



## **Report on**

# THE Integration of College Academic Upgrading Programs with Pre-Apprenticeship, Pre Trades, and Apprenticeship *PROGRAMMING*

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**Report on the Integration of College Academic Upgrading  
Programs with Pre-Apprenticeship,  
Pre Trades and Apprenticeship Programming**

**College Sector Committee**

Sue Folinsbee  
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## I. Introduction

The research on integration between college Academic Upgrading programs and Pre-Apprentice, Pre-Trades and Apprenticeship programming is part of a larger College Sector Committee (CSC) project entitled: *Supporting Apprenticeship and Pre Apprenticeship Programming through College Academic Upgrading Programs*.

The purpose of the research was to build on the previous work of the CSC to identify, in detail, through a qualitative approach, the joint work that is happening between Academic Upgrading and Pre-Apprenticeship, Pre-Trades and Apprenticeship programming in terms of:

- information sharing
- facilitated referral processes
- assessment and intake
- curriculum development and delivery
- other

The intention of the research was to identify what factors make it possible to work jointly, what some of the challenges are, what the outcomes of working jointly are, and what the overall benefits to colleges are. The research also examined what further supports are needed for joint work.

### A. Acronyms Used

<b>ACE</b>	Academic and Career Entrance program
<b>CSC</b>	College Sector Committee
<b>EAS</b>	Employment Assistance Services
<b>LBS</b>	Literacy and Basic Skills
<b>MTCU</b>	Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities
<b>OBS</b>	Ontario Basic Skills
<b>OSSD</b>	Ontario Secondary School Diploma
<b>TOWES</b>	Test of Workplace Essential Skills

## II. Methodology

A survey was e-mailed to contacts in Academic Upgrading and Apprenticeship in all of Ontario's 24 colleges.<sup>1</sup> In total, 20 completed surveys were returned. Eighteen were from college contacts working in Academic Upgrading. Two were from Apprenticeship. In addition, 12 telephone interviews were conducted with college managers and coordinators. Nine interviews were conducted in lieu of completing a survey. Three interviews were conducted as a follow-up to receiving a completed survey. Two out of 12 interviews were conducted with Apprenticeship (See Table 1). Participants were assured confidentiality in both returned surveys and interviews.

<b>Participants in Research</b>	<b>Overall Participation Rate</b>
Overall college representation	88% (21 out of 24 colleges)
Academic Upgrading	86% (25 out of 29 respondents)
Apprenticeship	14% (4 out of 29 respondents)

**Table 1: Survey Participation Rates by College Division**

Three respondents from Academic Upgrading indicated they had solicited input into the survey from counterparts in Apprenticeship.

College contacts received three invitations to participate in the survey or telephone interview. One limitation of the overall research is the small number of respondents from Apprenticeship.

<sup>1</sup> Please see Appendix 1 for questionnaire.

### III. Findings

*I am a great supporter of joint work and am very open to adapting models of integration in our own plans. We have great resources and willing service providers. All we have to do is figure out the best ways to capitalize on these assets so we can open as many doors as possible to interested learners.*

– Survey respondent from Academic Upgrading

The findings presented are based on the responses of informants from completed surveys and/or interviews.

Table 2 below shows that the most common activity or area for joint work is information sharing followed by curriculum development and delivery. The two areas where joint work has taken place to a much lesser degree are facilitated referral processes, and assessment and intake.

Area of Joint Work	Percentage of Colleges Involved (N = 29)
Information sharing	90%
Curriculum development and delivery	72%
Facilitated referral processes	55%
Assessment and intake	55%
Other 14%	

**Table 2: Respondents' Percentages of Joint Work**

#### A. Joint activities: Academic Upgrading,<sup>2</sup> Pre-Apprenticeship, Pre-Trades, and Apprenticeship

The sub-sections that follow describe the joint work that has taken place in the key areas of information sharing, curriculum development and delivery, facilitated referral processes, and assessment and intake.

<sup>2</sup> The term "Academic Upgrading" is used to refer to Academic Upgrading/LBS Programs.

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## **i. Information sharing**

*Managers' meetings (Job Connect, LBS, Apprenticeship and EAS) every six weeks keep everyone up-to-date and well-connected.*

### **– Survey respondent from Academic Upgrading**

There are a number of ways that Academic Upgrading, Pre-Apprenticeship, Pre-Trades, and Apprenticeship share information. The most common way of sharing information is through information sessions. Information is also shared through formal management meetings and is used to develop specific activities. Although this survey did not focus on Job Connect, some participants indicated that Job Connect was also part of information-sharing processes.

### **Information sessions**

Information sharing between Academic Upgrading and Apprenticeship works in a number of different ways. For example, to share information, Academic Upgrading invites contacts from Apprenticeship as guest speakers to talk about their programs with Academic Upgrading program participants and faculty. Conversely, Academic Upgrading faculty attends information sessions offered by Apprenticeship, including sessions on Pre-Apprenticeship programs. Academic Upgrading provides information on Academic Upgrading programs to Pre-Apprenticeship students. In one case, an information session set up by a local literacy network brought together literacy agencies, Apprenticeship, and others to share information on Apprenticeship. Based on participants' feedback, there was the sense that information sharing at this level was initiated more by Academic Upgrading than by Apprenticeship.

