

**Ministry of Colleges and Universities**

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Sous-ministre

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**MEMORANDUM TO:**

Presidents, Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology  
Linda Franklin, President and CEO, Colleges Ontario

Executive Heads, Publicly Assisted Universities  
Steve Orsini, President and CEO, Council of Ontario Universities

Université de l'Ontario français  
Université de Hearst  
Northern Ontario School of Medicine

Executive Heads, Indigenous Institutes  
Laurie Robinson, Executive Director and Chair,  
Indigenous Advanced Education and Skills Council  
Wendy Johnson, Executive Director, Indigenous Institutes Consortium

Registered Private Career Colleges  
Representatives of Private Designated Learning Institutions  
Adrian Sharma, Board Chair, Career Colleges Ontario  
Gonzalo Peralta, Executive Director, Languages Canada

**FROM:**

Shelley Tapp  
Deputy Minister, Ministry of Colleges and Universities

**DATE:**

July 16, 2021

**SUBJECT:**

**Fall 2021 Planning for the Postsecondary Education Sector**

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**Fall 2021 Planning**

After more than a year since full in-person instruction and on-campus activities paused, we are now starting to look ahead to Fall 2021 and to Ontario returning to in-class instruction in the postsecondary education (PSE) sector.

I am pleased to let you know that, assuming the continued progress of provincewide vaccination rates and continued improvements in key public health and health care indicators, it is anticipated that all in-person instruction and on-campus activities at PSE institutions would be permitted to resume without capacity limits or physical distancing requirements starting in Fall 2021.

Masks and face coverings will still be required for indoor settings and all PSE institutions are required to continue following provincial and federal public health and workplace safety requirements. We also encourage PSE institutions to engage with their local public health unit to establish opportunities for vaccination clinics and vaccine promotion on campus, and during events with high attendance.

I know many PSE institutions are running on-campus clinics or offering other types of vaccination drives. These are important actions that are supported by both the Ministry and the Ontario government. I encourage you to continue these activities as appropriate to support the province in its efforts for continued progress on vaccination rates.

While this is the planning assumption for Fall 2021, it is important to be mindful that we must remain vigilant and prepared with respect to COVID-19 trends and indicators and be aligned with broader reopening planning.

While the Ministry of Colleges and Universities looks forward to supporting the PSE sector in a return to in-person activity as safely as possible beginning in September, I want to emphasize that PSE institutions continue to have the flexibility to deliver academic instruction in the mode that best suits the needs of students and institutions, including virtual and hybrid delivery models.

In addition to the above, PSE institutions should continue to have in place appropriate health and workplace safety measures that are aligned with public health advice and guidance such as masking, screening, handwashing and cleaning protocols. As well, the ministry encourages PSE institutions to have policies in place to leverage rapid antigen testing for routine screening of asymptomatic individuals in alignment with provincial testing guidance, and wastewater surveillance, where appropriate.

I know from regular communications with many of you that the mental health and wellbeing of your students, faculty and staff is a priority. The impacts of COVID-19 have been challenging for all of us. PSE institutions should make every effort to ensure that students and employees have the mental health and wellbeing supports they need.

The ministry will release an updated *Postsecondary Education Public Health Measures Framework* (originally issued in June 2020) in early August 2021 and will ensure alignment with the most current public health and safety guidance and advice for September 2021 and onwards. The Postsecondary Education Public Health Measures Framework will include information on:

- PSE sector-specific public health and workplace safety measures (e.g., masks/face coverings, screening, cleaning)
- Advice to support a healthy and rewarding experience for students and campus employees (e.g., availability of mental health supports)
- Resources for public health and safety that may be useful to you and students and employees at your institution.

## **Continuity of Education Plans**

In our engagement with the PSE sector in early June, the ministry consulted on emergency planning and PSE institutions' level of preparation in that regard. The ministry heard about the work that PSE institutions have done to be responsive to public health measures in place as a result of COVID-19, and how those actions have impacted operational decisions about emergency planning.

In order to protect and support students, faculty and staff, it is important that there are planned and established measures for the continuity of teaching and learning in the event of an emergency or outbreak. It is also important that all members of the PSE institution have access to the Continuity of Education Plans (CEPs) and information on emergency planning (e.g., policies; procedures; protocols) is transparent and clearly communicated.

Accordingly, the ministry is directing publicly assisted colleges and universities to have Continuity of Education Plans (CEPs) in place. Colleges and universities should ensure that these plans align with local public health advice and any broader provincial public health measures.

CEPs must be publicly posted by September 2021 and must include the following:

- Information about protocols (i.e., health and safety) in the event of an emergency.
- Information on continuity of education in the event of a disruption to in-person teaching and learning.
- Links to useful resources in the event of an emergency (e.g., emergency contact information).

We understand that CEPs will be specific to each PSE institution based on their capacity, needs, priorities, and local circumstances. We also understand that in some cases, PSE institutions may already have these plans in place from recent emergency planning exercises.

Colleges and universities are asked to notify the ministry once these plans are in place (by September 2021) or if they are already in place. Ministry staff will be following up with colleges and universities that do not notify the ministry by Friday September 3, 2021. To further discuss CEPs, publicly assisted colleges and universities may contact

Ivonne Mellozzi, Director of the Postsecondary Accountability Branch, Ministry of Colleges and Universities, by email at [Ivonne.Mellozzi@ontario.ca](mailto:Ivonne.Mellozzi@ontario.ca) .

Indigenous Institutes and Private Career Colleges are strongly encouraged to also prepare CEPs as outlined in this memorandum if they have not done so already. For more information on this guidance, please contact:

- Indigenous Institutions – Barry McCartan, Director of the Indigenous Education Branch, by email at [Barry.McCartan@ontario.ca](mailto:Barry.McCartan@ontario.ca).
- Private Career Colleges, Language Schools and other Designated Learning Institutions – Laura Adams, Director & Superintendent of the Private Career Colleges Branch, by email at [pcc@ontario.ca](mailto:pcc@ontario.ca).

