



2017 **annual report**



2018
annual
report

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MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CO-CHAIRS

As the two newest chairs of the board, it is a pleasure to be part of an organization that is committed to spearheading change for students through education, access, and collaboration. Our role, as institutional leaders and members of the board, is to help foster a new kind of postsecondary experience, one that brings together colleges, universities, students, and other stakeholders, and ONCAT has certainly been a catalyst to this change.

Since its inception in 2011, ONCAT has broadened the discussion on student mobility in Ontario, and as a result, has supported more than 55,000 students who transfer annually among our colleges and universities. Through its many initiatives, the organization has worked with institutions to develop transfer pathways and equivalencies in the province, supported a growing body of research to

sustain an integrated approach to student mobility, built shared networks among multiple partners, and developed consistent standards to facilitate transfer by maintaining a high quality of academic success.

We are supportive of ONCAT for their advocacy on behalf of students across Ontario who are looking for more out of their postsecondary education, who are pursuing multiple credentials, diverse skillsets, and complementary experiences. In speaking to our students, they have indicated that for them it's about the ability to combine and blend the exact types of credentials they need to pursue the various career interests they may have. ONCAT's work towards a more integrated system for mobility in the Ontario postsecondary community serves this need while also being mindful of public investment.

On behalf of the Board, we would like to thank the Government of Ontario for recognizing the importance of ONCAT's past successes and

future potential for postsecondary education in Ontario, and recommitting to their support for this work. Their continued investment in student mobility makes meeting student needs for an efficient and flexible postsecondary system an attainable goal.



We would also like to recognize and thank ONCAT's interim Executive Director Lia Quickert, and the rest of the secretariat at ONCAT for moving the credit transfer agenda forward over the last year, as well as ONCAT's newest Executive Director, Yvette Munro who started in January of this year.

Lastly, we offer our appreciation and thanks to our colleagues at Ontario's colleges and universities. Your hard work, dedication and commitment to serving students is at the core of all of ONCAT's success.

Sincerely,



Cheryl Jensen
President & CEO,
Algonquin College



Rhonda Lenton
President & Vice-Chancellor,
York University



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As the new Executive Director, I am excited to lead an organization that is so focused on helping students across Ontario along their educational journey towards the right postsecondary credential, and as they prepare for their future careers.

Much like ONCAT, I am very passionate about helping young people, like first generation students who are the first in their family to pursue postsecondary education, new Canadians and immigrants who may experience difficulty in navigating the Ontario educational system and who might have previously studied in their home country, and adults who are returning to school looking to either start a new career or gain additional skills.

Having come to Canada from Hong Kong at a young age and being the first in my family to attend university, I can certainly sympathize with some of their struggles. I had to rely on friends, teachers, and my own research to understand and move through the system successfully. In my case, I ended up at York University, an institution that I connected with, particularly because of its diversity and the kind of programs that interested me.

Over the years, I have had the pleasure of working with many diverse communities throughout Ontario. First, as a result of my various positions in government, and also through several not-for-profit organizations, teaching at university and college, and finally, at York University where I spent a decade before landing at ONCAT. Throughout my various roles, I gained a greater appreciation for the important task that Ontario's postsecondary educational institutions play in providing high quality education, contributing to the province's economy, and supporting strong and vibrant communities.

My previous position as the Director of Academic Partnerships and Planning within the Office of the Vice Provost Academic at York allowed me to work with government, educational institutions, and academic and administrative colleagues across the institution to advance credit transfer, community engagement, and access to postsecondary education. I also had the great pleasure of working with ONCAT since its creation in 2011, participating at the annual conference and leading the development of new transfer pathway and research projects.

It is the culmination of these experiences that make me so keen to lead ONCAT, especially at such a crucial juncture in our history. This past year has really been a time of transition, moving the organization forward from a relatively new organization, created in partnership with the Government of Ontario, to a more mature organization that collaborates with postsecondary and other sector partners to make a positive difference in the lives of Ontario's students.

