

Interim Accountability Agreement

Institution: University of Guelph

Preamble:

Reaching Higher, the McGuinty Government Plan for Postsecondary Education, outlines the government's commitment to begin a new era for postsecondary education in Ontario, with the cumulative investment of \$6.2 billion over the next five years in the province's postsecondary education system.

This government is committed to working with publicly funded colleges and universities to achieve results for taxpayer dollars. Achieving accountability for public funds in this context requires clear roles, responsibilities and expectations. Demonstrating success to the public requires reporting on meaningful and measurable results for the sector.

This is why the government will be developing bi-lateral Multi-Year Agreements that will outline the targets and results expected of the sector from the cumulative fiscal investment beginning in 2006-07. The government recognizes that 2005-06 is a bridging year from the current accountability arrangements to the new Multi-Year Agreements.

This document is the Interim Accountability Agreement for 2005-06. It is a one-year accountability agreement, to be superseded by the development of Multi-Year Agreements beginning in 2006-07. It is a companion to your institution-specific 2005-06 operating grant allocations, and confirms the commitments and results expected from each institution for this funding. These commitments include the provision of indicators from institutions related to student retention, average class size and Student : Faculty ratios. The government recognizes that there is no systematic approach to measuring these indicators in Ontario at this time, which precludes the ability to compare data on these indicators from one institution to another. The government is committed to working with institutions to develop more robust data sets for future use.

This agreement constitutes an integral and central component of the government's and sector's overall performance and accountability relationship in 2005-06. It does not however, replace existing performance and accountability arrangements, and will be supplemented by existing and, where applicable, modified or new transfer payment and reporting requirements, such as those associated with individual grant lines. The ministry remains committed to the goal of reducing and consolidating accountability and reporting requirements wherever possible, consistent with the high standard of overall accountability for public funds expected by the public.

This agreement should be signed and returned to the ministry as soon as possible, with the understanding that the Advancing Quality and Supporting Excellence allocation will be released to the institution when the agreement is signed.

1. Government Goals and Commitments for the Postsecondary Education System

This section summarizes the government's expected goals for access, quality and accountability as announced in the 2005 Budget investments in postsecondary education, and outlines the 2005-06 government commitments designed to help the system meet these goals.

1.1 Access

As outlined in the 2005 Budget, the government is committed to ensuring that there is an increase in the number of Ontarians who have the opportunity to pursue higher quality postsecondary education that is affordable and accessible.

In 2005-06, the government will undertake the following initiatives designed to help the postsecondary education system improve access:

- Establish enrolment targets - 2005-06 targets will assist the government to meet its public commitments to increase university and college full-time enrolment by 50,000, increase graduate enrolment by 14,000 by 2009-10, and increase medical enrolments by a further 15% over the next four years;
- Establish new advisory committees on Aboriginal and Francophone postsecondary issues and continue the work of the existing Postsecondary Advisory Committee on Disability Issues to provide the government with strategic advice on how to maximize the educational experiences of these students;
- Develop a strategy to enhance the participation and success of First Generation students who are the first in their families to access postsecondary education;
- Continue the tuition freeze for 2005-06, compensate institutions for that freeze, and consult with student, college and university representatives on a new tuition framework to be in place for 2006-07;
- Enhance OSAP – improve student financial assistance for 135,000 low and middle-income students, and reintroduce up-front grants for low income students; and
- Develop an international marketing strategy to assist in the internationalization of Ontario's postsecondary education system and to ensure that Ontario remains competitive in an increasingly globalized environment.

1.2 Quality

As outlined in the 2005 Budget, the government is committed to the highest standards in teaching, research, and the student learning experience.

The government also recognizes that each institution has existing areas of excellence. This excellence might be found in a differentiated mission, a specialized niche, program leadership, service leadership, enhanced services and/or accessibility to a specific group, or some other area.

In order to assist institutions in meeting both the government's and their own goals in quality, the government is committed to:

- Establish the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario; and
- Provide funding to advance quality, support institutional excellence and fund change under a new Quality Improvement Fund in 2005-06.

