance system as a whole.

The college's conclusions are presented in a self-evaluation report, which will include the necessary supporting documents as appendices. The college will then draw up an action plan to ensure follow-up on the corrective measures identified to address any deficiencies observed in its quality assurance system.



The effectiveness of a quality assurance system is its ability to ensure continuous quality improvement.

3. Evaluation Criteria

In the audit, three criteria are applied to each of the components of a college's quality assurance system in order to assess the effectiveness of the mechanisms used by the institution. The Commission defines the **effectiveness of a quality assurance mechanism** as *its ability to ensure continuous improvement in quality in reaching its stated objectives*.

16. Content to be included in self-evaluation reports is detailed in Appendix D.

The three criteria to be applied are the following:

1. The implementation of quality assurance mechanisms;
2. The effectiveness of these mechanisms, that is, their ability to ensure a continuous improvement in quality by:
 - a) conducting a critical assessment of the achievement of the stated objectives of these mechanisms;¹⁷
 - b) identifying areas of strength and areas for improvement to ensure meeting these objectives;
 - c) implementing corrective measures for improvement, namely through an action plan, in a context of continuous quality improvement;
3. The review and updating of these mechanisms to ensure their effectiveness.

The following pages provide details of the criteria and sub-criteria pertaining to each component of the quality assurance system.



17. For the full set of objectives, refer to the sub-criteria of each component in the quality assurance system.

Component 1

Quality assurance mechanisms for programs of study

CRITERIA:

1. The implementation of mechanisms.

2. The effectiveness of mechanisms.

Sub-criteria:

2.1 The effectiveness of mechanisms to ensure the **relevance** of programs of study.

These mechanisms should make possible:

- a) a critical assessment of the relevance of programs of study, by examining whether:
 - objectives, standards and content are aligned with the needs and expectations of universities and/or the labour market;
 - objectives, standards and content take into account student expectations;
 - objectives, standards and content take into account the expectations of society.
- b) the identification of strengths and areas for improvement to ensure the relevance of programs.
- c) the implementation of corrective measures to address areas for improvement and ensure the relevance of programs in a context of continuous quality improvement.

2.2 The effectiveness of mechanisms to ensure **coherence** in programs of study.

These mechanisms should make possible:

- a) a critical assessment of the coherence in programs of study, by examining whether:
 - objectives and content clearly define competencies to be acquired; and program standards establish college-level competencies;
 - programs include comprehensive and varied learning activities that enable the objectives and program standards to be achieved;
 - learning activities are organized in a logical and sequential fashion to facilitate acquiring an in-depth and comprehensive understanding of program content;
 - requirements related to each learning activity (course load, laboratory work, student work) are set clearly and realistically; these requirements are accurately represented in course outlines, as well as in the course weighting and the calculation of credits.

- b) the identification of strengths and areas for improvement to ensure coherence in programs.
- c) the implementation of corrective measures to address areas for improvement and ensure coherence in programs in a context of continuous quality improvement.

2.3 The effectiveness of mechanisms to ensure **the value of teaching methods and student supervision.**

These mechanisms should make possible:

- a) a critical assessment of the value of teaching methods and student supervision by examining whether:
 - teaching methods are aligned with both the program objectives and each of the learning activities, and take into account student characteristics, facilitating the achievement of these objectives in compliance with set standards;
 - guidance, support and follow-up services, as well as screening measures designed to identify at-risk students, facilitate student success;
 - the availability of faculty is sufficient to meet the needs of students.
- b) the identification of strengths and areas for improvement to ensure the value of teaching methods and student supervision.
- c) the implementation of corrective measures to address areas for improvement and ensure the value of teaching methods and student supervision in a context of continuous quality improvement.

2.4 The effectiveness of mechanisms to ensure **the alignment of human, financial and material resources with education needs.**

These mechanisms should make possible:

- a) a critical assessment of the alignment of human, financial and material resources with education needs, by examining whether:
 - the number of qualified faculty is sufficient, and the respective areas of specialization diversified enough, to meet the objectives of both the programs and the learning activities;
 - the number of professional and support staff needed for the program is adequate and their qualifications are sufficient to satisfy the needs of the programs;
 - the motivation and skills of faculty and support staff are maintained and developed through clearly-defined evaluation procedures and professional development activities;
 - teaching facilities, equipment and other material resources are adequate in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility;
 - financial resources are sufficient to ensure the proper functioning of the programs.

- b) the identification of strengths and areas for improvement to ensure the alignment of human, financial and material resources with education needs.
- c) the implementation of corrective measures to address areas for improvement and ensure the alignment of human, physical and financial resources with education needs in a context of continuous quality improvement.

2.5 The effectiveness of mechanisms to ensure **the effectiveness of programs of study**.

These mechanisms should make possible:

- a) a critical assessment of the effectiveness of programs of study, by examining whether:
 - student recruitment, selection and integration measures are effective in admitting college candidates capable of succeeding in the programs;
 - student evaluation tools and methods used in the programs of study are effective in the evaluation of students' achievement of objectives according to the established standards;
 - course success rates are satisfactory and comparable to other programs of study and other institutions;
 - an satisfactory proportion of students complete the programs within a reasonable time frame, depending on their status and characteristics;
 - graduates meet established standards for the acquisition of skills required by the programs of study.
- b) the identification of strengths and areas for improvement to ensure the effectiveness of programs of study.
- c) the implementation of corrective measures to address areas for improvement and ensure the effectiveness of programs of study in a context of continuous quality improvement.

2.6 The effectiveness of mechanisms to ensure **the quality of program management**.

These mechanisms should make possible:

- a) a critical assessment of the quality of program management, by examining whether:
 - the organizational structure, methods of management, and means of communication are well-articulated and promote the proper functioning of the programs of study and a program-based approach;
 - clearly-defined procedures, using valid qualitative and quantitative data, facilitate regular assessment of the strengths and deficiencies of the programs and of each of the learning activities;
 - program descriptions are duly distributed and explained to both faculty and students;
 - the implementation of the institutional policy on the evaluation of student achievement in the programs is effective.

- b) the identification of strengths and areas for improvement to ensure the quality of program management.
- c) the implementation of corrective measures to address areas for improvement and ensure the quality of program management in a context of continuous quality improvement.