Looking forward, we're continuing our focus on developing and sustaining the frameworks and

practices that will bring credit transfer in Ontario in-line with stable, mature systems elsewhere across Canada and internationally. We're looking at adult education, and international transfer, as well as building partnerships with the indigenous institutions. To better serve our developing role in Ontario's postsecondary ecosystem, we continue to build on our new brand identity, with a revamp of the ONCAT and ONTransfer.ca websites.

Our successes would not be possible without support from our community. We would first like to acknowledge the investment from the provincial government for identifying ONCAT and its work in enhancing student mobility in the province, and for recognizing the importance of this conference.

We would like to thank our Board of Directors, under the leadership of our co-chairs, Cheryl Jensen, President and CEO of Algonquin College, and Rhonda Lenton, President and Vice-Chancellor of York University.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Lia Quickert, for providing leadership and stability to the organization as ONCAT's interim Executive Director.

For almost two years, she has been instrumental in continuing to advance ONCAT's agenda in collaboration with all the colleges and universities across the province.

And finally, we would like to recognize all of our partners at the 45 colleges and universities in Ontario. Our success as an organization is really a testament to all of their hard work.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Y. Munro'.

Yvette Munro
Executive Director





WHY MOBILITY MATTERS



At a time marked by changing technology, demographics, and socio-economic realities, there is increasing demand for a postsecondary education (PSE) system that delivers:

- Greater choice, options, and pathways;
- Improved student success, attainment and satisfaction levels;
- Increased focus on personalized learning; and
- Demonstrable return on investments (financial, resources, and time).

ONCAT is uniquely positioned to address these challenges, alongside our partners and stakeholders, and in alignment with the Ontario government's commitment to the development of an integrated education system that maximizes opportunities for student success and lifelong learning.

We recognize our important role in fostering a new kind of postsecondary experience – one that brings together the strength of colleges, universities, skilled workers, apprentices, and

all types of students. Building on supports for various communities and forging meaningful partnerships that connect our academic institutions to broader networks will help ensure all Ontarians are prepared for the jobs of tomorrow and have greater prospects for a brighter future.



WHO WE ARE

Established in 2011, the Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer (ONCAT) is a government-funded organization created to enhance academic pathways and reduce barriers for students looking to transfer among Ontario's 45 public colleges and universities.

As a member organization, ONCAT works with those institutions to develop transfer credit policies and practices to ease student mobility. ONCAT's activities are part of the Ontario government's commitment to the development of an integrated education system that maximizes opportunities for student success.

Collaboration is at the root of these efforts, and as one of the few organizations in Ontario that brings together all actors in PSE, ONCAT is uniquely poised to help deliver critical value to the entire sector.



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Students will experience ease of mobility among publically assisted PSE institutions

- Students will experience reduced barriers when transferring, which will help them to graduate.
- There will be increased and improved collaboration among institutions (colleges and universities) regarding transfer opportunities and articulation.
- Stakeholders will have improved awareness and knowledge of transfer opportunities, outcomes, and progress.



OUR MEMBERS

All 45 of Ontario's public colleges and universities:



**STUDENTS
FIRST**



WHO IS A TRANSFER STUDENT?

A transfer student is someone who has completed a course, some courses, or an entire program at one institution and wants to continue their postsecondary education at another.

POPULAR TRANSFER AREAS

- Business
- Social Sciences
- Liberal Arts
- Engineering
- Health

WHY TRANSFER?

