



Accreditation Committee Decision

Faculty of Education Lakehead University

Pertaining to the Accreditation of:

Multi-session consecutive program of professional education for persons of First Nation, Métis or Inuit ancestry and multi-session consecutive program, with areas of study in the Primary/Junior divisions, leading to a degree or diploma [referred to as Keewatinase Indigenous Teacher Education Program (KITEP- P/J)]

**Accreditation Committee
Ontario College of Teachers
July 21, 2025**

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Accreditation Committee Decision Regarding the Application for Accreditation Submitted by the Faculty of Education, Lakehead University

Introduction

The Faculty of Education at Lakehead University submitted an application on January 22, 2025 for general accreditation of a multi-session consecutive program of professional education with areas of study in the Primary/Junior divisions, leading to a degree or a diploma. The Faculty refers to this program as the Keewatinase Indigenous Teacher Education Program (KITEP). This program would be offered to persons of First Nation, Métis or Inuit ancestry as well as non-Indigenous individuals.

In accordance with Regulation 347/02 Accreditation of Teacher Education Programs and Regulation 563/21 General, an accreditation panel was established to:

1. conduct a review of the aforementioned program of professional education; and
2. act in an advisory role to the Accreditation Committee by reporting its findings and making recommendations with respect to the accreditation of the program reviewed.

The four-person accreditation panel was comprised as follows:

1. two members of the Ontario College of Teachers [the “College”] who are members of the roster established for the Accreditation Committee
2. a person who is not a member of the College, who is on the roster established for the Accreditation Committee, and who has expertise in teacher education program evaluation
3. a person nominated by the Faculty of Education, Lakehead University with specialized expertise in Indigenous teacher education

In making its recommendations, the panel reviewed the application for accreditation and other supplementary documentation provided by the Faculty of Education at Lakehead University. The accreditation panel conducted a virtual site visit on March 26 and 27, 2025. The accreditation panel conducted interviews with the Acting Dean, Chair of the Department of Indigenous Education, Anishinaabemowik Languages Program Coordinator, teaching faculty, education librarian, practicum team and community members.

Following the review, the accreditation panel compiled a draft report of its findings and recommendations for review by the Faculty of Education at Lakehead University. The final panel report submitted to the Accreditation Committee considers the comments provided by the Dean in response to the draft report.

In making its decision, the Accreditation Committee considered the Accreditation Panel Final Report, dated June 26, 2025, the Panel Chair's presentation to the Accreditation Committee and the regulatory requirements of Regulation 347/02, Accreditation of Teacher Education Programs.

Regulatory Context

In 2019, the Accreditation Committee granted general accreditation to the consecutive and concurrent programs of professional education offered by the Faculty of Education at Lakehead University until December 3, 2026. This accreditation applied to a concurrent program that combined studies in Indigenous education with areas of study in the Primary/Junior divisions (Indigenous Teacher Education), as well as a multi-session consecutive program of professional education with an area of study in teaching Indigenous Languages. In 2024, Lakehead University submitted a program change application for the latter (referred to as KITEP – Language). On September 6, 2024, the Accreditation Committee determined that Lakehead University had substantially changed the character and duration of the accredited multi-session program and confirmed continued accreditation.

Section 19 of O.Reg 347/02, Accreditation of Teacher Education Programs, defines an addition to program as:

- (a) a new area of study
- (c) a new component to prepare persons to be teachers described in subsection 1 (4) of the accreditation regulation for persons of First Nation, Métis or Inuit ancestry

In this case, the addition of the areas of study of the primary and junior divisions to the Keewatinase Indigenous Teacher Education Program (KITEP) constitutes both. With this addition, the KITEP will have two distinct cohorts with different terminal qualifications:

1. KITEP – Language
2. KITEP – Primary/Junior

KITEP - Primary/Junior shares the same format and structure, as well as the same foundation courses, conceptual framework and program design features as the accredited KITEP – Language. Given this alignment to an accredited program, the focus of this decision will pertain only to those requirements impacted by the addition of the areas of study.

