

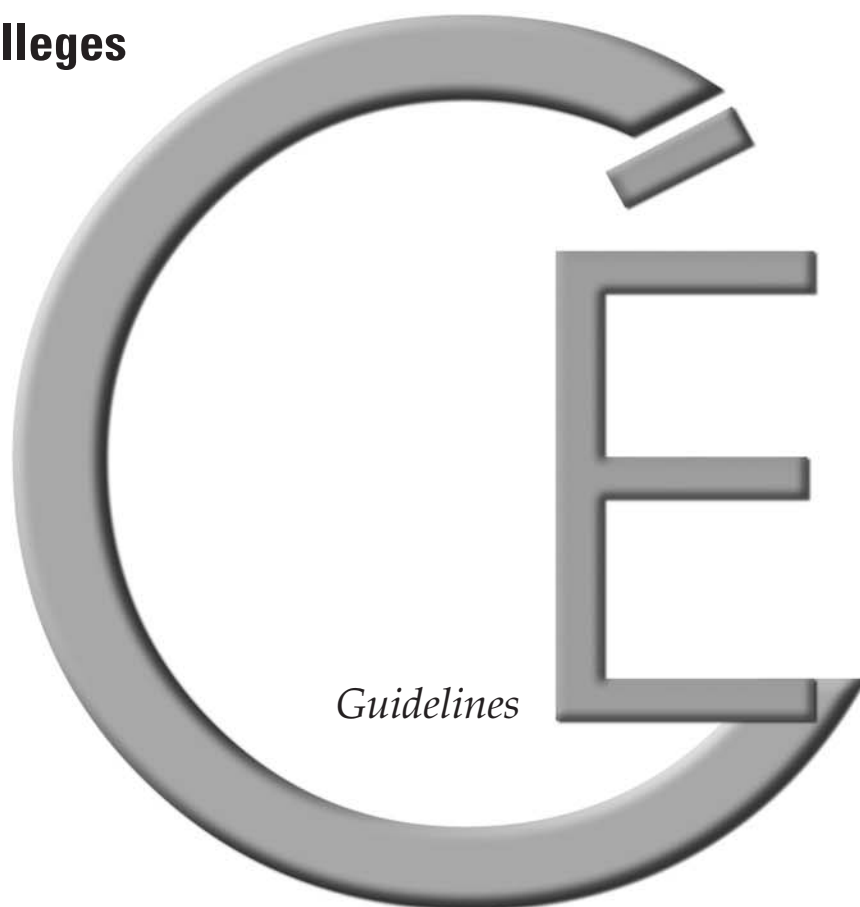
**Commission d'évaluation
de l'enseignement collégial**

**Evaluating
the effectiveness
of success plans
in the subsidized
private colleges**

Guidelines

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This document describes the orientations adopted by the *Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial* for evaluating the effectiveness of success plans in subsidized private colleges.

Introduction

In the spring of 2000, the Minister of Education of Québec announced the requirement that public and subsidized private colleges develop and implement success plans. This requirement was the result of a consensus in favour of increasing certification for young people, established during the *Sommet du Québec et de la jeunesse* in February 2000. Because both the colleges and the Ministère de l'Éducation had already set success and graduation as major priorities, these plans became part of the series of actions currently under way.

In 2001-2002, at the request of the Minister, the colleges' institutional success plans were evaluated by the *Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial*. The following year, the Commission analyzed the implementation of these plans, and then each college reviewed the results of their 2000-2003 success plans. The reviews – which were examined by the Commission in 2003-2004 – were to include an analysis of performance indicators (courses successfully completed in the first semester, the rate of re-registration in the third semester and the rate of graduation), an evaluation of how the plans were implemented, as well as the effectiveness of the support measures identified in the plan. Each college was then to judge the effectiveness of its own plan. As a result, the colleges could confidently refer to these results as they developed their new success plans. Most of the subsidized private colleges eventually adopted new success plans.

The colleges adopted measures (policies, plans and practices) to ensure the quality of the education they were offering as well as its continued development. Success plans were one of the components of quality assurance. The Commission recognizes that the colleges' methods of evaluating the quality of the education they offer have evolved and that this concern for quality assurance has become increasingly by integrated into the particularities of each institution.