3. The review and update of mechanisms to ensure effectiveness.

Component 2

Quality assurance mechanisms for the evaluation of student achievement

CRITERIA:

1. The implementation of mechanisms.

2. The effectiveness of mechanisms.

Sub-criteria:

2.1 The effectiveness of mechanisms to ensure a fair evaluation of student achievement.

These mechanisms should make possible:

- a) a critical assessment of a fair evaluation of student achievement, by examining whether:
 - students are duly informed of rules regarding the evaluation of learning;
 - the evaluation is impartial;
 - students have the right to appeal.
- b) the identification of strengths and areas for improvement to ensure a fair evaluation of student achievement.
- c) the implementation of corrective measures to address areas for improvement and ensure a fair evaluation of student achievement in a context of continuous quality improvement.

2.2 The effectiveness of mechanisms to ensure an equitable evaluation of student achievement.

These mechanisms should make possible:

- a) a critical assessment of an equitable evaluation of student achievement, by examining whether:
 - the evaluation allows students to individually demonstrate they have met the program objectives as per set standards, and the comprehensive assessment allows them to demonstrate that they have mastered the program's competencies;
 - the evaluation is based on the course content taught;
 - the evaluation is equally weighted in the case of courses taught by a team of teachers.
- b) the identification of strengths and areas for improvement to ensure an equitable evaluation of student achievement.
- c) the implementation of corrective measures to address areas for improvement and ensure an equitable evaluation of student achievement in a context of continuous quality improvement.

3. The review and update of mechanisms to ensure effectiveness.

Component 3

Quality assurance mechanisms for strategic planning within a context of results-based management

CRITERIA:

1. The implementation of mechanisms.

2. The effectiveness of mechanisms.

Sub-criteria:

2.1 The effectiveness of mechanisms to ensure **the implementation** of strategic planning.

These mechanisms should make possible:

- a) a critical assessment of the implementation of strategic planning, by examining whether:
 - the objectives of the strategic plan are taken into account in planned actions;
 - the means used are aligned with the strategic plan's objectives;
 - assigned responsibilities are carried out;
 - the calendar for the execution of the strategic plan is respected.
- b) the identification of strengths and areas for improvement to ensure the implementation of strategic planning.
- c) the implementation of corrective measures to address areas for improvement and ensure the implementation of strategic planning in a context of continuous quality improvement.

2.2 The effectiveness of mechanisms to ensure **the follow-up of strategic planning results**.

These mechanisms should make possible:

- a) a critical assessment of the follow-up of strategic planning results, by examining whether:
 - the indicators demonstrate progress toward achieving the expected results;
 - the expected results are achieved;
 - the strategic plan is reviewed annually, and updated if necessary.
- b) the identification of strengths and areas for improvement to ensure the follow-up of strategic planning results.
- c) the implementation of corrective measures to address areas for improvement and ensure the follow-up of strategic planning results in a context of continuous quality improvement.

3. The review and update of mechanisms to ensure effectiveness.

Component 4

Quality assurance mechanisms for success planning within a context of results-based management

CRITERIA:

1. The implementation of mechanisms.

2. The effectiveness of mechanisms.

Sub-criteria:

2.1 The effectiveness of mechanisms to ensure **the implementation of success planning.**

These mechanisms should make possible:

- a) a critical assessment of the implementation of success planning, by examining whether:
 - the objectives of the success plan are taken into account in planned actions;
 - the means used are aligned with the success plan's objectives;
 - assigned responsibilities are carried out;
 - the calendar for the execution of the success plan is respected.
- b) the identification of strengths and areas for improvement to ensure the implementation of success planning.
- c) the implementation of corrective measures to address areas for improvement and ensure the implementation of success planning in a context of continuous quality improvement.

2.2 The effectiveness of mechanisms to ensure **the follow-up of success planning results.**

These mechanisms should make possible:

- a) a critical assessment of the follow-up of success planning results, by examining whether:
 - the indicators demonstrate progress toward achieving the expected results;
 - the expected results are achieved;
 - the success plan is reviewed annually, and updated if necessary.
- b) the identification of strengths and areas for improvement to ensure the follow-up of success planning results.
- c) the implementation of corrective measures to address areas for improvement to ensure the follow-up of success planning results in a context of continuous quality improvement.

3. The review and update of mechanisms to ensure effectiveness.

4. The Commission's Rulings on the Effectiveness of the Quality Assurance System

At the end of an evaluation, the Commission renders a ruling on each of the components assessed, sets forth messages for improvement, where applicable, and provides a ruling on the overall effectiveness of the quality assurance system.

4.1 The Commission's Rulings

For each component, the Commission renders a ruling on the effectiveness of the quality assurance mechanisms implemented by the college. For each criterion and sub-criterion assessed, it concludes whether the quality assurance mechanisms and their management *ensure, generally ensure, partly ensure or do not ensure* the continuous improvement of quality for the component in question (programs of study / evaluation of student learning / strategic planning / success planning).

4.2 The Commission's Messages for Improvement

In its evaluation report, the Commission highlights the strengths in institutional practices observed during the audit. Where applicable, it also makes comments and delivers messages for improvement in regard to any element requiring corrective measures. These can take the form of *invitations, suggestions, or recommendations*. The latter necessitate a follow-up by the college, whereby it must demonstrate, by a deadline agreed upon with the Commission, that improvements have been made to address these deficiencies.

4.3 The Commission's General Assessment of the Effectiveness of the Quality Assurance System

At the end of the evaluation exercise, the Commission delivers an assessment of the overall effectiveness of the college's quality assurance system, basing its ruling on the effectiveness of each of the system's components, the effectiveness of the information system, and the integration of quality assurance in institutional management practices. Thus the Commission concludes whether the quality assurance system and its management *ensure, generally ensure, partly ensure or do not ensure* continuous quality improvement. More specifically, this assessment considers the following parameters:

- To what extent does the quality assurance system and its management ensure continuous quality improvement for each component of this system?

Commission renders a ruling on the ability of the quality assurance system and its management to ensure quality.

- To what extent does the implementation of quality assurance mechanisms demonstrate integrated and dynamic quality management? Does the institutional information system enable the collection of sufficient and valid data to support decision making with an eye to continuous quality improvement?
- How is the quality assurance system incorporated in the governance and management practices of the institution?





Stages of the Audit Cycle



The audit cycle is comprised of several stages: a self-evaluation, an on-site visit, an evaluation report by the Commission, and an evaluation follow-up.

The audit cycle is comprised of several stages: a self-evaluation carried out by the college, an on-site visit, an evaluation report by the Commission, and an evaluation follow-up by the college. The Commission also produces an annual progress report of all on-site visits as well as a summary report at the end of the audit cycle.

1. Scheduling the audit

The Commission establishes a general calendar for all on-site visits at the beginning of an audit cycle and informs each college of the semester selected for its visit. The Commission then communicates with each college to agree upon the exact date for the visit and provides a time frame for the college's audit process.