Findings – Requirements Not Impacted Given Alignment to Accredited Program

Based on the Accreditation Panel Final Report dated June 26, 2025, the Accreditation Committee finds that Requirements 1, 1.1, 2, 3i, 3iii, 5i, 9, 11, 12i, 12ii, 13, 14 and 15 are fully satisfied given their alignment with the existing accredited program. The Accreditation Committee accepts that there are no changes regarding the factual findings for the aforementioned requirements from the 2019 and the 2024 decisions, and that these apply to the KITEP multi-session consecutive program with areas of study in the Primary/Junior divisions.

Findings – Impacted Requirements

Based on the Accreditation Panel Final Report, the Accreditation Committee finds that there are changes to Requirements 3ii, 3.1, (4), 5ii, 6, 7, 8, 10 and 12iii as reported in the findings below.

Requirements and Findings

The reasons for the Committee's decision and the facts upon which it is based follow herein:

Requirement 3

The design of the program is consistent with and reflects the College's "Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession" and the "Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession", current research in teacher education, and the integration of theory and practice in teacher education.

Findings

The evidence indicates that the design of the program reviewed is consistent with and reflects the Ontario College of Teachers' *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession* and *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession*, current research in teacher education, and the integration of theory and practice in teacher education.

Current Research in Teacher Education

The design of the program is consistent with and reflects current research in teacher education.

Indigenized approaches to teacher education are informed by research on Aki-based learning (Simpson, 2014; Kimmerer, Gray Smith, & Neidhardt, 2022; Styres, 2011; Twance, 2017), community-based learning, culturally responsive pedagogy (Battiste, 2010; Vetter, Haig-Brown, & Blimkie, 2014; Gay, 2001), and the integration of Indigenous languages in teaching and storytelling (Cardinal, 2015; Reese, 2019). All foundation and method courses integrate these components. Aki-based learning permeates every component of the program.

Teacher candidates engage in community-led teaching and learning to gain experience in Indigenous protocol and knowledge transmission. They participate in cultural activities led by community Elders and Knowledge Keepers and identify activities based on the priorities of local communities and their supporting schools. Candidates engage in land-based cultural activities and circles focused on the spiritual, mental, emotional, or physical aspects of activity-based learning. During circle participation, teacher candidates connect their experiences with course readings, theory, curriculum expectations, and assessments.

Faculty investigate and contribute to various aspects of Indigenous education through research. The Faculty of Education and Keewatinase, Department of Indigenous Education have an active and ongoing Indigenous research agenda, inclusive of international research partnerships with Indigenous peoples (Sami in Norway and Māori in New Zealand). This

informs a faculty action research process that supports ongoing program monitoring and evaluation.

The KITEP – Primary/Junior program design is research-informed, including the cyclical process of *Kinoo-amaadawaad Megwaa Doodamadawaad* (learning from each other while doing). This approach aligns with the cyclical framework used in action research (Mertler, 2019), where multiple cycles of implementation, evaluation, and revision, progressing from one cycle (e.g., semester or year) to the next are followed.

Conclusion

Based on the information provided, the Accreditation Committee finds that Requirement 3 is fully satisfied.

Requirement 3.1

The program enables teacher candidates of a program of professional education to acquire knowledge and skills in all of the elements set out in Schedule 1.

Findings

The evidence gathered from documentation and interviews indicates that the program enables teacher candidates to acquire the knowledge and skills in all of the elements set out in Schedule 1.

Curriculum Knowledge

Element 1 – Current Ontario Curriculum and Policy Documents

The program provides teacher candidates with knowledge and understanding of the current Ontario curriculum and provincial policy documents that are relevant to the candidate's areas of study and curriculum, including planning and design, special education, equity and diversity, and learning assessment and evaluation.

Teacher candidates examine the current curriculum documents pertaining to the six core contents of the primary and junior divisions in different method courses. Candidates make connections between Aki-based learning and the Ontario curriculum during each of the three *Community Led Teaching and Learning* courses. They demonstrate their learning by creating Aki-based lesson plans and activities linked to the curriculum in: Native Studies; The Arts; Health and Physical Education; Language; Mathematics; Science and Technology; and Social Studies. Candidates cover all six subjects by the completion of the three *Community Led Teaching and Learning* courses (Social Studies, The Arts, Language, Mathematics, Science and Technology, and Health and Physical Education) by focusing on two subjects in each course. Candidates learn about the Kindergarten Program in several courses such as *Indigenous Storytelling* (Language) and *Agindaasowin* (Mathematics).