One college noted that it had had shared professional development sessions where faculty and staff from Apprenticeship, LBS, Job Connect, and EAS are able to network, share human and print resources, and focus on "case management" of shared clients.

### **Joint management meetings**

Managers or coordinators from Academic Upgrading and Apprenticeship (and other areas such as Job Connect) may hold formal meetings to share information about their programs. One common comment from the surveys was that even though managers may share information among themselves, there is not enough information sharing amongst the front line staff.

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## Information sharing leading to activities

Managers may share information that leads to the development of activities or joint action, the most common activity being a Pre-Apprenticeship proposal. Other activities that may result from information sharing are the best ways to integrate and refer potential Pre-Apprenticeship clients who do not have OSSD, and how to serve the needs of pre-apprentices or apprentices who are struggling basic skills in their program, particularly in math and reading.

Academic Upgrading staff may consult with Apprenticeship, MTCU to determine prerequisites for specific programs and determine course content determined for specific trades.

### ii. Curriculum development and delivery

*We are trying to break down silos. Managers in various areas—we recognize that we need to work as a team for the success of the students and to show MTCU.*

— Survey respondent from Apprenticeship

### Pre-Apprenticeship and Pre-Trades

For 55% of respondents, the most common joint work in curriculum development and delivery is for Academic Upgrading to deliver a component of basic and essential skills—especially ACE Math and English or LBS content—into Pre-Apprenticeship programming. This component may be offered at the front end of the program, or integrated throughout the technical training. In some cases, Academic Upgrading works with Pre-Apprenticeship participants who do not have OSSD to get an ACE credits within the program. In other cases, Academic Upgrading assists participants in brushing up on their basic or essential skills because they may already have their OSSD or they do not require an OSSD.

Academic Upgrading respondents represent a range of experience in working with Pre-Apprenticeship programming. Some are getting involved for the first time and others have been doing it for years. It appears that it may be more difficult for joint work to take place between Academic Upgrading and Apprenticeship for Pre-Trades courses. Only three respondents indicated that Academic Upgrading had consulted with or worked with Pre-Trades.

The Academic Upgrading component is generally developed in consultation with Pre-Apprenticeship instructors to ensure that it meets the needs of the trade and participants. Respondents indicated that Academic Upgrading subjects are tailored to the needs of the Pre-Apprenticeship program. For example, the math component can be tailored to the math used in a particular trade. Sometimes Academic Upgrading and Apprenticeship work jointly to hire a

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coordinator for the Pre-Apprenticeship program. Academic Upgrading may also provide extra help to Pre-Apprenticeship students who need it.

Informants who participated in interviews provided some examples of how Academic Upgrading may work with a Pre-Apprenticeship or Pre-Trades program. They are as follows:

- ✓ Apprenticeship approached Academic Upgrading for assistance in the trades math for Pre-Apprenticeship and Pre-Trades. As this issue was explored as a team, it became evident that LBS-4 math was the best pathway for the Pre-Apprenticeship program. Students took math within the regular LBS program. In the case of the Pre-Trades program, Academic Upgrading gave input into the math outcomes.
  - ✓ Apprenticeship worked with Academic Upgrading to develop the basic skills component of the Pre-Apprenticeship program for transportation technicians, cooks, and carpenters. This work was triggered by formal contracts with MTCU to deliver Pre-Apprenticeship programs. There was funding for Academic Upgrading with the Pre-Apprenticeship program so more hours could be added on to the pre-Apprenticeship program rather than having to substitute Academic Upgrading for something else. Academic Upgrading can offer ACE if needed. The upgrading component has been offered in two ways—at the front end of the program and also integrated with technical training. Feedback indicated that the integration method works better from a student interest and retention point of view.
  - ✓ Academic Upgrading works with Pre-Apprenticeship program for Automotive naturally because the two departments are in the same building. Academic Upgrading runs a section of the program as 12 weeks at the front end of the program. It works well to have this component at the front end as a way for new students to ease into college—especially if they have been out of school a long time.
  - ✓ Academic Upgrading approached Apprenticeship to work jointly on a pre-Apprenticeship program when its manager found out that Apprenticeship was putting in a proposal. Academic Upgrading wanted to be in on the program from the beginning—not at the last minute. When Academic Upgrading is invited in at the end of the process, the proper funding is not in place for the Academic Upgrading programming. In this case, Apprenticeship was receptive to the overture.
  - ✓ Academic Upgrading worked with the manager of the Pre-Trades program during the proposal phase and designed curriculum to include ACE English and Math.
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## Factors in offering Academic Upgrading within Pre-Apprenticeship or Pre-Trades programming

*We worked directly with people in Apprenticeship to design a Pre-Apprenticeship program. We heard they put in a proposal and wanted to be in on the front end, not last minute. When we are called in at the last minute [Academic Upgrading] is not funded properly.*

### – Survey respondent from Academic Upgrading

Informants provided some insights into the factors that influence the ease with which Academic Upgrading can work with Pre-Apprenticeship and Pre-Trades programming. These factors include:

- time and expectations around ACE certification
- funding arrangements
- management arrangements
- physical proximity of Academic Upgrading sites and Apprenticeship to each other
- perceptions of Academic Upgrading
- Pre-Trades courses as postsecondary credit courses

### *ACE*

Some respondents indicated that the expectation of getting ACE credits within the Pre-Apprenticeship program was too high within the timeframe of the program. In one case, the gap between the timeframe and the expectation of how many ACE credits could be obtained tied back to a screening process that was not strict enough in determining academic readiness of program participants.