2. College self-evaluation

The college, as part of its internal evaluation process, is required to carry out a critical assessment of the effectiveness of its quality assurance system, and demonstrate this in a self-evaluation report. This report must be concise, be supported by relevant evidence in appendices, and include an action plan. Full details on the content of a self-evaluation report are found in Appendix D.

3. Submission of the self-evaluation report

The college must submit the self-evaluation report to the Commission electronically.

4. Report analysis and preparation for the visit

The college's self-evaluation report is analyzed by the members of the visiting committee¹⁸ struck by the Commission for this purpose, using tools developed by the latter. The results of the analysis are then forwarded to the Commission's research professional in preparation for the on-site visit.

18. The role of this committee and the contribution of its experts are detailed in Appendix E.

5. On-site visit

The main purpose of the on-site visit is to contextualize and supplement the information contained in the self-evaluation report and provide a better understanding of the college's conclusions. In addition to supplementing the self-evaluation report, the visit enables consideration (where applicable) of any subsequent corrective measures implemented by the college between the adoption of the report and the time of the visit.

Typically, the visiting committee meets with members of college governance and management bodies, staff members involved in the implementation and follow-up of quality assurance mechanisms, the assessment of the effectiveness of these mechanisms, and the self-evaluation process.

At the conclusion of the on-site visit, committee members meet to summarize and record their observations. They also measure the results of the evaluation for each criterion against its objectives, identify key areas of strength and deficiency, render their rulings and, in certain cases, formulate messages for improvement that the Commission could present to the college. The committee's observations are evidence-based and supported by the observations found in the college's self-evaluation report, views expressed by college stakeholders during the visit, and any other documents examined while on site.

The on-site visit concludes with a meeting with the college administration, where the commissioner who chaired the committee, accompanied by the research professional, presents the committee's key conclusions.

6. Preliminary version of the evaluation report

The research professional drafts a preliminary version of the evaluation report, based on the conclusions and messages for improvement of the visiting committee, and validates the content of the report with the commissioner responsible and the experts of the visiting committee. The preliminary report is then submitted to a revision panel to ensure clarity and consistency of the text, and then analysed and approved by the Commission.

7. Feedback on the preliminary report

The Commission forwards the preliminary version of the evaluation report to the college, and invites the latter to comment on its rulings and messages for improvement, and generally provide feedback on whether the report accurately reflects the situation of the college. The college is also invited to inform the Commission of any corrective measures implemented since the visit.

8. Adopting the final report

The Commission then adopts the final version of the evaluation report. In some cases, the report may include the college's follow-up demonstrating any corrective measures adopted and carried out since the visit.

The final report is then sent to the college, forwarded to the Minister, and made public on the Commission's website.

9. Follow-up to the evaluation

The college must submit a follow-up report to the Commission by a deadline agreed upon between the Commission and the college, demonstrating corrective measures implemented to address the recommendations delivered. The Commission evaluates the measures implemented and produces a follow-up report, which is made public in the same manner as the final report.

10. Annual progress report

The Commission produces an annual report assessing the audit visits. This exercise is designed to provide a critical analysis of processes and tools used by the Commission, as well as an overview of the evaluation outcomes of colleges audited. This report may incorporate views expressed by college stakeholders during visits and is made public.

11. Summary report on the audit cycle

At the end of the complete audit cycle, the Commission produces a comprehensive summary report to present the outcomes of all evaluations for Québec colleges. This report is to be used as a tool to adjust processes, revise expectations for the upcoming cycle, and, if necessary, adapt the present document. This report is also made public.



Conclusion

With the implementation of an operation for the evaluation of the effectiveness of the quality assurance systems in Québec colleges, the Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial is adopting an approach that marks a major change in its evaluation practices as well as those of Québec's colleges. It is confident, however, that this paradigm shift will be successful, as colleges have acquired considerable expertise over the years through evaluations led by the Commission. It therefore intends to devote all necessary effort to support colleges in developing and evaluating the effectiveness of their quality assurance systems.

Systemic and cyclical, this new approach takes the form of an audit. Within the framework of the audit process, colleges are required to demonstrate the effectiveness of mechanisms that ensure quality in programs of study and in the evaluation of student learning. Mechanisms related to strategic planning and success planning for those colleges concerned with these practices will also be part of this process.

The key to the quality and success of the Commission's approach lies primarily in the dynamic nature of the institutions themselves and their ability to critically assess their practices and follow up with the implementation of appropriate measures to ensure



In college education, internal and external quality assurance are essential to ensuring the best possible educational experience for students.

continuous quality improvement. For colleges, this approach also means assuming a greater responsibility in evaluation. Indeed, this change in how the Commission fulfils its mission is made possible by the fact that colleges have the required expertise and autonomy to establish their own quality assurance systems in line with the Commission's vision of institutional quality management.

In the Québec college system, internal and external quality assurance processes are essential to ensuring quality in every aspect of a college's mandate and the best possible educational experience for students.

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European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)

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International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE)

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Appendix A

Evaluation Activities Carried Out by the Commission Since 1993

On Compliance and Potential Effectiveness:

- Institutional Policy on the Evaluation of Student Achievement (IPESA) (1993–ongoing);
- Institutional Policy on Program Evaluation (IPPE) (1993–ongoing);
- Initial success plans (2000–2004);
- Strategic plans (2004–ongoing);
- Success plans (2004–ongoing);
- Integrated approach to processing college follow-ups (*Approche intégrée du traitement des suivis des collèges*) (2012–current)

On Programs of Study, Institutional Evaluations and Effectiveness of Policies and Plans:

- Programs of Study: *Computer Science* (1994–1996), *Early Childhood Education* (1994–1996), *Social Sciences* (1994–1997), *Business Administration Technology and Cooperation Programs* (1995–1999), programs of study leading to an Attestation of College Studies (AEC) (1996–1999 and 2001–2003), post-college reform programs (2005–2008);
- General Education component of programs of study (1996–2000);
- Implementation of the Institutional Policy on Program Evaluation (IPPE) (1997–2002);
- Institutional Evaluation (2000–2004);
- Implementation of the Institutional Policy on the Evaluation of Student Achievement (IPESA) (2005–2012);
- Effectiveness of strategic plans (2007–current);
- Effectiveness of success plans (2007–current);
- Implementation of the Institutional Policy on Program Evaluation (IPPE) and evaluation of a selected program in licensed private institutions (2010–current).