1.3 Accountability

As outlined in the 2005 Budget, the government is committed to ensuring that postsecondary institutions be held accountable for accomplishing the goals and objectives established under Reaching Higher. In 2005-06 the government will undertake the following initiatives designed to help universities improve accountability:

- Implement and sign-back the 2005-06 Interim Accountability Agreements;
- Develop Multi-Year Agreements and a performance measurement framework for 2006-07; and
- Continue the ongoing review of institutional reporting requirements to streamline, consolidate and improve reporting requirements.

1.4 Funding

To support institutions' achievement of enhanced access, quality and accountability, the:

- University transfer payment budget will total \$2.63 billion in 2005-06. This is an increase of \$282 million from the 2004-05 levels of which \$124.2 million is the Quality Improvement Fund; and
- College transfer payment budget will total \$1.076 billion in 2005-06. This is an increase of \$133.5 million from the 2004-05 levels of which \$87.3 million is the Quality Improvement Fund.

Details regarding operating grant support for the postsecondary sector and for individual institutions can be found in the Minister's institution-specific 2005-06 allocation letter which you received on November 2, 2005.

2. Institution Commitments

This section outlines your institution's commitments for 2005-06.

2.1 Access

In 2005-06 your institution commits to:

- Comply with the tuition freeze as outlined in the *Guidelines for Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology and Publicly-Assisted Universities: Implementation of the Tuition Fee Freeze*; and
- Report on institutional enrolment growth at the undergraduate and graduate level in keeping with established protocols, thereby contributing to the sector targets established by the government, and where applicable report on institutional targets agreed to for medical enrolments.

2.2 Quality

In 2005-06 your institution commits to:

- Complete and return the attached Quality Improvement Fund (QIF) template (Appendix A) to the Ministry along with this document. The purpose of the QIF template is for institutions to provide information on how additional investments related to quality will be spent and the demonstrable improvements that will result

from this spending. Your institution is eligible for **\$4,076,126** for advancing quality including a \$532,255 allocation related to per student funding, and **\$945,032** for supporting excellence. **The release of this funding is conditional on the commitment to quality and excellence improvements, as evidenced by the completion and sign-back of the attached template.**

- **The distribution of this funding does not set a precedent for next year's allocation.**
- In addition, your institution will be paid \$1,439,986 representing 50% of your 2005-06 Access to Opportunities Program (ATOP) slip year payment based on your 2004-05 preliminary enrolment. Of this amount, \$1,091,295 is from the Quality Improvement Fund and \$348,691 is from the existing 2005-06 ATOP envelope.

2.3 Accountability

In 2005-06 your institution commits to:

- Continuing with all existing reporting requirements for 2005-06; and
- Investing the Quality Improvement Fund in the manner described in Appendix A with the expected result of improving the student experience.

Signature of President or Board Chair

Signature of Minister

Date: December 20, 2005

Date: _____

APPENDIX A: QUALITY IMPROVEMENT FUND TEMPLATE

PART 1: ADVANCING QUALITY

To ensure a quality postsecondary education, the ministry envisions a postsecondary education system that will be one that achieves the highest standards in teaching, research and the student learning experience, resulting in skills and innovation that will support economic growth.

The Advancing Quality portion of the 2005-06 Quality Improvement Fund is intended to

address the adverse effects on quality produced by per student funding anomalies¹, and advance quality at all institutions.

When completed, Part 1 of this template will outline the activities and results that will be achieved by each institution with this funding. The ability to demonstrate improvements in quality will inform the decision making process with respect to the future distribution of quality funding and the development of Multi-Year Agreements.

The advancing quality and supporting excellence funding will be released conditional on the completion of this template and the signing of the agreement.

Measurable Outcome Indicators

It is recognized that postsecondary institutions and the ministry will work together to develop outcome indicators of quality for inclusion in the 2006-07 Multi-Year Agreements.

To indicate that the 2005-06 advancing quality funding is achieving its intended results, the ministry is requesting that institutions report on measurement indicators commonly used by other jurisdictions to assess quality: Student : Faculty ratio, class size, and retention rates. The ministry recognizes that there is no systematic approach to measuring and publicly reporting these indicators in Ontario at this time. However, most institutions do have their own methodology for measuring and tracking these indicators.

¹ Defined as anomalies which have arisen through different levels of weighted enrolments over institutional corridor midpoints.