### *Funding arrangements*

Respondents report that when Academic Upgrading and Apprenticeship work together on a funding proposal from the beginning and build in funding for the Academic Upgrading component of the program, it was much easier for Academic Upgrading to offer basic and essentials skills as part of the program.

Some respondents spoke about the difficulties in building in upgrading for Pre-Apprenticeship students through LBS with no additional funding for development and delivery. Some comments suggested that the structure of the LBS programming does not have enough flexibility to accommodate the diverse needs of Pre-Apprenticeship participants. In addition, the results for these students will not be counted under LBS.

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### *Management structure*

Respondents reported that when Academic Upgrading and Pre-Apprenticeship programs are coordinated or managed by the same person, it is obviously easier to integrate Academic Upgrading programming into a Pre-Apprenticeship program.

### *Physical proximity*

Some challenges with respect to joint work in Pre-Apprenticeship programming include physical proximity. One challenge identified is that the preparation, development, and delivery of a Pre-Apprenticeship program may involve different personnel and sites within the same college in a range of communities— all leading to a process that is not as smooth as it could be. Another challenge is that Academic Upgrading and Apprenticeship may be in different locations within the same community, making it more difficult to work together. Comments from informants indicated that physical proximity made it easier to partner and work together to develop and deliver a Pre-Apprenticeship program.

In one example, Apprenticeship has set up its own tutoring program for remedial work in basic skills for Pre-Trades using peer tutors because Academic Upgrading is not located on site. In other cases, Apprenticeship can walk down the hall with a participant who needs extra help.

### *Perceptions of Academic Upgrading*

There may be a perception that Academic Upgrading cannot offer the math and communications upgrading or assistance as part of a Pre-Trades course because it is a postsecondary program and a certain kind of academic rigour is expected that Academic Upgrading cannot deliver. In addition, there may be other departments in the college that think that having Academic Upgrading involved would cross over into their territory. Although these perceptions and barriers exist, they are changing over time with the expectations on the part of MTCU funding that these partnerships are necessary.

## **Apprenticeship**

*As in any integrated system, efficiencies and services should be noticeably improved. An integrated system would improve both quality of service to customers and increase profile within both the college community and client community.*

**– Survey respondent from Apprenticeship**

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Academic Upgrading works with Apprenticeship programs to a much lesser degree than it does with Pre-Apprenticeship programs. Only 21% of respondents indicated that Academic Upgrading has provided basic skills support to apprentices during the in-school portion of their apprenticeship training.

The most common way that Academic Upgrading works with Apprenticeship on the in-school component of an Apprenticeship program is to provide extra help to students in math. Students may get individual help from Academic Upgrading in the form of tutoring or a math course may be set up. Some examples of work that have been done in the area of programming between Academic Upgrading and Apprenticeship are described below.

- ✓ Academic Upgrading developed a math course at LBS-3 for plumbing apprentices in consultation with Apprenticeship. The math teacher from Apprenticeship taught it and all the apprentices were able to pass their math.
- ✓ Academic Upgrading delivers the math and science for Apprenticeship programs. Academic Upgrading works with Apprenticeship instructors to determine the content of the courses.
- ✓ Apprenticeship refers apprentices having trouble with math to Academic Upgrading. Apprentices get tutoring help from instructors.
- ✓ Academic Upgrading hires an upgrading teacher to work with many different groups of apprentices on remedial math. The program is seen as flexible and the instructor can integrate the math in a way that apprentices see it as relevant.

### iii. **Facilitated referral processes**

*Apprenticeship and Upgrading have the same manager and are very close together. When students phone in for information, we are able to refer them from one program to the other and give them the information they need quickly and efficiently.*

– **Survey respondent from Academic Upgrading**

Facilitated referral processes work in a number of ways. In most common referrals, potential participants for Pre-Apprenticeship or Pre-Trades programs are referred to Academic Upgrading to get their ACE certification or to the LBS program to upgrade their skills before they can be considered for these programs. In addition, participants already attending Pre-Apprenticeship or Apprenticeship programs are referred to Academic Upgrading for extra help—mostly in math, but also in reading, physics, communications, and computers. In one example, where both Academic Upgrading and Apprenticeship have the same manager, advertising is shared and

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based on their needs, students are referred from one program to the other. In other situations where Academic Upgrading and Apprenticeship are in close proximity and working together, names are shared back and forth between programs. Some participants indicated that their referral processes are informal.