Evaluation Activities Since 1993 by Institution Status

CEGEPS	Subsidized Private Colleges	Licensed Private Institutions	Institutions Under the Authority of another Ministry or a University
<p>No On-site Visit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IPESA (1993–ONGOING) • IPPE (1993–ONGOING) • INITIAL SUCCESS PLANS (2000–2004) • STRATEGIC PLANS, INCLUDING SUCCESS PLANS (2004–ONGOING) 	<p>No On-site Visit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IPESA (1993–ONGOING) • IPPE (1993–ONGOING) • INITIAL SUCCESS PLANS (2000–2004) • SUCCESS PLANS (2004–ONGOING) 	<p>No On-site Visit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IPESA (1993–ONGOING) • IPPE (1993–ONGOING) 	<p>No On-site Visit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IPESA (1993–ONGOING) • IPPE (1993–ONGOING)
<p>On-site Visit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of the IPPE (1997–2002) • Implementation of the IPESA (2005–2012) • Evaluation of Programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>Computer Science</i> DEC / AEC (1994–1996) – <i>Early Childhood Education</i> DEC / AEC (1994–1996) – <i>Social Sciences</i> (1994–1997) – <i>Business Administration Technology & Cooperation</i> (1995–1999) – Post-college reform programs (2005–2008) • General Education component (1996–2000) • Institutional Evaluation (2000–2004) • Effectiveness of strategic plans (2007–current) 	<p>On-site Visit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of the IPPE (1997–2002) • Implementation of the IPESA (2005–2012) • Evaluation of Programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>Early Childhood Education</i> DEC / AEC (1994–1996) (in 3 colleges) – <i>Social Sciences</i> (1994–1997) (in 13 colleges) – <i>Business Administration Technology & Cooperation</i> (1995–1999) (in 4 colleges) – Post-college reform programs (2005–2008) • General Education component (1996–2000) • Institutional Evaluation (2000–2004) • Effectiveness of success plans (2007–current) 	<p>On-site Visit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of the IPPE and evaluation of a selected program (2010–current) • Implementation of the IPESA (2005–2012) • Evaluations of Programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Computer Science CEC / AEC (1994–1996) (in 7 colleges) – AEC1 (1996–1999) – AEC2 (2001–2003) <p>* These institutions were excluded from institutional evaluation as the focus of the Commission’s evaluation activities was limited to public and private colleges offering programs leading to a DEC.</p>	<p>On-site Visit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of the IPPE (1997–2002) • Implementation of the IPESA (2005–2012) • General Education component (1996–2000) • Institutional Evaluation (2000–2004) <p>* No evaluations of programs, except for the General Education component, as the Commission’s evaluation activities were focused on specific programs not offered by these colleges.</p>

Appendix B

Legislative and Administrative Documents

[Excerpts]

An Act respecting the Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial, RSQ, c C-32.2

CHAPTER II MISSION AND POWERS

13. The mission of the Commission shall pertain to the college instruction provided by general and vocational colleges and by any other public or private educational institution to which the College Education Regulations apply.

Its mission shall consist in evaluating, for each educational institution:

- (1) the institution's policy on the evaluation of learning achievement and the procedures for the certification of studies, and their implementation;
- (2) the institution's policy on the evaluation of programs of studies, and their implementation;
- (3) the implementation of the programs of studies established by the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports, taking into account the objectives and standards assigned to them;
- (4) the objectives, standards and implementation of the programs of studies established by the institution, taking into account the needs these programs are designed to meet.

[Educational mission and strategic plan]

In addition, for general and vocational colleges and private educational institutions accredited for purposes of subsidies under the Act respecting private education (chapter E-9.1), the Commission shall evaluate the activities related to their educational mission as regards administrative and academic planning and management as well as instruction and support services. Such evaluation includes an evaluation of the strategic plan established pursuant to section 16.1 of the General and Vocational Colleges Act (chapter C-29).

1993, c. 26, s. 13; 1993, c. 51, s. 72; 1994, c. 16, s. 50; 2002, c. 50, s. 8; 2005, c. 28, s. 195.

[Evaluation of programs of study]

14. The Commission may also evaluate the implementation, by all or some of the educational institutions, of any program of college studies it designates.

1993, c. 26, s. 14.

15. The Commission may, in exercising its powers and duties,

(1) develop evaluation criteria and instruments and ensure their dissemination;

(2) form advisory committees and determine their powers and duties as well as their operating rules;

(3) retain the services of experts.

1993, c. 26, s. 15.

[Evaluation of educational institutions]

16. The Commission may carry out an evaluation each time it considers it expedient. It shall give prior notice thereof to the educational institution concerned and give it an opportunity to present its views.

[Special attention]

The Minister may ask the Commission to pay special attention, in carrying out its evaluation, to one or more aspects of the activities related to the educational mission of one or more educational institutions.

[Methods]

The Commission shall conduct its evaluation according to the method it determines.

1993, c. 26, s. 16; 2002, c. 50, s. 9.

[Evaluation Report]

17. The Commission shall prepare an evaluation report containing its findings and conclusions.

[Recommendations to educational institutions]

In its report, the Commission may recommend to the educational institution measures for improving the quality of its evaluation policies, its programs or the means by which its programs are implemented. Such measures may also concern the planning, organization and operation of the institution and the management of the activities related to the educational mission of the institution.

[Recommendations to the Minister]

The Commission may also make recommendations to the Minister on any matter relating to programs of studies and evaluation policies, including any governmental or ministerial policy having an impact on the management by the institution of programs of studies and evaluation. It may, in particular, recommend to the Minister that an educational institution be authorized to award the Diploma of College Studies.

1993, c. 26, s. 17; 2002, c. 50, s. 10.

[Submitting the evaluation report]

18. The Commission shall send a copy of its evaluation report to every educational institution concerned and to the Minister.

[Releasing the evaluation report]

The report shall be made public by the Commission in the manner it considers appropriate.

1993, c. 26, s. 18.

19. The Commission may generally or specially authorize any person to collect from any educational institution concerned by an evaluation the information necessary for the carrying out of its mission.

[Powers]

To that end, the person authorized may

- (1) have access, at any reasonable time, to the facilities of the institution;
- (2) examine and make copies of any relevant register or document;
- (3) require any relevant information or document.

1993, c. 26, s. 19.

Public Administration Act, RSQ, c A-6.01

CHAPTER I

OBJECT AND APPLICATION

1. This Act affirms the priority given by the Administration, in developing and implementing the rules of public administration, to the quality of the services provided to the public; thus, it establishes a results-based management framework centred on transparency.

This Act reaffirms the role played by parliamentarians with respect to government action and their contribution to the improvement of the services provided to the public by enhancing the accountability of the Administration to the National Assembly.

2000, c. 8, s. 1.

[...]

CHAPTER VIII

AMENDING PROVISIONS

GENERAL AND VOCATIONAL COLLEGES ACT

111. (Amendment integrated into c. C-29, s. 18.1).

