



DOUGLAS COLLEGE

Comprehensive Program Review
Faculty of Applied Community Studies
Vocational Education and Skills Training

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Recommendations: Summary and Summary List

Recomm. Number	Related Report Component	Recommendation	Status / Timeline
1.	1	CAEP, Transitions, and CSCT courses are available through Curriculum Navigator. Import BOE courses to Curriculum Navigator.	Underway* (assigned to faculty)
2.		Review the CSCT and BOE courses to ensure alignment with BCCAT ASE Articulation Guide and industry standards.	Underway* (assigned to faculty)
3.	4	Support the development of hybrid courses for VEST programs, including WIL partnerships across BC to allow students to remain in their home communities when completing VEST programs.	Underway* (VEST is currently delivering programs online) (Proposal sent for MAEST funding – status pending)
4.		BOE Program and FACS Administration to explore possibilities to change the course trajectory for the program from continuous intake to semester-based delivery in order to improve student flow within VEST programs and reduce wait lists.	Underway* (VEST meeting with FACS Administration)
5.	5	Develop on-campus inclusivity and social purpose events hosted by VEST students.	Underway* Fall 2021
6.		Initiate cross-Faculty partnerships across Douglas College to create in-house WIL placements. Identify new partner companies in the Lower Mainland that will provide WIL placements integrated into our new and existing program curricula.	In progress* Winter/Summer 2022
7.		Introduce micro-credentials program into VEST course offerings to reduce waitlist and allow fast access to learning on demand.	Pending* VEST will plan in accordance with Douglas College’s strategic plan and college-wide micro-credential

			platform and guidelines
8.	7	All the VEST programs include certain common curriculum. This overlapping content will continue to be required in all programs streams, however it will be offered in a consolidated way serving all students. VEST faculty to review CGs for all program courses.	Pending
9.	8	VEST to review the PAC membership and make recommendations to the Dean and establish greater representation from the employment sector such as retail, manufacturing, customer service and food/hospitality industries.	In progress* Fall 2021 Winter/Fall 2022
10.		Educate our WIL employment partners and create awareness on best practices for hiring employees with barriers to education and employment and modelling universal design for training.	In progress* Winter/Fall 2022
11.	9	Consider VEST Faculty completing PD training in setting up and using micro-credentials in a post-secondary setting as a personalized professional learning opportunity and ways to receive recognition for learned skills and competencies.	Pending* Winter/Summer 2022
12.	10	All VEST programs will be scheduled according to the College matrix.	In progress*Fall 2021
13.		Request creation of a Program Advisor position to assist faculty members with program based administrative support while supporting a range of departmental processes, such as program marketing, admission, registration, orientation, etc. This aligns VEST with the other departments within FACS.	Not initiated Winter/Summer 2022
14.		Develop more inter-departmental partnerships in order to provide in-housework experience opportunities for VEST students.	In progress* Winter/Summer 2022

Summary of Strengths, Accomplishments, Weaknesses, Limitations, and Opportunities for Growth and Renewal

The VEST programs pride themselves for providing current and meaningful curricula as mandated by the BC Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training consisting of a range of authentic

learning and work-integrated learning opportunities. VEST programs maintain close working relationships with other institutions across BC that offer adult special education programs. VEST programs are strongly supported by community partners and offer excellent employment opportunities for their students.

This program review identified two major areas of weaknesses and limitations: first, due to increased student demand for post-secondary opportunities, our programming options need to become more flexible and meet changing industry standards; and second, we need to address overlapping program curriculum based on the principles of universal design for learning. With new partnerships in progress, we foresee many opportunities for growth and renewal of the VEST programs, with some of them underway at the time of this submission.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND PRIORITIZATION

The following recommendations emerged in VEST's program review:

