

**TITLE: PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT FOR CREDIT PROGRAMS****POLICY STATEMENT:**

Red Deer College (RDC) is responsible for offering programs that meet or exceed national, provincial and professional standards. The College uses a systematic, staged process for developing and redeveloping programs to ensure a) consideration of important aspects, b) suitable consultation with stakeholders, c) resource allocation, and d) transparent decision making. New/redeveloped programs are accessible, affordable, accountable, of high quality, and align with student, community, and regional needs and with RDC's Strategic Plan. The process includes consultation with internal and external communities, alignment with governance processes, implementation planning, formative evaluation, and, in the case of program development or redevelopment, interaction with the Ministry for approvals.

**PURPOSE:**

This policy provides a process that guides investment and decision-making in program development and redevelopment appropriately taking into account community and regional directions, College strategic directions, capacity, relative risk, implementation, and initial quality of programs. It also provides guidelines for documentation and decision making for initiators and developers.

**SCOPE:**

The policy applies to the development of all new programs that involve credentials or transfer programs not previously offered by RDC and to major redevelopment of an existing program including: change of credential name, change in major or concentration, substantial change in program outcomes, design, and/or length.

In the case of program redevelopment, program faculty consult with the appropriate Dean or Associate Dean(s) and the Academic Program Development Manager to determine relevant sections of the policy, depending on the nature and extent of the program redevelopment.

This policy does not apply to Apprenticeship programs or Continuing Education programs.

**PRINCIPLES:**

Procedures and decisions at Red Deer College:

1. Treat all persons fairly and respectfully.
2. Are non-discriminatory and non-intrusive.
3. Incorporate open, honest and timely communication.
4. Are made in a timely manner.
5. Provide appropriate confidentiality and privacy.
6. Provide appropriate access to education.
7. Ensure that all persons have access to informed support regarding policies, procedures, rights and responsibilities.
8. Operate with clear written expectations for conduct and handling of complaints.

9. Meet all accreditation standards.
10. Maintain and clearly state a high standard of instruction and administration in all areas of educational programs and services.
11. Are communicated in alternate forms to those who require such accommodation.

**Specifically for this policy:**

1. A systematic staged process with clear decision points ensures consideration of important aspects, suitable consultation with stakeholders, and resource allocation.
2. Resources needed for each stage of development are clearly identified.
3. New/redeveloped programs are accessible, affordable, accountable, of high quality, and align with community and regional needs.
4. All new program development/redevelopment considers: potential student demand, economic demand (employment market, further education prospects), financial viability, relationship to RDC Strategic Plan, relationship to Alberta post-secondary system, and College capacity.
5. Board Ends are a key consideration in all new/redeveloped programs.
6. Implementation of new programs is coordinated with appropriate College departments to maximize success.
7. New programs undergo a formative evaluation to monitor initial quality and make adjustments.
8. Development processes and decision-making align with the administrative and academic governance process of the College.
9. Depending on the nature of the redevelopment, the requirements of each stage are modified to eliminate those that are not applicable.
10. Programs are intentionally designed to provide flexible pathways to completion and transfer routes.
11. Programs are intentionally designed to conform to the Universal Design Policy (Universal design principles guide the planning and development of curriculum and provide a framework that enables all individuals to gain knowledge, skills, and enthusiasm for learning. Further, Universal Design in the learning context provides rich support for learning and reduces barriers within the curriculum while maintaining high achievement standards for all.)

**DEFINITIONS:**

**Curriculum:** the aggregate of courses of study in a Program or Program of Studies and their attributes. Curriculum includes program outcomes, admission requirements, in-program requirements, graduation requirements (where applicable), map of courses to program outcomes, and course curriculum elements for each course.

**Guide for Program Development and Redevelopment of Credit Programs:** a supplementary document posted on the RDC portal (TheLoop) that provides additional details and checklists.

**Major Redevelopment:** major redevelopment of an existing program is typically defined as any redevelopment that results in one or more of the following: change of credential name, change in major or concentration, substantial change in program outcomes, design, and/or length.

**Program:** official name of the credential awarded on graduation or the name of the program in the case of programs where a RDC credential is not awarded (e.g. University Transfer, Academic Upgrading).

**Universal Design:** the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.

## **PROCEDURE**

### **New Program Development:**

Program development normally consists of a five-stage process: Pre-development, Concept Proposal, Full Proposal, Implementation and Detailed Course Development, and Formative Program Review. This five-stage process, the first three of which are typically managed by the Academic Program Development Manager, is outlined below.