### **International Education**

I realize the importance of international education to the Ontario PSE sector. I know that the response to COVID-19 has been challenging for students and institutions alike. I want to reiterate that Ontario continues to welcome international students to our province and that the ministry will continue to work with you so that international students have a positive and rewarding experience studying in Ontario. Please refer to Appendix I in this Memo for more information on International Education.

### **Next Steps**

Today is a significant day in planning for next steps in the PSE sector. I remain grateful to all of you for your leadership and support during the COVID-19 response. While we must remain vigilant and responsive to the trajectory of COVID-19, I am optimistic that the PSE sector will resume many of the cherished in-person experiences that have been on pause for so long. I look forward to communicating further about the *Postsecondary Education Public Health Measures Framework* in the weeks ahead.

Once again, I appreciate your efforts as we continue to work together to support the best interests of students and institutions.

Sincerely,

*Original signed by*

Shelley Tapp  
Deputy Minister  
Ministry of Colleges and Universities

c: Ari Laskin, Chief of Staff, Minister's Office  
Dr. Kieran Moore, Chief Medical Officer of Health, Ministry of Health

Kelly Shields, Assistant Deputy Minister, Postsecondary Education Division,  
Ministry of Colleges and Universities

Tamara Gilbert, Assistant Deputy Minister, Advanced Education Learner Supports  
Division

Laura Adams, Director and Superintendent, Private Career Colleges Branch

Ivonne Mellozzi, Director, Postsecondary Accountability Branch, Postsecondary  
Education Division

Barry McCartan, Director, Indigenous Education Branch, Postsecondary Education  
Division

## **Appendix I: International Education**

As you know, as of July 5, fully vaccinated travellers who are authorized to enter Canada (including eligible international students) are no longer subject to the federally mandated 14-day quarantine requirements provided they meet the specific conditions set out by the Government of Canada.

Eligible fully vaccinated travellers are also exempt from the mandatory 3-day hotel stay at a Government-Authorized Accommodation (GAA) and Day-8 COVID-19 testing requirements.

To be considered fully vaccinated, travellers must:

- Have received the full series of a COVID-19 vaccine – or a combination of vaccines – that is accepted by the Government of Canada at least 14 days before entering Canada.
  - Currently, these vaccines are manufactured by Pfizer; Moderna; AstraZeneca/COVISHIELD and Janssen (Johnson & Johnson). Vaccines do not have to be administered in Canada to be accepted.
- Provide proof of vaccination in English or French (or a certified translation).
- Submit all required COVID-19 information electronically using ArriveCAN prior to travel to Canada, have a paper or digital copy of their proof of vaccination, and have a suitable quarantine plan.
- Meet the pre-entry and on-arrival testing requirements (pre-departure PCR and on arrival test) and be asymptomatic.

As part of this exemption, the federal government indicated that fully vaccinated travellers are not required to quarantine while they await the results of their on-arrival COVID-19 test result if they meet the specific conditions listed above. However, they are still required, during the 14 days after entry to Canada, to wear a mask when they are in public and maintain a list of the names and contact information of persons with whom they are in close contact with and the locations visited during that period, as well as follow any other public health measures of the province/territory they are in.

For international students who are not fully vaccinated per the federal government's requirements, there are no changes to the requirements for testing, federal hotel stopover or quarantine at this time. Travellers who self-declare as fully vaccinated but do not meet the conditions described above will also need to abide by these same requirements.

For more information on the exemption for fully vaccinated travellers and the specific requirements that must be met for consideration, please visit <https://travel.gc.ca/travel-covid/travel-restrictions/covid-vaccinated-travellers-entering-canada>.

The federal government has also indicated that it expects Designated Learning Institutions (DLIs) to continue to implement their approved COVID-19 Readiness Plan to oversee the quarantine and testing of any student who does not meet the conditions to be considered fully vaccinated.

As well, international students that are travelling to Canada must continue to have a suitable quarantine plan where they can stay for at least 14 days, even if they are seeking the fully vaccinated exemption. Final determination is made by a federal government representative at the border based on the information presented at the time of entry into Canada. International students must therefore be prepared to quarantine for 14 days, in case they are symptomatic or are determined to not meet the requirements.

Foreign nationals who do not have a suitable plan may be denied entry into Canada.

#### Student and Institution Compliance with DLI Quarantine Measures

The federal government has advised provinces that some international students arriving in Ontario have indicated to border officials that they did not have suitable quarantine plans and/or the means to quarantine despite DLIs having approved COVID-19 Readiness Plans in place to support them.

These students were therefore placed in federal Designated Quarantine Facilities to complete their mandatory 14-day quarantine. Provinces were also advised that, in some instances, arriving international students tested positive on their on-arrival COVID-19 test and lacked the means to transfer to an appropriate place for isolation in accordance with public health guidelines.

You are reminded of the responsibilities you have with respect to international students' arrival plans under with your institution's approved COVID-19 Readiness Plan. We expect that institutions are making all efforts to ensure student compliance with approved quarantine measures and ask that you continue to reinforce the importance of students planning their arrival and quarantine, if necessary, under your oversight.

#### Alternative Quarantine Locations for the Federal Hotel Stopover

I understand that there is strong interest among certain institutions for additional options to the current GAAs for non-fully vaccinated international students to comply with the federal hotel stopover requirement. The ministry continues to consider next steps in this regard. Institutions wishing to share any information in this regard are encouraged to contact the ministry through the individuals listed in the "Continuity of Education Plans" section in this memo.