

Multi-Year Agreement for Colleges for 2006-07 to 2008-09

As part of the 2005 Ontario Budget, the government introduced “Reaching Higher: The McGuinty Government Plan for Postsecondary Education”, which will provide a cumulative investment of \$6.2 billion in Ontario’s post-secondary education and training system by 2009-10.

The government’s goal is to use the Reaching Higher investments to improve access, quality and accountability of the postsecondary education system.

Traditionally, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) has allocated grants, and institutions have reported on outcomes achieved with the funding on an annual basis. This practice was continued and strengthened in 2005-06 when the government introduced the Interim Accountability Agreement, a one-year agreement which confirmed the commitments and results expected by government and each institution for the first year of the new Reaching Higher investments.

The government recognizes that publicly-funded institutions will have a greater ability to develop plans that meet the government goals for the sector and achieve results if there is funding stability and predictability. This is why the government is building on the groundwork established by the Interim Accountability Agreements and introducing Multi-Year Agreements and funding allocations.

This Multi-Year Agreement (MYA) articulates the government’s goals for the system, and its roles and responsibilities in meeting those goals. This agreement confirms the commitments expected from each institution and the sector-wide indicators that will be used to report on results achieved.

This agreement constitutes an integral and central component of the overall performance and accountability relationship between government and publicly-funded postsecondary institutions. It does not however, replace existing performance and accountability arrangements, and will be supplemented by existing and, where applicable, modified or new transfer payment reporting requirements, such as those associated with individual grants. The Ministry remains committed to the goal of reducing and consolidating accountability and reporting requirements wherever possible, consistent with the high standard of overall accountability for public funds expected by the public. This document constitutes part of the public record, and as such, should be made available on your institution’s website.

The Role of the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario

The government appreciates that implementing this MYA and future agreements will be part of an evolutionary process which will require a strong collaborative partnership between institutions and the Ministry. The government has also recently established the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO). This Council will play a significant role in developing a quality framework for postsecondary education in Ontario to facilitate multi-year accountability agreements with institutions, including the development of indicators for performance measurement and monitoring the Student Access Guarantee.

In partnership with institutions, the Ministry is committed to reviewing and revising this agreement as needed on an annual basis to ensure that the colleges and universities remain focused on meeting the government goals for postsecondary education. Advice from and research undertaken by HEQCO will inform this process.

1. Government Goals and Responsibilities for the Postsecondary Education System

This section summarizes the government's expected goals for access, quality and accountability as announced in the 2005 Budget through the Reaching Higher investments in postsecondary education, and outlines its role and responsibilities for meeting those system goals.

1.1 Access

The government is committed to ensuring that there is an increase in the number of Ontarians who have the opportunity to successfully pursue higher quality postsecondary education that is affordable and accessible across Ontario including northern and remote, rural and urban areas.

The government will undertake the following initiatives designed to improve access to the postsecondary education system:

- Establish enrolment targets and policies that will ensure that the government meets its commitment to increase university and college full-time enrolment, increase graduate enrolment by 12,000 in 2007-08 and 14,000 by 2009-10, and increase medical enrolments by a further 23 per cent by 2009-10;
- Develop policies and provide funding to deliver services that will promote access and increase opportunities for Aboriginal Peoples, Francophones, persons with disabilities, and persons who are the first in their family to attend postsecondary education. The policies will be informed by the committees established to provide advice to the Minister on how to maximize the educational experiences of these students. The First Generation Strategy offers an opportunity to target "at risk" and low-income communities and families and consider socio-economic factors;
- Provide additional funds that will allow Ontarians living in small, northern and rural communities to have access to a range of high quality college programs and services;
- Continue to improve transitions to college by working with education system partners to build pathways and develop and implement strategies that support transitions, developing pathways for potential students who are no longer in secondary school, and engaging the community in the development of pathways;
- In partnership with institutions, provide a Student Access Guarantee that provides that no qualified Ontario student will be prevented from attending Ontario's public colleges and universities due to lack of adequate financial support programs. The Student Access Guarantee means that students in need will have access to the resources they need for their tuition, books, and mandatory fees;
- Continue enhancements of the Ontario Student Assistance Program. This includes extending access grant eligibility to students from low- and middle-income families, updating the book and supply allowance, continuing to limit students' annual repayable debt, and matching funds raised by institutions to

establish endowments. In partnership with institutions, the government will also implement for 2007-08 a website that will allow students to identify costs and sources of financial aid;

- Work jointly with the Chair of HEQCO, to establish a research agenda on participation and access to be carried out by the Council;
- Define the role and responsibilities of HEQCO in monitoring and making recommendations relating to the implementation of the Student Access Guarantee;
- Develop system measures to track the participation of under-represented and mature students¹ with the assistance of institutions and HEQCO in a manner that is sensitive to privacy concerns; and
- Develop a comprehensive international marketing strategy to assist in the internationalization of Ontario's postsecondary education system and to ensure that Ontario remains competitive in an increasingly globalized environment.