2000, c. 8, s. 111.

General and Vocational Colleges Act, RSQ, c C-29

CHAPTER I

COLLEGES

16.1. The board of each college shall establish a strategic plan covering a period of several years, having regard to the situation prevailing at the college and the directions of the strategic plan established by the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport. The plan shall state the objectives and the measures that are to be implemented to fulfil the mission of the college. The strategic plan shall include a success plan, which is a special plan to improve student success.

[Reviews and updates]

The strategic plan shall be reviewed annually and updated if necessary.

[Copies]

The board of each college shall send a copy of its strategic plan and of any updated plan to the Minister and to the Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial, and shall make the plans public.

2002, c. 50, s. 1; 2005, c. 28, s. 195.

16.2. A document explaining the success plan shall be distributed to the students and the staff of the college. The board of the college shall see to it that the wording of the document is clear and accessible.

2002, c. 50, s. 2.

[...]

17.0.2. The academic council must give its opinion to the board on any question submitted to it by the board in matters within its jurisdiction.

[Advance Submissions to Academic Council]

The following must be submitted to the council before being discussed by the board:

- (a) proposals for institutional policy on the evaluation of learning achievement and procedures for the certification of studies;
- (b) proposals for institutional policy on the evaluation of programs of studies;
- (c) proposals for programs of studies envisaged by the college;
- (d) the selection of learning activities that are within the jurisdiction of the college;
- (e) any draft by-law or policy relating to the rules, procedures and criteria governing the admission and registration of students;
- (f) the draft strategic plan of the college as regards matters within the jurisdiction of the council.

1993, c. 25, s. 8; 2002, c. 50, s. 3.

[...]

18. The Government shall establish, by regulation, the College Education Regulations.

[Organizational Framework]

The College Education Regulations shall pertain to the general organizational framework of college education, in particular as regards the admission and registration of students, programs of studies, the evaluation of learning achievement and the certification of studies, and may determine the respective powers and duties of the Minister and of colleges in such matters.

[Powers]

The College Education Regulations may, in particular:

- (a) confer on the Minister the responsibility of establishing, within the scope of the College Education Regulations, the programs of studies leading to the Diploma of College Studies and the number of credits allotted to each program; the College Education Regulations may, however, confer on colleges the responsibility of determining certain elements of these programs;
- (b) authorize the Minister, with or without conditions, to recognize programs of studies other than those he establishes within the scope of the College Education Regulations as programs leading to the Diploma of College Studies;

- (c) provide that programs of technical studies leading to an Attestation of College Studies awarded by a college may be established by the college and, for that purpose, determine the cases in which the Minister's authorization is not required for the implementation of such institutional programs and the cases in which authorization may be subject to conditions;
- (d) confer on colleges the responsibility of evaluating learning achievement, subject to what is otherwise provided in the College Education Regulations, particularly in relation to the power of the Minister to impose uniform examinations;
- (e) provide that the Minister may delegate to a college, on the conditions he determines and on the recommendation of the Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial, all or part of his responsibility under the College Education Regulations in the matter of certification of studies;
- (f) provide that the final date after which a student may not abandon a course without a failing mark being entered in his record shall be determined by the Minister;
- (g) authorize colleges, with or without conditions, to recognize equivalences or grant a student course exemptions or substitutions;
- (h) provide that the Minister may determine remedial activities which may be rendered compulsory by a college.

Every draft regulation under this section shall be submitted to the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation for examination.

The Minister may establish conditions for the application of the College Education Regulations. Such conditions may include measures permitting the gradual application of the College Education Regulations.

1966-67, c. 71, s. 18; 1979, c. 24, s. 11; 1984, c. 47, s. 29; 1985, c. 30, s. 26; 1993, c. 25, s. 11.

[...]

18.0.2. The Minister may make regulations concerning:

- (a) the by-laws or policies that a college must adopt, particularly with regard to the management of staff who are members of an accredited association within the meaning of the Labour Code (chapter C-27) and the procedure for awarding an external audit mandate, in addition to those that the college may be required to adopt under the College Education Regulations;
- (b) the registers that a college must keep;
- (c) the reports and statistics that a college must furnish to the Minister;
- (d) (*paragraph repealed*).

1993, c. 25, s. 11; 1997, c. 87, s. 13.

18.1. The Minister may, with the authorization of the Conseil du trésor, determine, by regulation, conditions of employment for, the classification and maximum number per class of the positions held by, and the remuneration, recourses and rights of appeal of the members of the staff who are not members of a certified association within the meaning of the Labour Code (chapter C-27).

The regulations may require a college to adopt, within such time as the Minister may prescribe, a management policy for the staff described in the first paragraph in order to regulate conditions of employment which are not determined by the Minister. The regulations shall specify what matters the policy must cover and they may prescribe the modalities of consultation on the policy and of its adoption and implementation.

Regulations made under this section come into force on the date of their publication in the Gazette officielle du Québec or on any later date fixed therein.

The Conseil du trésor may limit the authorization requirement under the first paragraph to the matters it considers to be of governmental import. It may also attach conditions to its authorization.

1985, c. 30, s. 27; 1986, c. 77, s. 1; 1993, c. 25, s. 12; 2000, c. 8, s. 111.

19. Subject to this Act, the College Education Regulations and the regulations enacted pursuant to section 18.0.1, 18.0.2 or 18.1, a college may make by-laws respecting:

- (a) its internal management;
- (b) the appointment, functions and powers of its staff;
- (c) the management of its property;
- (d) the composition of the executive committee and of the academic council, the term of office of the members thereof and the extent of their powers;
- (e) the special conditions for the admission, or continued enrollment in a program, of students or certain categories of students, taking into account the restrictions or conditions affecting the exercise of this power set out in the College Education Regulations, and any special conditions established by the Minister under the College Education Regulations for admission to a program;
- (f) the composition, mode of appointment and term of office of the members of the committee created under section 17.1 or 17.2, and the powers and duties of this committee;
- (g) the pursuit of its objects.

1966-67, c. 71, s. 19; 1979, c. 24, s. 12; 1985, c. 30, s. 28; 1993, c. 25, s. 13; 1997, c. 87, s. 14.

[...]

27.1. Not later than 1 December each year, a college must submit a report of its activities for the preceding fiscal period to the Minister. The report must set forth the results obtained in relation to the objectives fixed in the strategic plan.

1979, c. 24, s. 17; 1993, c. 25, s. 21; 1993, c. 26, s. 26; 2002, c. 50, s. 4.