In the *Indigenous Storytelling* course, teacher candidates review the Ontario curriculum and relevant Ministry documents and explore the integration of Indigenous literacy approaches into existing curriculum expectations.

Demonstrating knowledge of the Ontario Curriculum is a performance expectation of teacher candidates during practicum. Associate teachers use the Keewatinase Practicum Assessment to evaluate candidates on their teaching practice in domains such as demonstrating an understanding of curriculum guidelines, expectations, subject matter and big ideas. Candidates are assessed on their development of engaging lesson plans and communication of clear, achievable expectations and instructions to learners.

Element 2 – Current Research in Teaching and Learning

The program offers several opportunities to prepare teacher candidates to acquire knowledge, skills, perspectives and practice in using current research in teaching and learning.

Throughout the program, teacher candidates investigate research-informed Indigenous and non-Indigenous approaches to teaching and learning. In the *Indigenous Education Research and Data Analysis* course, assigned readings include *Honouring the Learning Spirit* (Battiste, 2010) and *Culturally Responsive Teaching* (Vetter, Haig-Brown & Blimkie, 2014). In the *Technology as a Teaching and Learning Tool* course, candidates examine teaching resources from Anishinaabemodaa (Waking up Ojibwe, 2024), learn about digital storytelling and utilize resources from The Learning Portal from College Libraries Ontario (2024).

Method courses draw on treaty teachings as well as learning resources published by the Ministry of Education. In the *Indigenous Ways of Knowing science* course, research-informed resources such as *Land as Pedagogy* (Simpson, 2017), *Braiding Sweetgrass for Young Adults: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, the Teachings of Plants* (Kimmerer, Gray Smith, & Neidhardt, 2022) and *Can Indigenous Knowledge and Western science work together?* (Mervis, 2022) are examined. In the *Agindaasowin* (mathematics) course, teacher candidates explore multi-modal, research informed resources such as *Paying Attention to Proportional Reasoning K-12* (2012) and the video *High-Impact Instructional Practices in Mathematics* from the Ontario Ministry of Education. These resources are based on *Visible Learning for Mathematics: What works best to optimize student learning, Grades K–12* (Hattie, Fisher, Frey, Gojak, Moore & Mellman, 2016).

Pedagogical and Instructional Strategies Knowledge

Element 1 – Educational Research and Data Analysis

The program enables teacher candidates to acquire knowledge, skills, perspectives and practices in using educational research and data analysis.

All KITEP – Primary/Junior candidates take the *Indigenous Education Research and Data Analysis* course where they study Indigenous research frameworks and research methods. Course themes include Indigenous knowledge systems, wisdom-seeking, and inward knowing.

In the Sources of Knowledge Inquiry Bundle assignment for this course, teacher candidates draw upon Indigenous traditions of research and data analysis to plan their teaching and learning practices. In the final course assignment, candidates create an inquiry process concept map including Indigenous research articles and community-based resources (people).

Element 2 – Technology as a Teaching Tool

The program enables teacher candidates to acquire knowledge, skills, perspectives and practices in using technology as a teaching tool.

In the *Technology as a Teaching and Learning Tool* course, teacher candidates examine the use of technology as inclusive and responsive pedagogy to engage all learners both by distance learning and in the classroom. Candidates assess various technological resources, including social media, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Indigenous teaching contexts, digital field trips and digital storytelling.

Assignments include preparing a podcasting workshop, a reflective journal with insights about themselves as a digital learner and teacher, and presentations on digital tools such as a virtual game, app, or teaching tool. Candidates develop a technology-rich lesson plan that includes overall and specific expectations from the Ontario curriculum, learning goals, resources and materials, accommodations for students with Individual Education Plans (IEP), detailed instructions, and assessment tasks.

