



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

University of Toronto
Governing Council

Policy on Certificates (For Credit and Not-For-Credit)

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Preamble

The University of Toronto offers three types of for-credit programs: degrees, diplomas and certificates. Undergraduate degree, graduate degree and diploma programs are governed by the *Policy for Approval and Review of Academic Programs and Units* in conjunction with the *University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process (UTQAP)*. The third type, for-credit certificates, are offered at the undergraduate level only and include stand-alone certificates and certificates that may be taken in conjunction with an undergraduate degree program. They consist of a coherent sequence of for-credit courses.

In addition to for-credit certificates, divisions at the University of Toronto may offer not-for-credit certificates as part of their continuing, professional and executive education programming. Not-for-credit certificates require in-depth knowledge in a particular subject area and comprise a coherent sequence of courses. Divisions also offer a range of continuing, professional and executive education activities.

Scope

This Policy is intended to define the parameters around for-credit and not-for-credit certificates and will:

- a) establish categories of certificates;
- b) ensure consistency in the use of the term “certificate” across divisions of the University of Toronto, so that its meaning will be clear to applicants, students, employers and the public;
- c) ensure that certificates constitute evidence of achievement of appropriate standards of learning;
- d) ensure that the resource implications of certificates and continuing, professional and executive education programming are appropriately addressed; and
- e) establish an approval process appropriate to each category of certificate.

Additional related policies and guidelines are the *Transcript Policy* (January 26, 2012), *Guidelines on Academic Transcript Notations* (December 8, 2011), the *Statement of Policy on Continuing Education* (November 15, 1988), the *Guidelines for Continuing, Professional and Executive Education* (2016), and the *Policy on Approval and Execution of Contracts and Documents* (November 17, 2008).

Categories of Certificates

The categories are as follows:

1) Post-baccalaureate certificates (stand-alone, for-credit):

- Normally require completion of an undergraduate degree or equivalent, as a condition of admission.
- Comprise a coherent sequence of for-credit undergraduate courses which may be eligible for credit towards a subsequent undergraduate degree program.
- Provide a mechanism for the assessment of student performance.
- Successful completion of the certificate is recorded on the academic transcript.

- Students are registered as University of Toronto undergraduate students and receive a parchment at Convocation.

Examples of certificates that fall under this category include:

- Certificate in Human Resources Management (Faculty of Arts & Science)
- TESOL Certificate Program (Faculty of Arts & Science)

2) Certificates offered in conjunction with an undergraduate degree program (for-credit):

- Students must be enrolled in a specific University of Toronto undergraduate degree program in order to qualify.
- Comprise a coherent sequence of for-credit undergraduate courses, relating to an identified topic or theme that may complement the degree program. Will normally consist of fewer full-course equivalents than a minor in an equivalent area.
- Provide a mechanism for the assessment of student performance. Will normally conform to the established rules and regulations relative to student progression and good standing.
- Completion of the certificate is recorded on the academic transcript as a component of the undergraduate degree; students do not receive a separate parchment at Convocation.

Examples of certificates that fall under this category include:

- Certificate in Global Engineering (Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering)
- Language Citation in French Studies (Faculty of Arts & Science)

3) Certificates in continuing, professional and executive education (not-for-credit):

- May have open admission, but may be targeted to particular professional and quasi-professional areas¹.
- Comprise a coherent sequence of not-for-credit courses.
- Normally provide a mechanism for the assessment of student performance.
- Not-for-credit courses may not be counted for credit toward any degree program at the University of Toronto.
- Participants are not registered as University of Toronto students.
- Normally, courses and certificates are not included on the academic transcript. Completion of the certificate program is to be recognized by a certificate from the division offering the program.

Examples of certificates that fall under this category include:

- Certificate in Information Management (School of Continuing Studies; Faculty of Information)
- Certificate in Financial Analysis (School of Continuing Studies)]

¹ In some cases these certificates in continuing, professional and executive education may be designed to fulfil the requirements of external professional, quasi-professional or other organizations and may have specific admission requirements.