Please provide the ministry with your institution's definition and measurement methodologies for the following indicators:

INDICATORS	DEFINITION AND METHODOLOGY
Student : Faculty Ratio	FTE of undergraduate teaching divided by budgeted MTCU faculty positions for main campus.
Average Class Size	Average meet size as of Fall count date per Maclean's definition.
Student Retention	Undergraduate progress through studies at Fall count dates per Maclean's definition

To establish, benchmark and track these results, the ministry is seeking this information from 2002-03 onward. Details on the rates for the 2002-03, 2003-04 and 2004-05 indicators should be returned with the signed agreement. The institution agrees to provide the ministry with details on the rates for the 2005-06 indicators by July 1, 2006.

INDICATORS	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006
Student : Faculty Ratio*	23	25	25	
Student : Faculty Ratio* (excluding DVM program)	25	27	27	
Average Class Size at the 1st Year Level **	47	48	49	
Average Class Size at the 2nd Year Level**	33	34	35	
Average Class Size at 1st and 2nd Year Level	40	41	41	
Average Class Size at the 3rd Year Level	33	34	33	
Average Class Size at the 4th Year Level	21	21	20	
Average Class Size at 3rd and 4th Year Level	28	28	27	
Student Retention Rate 1st to 2nd Year	92	90	91	
Student Retention Rate After 2nd Year***	94	92	93	

* For Student : Faculty Ratio please exclude, if possible, self-funded programs and continuing education programs not funded by the province.

**The ministry would prefer to receive information on the average class size at the 1st year level. If this is not possible, the ministry will accept average class size at the 1st and 2nd year level, and average class size at the 3rd and 4th year level.

***The ministry would prefer to receive information on the student retention rate from the 2nd to 3rd year and the rate from the 3rd to 4th year, but will accept the student retention rate after the 2nd year.

Human Resources:

A) Human Resources Definitions

The ministry recognizes that each institution may define the terms full time tenured, full time limited term and part time differently. Please provide the ministry with your institution's definition of the following terms:

TERMS	DEFINITION
Full Time Tenured	Workforce flows (hires and terminations) are tracked for the period from May 1, 2005 through to December 15, 2005.
Full Time Limited Term	Net workforce change is provided as measured between November payroll snapshots i.e., Fall 2004 and Fall 2005.
Part Time (FTE)	Net workforce change is provided as measured between November payroll snapshots i.e., Fall 2004 and Fall 2005.

B) Please complete the following table to identify the number of hires, retires/departures and net new hires at your institution (not just those funded through the QIF):

2005-06*	Faculty/Academic			Student Services Staff**		Admin Staff***
	Full Time Tenured	Full Time Limited Term	Part Time (FTE)	Full Time	Part Time (FTE)	Full Time
Hires	35			9		7
Retires / Departures	29			6		7
Net New Hires	6	-20	23	3	-2	0

* Please provide these details from your 2005-06 Academic Year.

** For student services staff definition, please refer to the student services functional area definition developed by the Council of Finance Officers - Universities of Ontario (COFO-UO) of the Council of Ontario Universities to report on expenses in their annual financial report. Student Services Staff do not include ancillary staff.

***For admin staff definition, please refer to the administration & general functional area definition developed by the Council of Finance Officers - Universities of Ontario (COFO-UO) of the Council of Ontario Universities to report on expenses in their annual financial report.

Teaching & Learning Excellence

A) Advancing Quality Funding being allocated to Teaching & Learning Excellence: \$3.4M

B) Please identify and provide details of any 2005-06 investments related to teaching and learning excellence. Examples may include changes to class size, modes of instruction, program and curricular development and professional development initiatives for staff.

Hiring of 35 full-time faculty and an additional 2 academic staff to deal with enrolment pressures.

C) Please identify any expected qualitative and quantitative outcomes generated by this additional investment.

This investment will help the University to continue its focus on smaller class experiences and direct contact with faculty. Both are regarded to be important aspects of effective student engagement and satisfaction with the learning experience.

Educational resources:

A) Advancing Quality Funding being allocated to educational resources: \$0.5M

B) Please identify and provide details of any 2005-06 investment related to educational resources. Examples of educational resources may include equipment and supplies (lab / classroom), library materials and resources, and IT Infrastructure.