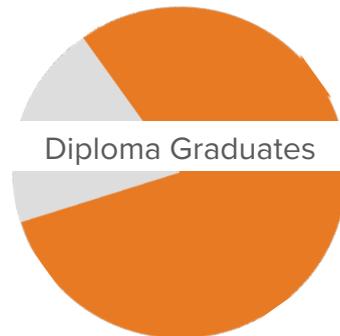
- To switch programs
- Institution isn't the right fit
- Personal circumstances
- Want additional PSE studies



EVERY DIRECTION OF

↻ university ↔ college ↻

TRANSFER COUNTS



64% have a pathway into a degree in a **similar** discipline

80% have a pathway into a **degree** beyond just broad-based admissions policies



25% can be recognized in an **equivalency** upon transfer

1,500,000 ANNUAL PAGE-VIEWS

WHAT IS ONTRANSFER.CA?

ONTransfer.ca caters to those students thinking about their postsecondary journey. It's a free website managed by ONCAT where students interested in mobility can see what courses and programs will transfer. The website has information from our membership consisting of all of Ontario's 45 public colleges and universities.



HOST TO:

- **Program Transfer Guide** which has 1,800+ block agreements, leading to **800,000+ individual transfer opportunities**
- **Course Transfer Guide** which has **210,000+ course equivalencies**

HELPING:

- H** High school students looking to combine college & university studies to tailor their education
- UC** College or university students thinking of changing schools
- G** Students who have finished a college or university program & want to further their studies.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

- Providing students with accurate and comprehensive information about the transfer process
- Providing leadership in creating a culture to support student mobility in Ontario
- All institutions are now tracking and/or posting:
 - Block transfer agreements;
 - Credit transfer policies, and are participating in the defining and implementation of best practices to ease transitions for students;
 - Data on how many students transfer; and
 - Diploma-to-diploma and degree-to-degree pathways for students in high demand areas.



**55,000+ STUDENTS TRANSFER
EVERY YEAR IN ONTARIO**





BUILDING ON SHARED RESOURCES



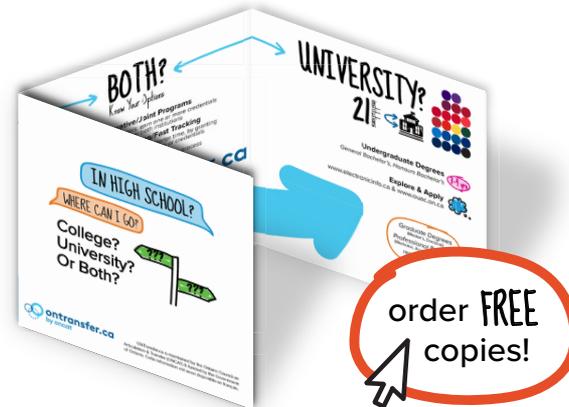
NEW HIGH SCHOOL BROCHURE

ONCAT continues to work with students and stakeholders to ensure that there is a better understanding of the transfer and mobility opportunities, outcomes, and progress afforded by our system.

As our stakeholder base expands and shifts, ONCAT strives to proactively respond to evolving needs. After comprehensive research, product development, and feedback, a new High School brochure was released in Fall 2017, in both online and print formats. The brochure is tailored to students in secondary school who are thinking about their next educational steps, and is designed to help explain some of the requirements for College and University studies, with a focus on transfer.

We were thrilled by the response, seeing **14,000+** copies of the brochure ordered in just the first three months of the launch – a clear sign that this resource was a much needed complement to the materials available to students planning their postsecondary path, and those stakeholders supporting them with this task.

ONCAT will continue to welcome feedback to further refine the brochure as needed, and intends to begin work on similar tailored resources for our other audiences, including adult learners. View and order free copies of this resource on the ONCAT website.



PLATFORMS FOR COLLABORATION

In June 2017, Pan-Canadian partners gathered in Toronto for the Pan-Canadian Consortium on Admissions & Transfer (PCCAT) Annual Conference to discuss related research, promising new initiatives, and successful best practices in credit transfer. Also celebrated at the conference was the expansion of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enhance student mobility across their jurisdictions and across the country. Seven provincial councils are now signatories, including ONCAT. The long-term goal is to establish a shared database so students in any jurisdiction can search for post-secondary educational opportunities inter-provincially.