The Commission regards this evaluation of success plans, with particular emphasis on their effectiveness, as part of its continuing operations on quality assurance in college education in Québec. Furthermore, the evaluation will help the Commission assist colleges in the ongoing improvement to their planning processes.

In evaluating the effectiveness of the success plans of subsidized private colleges, the colleges will first of all compare results to the goals that had been set and then look critically at the plans themselves. Each plan should then be examined in detail. This analysis will provide the colleges with the essential elements for the development of their next success plans.

Principal conclusions to be drawn from the September 2004 summary report on the evaluation of student success plans

The first plans were drawn up in 2000, their results examined and a review of these results published. The Summary Report¹ of this evaluation concluded that, taken as a whole, the implementation of student success plans in the colleges resulted in an increase in courses successfully completed in the first semester and retention in the third semester. The Commission also noted that those colleges with the best results were those which had chosen appropriate measures to address difficulties encountered by their students in achieving success and graduating. These colleges had also succeeded in implementing activities outlined in the plans, notably through the coordination of activities and ensuring that stakeholders worked closely together. Additionally, in these same colleges, the success plans were monitored on a more regular basis and adjustments made on the basis of the results obtained. The Commission also noted that this experience would in all probability enable all colleges to develop and implement effective new student success plans.

1. The Summary Report on the evaluation of the college's student success plans is available on the Commission's Website (<http://www.ceec.gouv.qc.ca/publications/SYNTHESES/PlanReussite.pdf>).

General guidelines for the evaluation of the effectiveness of success plans

For subsidized private colleges covered by this process

Each college should assess the effectiveness of its particular success plan by comparing the results obtained with the initial goals. Colleges should take a close critical look at their plans and the results achieved, taking into account both the context in which the plans were developed (from the analysis of obstacles to success to the selection of performance indicators) and their actual implementation. These assessments should also enable each college to analyze the extent to which the indicators selected as tools for evaluating progress towards their objectives were appropriate to their needs. In some cases, the assessments should also allow colleges to determine to what extent the strategies chosen to achieve those objectives were effective.

Each college should develop a process and methodology for this analysis that most appropriately reflects its own particular situation and the Commission's analytical framework. To ensure that these assessments constitute an effective starting-point for the development of their subsequent plans, colleges should establish timelines that allow them to evaluate their plans and, at the same time, meet the deadlines set by the Commission.

By scheduling self-evaluation activities that take into account the timelines for their success plans, the colleges will be well placed to build on the results of their own assessments as well as different aspects of their conclusions as they prepare their subsequent plans.

For the *Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial*

The Commission will participate in this exercise in the same way it usually does: it will review each college's self-evaluation report, visit the college and then adopt a preliminary report that covers the process followed within the institution and the effectiveness of its success plan. The report will then be sent to the college and the latter invited to react to it. The Commission will take the follow-up input from the college into account when preparing its final report.

In the spring of 2008, the Commission will make public the analytical framework, as well as the criteria it will apply in evaluating the effectiveness of the success plans and in analyzing the reports from the colleges.

Furthermore, the Commission will pay particular attention to the importance of accompanying the colleges as they work through the evaluation process, notably through information sessions or other opportunities for feedback and discussion. Sessions will be organized so that as many people as possible may attend; they will begin in April 2008 and will continue through June 2009.

Conclusion

The evaluation of the effectiveness of the success plans is a crucial part of the vision the *Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial* strives to embody: achieving recognition for its particular contribution to the ongoing development of the quality, credibility and the importance of college education in Québec. This evaluation process enables the Commission to both monitor the implementation of success plans in the colleges and pursue its evaluation of the effectiveness of the various quality assurance components in each teaching establishment. The Commission also plays a role in helping the colleges to improve the way they plan for success.

Within the framework of this operation, the colleges will examine their results in relation to their specified objectives and, at the same time, carry out a critical analysis of the development, implementation and monitoring of their success plans. This process will give each college, in preparation for the development of its subsequent success plan, the opportunity to review its own situation, identify what it was able to accomplish and assess its monitoring methods.

As is customary, the Commission will work closely with the colleges in carrying out this particular operation.