1.2 Quality

The government's Reaching Higher Plan is committed to the highest standards in teaching, research, and the student learning experience, and will undertake the following initiatives designed to help the postsecondary education system improve quality:

- Provide funding that will allow institutions to enhance the quality of their learning environment as evidenced by student satisfaction and success;
- Participate in the Ontario Colleges' Key Performance Indicator initiative as per the current process;
- Participate in the Ontario College Student Engagement Survey (formerly known as the Pan Canadian Survey of the Student Experience in Canadian Colleges and Institutions);
- Work jointly with the Chair of HEQCO to establish a research agenda on quality to be carried out by the Council;
- Define the role and responsibilities of HEQCO on monitoring quality in the system, and receive guidance from the Council on improving quality;
- Work with the Ministry of Research and Innovation to support the role of institutions in implementing the province's research, innovation and commercialization agenda;
- Co-operate and work with the College-University Consortium Council (CUCC) and institutions to develop strategies and policies that will improve and increase collaboration between institutions and sectors, in support of student success and mobility; and,
- Receive advice from HEQCO and CUCC on the best way to measure increased collaboration.

1.3 Accountability

The government is committed to ensuring that it and postsecondary institutions be held accountable for accomplishing the goals and objectives established under the Reaching Higher Plan.

¹ Mature Student status: status of an applicant who does not have an Ontario Secondary School Diploma or equivalent but has reached the age of 19 years on or before the commencement of the program of instruction in which he or she intends to enrol.

The government will undertake the following initiatives designed to help institutions improve accountability:

- Track and report on the achievement of the Reaching Higher Measurement and Results Schematic identified in **Appendix A**;
- Receive the advice of HEQCO on the best way to measure performance and ensure the accountability of colleges and universities;
- Continue the ongoing review of institutional reporting requirements to streamline, consolidate and improve reporting requirements;
- Sign and implement this Multi-Year Agreement with the understanding that it will be reviewed annually in partnership with the institutions to determine whether any revisions are needed pursuant to the advice and input of HEQCO or to reflect maturing consensus on how to measure and encourage quality and access; and
- Participate in the annual review of the Multi-Year Action Plan located in **Appendix B** of the Agreement. When completed, the Multi-Year Action Plan will establish the institution specific strategies, indicators and results designed to contribute to the system-wide goals and results for access, quality and accountability identified in the Reaching Higher Measurement and Results Schematic located in **Appendix A**.

1.4 Funding

Recognising the importance of stability and predictability of funding for institutional planning and in order to increase the capacity of institutions to meet shared goals of quality and accessibility, the government will provide multi-year funding allocations for the three years covered by this agreement.

Preliminary allocations for 2006-07 and notional allocations for 2007-08 and 2008-09 will be provided based on best information available and are subject to change as updated information becomes available.

2. Institution Commitments

This section outlines the commitments and results expected from each institution.

2.1 Access

Your institution commits to undertaking the following initiatives designed to help the postsecondary education system improve access:

- Participate in the Student Access Guarantee. In partnership with the government, develop a Student Access Guarantee that provides that no qualified Ontario student will be prevented from attending Ontario's public colleges and universities due to lack of financial support programs. The Student Access Guarantee means that students in need will have access to the resources they need for their tuition, books and mandatory fees;
- Provide the ministry with the assistance needed to design and implement a website that will allow students to identify costs and sources of financial student aid;
- Complete small, northern and rural access plans to enhance Ontarians' access to quality college programs and services;
- Comply with the new Tuition Fee Framework;

- Provide HEQCO with the assistance needed to complete access related research;
- Provide the ministry and HEQCO with the assistance needed to develop a system measure to track the participation of under-represented groups, and mature students in a manner that is sensitive to privacy concerns. The First Generation Strategy is expected to develop measures to find and track those who are the first in their family to attend postsecondary education (including “at risk” and low-income students);
- Continue to improve transitions to college by working with secondary schools to build pathways and develop and implement strategies that support transitions, developing pathways for potential students who are no longer in secondary school, and engaging the community in the development of pathways;
- Report on institutional enrolment growth in keeping with established protocols or as required by the ministry thereby contributing to the sector targets established by government; and
- Provide the ministry with institution specific multi-year access strategies, indicators and results in the Multi-Year Action Plan template located in **Appendix B** of the agreement.

2.2 Quality

Your institution commits to undertaking the following initiatives designed to help the postsecondary education system improve quality:

- Participate in the Ontario Colleges’ Key Performance Indicator initiative as per the current process, and report separately on indicators identified in the MYA Action Plan in **Appendix B**;
- Participate in the Ontario College Student Engagement Survey (formerly known as the Pan Canadian Survey of the Student Experience in Canadian Colleges and Institutions), and submit results to MTCU as per the protocol to be developed;
- Provide HEQCO with the assistance needed to complete quality related research; Provide the ministry with institution specific multi-year quality strategies, indicators and results in the Multi-Year Action Plan template located in **Appendix B** of the agreement; and
- Co-operate and work with postsecondary education institutions and the College-University Consortium Council (CUCC) to develop strategies and policies that will improve and increase collaboration between institutions and sectors, in support of student success and mobility, and provide HEQCO and the CUCC with the assistance needed to develop advice on the best way to measure increased collaboration.

2.3 Accountability

Your institution commits to undertaking the following initiatives designed to help the postsecondary education system improve accountability:

- Complete the Multi-Year Action Plan template attached in **Appendix B** which, when completed, will establish the institution specific strategies and results designed to contribute to the system-wide goals and results for access, quality and accountability identified in the Reaching Higher Measurement and Results Schematic located in **Appendix A**;