Library acquisitions and extended hours of operation	\$ 0.100M
Media Centre in the College of Arts	\$ 0.200M
Co-op Education/Experiential Learning	\$ 0.100M
Classroom Instruction Support	\$ 0.100M

C) Please identify any expected qualitative and quantitative outcomes generated by this additional investment.

The rapid and sizeable enrolment growth that occurred over the period of the double cohort put additional stress on University operations in a number of areas that were already struggling as a result of chronic under-funding during the pre-growth years. The injection of funds into the classroom, academic services, improved learning technologies, expansion of experiential learning opportunities and library resources will improve the quality and effectiveness of the learning experience.

Student Supports/Services:

A) Advancing Quality Funding being allocated to Student Supports/Services: \$0.25M

B) Please identify and provide details of any 2005-06 investment related to student support and services. Examples may include student remediation and retention strategies, general and/or academic counseling, special needs initiatives, and career planning and employment preparation.

Increased funding to respond to increased demand for services in the areas of student counselling, centre for students with disabilities and student health services.

C) Please identify any expected qualitative and quantitative outcomes generated by this additional investment.

This funding will help student services to respond to both increased demand for services as well as develop new initiatives to deal with specific concerns and issues arising from the changing needs of students as the University strives to provide the high-calibre services that will help our students to succeed.

Other Advancing Quality Initiatives:

If applicable, please identify any other initiatives that your institution will undertake with your advancing quality funding. In your description, please identify the amount being allocated to this activity, your planned investment details, and any expected qualitative or quantitative outcomes generated by this additional investment.

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PART 2: SUPPORTING EXCELLENCE

This fund will be used to support excellence as your institution defines it. This excellence might be found in a differentiated mission, a specialized niche, program leadership, service leadership, enhanced services and/or accessibility to a specific group, or some other area.

Bilingual institutions may outline how their excellence funding will impact French-language programs and services offered at their institutions.

When completed, Part 2 of this template will outline the activities and results that will be achieved by each institution with this funding.

Investments

Identify the specific investments and activities that will be used to support excellence.

The following is a description of the areas that benefit from expenditure of our allocation of \$945,032 in funding for supporting excellence.

Guelph's Mission of learner-centeredness demands active learning. As such, the university must ensure that barriers to learning are lowered, that assistance, remediation and enrichment are always and easily available and the learning environment is as engaging as possible. Our supportive learning environment reflects a uniquely close partnership among academic programs, library resources and student affairs to deliver on a commitment to supportive learning.

Our Learning Commons brings together peer helpers with professional librarians, writing specialists, math and technical support experts and front-line academic and personal support staff in a one-stop shop for learning of all types. Aggregate demand for Commons services – especially writing skills assistance – increased by some 10% last year.

Supported Learning Groups are primarily administered out of the Learning Commons. They focus dedicated assistance on especially demanding, "high-risk" courses. Demand for Supported Learning Groups exceeds resources available and they are currently limited to eight high priority courses.

Continually improving the supportive learning environment in these and other ways is crucial to maintaining Guelph's educational excellence.

Expected Outcomes

Identify the specific short and long-term results expected from this investment. Short-term results are results that can be measured or demonstrated by 2006-07. Results could include inputs, outputs or outcomes.

In the short-term, we would expect to see accommodation of greater numbers of students in the Learning Commons. In the longer term, we would expect to see favourable results in terms of NSSE scores, student retention and graduation rates.

Performance Indicators

Identify any performance indicators that will be used to demonstrate that the expected results have been achieved.

Improved NSSE scores
Improved Student Retention
Improved Graduation Rates

Special Client Groups

In addition to any initiatives specifically related to the \$10.2M access funding (not yet distributed), and in advance of recommendations that may arise from the Minister's Access Committees, please outline any access activities for special client groups supported by your excellence funding in the following table.