Element 3 – Informed Selection and Use of Instructional Strategies to Address Student Learning

Teacher candidates acquire knowledge, skills, perspectives and practices in inquiry-based research, data and assessment, and current instructional strategies to address student learning styles in coursework and practicum. For example, in the *Student Teaching* course, teacher candidates explore the foundational concepts of Indigenous pedagogy and the Seven Grandfather Teachings and how they can inform teaching and lesson planning. They discuss wholistic education, community relationships, and experiential learning. Candidates discuss asset-based teaching and learning and focus on recognizing and building upon student strengths.

In an assignment in the Indigenous storytelling literacy course, candidates design a culturally responsive literacy program to meet the needs of Indigenous students. They choose a case study that aligns with theories of language acquisition, socio-constructivism, and literacy development course content. Candidates analyze cultural responsiveness, challenges and successes and highlight how the program addresses the developmental stages of literacy for Indigenous children.

In practicum, associate teachers assess teacher candidates on their ability to engage learners in the learning process through careful selection and implementation of developmentally appropriate approaches/strategies/tools.

Element 4 – Learning and Teaching Methods and Differentiated Instruction

The program enables teacher candidates to acquire knowledge, skills, perspectives and practices in using learning and teaching theories and methods and differentiated instruction in method and foundations courses and practicum.

The Culture Camp methods course enables teacher candidates to develop an understanding of 'Indigegogy', the practice of teaching and learning within an Indigenous worldview. They examine and develop an understanding of wholistic Indigenous knowledge and the theory of wholistic education. Candidates engage in land-based teachings, opening circles, a Medicine Walk and sweat lodge teachings. They engage with resources such as *Indigenous Wholistic Theory: A Knowledge Set for Practice* (Absolon, 2010) and *Seeing the World with Aboriginal Eyes* (Rice, 2010).

Teacher candidates learn to modify existing lesson plans and incorporate Aki-based learning to accommodate diverse learning needs. More broadly, each course demonstrates how Aki-based learning can be integrated into teaching practices. Candidates explore the seasonal learnings of the Medicine Wheel and authentic learning activities such as the process and teachings of hide tanning.

Differentiated instruction, modifications, and accommodations for diverse learners are addressed in the mandatory child development foundations course. Differentiating instructional and assessment strategies based on student needs, interests, and learning profiles is a performance expectation of teacher candidates during practicum. Observable indicators of this expectation include shaping instruction so that it is beneficial to all students who learn in a variety of ways.

Element 5 – Classroom Management and Organization Skills

The program enables teacher candidates to acquire knowledge, skills, perspectives and practices in the development of classroom management and organization skills.

Teacher candidates develop strategies that promote student mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual health, while recognizing the teacher's role in fostering a supportive and nurturing learning environment. Candidates learn to utilize holistic health principles to identify student strengths, and design educational experiences that honour these strengths. Through coursework and case studies in, *Wholistic Healing and Indigenous Education*, candidates learn to create and maintain a classroom environment that focuses on incorporating Indigenous perspectives on health and well-being into their pedagogy. In the *Student Teaching II* course, teacher candidates further examine classroom management strategies in preparation for the second practicum placement.

The practicum performance expectations and Keewatinase Practicum Assessment criteria demonstrate that teacher candidates are assessed on their ability to accomplish the following objectives pertaining to the demonstration of effective classroom management strategies: create a positive, inclusive, safe learning environment; engage in strategic relationship-building conversations with learners; model initiative and enthusiasm for learning; and address inappropriate behaviours in a positive manner that leaves the learner's dignity intact.

Element 6 – Student Transitions

The program enables teacher candidates to acquire knowledge, skills, perspectives and practices in child and adolescent development and student transitions to age 21 and through kindergarten to Grade 12.

The mandatory foundation course *The Development of the Child* is taken by both KITEP cohorts.

The learning outcomes in *The Development of the Child* course are that teacher candidates are expected to analyze the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual development of children and youth across kindergarten, elementary, and secondary school years to better understand how these dimensions impact learning and behavior, inclusive of learner transitions.

Element 7 – Student Observation, Assessment and Evaluation

The program enables teacher candidates to acquire knowledge, skills, perspectives and practices in using current strategies relating to student observation, assessment and evaluation.