To a lesser degree, LBS students are recruited for, and referred to Pre-Apprenticeship programs. In some cases, Academic Upgrading does the assessment for the Pre-Apprenticeship program and provides a number of applicants to choose from. Comments indicated that it is difficult to recruit students from LBS for Pre-Apprenticeship programming because it is difficult to predict when the program will happen and to prepare LBS students for it by the start date.

One informant described a case management approach to working with students who need extra help. Students have a learning plan, a counsellor helps refer them to the appropriate program to help with reading and math, and they are followed through their program using a coordinated approach.

#### **iv. Assessment and intake**

The most common activity in terms of assessment and intake is that Academic Upgrading does the assessment and intake for Pre-Apprenticeship programs. Academic Upgrading uses the LBS assessment and intake process for Pre-Apprenticeship programming or TOWES testing for selection in Pre-Apprenticeship programming to determine what essential skills need to be upgraded. Academic Upgrading may also sit on the interview team to select participants for the Pre-Apprenticeship program.

Respondents provided examples of how assessment and intake might take place:

- ✓ Academic Upgrading used the TOWES assessment at the beginning of the Pre-Apprenticeship program. Students then upgrade their skills using the Measure Up Web site and by completing working their field. They are invited to take the TOWES assessment again to see their progress.
  - ✓ The LBS coordinator conducts assessments and does the intake for pre-Apprenticeship programs. The coordinator provides the results to pre-Apprenticeship program staff for selection and provides input into the process if required.
  - ✓ TOWES is used to select participants for the Pre-Apprenticeship program. Those selected through this process are then interviewed by a committee. Committee
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members include the campus manager, an Academic Upgrading instructor, an Apprenticeship instructor, and a career counsellor from Job Connect.

- ✓ Academic Upgrading, Apprenticeship, and Job Connect work together to determine how to best refer clients—especially those who do not have their OSSD. Clients are referred to OBS from Apprenticeship to be evaluated. They then take the appropriate ACE courses based on the assessment. Once they have completed their training with OBS, they return to Pre-Apprenticeship training.

## **B. Factors that make it Possible to Work Jointly**

There are a number of factors that contribute to success in joint work between Academic Upgrading and Pre-Apprenticeship, Pre-Trades and Apprenticeship. These factors, listed in the frequency (most frequent to least frequent) as identified by informants are:

- good working relationships
- strong college vision and leadership
- funding for Pre-Apprenticeship programming
- proximity of departments
- same manager
- creative instructors
- clear protocols

### **i. Good working relationships**

The number one factor in enabling joint work is good working relationships among the parties involved. This includes trust among those involved along and a willingness to work as a team and try new things. It includes a knowledge of, and respect for, each other's different areas and expertise. It also includes building in time to share information and knowledge.

### **ii. Strong college vision and leadership**

Good working relationships as a factor in enabling joint work are closely followed by strong college vision and leadership. Within such a vision there is a recognition that all departments have to work together for student success. In some cases, one director or senior manager is responsible for both Academic Upgrading and Apprenticeship (and Job Connect) and can make

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the vision for working jointly a practical reality. In one college, these departments use the same planning template.

### **iii. Funding for Pre-Apprenticeship programming**

MTCU funding for Pre-Apprenticeship programs and Employment Ontario were cited as factors that set the stage for joint work.

### **iv. Proximity of departments**

When Academic Upgrading and Apprenticeship are housed together on the same campus or the same building, their proximity makes it easy to collaborate. Both formal and informal meetings can be easily scheduled.

### **v. Same manager**

Joint work is enabled when the same manager is responsible for Academic Upgrading and Pre-Apprenticeship programming and/or Apprenticeship.

### **vi. Creative instructors**

Creative instructors who understand, for example, applied math, and can make learning relevant and interesting for the trades were identified as a success factor in joint work.

### **vii. Clear protocols**

Clear protocols in terms of roles and responsibilities and clear boundaries were identified as key in planning and carrying out joint work.

## **C. Outcomes of working jointly**

*Student success rate is high. Students in the Pre-Apprenticeship Training Program were all successful in finding suitable work placements for the program. Many of the companies have kept the students on after the program work placement and we are optimistic that they will be signed on as apprentices.*

**– Survey respondent from Academic Upgrading**

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Respondents identified many positive outcomes of working jointly. These outcomes in the order of the frequency (most frequent to least frequent) that they have been identified by informants are:

- better student success and retention
- improved relationships, communication and information sharing
- improved service and information delivery to clients
- enhancements to programs
- raised profile of college in the community
- optimization of internal resources

#### **i. Better student success and retention**

Respondents indicated that there was more student success in both Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship as a result of working jointly. Examples include the fact that students are getting their ACE certification, passing Pre-Apprenticeship programs, and passing Apprenticeship programs because of the Academic Upgrading component.

#### **ii. Improved relationships, communication, and information sharing**

Improved relationships, better communication and more information sharing were identified as other important outcomes from working jointly. For respondents, information sharing leads to more sharing of resources, better understanding of each other's programs, better teamwork, and more effective referrals.