1. Import BOE course to Curriculum Navigator.
2. Review the CSCT and BOE courses to ensure alignment with BCCAT ASE Articulation Guide and industry standards.
3. Support the development of hybrid courses for VEST programs, including WIL partnerships across BC to allow students to remain in their home communities when completing VEST programs.
4. BOE Program and FACS Administration to explore the possibilities to change the course trajectory for the program from continuous intake to semester-based delivery to improve student flow within VEST programs and reduce waitlist.
5. Develop on-campus inclusivity and social purpose events hosted by VEST students.
6. Initiate cross-Faculty partnerships across Douglas College to create in-house WIL placements. Identify new companies in the Lower Mainland that will provide WIL placements integrated into our new and existing program curricula.
7. Introduce micro-credentials program into VEST course offerings to reduce waitlist and allow fast access to learning on demand.
8. VEST faculty to review CGs for all programs.
9. VEST to review PAC membership and make recommendations to the Dean to establish greater representation from the employment sector such as retail, manufacturing, customer service and food/hospitality industries.
10. Educate our WIL employment partners and create awareness on best practices for hiring employees with barriers to education and employment and modeling universal design for training.
11. Consider VEST Faculty completing PD training in setting up and using micro-credentials in a post-secondary setting as a personalized professional learning opportunity and ways to receive recognition for learned skills and competencies.

12. All VEST programs will be scheduled according to the College matrix.
13. Request creation of Program Advisor position to assist faculty members with program based administrative support while supporting a range of departmental processes such as program marketing, admission, registration, orientation, etc.
14. Develop more inter-departmental partnerships in order to provide in-house work experience opportunities for VEST students.

Based on my assessment of the thoroughness, rigor and validity of the program review, these are all reasonable recommendations, and they should be implemented as soon as possible. To assist with creating an action plan for implementation, I have created a chart that prioritizes recommendations and indicated who should be tasked with implementing. The work is distributed among the Dean, the Chair(s) and new Advisor position (as per priority #1 in Administration), and the faculty.

Implementer	Prioritized Recommendation
Administrator	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Request creation of Program Advisor position to assist faculty members with program based administrative support while supporting a range of departmental processes such as program marketing, admission, registration, orientation, etc. <i>(Dean to create budget, job description, hiring process, etc, asap)</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Initiate cross-Faculty partnerships across Douglas College to create in-house WIL placements. Identify new companies in the Lower Mainland that will provide WIL placements integrated into our new and existing program curricula. <i>(New Program Advisor to work on this as part of duties)</i> b. Develop more inter-departmental partnerships in order to provide in-house work experience opportunities for VEST students. <i>(New Program Advisor to work on this as part of duties)</i> 2. BOE Program and FACS Administration to explore the possibilities to change the course trajectory for the program from continuous intake to semester-based delivery in order to improve student flow within VEST programs and reduce waitlist. <i>(Dean should work with Chair and governance structure)</i> 3. Consider VEST Faculty completing PD training in setting up and using micro-credentials in a post-secondary setting as a personalized professional learning opportunity and ways to receive recognition for learned skills and competencies. <i>(Dean should work with Chair to set up paid training for faculty)</i>
Chairs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Import BOE course to Curriculum Navigator <i>(Chair should work through appropriate governance structure)</i> 2. All VEST programs will be scheduled according to the College matrix. <i>(Chair should work in conjunction with BOE and with Dean on student trajectory to add to Cur. Navigator)</i> 3. VEST to review PAC membership and make recommendations to the Dean to establish greater representation from the employment sector such as retail, manufacturing, customer service and food/hospitality industries <i>(Chair to review first, and then bring forward to faculty for input – this group will drive hybrid models, WIL and Micro-credentials)</i>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Support the development of hybrid courses for VEST programs, including WIL partnerships across BC to allow students to remain in their home communities when completing VEST programs. <i>(Chair to work with new Advisor and faculty to assess what is possible and then begin developing options)</i> 5. Introduce micro-credentials program into VEST course offerings to reduce waitlist and allow fast access to learning on demand. <i>(work with Dean, PAC and faculty on design, logistics, implementation strategy – this could be done in conjunction with #4 for broader reach through hybrid offerings)</i>
Faculty	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the CSCT and BOE courses to ensure alignment with BCCAT ASE Articulation Guide and industry standards. <i>(Chair can create the timeline/meeting structures – committee to provide the feedback)</i> 2. VEST faculty to review CGs for all programs. <i>(Chair and Dean to create time for this work; should be done in conjunction with #1)</i> 3. Develop on-campus inclusivity and social purpose events hosted by VEST students. <i>(work with VEST students to develop ideas and implementation strategies)</i> 4. Educate our WIL employment partners and create awareness on best practices for hiring employees with barriers to education and employment and modeling universal design for training. <i>(Partnerships with Inclusion BC and Inclusive Education Canada could be helpful here; Chair should build these higher level relationships, share info with faculty; faculty educate employers and perhaps have mini conference/workshops for employers)</i>