The ministerial policy documents *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools* (2010) and *The Kindergarten Addendum* (2016) are integrated into courses such as, but not limited to: *Culture Camp*, *Agindaasowin* (math), and *Indigenous Storytelling*. In the *Student Teaching* course, teacher candidates discuss the alignment of *Growing Success*-(2010) with Indigenous frameworks for assessment including prioritization of relationship-building and self-assessment in Indigenous education. Candidates explore the principles of fairness, transparency, student self-assessment and focus on formative assessment as part of the learning process.

Teacher candidates develop strategies relating to culturally responsive assessment and evaluation in several mandatory method courses. In the *Indigenous Ways of Seeing* visual arts course, they examine learning skills and work habits, assessment for and as learning and achievement charts. In the *Agindaasowin* math course, candidates look to nature and Indigenous perspectives to conceptualize learning that includes feedback cycles (with self, others, environment, and materials) and discuss approaches and principles for culturally responsive math assessment. Candidates design a unit plan in the *Community Led Teaching*

and *Learning Ziigwan Niibin* spring-summer course where they define learning outcomes aligned with the Ontario Curriculum. The plan includes assessment methods that respect Indigenous ways of knowing, allowing students to demonstrate their learning in multiple ways such as oral presentations, projects, and reflections.

Utilizing a variety of evidence-based assessment and evaluation strategies is a practicum performance expectation for teacher candidates. Observable indicators of this expectation include:

- using a variety of techniques to report student progress
- engaging in meaningful dialogue with students to provide feedback during the teaching and learning process
- gathering accurate data on student performance and keeping comprehensive records of student achievement
- using a variety of appropriate assessment and evaluation techniques
- using ongoing reporting to keep students and parents informed and chart student progress.

During practicum, teacher candidates are assessed on their assessment and evaluation practices. They are expected to practice assessment for, as and of learning and provide specific, meaningful and timely descriptive feedback to learners.

Element 8 – Supporting English Language Learners

The program enables teacher candidates to acquire knowledge, skills, perspectives and practices to teach students whose first language is not the language of instruction in coursework and through practical experiences.

Indigenous Storytelling provides opportunities for teacher candidates to explore the resource *Supporting English Language Learners: A Practical Guide for Ontario Educators Grades 1-8* (2008). Support for English Language Learners is addressed through case studies assignments in *The Development of the Child* course. A specific learning outcome for the KITEP is knowledge of how to teach students whose first language is not the Indigenous language.

Element 9 – Pedagogy, Assessment and Evaluation for Specific Curriculum Areas

Information pertaining to this element is addressed in Requirement 10.

Element 10 – Supporting Students with Special Education Needs

The program enables teacher candidates to acquire knowledge, skills, perspectives and practices in the policies, assessments and practices involved in responding to the needs and strengths of all students, including students identified as requiring special education

supports.

Teacher candidates explore the resource *Learning for All: A Guide to Effective Assessment and Instruction for All Students Kindergarten to Grade 12* (2013) in the Indigenous storytelling literacy course. The provincial policy documents: *Special Education in Ontario Kindergarten to Grade 12 – Policy and Resource Guide* (2017), *Individual Education Plan* (2024) and *The Identification and Placement of Exceptional Students* (2024) are examined in the development of the child course.

In an assignment in *The Development of the Child* course, teacher candidates select a case study about a student with special needs. They prepare an Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) report and develop an Individual Education Plan (IEP) that takes into consideration the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual characteristics and the learning needs of the student, including the appropriate modifications and accommodations. Throughout this assignment, candidates reflect on Indigenous perspectives and community involvement and their integration into the IPRC and IEP processes to support the student holistically.

Teacher candidates design lesson plans for a selected grade level (Kindergarten to grade 6) for one of the Ontario Curriculum core content areas (Social Studies, The Arts, Language, Mathematics, Science and Technology, or Health and Physical Education). The lesson plans integrate land-based learning activities and Indigenous perspectives into teaching strategies. Candidates include specific accommodations and/or modifications for students requiring special education supports, ensuring that the lesson is inclusive and accessible to all learners. Teacher candidates provide a rationale for the lesson design, explaining how it supports student achievement and well-being, particularly for Indigenous learners and those with special needs.

The Teaching Context Knowledge

Teacher candidates in the program are provided with knowledge of the Ontario context in which schools operate in both coursework and practicum experiences.