An Act respecting Private education, RSQ, c E-9.1

CHAPTER III RULES GOVERNING THE ACTIVITIES OF INSTITUTIONS DIVISION III COLLEGE LEVEL INSTRUCTION

44. The College Education Regulations shall apply to general or vocational instructional services at the college level dispensed by private educational institutions.

The conditions of application of the College Education Regulations are the same as those established by the Minister under section 18 of the General and Vocational Colleges Act (chapter C-29).

1992, c. 68, s. 44; 1993, c. 25, s. 27.

45. An educational institution shall dispense, for each program of pre-university or technical studies mentioned in its permit, at least those courses which, when combined, render the student eligible for admission to university-level studies or to a diploma or attestation of college studies awarded in accordance with the College Education Regulations.

1992, c. 68, s. 45; 1993, c. 25, s. 28

CHAPTER IV EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CONTRACT

66. The educational service contract to which this chapter applies is a contract by which a private educational institution undertakes in respect of a natural person, the client, to provide educational services belonging to a category mentioned in any of paragraphs 1 to 8 of section 1, or to provide accessory services, in return for a price which the client undertakes to pay to the operator.

The price shall include the admission or enrollment fees but not the charge referred to in section 67.

1992, c. 68, s. 66.

Régime budgétaire et financier des établissements privés d'ordre collégial (Excerpts from Schedule 039)

1. On December 17, 2002, the National Assembly assented to the Act to amend the General and Vocational Colleges Act and the Act respecting the Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial. As of July 1, 2004, pursuant to section 12 of this Act and section 16.1 of the General and Vocational Colleges Act, the board of every CEGEP shall establish a strategic plan that also includes a success plan. [*translation*]

2. As the General and Vocational Colleges Act is not applicable to subsidized private institutions, the latter are therefore not required to produce a strategic plan or a success plan. However, as in the past, subsidized private institutions that do submit their success plan to the Ministère and to the Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial shall continue to receive funding specifically allocated for implementation the success plan. [*translation*]

College Education Regulations, RRQ, C-29, r4

DIVISION V ADMINISTRATION OF PROGRAMS

17. A college shall adopt and make public, in whatever form it considers appropriate, a description of the objectives, standards and learning activities for each program it offers.

The program description shall be distributed to students upon their admission to the program.

OC. 1006-93, s. 17.

[...]

20. A college is responsible for having each teacher draw up, in compliance with the program, an outline for each course.

The course outline shall contain the course objectives and content, the methodology, a bibliography, class participation requirements and evaluation procedures.

The outline shall be distributed to students registered in the course at the beginning of each term.

OC. 1006-93, s. 20

[...]

24. A college shall, after consulting the academic council, adopt an institutional policy on program evaluation and shall ensure its implementation.

OC. 1006-93, s. 24.

DIVISION VI EVALUATION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

25. A college shall, after consulting the academic council, adopt an institutional policy on the evaluation of student achievement and shall ensure its implementation. The institutional policy on the evaluation of achievement shall set forth, in particular, the terms and conditions for applying sections 21 to 23, and shall provide for a process of certification and the imposition of a comprehensive examination for each program leading to a Diploma of College Studies that is offered by the college to assess the students' achievement of the set of objectives and standards determined for that program.

OC. 1006-93, s. 25.

DIVISION VII CERTIFICATION OF STUDIES

32. The Minister shall award a Diploma of College Studies to a student who, according to the recommendation of the college attended by the student:

(1) has attained the set of objectives and standards of the program of studies to which the student is admitted, has passed the comprehensive examination for that program, and has passed the uniform examinations, if any, imposed by the Minister; or

(2) has attained the set of objectives and standards of the subject areas in the components of general education set out in sections 7 to 9, has obtained at least 28 credits in the specific program components referred to in sections 10 and 11, and has passed the uniform examinations, if any, imposed by the Minister.

Despite the foregoing, in the case referred to in subparagraph 2 of the first paragraph, a Diploma of College Studies may not be awarded to a student who already holds a Diploma of College Studies or is registered in a program of studies leading to the Diploma of College Studies.



The diploma must state the name of the student, the name of the college and, if the diploma is awarded pursuant to subparagraph 1 of the first paragraph, the title of the program.

OC. 1006-93, s. 32; OC. 724-2008, s. 18.

32.1. The Minister shall award a Specialization Diploma in Technical Studies to a student who, according to the recommendation of the college attended by the student, has attained the set of objectives and standards of the program of studies to which the student is admitted.

The diploma must state the name of the student, the name of the college and the title of the program of studies.

OC. 724-2008, s. 19.

32.2. The Minister may delegate to a college, on the conditions determined by the Minister and on the recommendation of the Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial, all or part of the Minister's responsibilities under sections 32 and 32.1 regarding the certification of studies.

OC. 724-2008, s. 19.

33. A college shall award, on the conditions it determines, an Attestation of College Studies to a student who has attained the objectives of an institutional program to which the student is admitted.

The attestation shall state the name of the student, the name of the college, the number of credits received and the title of the program.

OC. 1006-93, s. 33

Appendix C

Examples of Quality Assurance Mechanisms

The purpose of this appendix is to provide examples of quality assurance mechanisms that colleges can use to support the demonstration in their self-evaluation reports. The examples that follow are drawn from various practices observed throughout the college network. This is by no means a comprehensive list, nor does the Commission expect every college to adopt all of them.

The examples are grouped under the four components of the quality assurance system and are specifically related to the sub-criteria of the component that address the effectiveness of the mechanism. A given mechanism can be applied to more than one component.

Component 1: Quality Assurance Mechanisms for Programs of Study

Mechanisms to ensure relevance: college liaison mechanisms with the labour market and universities; follow-up surveys of graduates; student questionnaires; follow-up indicators (e.g. labour market, university admission and graduation rates, placement rates of graduates in employment related to their training, etc.); structures for the development, adoption and revision of local plans for programs of study; etc.

Mechanisms to ensure coherence: structures for the development, adaptation and revision of competency flowcharts and course matrices; policies for course frameworks; structures for the development, adoption and revision of local plans for programs of study; procedures for course outline approval; information systems on programs of study; program monitoring tools (e.g. dashboards, annual reports on the implementation of programs); etc.

Mechanisms to ensure value in teaching methods and student supervision: procedures for course outline approval; inventory of teaching methods; procedures for the evaluation of teaching; faculty performance evaluation; screening, support and follow-up measures for at-risk students; evaluation of student supervision measures; etc.

Mechanisms to ensure the alignment of human, financial and material resources with education needs: measures for evaluating and upgrading skills for faculty and other categories of staff; professional development plans for faculty and other categories of staff; policies recognizing the value of quality instruction; procurement plans for new or upgraded specialized equipment; blueprints for development (e.g. IT, physical infrastructure); etc.