#### **iii. Improved service and information delivery to clients**

Improved overall service and delivery of information to clients was another important outcome. Academic Upgrading clients were identified as having more awareness of apprenticeship opportunities.

#### **iv. Program enhancements**

Respondents noted program enhancements such as new clients for both Academic Upgrading and Apprenticeship as a result of joint work. An increase in shared clientele was also indicated. One program said that it was able to count information and referral hours for LBS related to the assessment process for Pre-Apprenticeship. Another example of program enhancements was better screened applicants for Pre-Apprenticeship programming. An increase in funding was also

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given as an example of a benefit of working jointly, as was the raised profile of Academic Upgrading.

**v. Raised profile of college in the community**

Joint work has led to a better serving of the community and more awareness in the community of opportunities through apprenticeship. This has led to an increased reputation of colleges in the community.

**vi. Optimization of internal resources**

More efficiency in the use of internal resources was also identified as an outcome. For example, Academic Upgrading and Apprenticeship work together to do joint marketing. In other cases, resources are shared among faculty in Academic Upgrading and Pre-Apprenticeship.

**D. Challenges of Working Jointly**

*It's very hard to get everyone involved when we only have part-time faculty in the upgrading program and they are already overloaded with the LBS paperwork. Time and money are the two big factors.*

**– Survey respondent from Academic Upgrading**

A number of challenges in working jointly were identified by respondents. These challenges are ordered in the frequency (most frequent to least frequent) in which they were identified by respondents.

These challenges are:

- funding
  - physical proximity
  - different structures, schedules and administrative requirements
  - different values and philosophies and territorial issues
  - communication and relationship building
  - time constraints
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## **i. Funding**

*We get a certain amount of money for Academic Upgrading. There is no money for curriculum development and partnership development. We still need to meet our own objectives.*

**– Survey respondent from Academic Upgrading**

Funding was the most frequently identified challenge in working jointly. From the Academic Upgrading point of view, it is difficult to develop the specialized and tailored solutions for Pre-Apprenticeship, Pre-Trades, and Apprenticeship within the regular Academic Upgrading program. Comments from respondents included the fact that “this work can not be done within regular jobs; additional funding is needed to increase upgrading services and meet the needs of learners, and time is needed to develop or adjust course materials.” Another respondent from Academic Upgrading stressed that it does not work when the department is asked by Apprenticeship to offer upgrading for Pre-Apprenticeship training after the proposal has been accepted. Without consultation from the beginning, the proper resources for the upgrading component tend not to be built into the proposal.

Lack of funding for TOWES testing was identified as an issue in one case. In another instance, lack of Pre-Apprenticeship programs to meet the needs of the region was identified as an issue. Another issue raised was the need to address learning disabilities for those going into or already in the trades, and that right now there is no capacity to be able to do this within Academic Upgrading.

## **ii. Physical proximity**

*Currently the upgrading for Pre-Apprenticeship is collocated with the LBS/AU classrooms. If they were not co-located, it would be much more difficult to maintain the supports and connections for Pre-Apprenticeship students.*

**– Survey respondent from Academic Upgrading**

Physical proximity was identified as a significant challenge in working jointly. For example, if different programs are not at the same campus or not on site together, it is challenging to work jointly, or refer students or apprentices for upgrading help. For example, lack of close proximity can make it difficult to provide timely support in a cost-effective manner. Some participants suggest having Academic Upgrading, Apprenticeship and Job Connect all housed in one building.

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### iii. Different structures, schedules, and administrative requirements

*There needs to be much more work done jointly to identify students who are lacking basic skills and then providing remedial plans. Upgrading must be willing to work with short turn around times and in relatively small increments.*

– **Survey respondent from Apprenticeship**

Different ways that programs are structured and their reporting requirements can make it difficult to work jointly. For example, according to many respondents, LBS guidelines and its funding structure limit the joint work that can be done. Academic Upgrading needs to track and report on attendance and learner statistics. This kind of tracking can be challenging when working with apprentices. In addition, the tracking of contact hours is a significant challenge. One respondent said that in order to provide value for apprentices and students in pre-apprenticeship programs, students need to be able to attend part-time not full-time. The respondent noted that this lack of flexibility limits creativity—it is a model that does not fit because all programs for joint work are part-time. Another respondent noted that because Academic Upgrading cannot count learners, contact hours or exits, their own statistics do not reflect the work it is doing and the level of cooperation it fosters. This lack of statistics can have an effect on qualifying for future funding. Some respondents indicated they would like to see MTCU address these issues.

Other respondents reported that regular delivery of upgrading is not a cost-effective way to serve these clients and that it is difficult to customize one-on-one packages for apprenticeship students. One respondent noted that with only LBS funding, Academic Upgrading does not have the resources to develop and offer something different because its program area is tuition free.

Other comments indicate that Apprenticeship does not have the same outcomes-based deliverables as Pre-Apprenticeship and Academic Upgrading. As a result, Apprenticeship programming may not always have the same investment in deliverables. It was suggested that each partner needs to understand and make a commitment to helping each other meet outcomes.

From an Apprenticeship point of view, scheduling can be an issue—especially given that the apprentice may have to drive a distance each day to get to the program. One comment emphasized the need for “an adaptive, flexible system.”