Certificate Nomenclature

Category 1 and 2: Post-baccalaureate certificates and certificates offered in conjunction with an undergraduate degree program

The names of certificates in these two categories should be simple, consistent and specific to the area of study. Examples include:

- Certificate in Human Resources Management (Faculty of Arts & Science)
- Certificate in Global Engineering (Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering)

Category 3: Certificates in continuing, professional and executive education

A certificate in this category should clearly indicate it is a continuing education activity and:

- a. will normally be referred to as a “Not-For-Credit Certificate”, “Certificate in Continuing Studies”; “Certificate in Continuing Education”, “Certificate in Professional Development”, or “Certificate in Executive Development”;
- b. in exceptional circumstances, and with the approval of the Provost, may have different terminology to align certificates awarded by divisions at the University of Toronto with that of peer institutions offering similar programs, or with that in common use in a given professional or quasi-professional area.

Oversight and Accountability

Category 1: Post-baccalaureate certificates

Category 1 certificates are for-credit certificates offered at the University of Toronto that are eligible for and receive government funding, and as such, are subject to the same quality assurance accountability processes as other for-credit programming. While not explicitly referenced in the UTQAP, category 1 certificates will follow the protocols for approval and closure for major modifications in the UTQAP (section 3). Category 1 certificates are subject to periodic reviews under the UTQAP. In addition, certificates in this category will be included in an annual report by the Provost to the Committee on Academic Policy & Programs.

Category 2: Certificates offered in conjunction with an undergraduate degree program

Category 2 certificates are for-credit certificates at the University of Toronto that are offered in conjunction with an undergraduate program, and as such, fall under the UTQAP. Certificates in this category will follow the protocols for approval and closure for minor modifications in the UTQAP (section 3.1). Category 2 certificates will be reviewed with the relevant undergraduate program under the UTQAP. In addition, certificates in this category will be included in an annual report by the Provost to the Committee on Academic Policy & Programs.

Category 3: Certificates in continuing, professional and executive education

Category 3 certificates are not-for-credit certificates and therefore do not receive government funding and are not subject to the same approvals as certificates governed by the UTQAP. However, these certificates should be consistent with the University’s general objectives and the strategic direction of the divisions offering them. They should adhere to the same standards of excellence that are expected of all University of Toronto program offerings. Certificates in this category must meet institutional and divisional criteria with respect to quality assurance including any review process, fit and resource allocations and shall align with the protocols set out in the *Guidelines for Continuing, Professional and Executive Education* (2016). Certificates in this category must undergo the appropriate divisional approval and are submitted to the

Provost's office for inclusion in an annual report by the Provost to the Committee on Academic Policy & Programs.

For the School of Continuing Studies, certificates in this category are approved by the Dean, School of Continuing Studies and included in an annual report to the Provost's office and will be included as part of the Provost's report to the Committee on Academic Policy & Programs.

Other Certificates

1. Certificates of attendance/certificates of completion for continuing education activities: with decanal approval, "Certificates of Attendance" or "Certificates of Completion" may be issued by divisions using the division's logo to recognize other continuing education activities, provided that the certificate makes it clear what is being signified—for example, attendance at a course or workshop (specifying the length), passing of an examination, etc. For more information, please refer to the *Guidelines for Continuing, Professional and Executive Education*.
2. Certificates of attendance for auditing courses: auditing of courses may be allowed by a division as provided for in the University's *Policy on Auditing of Courses*. Certificates of Attendance may be issued by the division as provided by that Policy. Credit for audited courses or other continuing education activities may not be transferred to degree programs at the University of Toronto.

Approved by the Governing Council February 25, 2016.

RELATED DOCUMENTS (*Added by the Secretariat for reference, March 3, 2020*)

[*Policy for Approval and Review of Academic Programs and Units*](#)

[*Transcript Policy*](#)

[*Guidelines on Academic Transcript Notations*](#)

[*Statement of Policy on Continuing Education*](#)

[*Guidelines for Continuing, Professional and Executive Education*](#)

[*Policy on Approval and Execution of Contracts and Documents*](#)

[*Policy on Auditing of Courses*](#)