Mechanisms to ensure the effectiveness of programs of study: admission policies; procedures for course outline, final course examination and comprehensive assessment approvals; follow-up indicators monitoring success rates; procedures for monitoring causes of dropping out; etc.

Mechanisms to ensure the quality of program management: structures for the development, adoption and revision of programs of study; procedures for establishing, approving and revising operating regulations for program committees and communication protocols both between faculty members and between faculty and management; structures for developing and adopting program and departmental work plans; procedures for approving and revising departmental policies and/or guidelines in evaluating student achievement; information system on programs; mechanisms for the monitoring and revision of programs; etc.

Component 2: Quality Assurance Mechanisms for the Evaluation of Student Achievement

Mechanisms to ensure a fair evaluation of student achievement: procedures for establishing, implementing and reviewing departmental rules and policies on evaluating student achievement; mechanisms for the dissemination of guidelines (e.g. course outlines, academic calendars, Intranet, etc.); policies on academic appeals and complaints; policies on recognition of prior learning; etc.

Mechanisms to ensure an equitable evaluation of student achievement: procedures for course outline, final course examination and comprehensive assessment approvals; procedures for establishing, implementing and reviewing departmental rules and policies on evaluating student achievement; policies and tools for on the recognition of prior learning, course equivalency or substitutions; procedures for reviewing student files (e.g. substitution, equivalencies); collaborative tools for faculty; etc.

Component 3: Quality Assurance Mechanisms for Strategic Planning within a Context of Results-based Management

Mechanisms to ensure the implementation of strategic planning: procedures for developing, implementing and reviewing: annual institutional priorities; plans for implementing the strategic plan; institutional, management, departmental and program work plans (e.g. work plan templates); management dashboards, etc.

Mechanisms to ensure the follow-up of strategic planning results: follow-up mechanisms that track indicators and progress measured against expected results (e.g. dashboards); annual review and, where applicable, updates; etc.

Component 4: Quality Assurance Mechanisms for Success Planning within a Context of Results-based Management

Mechanisms to ensure the implementation of success planning: procedures for developing, implementing and reviewing: annual institutional priorities; plans for implementing the success plan; institutional, management, departmental and program work plans (e.g. work plan templates); management dashboards, etc.

Mechanisms to ensure the follow-up of success planning results: follow-up mechanisms that track indicators and progress measured against expected results (e.g. dashboards, etc.); annual review and, where applicable, updates; etc.



Appendix D

Content of the Self-Evaluation Report

The Commission recommends colleges prepare their self-evaluation report according to the structure presented below. Required information and supporting documents are listed at the end of each sub-section.

Recommended structure for a self-evaluation report

1. Introduction
2. Presentation of key institutional quality assurance mechanisms
3. Evaluation of the effectiveness of quality assurance mechanisms
4. Review and update of quality assurance mechanisms
5. Conclusions on the effectiveness of the quality assurance system
6. Action plan
7. Appendices

1. Introduction

In drafting a self-evaluation report, the college must first present a concise and factual overview of its operations and state of affairs during the period under observation, which should start no later than the beginning of the 2012–2013 academic year and end with the production of the report. The introduction should include:

- a general description of the college (mission, campuses, affiliated college centre(s) for technology transfer, affiliated research centre(s), other affiliated institution(s), etc.);
- the type of instruction offered (regular day, continuing education, distance or e-learning, etc.);
- the evolution of its main programs and areas of study, in regular day and/or continuing education);
- the evolution of the student population, in Regular day and/or continuing education programs;
- the evolution of college personnel, by staff category (management, faculty, professionals, support staff);
- any other information deemed relevant by the college due to its specific characteristics.

Second, the introduction should also include the self-evaluation approach used for the audit, outlining the following:

- the main issues of the self-evaluation;
- the membership of the self-evaluation committee;
- the distribution of duties and responsibilities;
- data collection procedures and the role of the information system;
- data analysis procedures used to critically assess the effectiveness of mechanisms;
- the process leading to conclusions and the action plan;
- any consultations carried out.

Document to be included in an appendix: (Please include hyperlinks to facilitate access)

Self-evaluation plan.

2. Presentation of key institutional quality assurance mechanisms

The self-evaluation report should briefly describe the key institutional mechanisms used by the college in the components of its quality assurance system: mechanisms aimed at quality assurance for programs of study, for the evaluation of student achievement, for strategic planning and for success planning.¹⁹

First and foremost should be those mechanisms required by regulations related to the mandate of the Commission, followed by other institutional mechanisms such as policies, by-laws, guidelines adopted by the board of governors, etc.

Examples of key quality assurance mechanisms:²⁰

- **for programs of study:** Institutional Policy on Program Evaluation (IPPE), policies regarding program management, human resources management, performance evaluation, investment plans, etc.;
- **for the evaluation of student achievement:** Institutional Policy on the Evaluation of Student Achievement (IPESA), policy on the quality of language, policy on the recognition of prior learning, etc.;
- **for strategic planning:** the strategic plan, implementation of the strategic plan, institutional priorities, etc.;
- **for success planning:** the success plan, implementation of the success plan, institutional priorities, etc.

For each mechanism, the report must include:

- the date of last review of policies and the time frame for plans, etc.;
- the contribution of the mechanism to quality assurance;
- the key individuals responsible for its implementation.

Documents to be included in the appendix: (Please include hyperlinks)

Policies, plans and other institutional documents related to quality assurance mechanisms.

19. The college must consider the entire set of quality assurance mechanisms in programs of study and the evaluation of student learning in credit programs for both regular day and continuing education.

20. Note that in a quality assurance system, a given mechanism can contribute to the quality assurance of more than one component.

3. Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Quality Assurance Mechanisms

For each component of its quality assurance system, the college must carry out a critical assessment on the ability of its mechanisms to ensure continuous improvement in quality.

Component 1: Quality Assurance Mechanisms for Programs of Study

The college should briefly describe the quality assurance mechanisms used to ensure relevance of the programs of study; their coherence; the value of teaching methods and student supervision; the alignment of human, financial and material resources with education needs; their effectiveness; and the quality of program management. It can demonstrate its use of these mechanisms by citing program self-evaluation reports produced during the observation period.²¹ The college gauges the ability of these mechanisms to identify areas of strength or deficiency to ensure quality programs of study by referring to its self-evaluation follow-up plans. Lastly, within the context of continuous improvement, the college must assess any corrective actions undertaken, by referring to documents that demonstrate follow-up to program evaluations.