	Type of Initiative and Program Area
Aboriginal	Note here that in spite of the fact that Guelph is among those institutions that do not receive funding from the Special Purpose Envelope for Aboriginal Education and Training we continue to increase our support to this group. In 2005-06 we will provide increased counseling capacity and see text below
First generation	Increased counseling capacity, pilot writing support project in the Learning Commons, an off-campus support program (mentors for off-campus, first year students) and see text below
Persons with disabilities	Increased counseling capacity and see text below
Other	Pilot academic development program for athletes

A number of recommendations were made in the report of the President's Task Force on Accessibility (November 2004) toward improving accessibility for the groups identified in the table above. These recommendations have been assigned to specific offices/areas for advice regarding implementation. Among the recommendations for action are those listed below.

Aboriginal Canadians and Visible Minorities

- Review current practices employed at other institutions to develop the academic skills and knowledge of aboriginal and visible minority students.
- Examine how well the University supports and encourages the personal and academic success of aboriginal and visible minority students enrolled at Guelph.
- Develop and implement a set of programs by the University that will enhance accessibility by generating a student body that is not only educationally well prepared to graduate but also representative of Canada's cultural, ethnic, geographic and socio-economic mosaic.

First Generation University Students

- Creation of financial incentives in the form of scholarships and bursaries to encourage attendance from first generation university students.
- Provision of needs-based bursaries for residence as a means to diversify the current demographic and to provide an incentive for attendance.

Persons with Disabilities

- Review the current framework for improving access for students with disabilities to ensure that it is as effective as possible.
- Since university admission is highly competitive, some qualified applicants (with and without disabilities) currently fail to be accepted. Registrarial Services should designate a number of admission spaces each year for students with disabilities who have documented the impact of the disability-specific barriers on prior academic success but who have not been admitted on the basis of other submitted documentation.
- Work with faculty and staff to develop an institutional policy regarding the application of universal design principles in courses and campus services. The concept of promoting Universal Instruction Design principles into learning material, course design and learning spaces throughout the campus is also an issue raised in the Provost's White Paper on re-imagining the undergraduate learning experience (November 2005).

Ongoing efforts of our Centre for Students with Disabilities (CSD) for 2005-06:

- The CSD will take a leadership role in Accessibility Awareness Week by providing strong resource support for this important student initiative.
- The CSD will introduce new programs to raise awareness, including "Learning Lunches" for students and increased faculty training.
- The CSD will continue to offer the University's Pre-Flight Program, a week-long, on-site summer preparation program for students with learning disabilities and open to all current high school students who plan to attend any Ontario university in Fall 2005.

PART 3: OUTCOME INDICATORS OF QUALITY

It is recognized that universities and the ministry will work together to develop outcome indicators of quality for inclusion in the 2006-07 Multi-Year Agreements. In 2005-06, the ministry will seek universities' commitment to begin that process by participating in common measurement tools used by many jurisdictions to assess quality. Additional indicators will be developed in the future.

The following table outlines the measures identified by the Council of Ontario Universities, and key expectations and objectives to be achieved by each of these measures:

Measure	Actions for 2005-06	Expectation/Objective
<p><i>NSSE Survey Results in 2006 and future years:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Level of academic challenge (ii) Active and collaborative learning (iii) Student-faculty interaction (iv) Enriching educational experience (v) Supportive campus environment 	<p>The institution shall participate in the 2006 NSSE survey and in the development of a protocol between MTCU and COU regarding the use of the data to establish a baseline from which to assess improvement in the quality of the undergraduate student experience.</p> <p>Date: to be discussed with CUPA</p>	<p>A significant improvement in the quality of the undergraduate student academic experience</p>
<p><i>Consortium on Student Retention Data Exchange (CSRDE)</i></p>	<p>The institution shall participate in the 2006 CSRDE and in the development of a protocol between MTCU and COU regarding the use of the data to establish a baseline from which to assess improvement of undergraduate student retention.</p> <p>Date: to be discussed with CUPA</p>	<p>Retention and graduation rates that are among the best in North America</p>
<p><i>Graduate and Professional Student Survey</i></p> <p><i>(Designed and administered by MIT)</i></p>	<p>The institution shall participate in the 2007 GPSS (MIT survey) and in the development of a protocol between MTCU and COU regarding the use of the data to establish a baseline from which to assess improvement in the quality of the graduate student experience.</p> <p>Date: to be discussed with CUPA</p>	<p>A significant improvement in the quality of graduate student academic experience</p>