February 2018 marked ONCAT's 4th ONTransfer.ca Day, bringing administrators from 45 colleges and universities across the province to Toronto to discuss the technical aspects of credit transfer, and share tools and resources. Discussions centered on streamlining of transfer processes, credit assessment, and collaboration. A plenary session featured two transfer students who shared their experiences, challenges, and hopes, from which attendees had the opportunity to learn and brainstorm solutions.

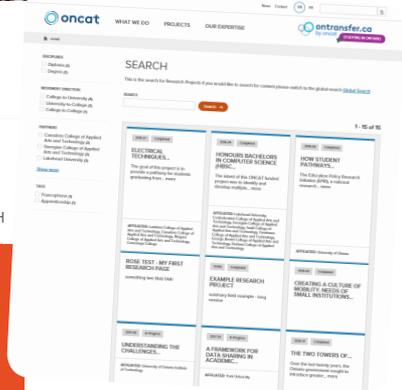
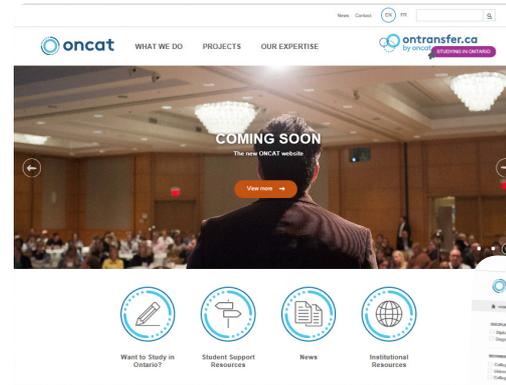
We are also pleased to welcome over 300 participants from all levels of Ontario's PSE community to ONCAT's 7th annual Student Pathways in Higher Education conference. The conference gives participants the opportunity to learn about emerging directions on transfer and mobility, both provincially and nationally, explore new partnerships, and share credit transfer and student support best practices.

ONTRANSFER.CA AND ONCAT WEBSITES

As ONCAT's flagship service, the ONTransfer.ca website continues to be maintained and developed with the goal of providing students with a central access point for all information on credit transfer in Ontario. In complement to this platform is the ONCAT corporate site. Where ONTransfer.ca services as the hub for students, ONCAT.ca serves as a sector resource for our stakeholders and partners.

As part of our rebranding, and in order to provide a revitalized electronic platform for resourcing and support, a website redevelopment of ONCAT.ca began in 2017.

After the release and review of a project schedule and thorough RFP in May 2017, ONCAT engaged the services of Digital Echidna, a London Ontario based agency. The website is expected to launch in spring of 2018, and will include a new project search feature, and the capacity for hosting expanded resources from our communities of practice, including an online Learning Outcomes toolkit.



275,000+ SESSION VISITS TO ONTRANSFER.CA FROM APRIL 2017 TO MARCH 2018

MOBILITY INFRASTRUCTURE



Reliable information, and collaboration in the improvement of new and existing pathways, is crucial to ensuring successful and effective student mobility in Ontario. With this in mind, ONCAT funds projects through an annual Request for Proposals (RFPs) in various areas of credit transfer, including Innovative Transfer, Pathway Development, and Research. This year we decided to automate the RFP application process through an online platform, after consultation with stakeholders.

Additionally, 35 new final reports for research and pathway development projects were posted to the ONCAT website; these are significant learning resources to the sector, serving to bring together examples, tools, and experiences on credit transfer and articulation. To view the reports, please visit the Project and Research sections of the ONCAT website.



INNOVATIVE TRANSFER

As our understanding of credit transfer grows, so too do new ideas and perspectives on the application and

development of student mobility more broadly. Recognizing the exciting potential of these new opportunities, in 2016-17 ONCAT began offering an RFP with a focus on Innovative Transfer. This has included new models of academic collaboration and system-wide solutions to reduce barriers for transfer students, with 5 projects receiving funding in the 2017-18 year.