Component 2: Quality Assurance Mechanisms for the Evaluation of Student Achievement

The college should briefly describe the quality assurance mechanisms used to ensure a fair and equitable evaluation of student achievement. It can demonstrate its use of these mechanisms by referring, where applicable, to any self-evaluation reports on the implementation of the IPESA produced during the observation period. It should also refer to the results of program evaluations with regard to implementing the IPESA under the criterion of program management. The college then gauges the ability of these mechanisms to identify areas of strength or deficiency to ensure a fair and equitable evaluation of student achievement, by referring to its self-evaluation follow-up plans. Lastly, within the context of continuous improvement, the college should demonstrate the ability of its mechanisms to effect improvement by referring to the assessment of the follow-up plan to the implementation of the IPESA as well as assessments of follow-up plans to program evaluations.

Component 3: Quality Assurance Mechanisms for Strategic Planning within a Context of Results-based Management

The college should briefly describe the quality assurance mechanisms used to ensure the implementation of strategic planning and the follow-up of results. It can demonstrate its use of these mechanisms by referring to the assessment of the strategic plan produced during the observation period as well as any other relevant institutional documents. The college gauges the ability of these mechanisms to identify areas of

21. The Commission recommends that, in addition to these reports, the college submit any partial or periodic self-evaluation reports on individual quality assessment criteria.

strength or deficiency to ensure effectiveness in the implementation of strategic planning and follow-up of results by referring to the follow-up plan related to the assessment of the strategic plan. Lastly, within the context of continuous improvement to strategic planning, the college gauges the ability of the mechanisms to effect improvement, by referring to the assessment of its follow-up plan.

Component 4: Quality Assurance Mechanisms for Success Planning within a Context of Results-based Management

The college should briefly describe the quality assurance mechanisms used to ensure the implementation of success planning and the follow-up of results. It can demonstrate its use of these mechanisms by referring to the assessment of the success plan produced during the observation period as well as any other relevant institutional documents. The college gauges the ability of these mechanisms to identify areas of strength or deficiency to ensure effectiveness in the implementation of success planning and follow-up of results by referring to the follow-up plan related to the assessment of the success plan. Lastly, within the context of continuous improvement to success planning, the college gauges the ability of the mechanisms to effect improvement, by referring to the assessment of its follow-up plan.

Documents to be included in an appendix: (Please include hyperlinks)

- Calendar of program evaluations carried out during the observation period;
- Program self-evaluation reports produced during the observation period,²² follow-up plans of program evaluations, follow-up assessments as well as any other documents demonstrating improvement to quality assurance mechanisms;
- Self-evaluation reports on the implementation of the IPESA produced during the observation period, the action plan following the self-evaluation and the follow-up assessment of the action plan;
- Assessment of the strategic/success plan, the follow-up plan to this assessment, and the assessment of the follow-up plan;
- Documents demonstrating the effectiveness of the implementation and follow-up of the results of strategic and/or success planning, e.g.: institutional priorities, management and departmental work plans, annual assessments of work plans, annual reports on the strategic plan and annual assessments of the success plan, etc.²³

22. In cases where a large number of self-evaluation reports were produced during the observation period, a representative sample will suffice.

23. A representative sample of these documents will suffice.

4. Review and Update of Quality Assurance Mechanisms

The college should carry out a critical assessment of practices and procedures for the review and updating of its institutional quality assurance mechanisms. This should include a concise description of the reviews and any adjustments made during the observation period and an evaluation of their impact on continuous quality improvement.

Documents to be included in an appendix: (Please include hyperlinks)

- Report on reviews of the IPPE and the IPESA (where applicable);
- Report on reviews of the strategic plan and the success plan (where applicable);
- Revised policies and by-laws;
- Revised and updated plans (where applicable);
- Resolutions adopted by the board of governors on any reviewed and updated mechanisms.

5. Conclusions on the Effectiveness of the Quality Assurance System

The college must include in the self-evaluation report its conclusions on the overall effectiveness of its quality assurance system, based on the demonstrated effectiveness of each criterion and considering the following parameters:

- To what extent does the quality assurance system and its management ensure continuous quality improvement?
- Does the information system enable the collection of sufficient and valid data to support informed decision-making in ensuring continuous quality improvement?
- To what extent does the interaction between different quality assurance mechanisms promote an integrated and dynamic management of quality?
- How is the quality assurance system incorporated in the governance and management of the institution? To what extent is an institutional culture of quality integrated in management practices to collectively meet and demonstrate quality standards?

6. Action Plan

Following the self-evaluation exercise, the college may need to undertake corrective action to address deficiencies observed in the effectiveness of its quality assurance system. Its self-evaluation report must therefore include a structured action plan detailing a comprehensive set of corrective measures, key delivery dates for implementation, and the distribution of responsibilities between all concerned stakeholders.

7. Appendices

The college is required to include the resolution of its self-evaluation report's adoption by its board of governors and its organizational chart. The college is also required to include the documents specified in the boxes in this appendix and any other documents deemed relevant. For the online version of the report, the College should insert hyperlinks to the various sections of the report to enable the reader to consult appendices as required.



Appendix E

The Visiting Committee and the Role of Experts

For each evaluation requiring an on-site visit, the Commission strikes a visiting committee to analyse the self-evaluation report submitted by the college, visit the college, and propose rulings and messages for improvement. Each committee is comprised of three external experts and two members from the Commission – a Commissioner, acting as chair, and a research professional.

The experts are tasked with:

- Analyzing, prior to the visit, the self-evaluation report, with tools specifically developed to this end;
- Identifying items requiring further verification and/or clarification during the visit;
- Participating in the visit;
- Assisting, following the visit, in formulating an assessment of the college's self-evaluation results and, where applicable, the action plan for corrective measures adopted by the college;
- Validating the preliminary report prepared by the Commission staff.

Experts are selected both for their knowledge of the college network and their experience in evaluation and quality assurance, and receive training to prepare them for carrying out their duties and responsibilities. They are duly informed of the code of conduct regarding confidentiality, impartiality and respect, to which they must conform at all times.

Due to the cyclical nature of evaluation, the Commission recruits and trains potential members for visiting committees on an ongoing basis. To promote a complementarity of opinions on the committees, the Commission recruits experts with diverse backgrounds within the college network and elsewhere. Experts from the college network include: directors general, assistant directors general, academic deans, assistant academic deans, directors of continuing education, human resources directors, faculty members, college professionals and external members of college boards of governors. Experts may also be recruited from different socioeconomic groups or universities, ranging from administrators to graduate students in fields related to education.

Lastly, to ensure impartiality, the list of experts proposed for a visiting committee is submitted for approval to the administration of the college being evaluated.



**Commission
d'évaluation
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Québec 

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