



Regional Transfer Arrangement Policy

1. History

The Regional Transfer Arrangement (RTA), administered by the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission (MPHEC), was approved by the Maritime Premiers on February 16-17, 1979.

Under the RTA, each of the three Maritime provinces provides funding to the other two provinces for university students enrolled in programs not offered in the home province. The transfer of funds in any given fiscal year is based on the enrolments of Maritime residents in these regional programs two years earlier, the latest year for which complete enrolment data are available at the time budgets are prepared.

When the RTA was first drafted in 1979, two options were considered. The value and calculation of transfers were the same under both alternatives. The difference was in defining a regional program.

Option 1

The first option would have transferred funds for programs that were unique to the region, consequently, the designation of a program as regional would have required unanimous consent from the three Maritime provinces.

Option 2

The second option, which was the one that was approved and is still in use today, designated a program as regional if it was not offered in the student's province of residence. The advantage was a more automatic designation of a program as regional.

In summary, the amount transferred for any program can be summarized by the following formula:

$$T = S \times W \times (G/D)^* \text{ where:}$$

T = \$ amount to be transferred from Province A¹ to Province B² for a particular program

S = the # of full-time students from Province A enrolled in the *program* in Province B³

W = MPHEC weight assigned to the *program*

G = Province B's approved grants to all its universities

D = Province B's total Weighted Full-Time Equivalent (WFTE)

* the value of G/D is defined as the transfer or unit cost per WFTE per Province

¹Province A: The permanent province of residence of a student (at application)

²Province B: Province where regional program is offered

³Fall term Full-Time Equivalents (FTE)

In addition to the regular transfer per WFTE, an annual lump sum amount called the Dalhousie Medical Education Supplement is added to both the New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island transfers to Nova Scotia. The supplementary funding transfer became a part of the regional transfer arrangement in 1986-87, phased in over a number of years, to cost-share the under-funding of its School of Medicine. New Brunswick's share of the supplement will begin to be phased out beginning in fiscal year 2012-13 due to the creation of Dalhousie Medical Education program in New Brunswick, funded under a separate agreement by the Province of New Brunswick.

The Atlantic Veterinary College (AVC) is funded by a separate Atlantic Provinces agreement. AVC programs are therefore not included in any component of the RTA calculation.



2. Definition of regional programs

Full-time university programs approved by the MPHEC offered in either of the other two Maritime Provinces that are not offered in the student's home province.

Any program offered by an institution and not approved by the MPHEC cannot be accounted for under this policy.

The regional status of a program is the status of the program at the time enrolments are reported.

3. Criteria used in the application of the definition of regional programs

The following are meant to assist MPHEC staff in determining the regional status of a program:

- Language of instruction
- Study area/Discipline
- Student/learning outcomes
- Level of study
- Province of study
- Restrictions on admissions (programs offered by a host province that are not open to students from the other two Maritime provinces cannot be designated as regional)
- Public funding (as per Commission policy, full-cost recovery programs cannot be designated as regional for the purpose of the RTA, since the host province is not funding it)

Specifically, the above is applied as follows:

A publicly-funded program is designated as regional for a province if a similar full-time program in the same study area/discipline is not offered at the same level in the same language in that province.

4. Criteria not to be used in the application of the definition of regional programs

The following criteria must not be used to determine the regional status of a program:

- Program structure (the same subject area/content may be covered in a program structured differently)
- Program name (the same subject area/content may be covered in a program named differently)
- Credential granted (the same subject area/content may be covered in a program leading to a different credential, provided they are at the same level of study)
- Program delivery mode (the same subject area/content may be covered in a program delivered differently)
- Program enrolment reporting code (similar programs may be coded under two or more codes, depending on the particular emphasis of each program)

5. Definition of approved grants

Provincial unrestricted operating grants (on a March 31 available funding^a basis) provided to publicly-funded universities after making adjustments for such things as special grants for debt servicing^b and recoveries^c in respect of specific programs.

^a Available funding: funding on the basis of the year in which the universities will be spending it.

^b Debt servicing: An amount is deducted annually from the funding provided by the Province of Prince Edward Island to the University of Prince Edward Island because this funding includes an amount relating to debt servicing, which is ineligible.

^c Recoveries: The supplementary funding included in Dalhousie University's base funding for its Medical Education program is subtracted annually from the Provincial operating grants provided to the University in order to avoid double counting, as it is funded separately through the Dalhousie Medical Education supplement.



Funding for college-level programs offered at Université Sainte-Anne from the Nova Scotia Department of Labour and Advanced Education is included in the approved grants, as the college-level WFTE are also included in the calculation.

6. Designation process

The designation of regional programs is a staff-based process. During the program assessment process, the program assessment team at the MPHEC applies the criteria outlined in sections 3 and 4 above. The team may call on other individuals (i.e. other staff members, or members of the Academic Advisory Committee, the Finance Committee or the Commission) as issues arise.

A list of programs under review is circulated to the Academic Advisory Committee and the Commission at regular meetings to allow members to weigh in on the regional status assigned to new programs.

7. Review and update

When a new program is approved in a province where it was not previously offered, the regional status of related programs offered in the two other provinces is reviewed and updated once enrolments are reported in the new program. For example, if Nova Scotia had been offering a Bachelor's program in criminology designated as regional for both NB and PEI, but then NB obtains approval for a Bachelor's program in criminology as well, then the NB program is designated as regional to PEI only, and the status of the NS program is reviewed and updated to designate it as regional for PEI only. This revised designation becomes effective at the time enrolments are reported in a newly designated program.

If the introduction of a new program changes the regional status of other programs in the same discipline that are high cost or have high enrolments (adding up to more than 100 WFTE), the regional status of the existing programs will be phased-out over the number of years equal to the normal length of the program.

Approved by the Maritime Premiers on February 16-17, 1979 (per Council of Maritime Premiers minute 34-3)

Reviewed and updated on April 23-24, 2001 by the MPHEC Board (minute 182-09)

Reviewed and updated on November 27, 2013 by the MPHEC Board (minute 251-2013-11-27/13)

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