### iv. Different values and philosophies and territorial issues

Another challenge cited is different values and philosophies among programs. One issue is around perceptions of Academic Upgrading and what it can offer. For example, Academic Upgrading might be seen as too academic by Apprenticeship, or not academic enough for Post-

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Secondary by others. Another concern raised was that a particular apprenticeship program or sector might worry about its reputation if it works with Academic Upgrading. Respondents said that some of these issues are slowly being broken down by successful, joint initiatives where students are successful and Apprenticeship sees the usefulness of Academic Upgrading.

The importance of getting the right kind of upgrading instructor who, using appropriate curriculum, can bridge these differences and make learning relevant to the trades and non-traditional learners was stressed. Respondents noted that it was sometimes difficult to find this kind of instructor.

Another issue raised by an Apprenticeship informant was that apprentices and students in Pre-Apprenticeship programs may be reluctant to participate in upgrading. They may not want to reveal any personal shortcomings in basic skills and would keep these to themselves. In addition, students in trades-related courses may not see the relevance of upgrading to their goals. One respondent's comment reflected on the need to integrate the upgrading well enough so students see its value.

In some cases there may be issues around who is responsible for upgrading. For example, other college departments might see it is their role to provide the communications and math components of postsecondary training.

#### **v. Communication and relationship building**

Although a lot of work has been done to build good communications and relationships for joint work, some respondents indicated that there is more work to do. In some cases, there is still a knowledge gap in what people know about each other's programs. More work in these areas could lead to a better understanding of each other's programs and to more referrals.

#### **vi. Time constraints**

Time is a factor in working jointly in that everyone is busy and collaboration takes more time.

### **E. Future Plans**

The majority of respondents are planning to continue with the joint work they have started. This includes continuing to provide support to Pre-Apprenticeship, Pre-Trades, and Apprenticeship programming. The most common future plans are to develop new programs that prepare adults

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for Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship, work with new Pre-Apprenticeship programs, and support apprentices who have barriers and upgrading needs. There are also future plans for shared professional development, more formal joint meetings, ongoing referrals, and more relationship building. About a quarter of the respondents have no future plans for joint work or are not sure at this time what the joint work will be.

## **F. Others Supports that Academic Upgrading Could Provide**

This section reports on what respondents think Academic Upgrading could provide to Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship that they are not providing already. Responses vary depending on what Academic Upgrading is presently providing.

The most frequent response in terms of additional supports that Academic Upgrading could provide was in the area of remedial support to apprentices and pre-apprentices. This support could be provided to individuals who are struggling with the basics, particularly in math and communications. This support could be linked to TOWES testing for Pre-Apprenticeship students. Other areas identified for additional support included testing-taking (including preparation for the Certificate of Qualification), time management, career development, and learning strategies. Short workshops were identified as a way to address these topics. One idea was to offer upgrading within Pre-Apprenticeship programs in the community with groups such as First Nations as a step to bringing them into the college.

Preparation for the workplace was also noted as an area for further development. This includes self-management skills, interview and job search, and workplace essential skills including document use.

Professional development for Apprenticeship in the area of Essential Skills was also identified as an area for further joint work

Respondents said that the most effective process for offering these supports to Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship programs was to assess where remediation is needed and build LBS capacity to provide it to address individual needs. This would mean continued collaboration among programs. Academic Upgrading would need to take the initiative to find out what services are needed by approaching Apprenticeship. This involves informing and building awareness about services so that managers and faculty from Apprenticeship will refer struggling students to Academic Upgrading. Academic Upgrading could hold an orientation at the beginning of each program to let students know what services are available.

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Some respondents noted that students may not be interested in participating in extra hours of instruction—especially if they have already been accepted as apprentices. One suggestion was to have an assessment for students and apprentices before they come to school to assess weak areas. Early identification of learning needs and barriers was stressed.

One recommendation was to have cross-college planning teams that bring ESL, LBS, and Apprenticeship together. One college has put together a skills council to bring these areas together. Another idea was to make sure that Academic Upgrading is built into Pre-Apprenticeship proposals. Co-housing was also suggested as an effective way for different programs to work together. In addition, local Apprenticeship offices should distribute information about upgrading opportunities to clients.

## **G. Provincial Protocols for Accessing Academic Upgrading Support**

Respondents were asked how helpful a provincial protocol would be for accessing academic supports. The majority favoured flexible guidelines or best practices that could be adapted for each college. People stressed that colleges have different geographies, variations in doing things, diverse funding arrangements, and a range of capacities. They would like a template that is helpful but not prescriptive and not mandated. Guidelines could include:

- what processes are working
- roles and how to work together
- what others are doing
- lessons learned
- who to contact
- actual stories

Respondents noted guidelines would be useful in that they would help structure partnerships, provide continuity internally and with external partners, and make it easier for clients to go from one college to another. Guidelines could also provide consistency of service and recognition of Academic Upgrading services. Guidelines save the time of having to do it oneself. Referral protocols are especially important as part of the guidelines.