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

There are a few other points that VEST should contemplate as the action plan is built. First, the fact that some VEST programs create revenue to assist with funding for 50 prospective student applications is a wonderful initiative. It is supportive while recognizing the value of work the students are doing. I would encourage VEST to continue to find ways to create revenue streams to value the skills of the current students, to support future students, and to fund other initiatives the program area is interested in. There may be a possibility to create a social enterprise whereby revenue circles back into the enterprise to provide funding for student wages (work ops or ongoing wages). Instructors have great ideas for revenue generation (fix-it café, bike shop, community gardens) and are keen on being innovative. Hosting brainstorming sessions with students, faculty, other Douglas service area employees, and employer partners might result in some lucrative ideas to generate revenue. There will likely be an initial investment required, but this should not deter the program from pursuing ideas that will help the program long term.

Second, the program review included an examination of core competencies from student and instructor perspectives, but the curriculum itself was not mentioned. How are instructors achieving the core competencies? What materials and activities are they

using? To evaluate core competencies and overall program outcomes, materials and activities need to be examined through a lens of universal design. If Douglas has Teaching and Learning Specialists, they could help here. Employer partners should also have input into reviewing how well students are prepared for their practicum. A thorough review that includes mapping of course and program learning outcomes to demonstrated execution of skills in placements might have allowed for the identification of any potential gaps. Given that both students and faculty raised concerns about the need for revision/updating of practicums, having a Teaching and Learning Specialist examine the materials being used in the classroom, the methods being used to help students learn, and whether what is occurring in the classroom is transferable to the workplace would be incredibly useful. Also, drawing on employer partners to provide perspective on how well students are prepared for the workplace (without overburdening them with additional workload) could provide important insight on what is working well and what needs improvement in the application of the learning.

Third, Douglas should be applauded for providing faculty with additional professional development time. It is critical for faculty to stay current in their field, and paid time to do this is essential for faculty. Given that the VEST faculty are requesting training in universal design, this shows a commitment to the program and a commitment to making things better for students. This is a worthy request, as universal design training assists instructors with thinking about approaching the teaching and learning process in ways that incorporate and respond to diverse abilities and needs of learners. New technologies are assisting greatly in this area, and it would be worth it to find ways to incorporate updated universal design training regularly for faculty.

Fourth, it appears that other institutional areas are very supportive of VEST, they value the contributions the students make, and they want students and the program to succeed. Since VEST is interested in creating more partnerships on campus for WIL, there is a huge opportunity to leverage the existing support for the program. However, it was also pointed out by some of the survey participants that there are issues with timely responses and the provision of accurate information. Hiring an Advisor for VEST can help reduce the workload on faculty and make processes and information sharing consistent and more accurate. This will reduce time delays, and it will help nurture relationships between VEST and other areas so that they remain positive and supportive. Hiring of this position should be a priority for the program.

Fifth, a focus on micro-credentials is an excellent strategy to move VEST to the next level, and this will require the area to partner with other program areas at Douglas or other PSEs and with industry/employers. Some of the most innovative initiatives emerge through these sorts of partnerships. VEST already has many partnerships with the external community that can be leveraged, and the internal institutional support for the program and faculty desire to improve the program will go a long way to make micro-credentials happen in VEST. The timing is right to seek these opportunities, the first step will be to build the relationships and the rest will follow.