Element 1 - Mental Health and Well-Being

The program enables teacher candidates to acquire knowledge and understanding in child, youth and parental mental health relevant to the elementary and secondary school environment in Ontario through the mandatory dedicated course *Wholistic Healing and Indigenous Education*.

A learning outcome for this course is that teacher candidates develop strategies that promote students' mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual health. Coursework themes include wholistic well-being, trauma-informed care, mental health awareness, and self-care. Course readings include resources such as *Supporting Minds: An Educator's Guide to Promoting Student Mental Health and Well-Being* and *Health Canada* (2015): *First Nations*

Mental Wellness Continuum Framework.

In the final assignment of this course, teacher candidates create a unit plan that integrates mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual health into their classroom practices. Candidates focus on fostering student well-being, relationship-building, and the development of individual strengths. They demonstrate their understanding of wholistic health principles and the use of support systems to create an inclusive and nurturing classroom environment.

Element 2 - Standards of Practice and the Ethical Standards

Information pertaining to this element is addressed in Requirement 3i.

Element 3 - Learning Transitions and Post-Secondary Pathways

Information pertaining to this element is addressed in Pedagogical and Instructional Strategies Knowledge Element 6.

Element 4 - Ontario Context

The program enables teacher candidates to acquire knowledge, skills, perspectives and practices pertaining to the Ontario context in which elementary or secondary schools operate; Indigenous Perspectives, Cultures, Histories and Ways of Knowing; and Safe and Accepting Schools/Creation of a Positive School Climate and Environmental Learning, Ecojustice and Climate Action.

The KITEP is rooted in a wholistic Indigenous perspective. Indigenous ways of knowing, seeing, doing and being are foundational to the program. Course structures, learning outcomes, assignments, and texts support this foundation.

During the *Culture Camp*, teacher candidates are introduced to traditional Indigenous teaching and learning through an exploration of Indigenous worldviews and the relationships between traditional teaching, sharing, and learning. This is contextualized within the contemporary education system through the practical application of curriculum expectations. The *Culture Camp* helps to ground the KITEP in Indigenous Ways of Knowing, Seeing, Doing and Being. With an Elder/Knowledge Keeper present, candidates are introduced to the importance of Aki (Land) and language, Indigenous circle work, story work, ceremony, traditional teachings, protocol, song and philosophy, as well as reflecting and journaling.

Rooted in the local community and Aki texts, the *Community-Led Student Teaching and Learning Dagwaagin, Biboon, Ziigwan/Niibin* courses consolidate foundational Indigenous teachings and further offer experiential activities. Through these experiences, teacher candidates gain community-based experience that reflects local cultures and the goals and objectives of local Ontario schools.

In the *Technology as a Teaching and Learning Tool* course, teacher candidates create an audio or video podcast based on a topic of their choice, with options including a focus on climate change. In the *Indigenous Ways of Knowing* science course, they explore the role of Indigenous knowledge in environmental stewardship and sustainability and integrate concepts of sustainability into Science and Technology education. For example, they examine Indigenous stewardship, such as planting vegetation or habitat restoration, and connect it to scientific principles and Indigenous teachings.

Teacher candidates review and apply Ontario's *Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy* and the *Safe and Accepting Schools Policy (2024)*. In the *Student Teaching* course, candidates discuss the creation of safe and equitable learning environments and explore the principles of equity, inclusion and applications in the classroom. Candidates review strategies to address bullying, violence prevention, and creating safe spaces for all students, with attention to Indigenous learners' needs. Teacher candidates complete an Agreement describing how they are expected to enact a positive classroom climate during the two practicums.

The learning outcomes in the *Wholistic Healing and Indigenous Education* course support the creation of a positive classroom and school climate. Specifically, one of the course learning outcomes is that teacher candidates are expected to develop and implement strategies that promote students' mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual health, recognizing the teacher's role in fostering a supportive and nurturing learning environment.