#### **Stage 1: Pre-development (Program Investigation)**

Program ideas and suggestions may come from, but are not limited to, School Councils, advisory committees, faculty, staff, students, continuing education, administration, environmental scanning, and community members. If there is a resource requirement to complete this stage, the School/developer consults the Dean. The extent of initial consideration may vary considerably.

Stage 1 Includes initial consideration of:

- Nature of the program (length, type of credential)
- Relationship to Strategic Plan
- Relationship to current RDC programs and program mix priorities
- Potential student demand
- Economic demand (market/prospects for graduates)

This stage results in a Pre-development report.

**Decision:** To proceed to Stage 2 Concept Proposal with appropriate planning resources and direction of a Dean.

Recommending authority: School Council

Advising authority: Deans' Council

Principal authority: Vice President Academic (VPA)

#### **Stage 2: Concept Proposal**

The foci of the Concept Proposal are the overall description of the program and the expected feasibility and sustainability. See the "Guide for Program Development and Redevelopment of Credit Programs" for required documentation.

**Decision:** To proceed to Stage 3 Full Proposal Development with appropriate planning resources and the direction of a Dean.

Recommending authority: School Council

Advising authority: Deans' Council

Principal authority: VPA

### **Stage 3: Full Proposal**

This stage includes detailed development of the proposal for RDC and Ministry approvals (including Campus Alberta Quality Council for degrees). In most cases, this stage involves extensive system consultation, program outcome development, curriculum development, and community consultation. All development at Stage 3 includes a Program Advisory Committee. For internal approval use Academic Council approved templates. For external approval use the following:

For new programs other than degrees offered by RDC, use the New Program Proposal Template developed by the Ministry.

For redevelopment of programs offered by RDC, use the Change Program Proposal Template developed by the Ministry.

For degree proposals, use the Degree Program Proposal Checklist – Resident Alberta Institutions (Campus Alberta Quality Council).

**Decision:** To submit the proposal to the Ministry for program approval (and funding if required). In some cases of redevelopment, Ministry approval is not required.

Advising authority: VPA, Deans' Council

Recommending authority: School Council (where appropriate)

Recommending authority: Curriculum Committee of Academic Council

Recommending authority: Academic Council

Principal authority: President (Board of Governors)

\*Normally VPA signs off on Ministry proposal submission

Note: Degree proposals undergo a two-stage approval process, with the Ministry completing the system review and then forwarding the proposal to Campus Alberta Quality Council for quality review and recommendation to the Minister.

### **Stage 4: Implementation and Detailed Course Development**

Implementation and detailed course development planning normally begin following a decision by the Ministry to approve the program and, additionally, to approve funding if required. The Dean may authorize proceeding to some aspects of Stage 4 in advance of approvals, especially in the case of program redevelopment.

See the "Guide for Program Development and Redevelopment of Credit Programs" for Checklist.

#### **Decisions:**

Principal authority: VPA for overall budget

Principal authority: Dean for implementation planning, Senior Administration members for areas of responsibility (e.g. Marketing)

### **Stage 5: Formative Program Review**

All new programs and redeveloped programs undergo a Formative Program Review.

Formative Program Reviews are conducted under the Program Review Policy with data collected in consultation with Strategic Planning and Analysis. Please see the Program Review Policy for additional details.

**OFFICER RESPONSIBLE:** Chair of Academic Council

**RECOMMENDING AUTHORITY:** Academic Council

**CONSULTATION FOR REVIEW:** Deans' Council, School Councils, Registrar, Academic Program Development Office, Centre for Teaching and Learning

**POLICY REVIEW DATE:** February 2021

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** July 1, 2016

**REVISION HISTORY:** July 1, 2008  
July 1, 2016

**RELATED POLICIES:**

- [Admission of Students to Credit Programs](#)
- [Assignment of Academic and Billing Credit to Courses](#)
- [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy](#)
- [Course Outline](#)
- [Curriculum Standards for Credit Programs](#)
- [Program Review](#)
- [Programs: Advice from Stakeholders](#)
- [Transfer of Credit Courses and Programs](#)
- [Universal Design](#)

**CONNECTION TO BOARD POLICIES:**

All RDC policies support relevant Board of Governors policies.