Finally, I have very much enjoyed participating in this program review. I was thoroughly impressed by the care and attention that was taken to assess so many aspects of the program and by the number of faculty and staff who took the time to provide input. Douglas should be proud of VEST, and VEST should be commended on engaging in such a fulsome undertaking of analysis of the various components that impact its success. Although the student response rate was not stellar, response rates are on par with typical student survey rates for program reviews. VEST programs should be very pleased with the results in this evaluation and with the work it is doing. Douglas has been a leader in ASE programs for many years, and it continues to strive to become even better by engaging in the important review process. Congratulations on a job well done!



**DOUGLAS COLLEGE COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW (CR)
RESPONSE FROM THE
OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT, ACADEMIC AND PROVOST**

Douglas College Administration policy A38: *Program Review* requires a follow-up plan be developed by the Vice President, Academic and Provost, in response to the Self-Study and External Report.

FACULTY (Lead Dean/Associate Dean)	<i>Applied Community Studies</i>	
Department / Program	Vocational Education and Skills Training (VEST)	
Date Submitted	August 2022	
External Review Panel (ERP)	1. Dr. Jean Maltesen	Dean, Academic and Career Preparation, Vancouver Island University
Reason for Timing of Comprehensive Review	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Schedule (routine) or <input type="checkbox"/> Off-cycle, due to emergent concerns (<i>specify below</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Changes in discipline/field/licensing <input type="checkbox"/> New program development <input type="checkbox"/> Demand/enrolment/budget concerns <input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>specify</i>) 	
Date of last Comprehensive Review	N/A	
RESPONSE/RECOMMENDATIONS		
SUMMARY RESPONSE	<p>VEST is a generally well-managed program, responsive to the changing need of local labour markets and its client/student population.</p> <p>The external reviewer spoke positively of the program, supported virtually all of the self-study recommendations and included several recommendations of her own, noting: <i>“Douglas’ VEST programs focus on student learning for real life situations. The practical application of learned skills is a necessary component of ASE programs so students can be supported as they transfer what is learned in the classroom to an employment situation.”</i></p> <p>The external reviewer goes on to note that</p> <p><i>“Drawing on student and faculty perspectives is part of this systematic review. There were also opportunities for industry to provide input through the Advisory Council meetings. However, I would also recommend that consideration be given to more employers/partners to enhance feedback since not all partners are on the Council; these partners also need a mechanism for input to add to the validity and reliability of findings.”</i></p>	



	<p>The VPA&P supports all but one of the recommendations in the self-study as well as additional recommendations made by the external reviewer. The VPA agrees with the external reviewer that VEST should move cautiously with respect to introduction of micro-credentials into the program as such credentials are not currently “recognized in the industry by employers.”</p> <p>The VPA commends VEST faculty for producing a high-quality, thorough and thoughtful self-study.</p>
All Self-Study recommendations accepted?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No (Yes – with a caveat regarding micro-credentials)
All External Report recommendations accepted?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<p>VPA’s RECOMMENDATIONS</p> <p>In particular, TESL should focus on the following:</p>	<p>The VPA&P requests that the Faculty Dean and/or Associate Dean work with the Program Coordinators to implement the changes outlined in the program self-study as well as recommendations put forward by the external reviewer. The VPA recommends that the Dean and faculty continue to monitor the adoption of micro-credentials within industries that place our graduates. Recommendations and timelines are summarized in a table/workplan based on the external reviewer’s report.</p> <p>The VPA&P asks that the Dean review the administrative resources currently available to the program and make appropriate adjustments or recommendations to the VP&P for additional support as warranted.</p> <p>As per the College’s routine follow-up to comprehensive program reviews, the Department is to submit its Implementation and Action Plan (IAP) to the Dean within 45 days of receipt of this Report, and to report back to the Dean one year after submission of the IAP to account for progress made.</p>
Next scheduled PR (5 – 7 years):	2027

Thor Borgford
 Vice President, Academic and Provost

April 28, 2023
 Date