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## H. Supports Needed for Academic Upgrading to do Joint Work

*We need funded time to support the outcomes we are trying to achieve instead of doing this as an add-on to everything else. Some times this can be achieved through Pre-Apprenticeship funding.*

– **Survey respondent from Academic Upgrading**

The most important supports that respondents said is needed for joint work are funding and time. They reiterated that it is difficult, if not impossible, to do joint work under current funding arrangements for LBS. They said that they need additional funding to 1) develop specific trades-related curriculum, 2) develop partnerships, and 3) attend professional development and information-sharing sessions. Along with these supports, they would like to see changes to the LBS guidelines so there is a model that meets the needs of students in this joint work.

The second most important support needed is to understand Apprenticeship—what they do, their needs, the system, and skills for different trades.

There also needs to be a rethinking of upgrading in a more applied, less academic way, with more applied resources and teaching techniques. People would like to see more sharing of curriculum and models that work.

Other comments around support needed include a long-term plan for Pre-Apprenticeship training and more acceptance of the role and support that Academic Upgrading can provide. A supportive environment is also needed with leadership from senior management in the college and support from LBS consultants.

## I. Benefits of Joint Work to Overall College Delivery

Overwhelmingly, respondents identified student success in completing their programs and reaching their goals as the main benefit of joint work. This was closely followed by better student retention, more relevant content, improved seamless service to clients, satisfied employers, and more employed clients.

Other benefits noted were stronger relationships and programming, less duplication of services, cost savings, more respect for and knowledge of programs, and enhanced perception of the college by the community and students.

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## IV. Analysis: Summary Statement

Overall, the results of the research shows that there is a positive movement towards integration on the part of Academic Upgrading and Pre-Apprenticeship, Pre Trades and Apprenticeship programs. In almost all cases, there is at least information sharing among programs and a large majority of the integration work is occurring in the area of curriculum development and delivery. Academic Upgrading is offering basic and essential skills especially math in pre-apprenticeship programming and as support to apprentices during the in-school component of their program. Integration is taking place to a much lesser degree in the areas of assessment and intake and formalized referral processes. These areas need to be further understood in terms of both challenges and opportunities and require more attention and development in future integration work.

Good working relationships among personnel in Academic Upgrading and Apprenticeship and strong college vision and leadership are the top factors leading to successful joint work. In all cases where colleges are working jointly there are consistently positive outcomes both internally and externally. Internally, integration leads to better student services, success and retention, improved working relationships among departments, enhanced programs and cost savings. External outcomes are better knowledge about programs and the enhanced reputation of the college in the community.

However, there are challenges when it comes to integration. One noticeable challenge is for Academic Upgrading to develop specialized programming and tailored solutions within the current Academic Upgrading Framework in terms of time to develop specialized resources and to offer specialized services to Apprenticeship. Different proximities, structures, requirements, values and philosophies between the two areas can also make integration difficult. Academic Upgrading needs additional funding and a better understanding of Apprenticeship's needs and how to address them to undertake joint work.

Few college personnel from Apprenticeship participated in this research despite two follow-up e-mails after the original request. Responses also show that Academic Upgrading usually initiates the integration relationship. These two findings show that there needs to be more awareness raising with Apprenticeship about the benefits of Academic Upgrading supports to their students and programs.

The large majority of colleges plan to continue their joint work and build on their successes especially in curriculum development and delivery but also information sharing and referrals. Respondents would like to learn from their colleagues in other colleges what kinds of integration processes are working through stories and lessons learned. They would like to see guidelines and templates for integration work that they can adapt to their unique context.

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## Appendix A: Survey Questionnaires

### Survey with Academic Upgrading Programs: Integration of College Academic Upgrading Programs with Pre-Apprenticeship, Pre Trades and Apprenticeship Programming

#### Introduction:

The purpose of this survey is to gather information on both the current activities and future plans for the integration of academic upgrading programs with apprenticeship, pre-apprenticeship, and pre trades programming in Ontario colleges. The survey is part of the College Sector Committee (CSC) project *Supporting Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship Programming through Academic Upgrading Programs*. At the recent joint College Upgrading, Job Connect and Apprenticeship conference "Riding the Wave" participants from all three programs identified that establishing closer working relationships within colleges would improve program outcomes, raise college profile and benefit students. The objective of gathering this information is to identify:

- strategies for information sharing, and facilitated referrals
- linkages between Academic Upgrading and Apprenticeship teachers and initiatives to share or jointly deliver curriculum
- effective assessment and intake processes intended to fast track interested participants into Pre/Apprenticeship and Pre Trades training
- key outcomes required in upgrading programming to promote student success in pre/apprenticeship programs
- benefits and challenges of integration

We wish to collect all the information by **July 31, 2007**. Sue Folinsbee has been hired by the College Sector Committee to complete the research. Sue will contact you to arrange an interview or you can complete this survey and send back to Sue by e-mail [sfolinsbee@ica.net](mailto:sfolinsbee@ica.net) or by fax: 416-488-3674.

The information from the survey will be used to compile a report on the integration strategies currently used or planned in the Ontario college system. Names of individuals will not be used in the report. However, we would like to thank individuals for their contributions in the acknowledgments.