In addition to continuing to offer this new RFP, ONCAT has begun work on two projects that address the complexity and challenges in the areas of adult education and credential laddering and latticing*. The approaches hold promise in contributing to the accessibility of lifelong learning, and offer legitimate second-chance options for students who, for various reasons, seek to change programs, institutions, or credentials.

** Laddering (or stacking) implies a linear approach to learning with students moving in one direction and typically through high affinity pathways, whereas latticing facilitates movement through a matrix of credentials, not necessarily in any one direction or only along high affinity pathways.*



PATHWAY DEVELOPMENT

12 new pathway development projects were added to the previous 130 ONCAT has supported through the Credit Transfer Innovation Fund since 2011. These projects help in the development and implementation of strategies to enhance student mobility, expansion of transfer opportunities, and increases in postsecondary collaboration.



KNOWLEDGE GATHERING

Knowledge gathering develops more robust indicators of our success, both as an organization and a province, with respect to credit transfer, and helps us measure success against system-level

goals. ONCAT funds and engages in research projects that examine student experiences of transfer and patterns of academic performance. Some of the research we are leading and supporting:

- In the 2017-18 RFP process, a total of 6 research projects were funded.
- A redeveloped Student Experience Survey was launched in February 2018, administered through CCI Resources Inc, and distributed with support from the student organizations (CFS-ON, OUSA, CSA). The survey will help shed light on the experience of students prior to, during, and after the transfer process, as well their experience interacting with the ONTransfer.ca website. To date, we have received over 4500 responses, and in early 2018 an analysis will be run on the result.
- The Ontario College & University Transfer Analysis, in partnership with the Ontario College Application Service (OCAS), looks at student patterns using transcript transfer requests from OCAS and OUAC (the Ontario Universities' Application Centre) for three population groups (all students, first generation students, and indigenous

students), mapped along region, college/ university, and area of study.

- Trends in Student Mobility Research and Practice (formerly called Promising Practices) was completed, which reviewed of all of ONCAT's funded projects since 2011, and summarized the trends and insights found.





GROUPS



Faculty Fellows

Faculty play an essential role in the student experience of transfer. In 2016-17, ONCAT piloted a Faculty Fellows program to directly engage faculty in areas of student mobility and transfer. The five pilot institutions are La Cité collégiale, Université de Hearst, Lakehead University, Seneca College, and St. Clair College. Institutional project activities include Lunch and Learns, faculty focus groups and surveys, and reviews of transfer student data and transfer agreements.

Francophone and Bilingual Institutions Advisory Board

A working group of member representatives from francophone and bilingual institutions, to better understand and address the particular contexts and challenges of those institutions. Comprised of 9 public francophone or bilingual institutions in Ontario, including affiliated or confederated institutions: Collège Boréal, Collège Universitaire Dominicain,

Collège Universitaire Glendon, La Cité collégiale, Université de Hearst, Université Laurentienne, Université d'Ottawa, Université Saint Paul, Université de Sudbury.

Learning Outcomes Steering Committee

A working group of member representatives who are developing a better understanding of the role of learning outcomes in the credit transfer process and how they can improve existing and future pathways. As part of this work, ONCAT's multi-year "The Learning Outcomes for Transfer – Publication Project" aims to assess critically the theoretical and conceptual foundations, assumptions, and implications of using learning outcomes for the purposes of credit transfer and student mobility. An international, large-scale assessment of outcomes-based approaches has been conducted, from which preliminary implications and recommendations for the Ontario context have been composed.

Northern Institutions' Pathways Steering Committee

A working group of member representatives from northern institutions, to better understand and address the particular contexts and challenges of institutions based in the north.

The Steering Committee includes four universities

(Algoma, Lakehead, Laurentian, Nipissing) and six colleges (Cambrian, Canadore, Boréal, Confederation, Northern and Sault). Current work is focused on an Integrated Project to

improve collaboration across the institutions and to provide students with unique educational opportunities in Northern Ontario.