The CSC thanks you for your support.

Lynne Wallace  
Executive Director  
College Sector Committee

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**Survey with Academic Upgrading Programs: Integration of College  
Academic Upgrading Programs with Pre-Apprenticeship, Pre Trades and  
Apprenticeship Programming**

Name of College: \_\_\_\_\_

Your name and title: \_\_\_\_\_

**Survey Questions:**

**1. Overall, how has Academic Upgrading worked jointly with Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship to address basic and essential skills needs of apprentices?**

In which the following areas has there been joint work. Please check those that apply.

- information sharing
- facilitated referral processes
- curriculum development and delivery
- assessment and intake
- other

i. Could you describe how the joint work has taken place for each area?

ii. What factors made it possible to work jointly?

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iii. What were the outcomes of working jointly?

iv. What future plans are there to work together on these areas?

v. What are some of the factors that might make it difficult to work jointly? How could these factors be overcome?

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**4. What do you see as the benefits to overall college delivery of joint work or integration of Academic Upgrading with Apprenticeship, Pre-Apprenticeship and Pre Trades Programs?**

**5. What kind of support s do Academic Upgrading staff need to work successfully with Apprenticeship, Pre-Apprenticeship and Pre Trades Programs to ensure that there are successful outcomes for students in these programs?**

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## Survey with Apprenticeship, Pre-Apprenticeship and Pre-Trades Programs: Integration of College Academic Upgrading Programs with Pre- Apprenticeship, Pre Trades and Apprenticeship Programming

### Introduction:

The purpose of this survey is to gather information on both the current activities and future plans for the integration of academic upgrading programs with apprenticeship, pre-apprenticeship, and pre trades programming in Ontario colleges. The survey is part of the College Sector Committee (CSC) project *Supporting Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship Programming through Academic Upgrading Programs*. At the recent joint College Upgrading, Job Connect and Apprenticeship conference "Riding the Wave" participants from all three programs identified that establishing closer working relationships within colleges would improve program outcomes, raise college profile and benefit students. The objective of gathering this information is to identify:

- strategies for information sharing, and facilitated referrals
- linkages between Academic Upgrading and Apprenticeship teachers and initiatives to share or jointly deliver curriculum
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- key outcomes required in upgrading programming to promote student success in pre/apprenticeship programs
- benefits and challenges of integration

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The CSC thanks you for your support.

Lynne Wallace  
Executive Director  
College Sector Committee

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**Survey with Apprenticeship, Pre-Apprenticeship and Pre-Trades Programs:  
Integration of College Academic Upgrading Programs with Pre-  
Apprenticeship, Pre Trades and Apprenticeship Programming**

Name of College: \_\_\_\_\_

Your name and title: \_\_\_\_\_

**Survey Questions:**

**1. What programs does your college offer in the area of apprenticeship, pre-apprenticeship and pre-trades?**

- i. Please list the programs your college offers in terms of apprenticeship, pre-apprenticeship and pre-trades.

Name of program	Category	Length of Program

- ii. How do you ensure in your recruitment and counselling process that students in apprenticeship, pre-apprenticeship, and pre-trades have the basic and essential skills such as trades math, reading comprehension document use, writing, study skills and test taking? What remedial practices or referral processes do you have in place for students who do not have the required basic skills for your program? How do you refer these students if they do not have the required basics for your program?
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iii. How do you address basic and essential skills in your curriculum?

**2. Overall, how have Apprenticeship and Pre- Apprenticeship worked jointly with Academic Upgrading to address basic and essential skills needs of apprentices and other students in your programs?**

i. In which the following areas has there been joint work. Please check all those that apply.

- information sharing about students (e.g. between Apprenticeship and Academic Upgrading)
- facilitated referral processes
- joint program planning (e.g. between Apprenticeship and Academic Upgrading)
- assessment and intake
- other

ii. Could you describe how the joint work has taken place for each area?

iii. What were the critical steps and important factors which made it possible to work jointly?

iv. What were the specific benefits of working jointly?

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v. What future plans and next steps are there to work together on these areas?

vi. What are some of the factors that might make it difficult to work jointly? How could these factors be overcome?

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**2. What other kinds of support could Academic Upgrading provide in basic and essential skills for the students in your programs that are not currently being provided?**

i. What kind of supports could Academic Upgrading provide that are not currently being provided?

ii. What would be the most effective process for Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship programs to access these supports from Academic Upgrading?

iii. How helpful would a standard provincial protocol be for a process to access academic supports?

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**4. What do you see as the benefits to overall college delivery of joint work or integration of Academic Upgrading with Apprenticeship, Pre-Apprenticeship and Pre Trades Programs?**

**5. What kind of support do Apprenticeship/pre-Apprenticeship staff need to work successfully with Academic Upgrading to ensure that there are successful outcomes for students in these programs?**

**6. Have you been able to track the success rate of students who come to your programs from Academic Upgrading ?**

i. If so, could you describe your tracking process?

ii. If so, could you describe the success rate for those students who have come from Academic Upgrading?

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