Student Advisory Board

Comprised of students, the board provides advice on the on-going operational activities of ONCAT, and advises on the development of new ideas and initiatives to enhance and support student mobility, including credit transfer information products.



Transfer Advisor Group (TAG)

Transfer advisors, at both sending and receiving institutions, are often times students' first official point of information when making decisions about transfer. Established to provide feedback and guidance, TAG provides ONCAT with sector-wide expert advice on transfer advising. The first TAG meeting was held in 2017, with participation from 37 attendees from 34 institutions.

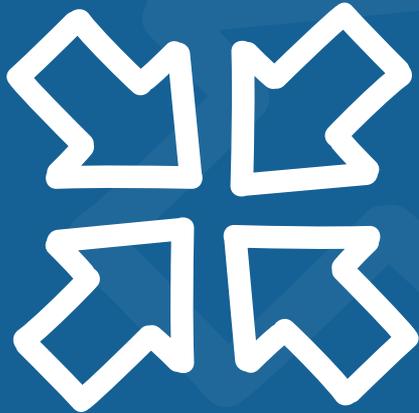
In March 2018 the second successful meeting saw the election of the co-chairs, and the development of first year objectives.

Transfer Committees

Comprised of representatives from a specific discipline (English, History, Engineering, Game Education, or Business), drawn from the colleges and universities that offer at least one credential in that field of study. They act as a platform for information sharing and discussion on student mobility in the discipline. Industry and accreditation bodies also participate in committees when relevant, such as within the Engineering Transfer Committee. This past year the formation of two new transfer committees began, in the areas of Community Services and Biology/ Biotech.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS



[Cheryl Jensen](#), President and CEO of Algonquin College (Co-Chair)

[Rhonda Lenton](#), President and Vice-Chancellor of York University (Co-Chair)

[Lynn Casimiro](#), Vice-President Academic and Student Success, La Cité collégiale

[Donna Church](#), Vice-President Academic, Academic Affairs, Lambton College

[Serge Demers](#), Interim Vice-President, Academic and Provost, Laurentian University

[Chris Fernlund](#), University Student Representative

[Cindy Hazell](#), External Representative

[Susan McCahan](#), Vice-Provost, Innovations in Undergraduate Education, University of Toronto

[Pierre Riopel](#), External Representative

[Luke Speers](#), College/University Graduate Representative

Ex Officio Members of the Board

[Yvette Munro](#), Executive Director, ONCAT

[Karen Creditor](#), Chief Executive Officer, Ontario College Application Service

[David Fulford](#), Vice-President Research, Colleges Ontario

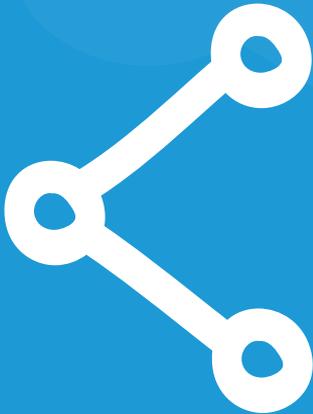
[Peter Gooch](#), Senior Director, Policy and Analysis, Council of Ontario Universities

[Heather Lane](#), Executive Director, Ontario Universities' Application Centre

[David Porter](#), CEO, eCampus Ontario



ONCAT TEAM





Yvette Munro
Executive Director



Rose Chan
ONTransfer.ca Manager



Amy Oziel
Operations Coordinator



Shauna Love
Operations Director



Melinda Cheng
Special Projects Assistant,
Data Projects



Carolyn Poplak
Project Lead:
Collaborations and
Community Programs



Lia Quickert
Strategic Communications
and Public Affairs Director



Sonia Chwalek
Communications and
Events Coordinator



Peter Ssekiziyivu
Finance Manager



Alana Wiens
Policy and Programs
Director



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Coordinator



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