Creating a safe and inclusive learning environment is a practicum performance expectation. Observable indicators of this expectation include:

- following appropriate legislation, local policies, and procedures regarding student safety and welfare
- ensuring and modeling bias-free assessment
- valuing and promoting fairness and justice and adopting anti-discriminatory practices with respect to gender, sexual orientation, race, disability, age, religion, culture, diversity of Indigenous cultures, and similar factors
- communicating information from a bias-free, multicultural perspective and privileges Indigenous ways.

These indicators assist associate teachers in establishing next steps for teacher candidates.

Element 5 - Education Law and Legislation

Information pertaining to this element is addressed in Requirement 11.

Element 6 - Professional Relationships

The program enables teacher candidates to acquire knowledge, skills, perspectives and practices in how to create and maintain the various types of professional relationships between and among members of the College, students, parents, the community, school staff and members of other professions in coursework and practicum expectations.

Candidates develop skills for fostering professional relationships in both method and foundation courses. Opportunities for teacher candidates to develop professional relationships with Indigenous community Elders and Knowledge holders, with an emphasis on local protocols and respectful relationships with community members are fostered in the *Community-Led Student Teaching and Learning Dagwaagin, Biboon, Ziigwan/Niibin* course.

They discuss what it means to maintain professional relationships with colleagues and professional networks in their *Student Teaching* course, and they expand their community and professional network of supportive knowledge-sharers and educators in the *Indigenous Education Research and Data Analysis* course

In *The Development of the Child* course, teacher candidates address the role of communication in fostering relationships between students, teachers, and families.

Candidates complete a reflection on effective family-teacher communication techniques and participate in role-playing family-teacher conferences with a focus on relationship-building. A group-sharing circle follows both activities.

In preparation for the practicum, candidates review and sign *The Teacher Candidate Agreement*, where they commit to interacting with learners, peers, colleagues, and parents professionally, responding appropriately in stressful situations or those involving conflict.

Then, during practicum, associate teachers evaluate teacher candidates on their professionalism in their ability to demonstrate sound professional judgment with learners and colleagues.

Conclusion

Based on the information provided, the Accreditation Committee finds that Requirement 3.1 is fully satisfied.

Requirement 4

The program curriculum is current, references the Ontario curriculum, includes the application of current research in teacher education, and represents a wide knowledge base in the divisions and components of the program.

Findings

The evidence indicates that the program reviewed is current, references the Ontario curriculum, includes the application of current research in teacher education, and represents a wide knowledge base in the divisions and components of the program.

Findings related to this requirement are reported in Requirement 3.1.

Conclusion

Based on the information provided, the Accreditation Committee finds that Requirement 4 is fully satisfied.

Requirement 5

The course content of the program includes theory, method and foundation courses and makes appropriate provision for the application of theory in practice.

Findings

The evidence indicates that the course content of the program reviewed includes theory, method and foundation courses, and makes appropriate provision for the application of theory in practice. The program includes method, foundation, practicum and research courses. Theory is integrated into the method and foundation courses.

The teaching method courses are described for the primary and junior divisions in Requirement 10.

Application of Theory in Practice

The program integrates theory with practice, involving community members to help teacher candidates find real-world examples and engage with local experts. This approach enhances their understanding and incorporates cultural knowledge and local context, particularly for Indigenous students.

Instructors use intentional approaches to connect theory and practice for teacher candidates. They consider what tools and resources would be useful for candidates as they begin their placements and enter schools. They seek out resources that can be connected back to the curriculum and utilized in teaching, both currently and in the future.

Teacher candidates learn to apply theory to practice through coursework, assignments, case studies, unit planning, reflections, and practicum placements. Candidates chronicle their participation in cultural activities and make connections to the Ontario Curriculum in a Photovoice assignment for the *Culture Camp* course. In the *Wholistic Healing and Indigenous Education* course candidates prepare a unit plan that integrates mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual health, focusing on student well-being, relationship-building, and the development of individual strengths. In this plan, candidates demonstrate their understanding of wholistic health principles and relationship-building strategies learned in class to create an inclusive and nurturing classroom environment.

In the *Student Teaching* course, teacher candidates prepare for their classroom placement by examining relevant policy documents to inform their practicum. The course learning outcomes state that candidates will reflect on and self-assess their professional judgement and teaching practice to learn from how they implement evidence-based teaching practices. Candidates must also demonstrate the ability to apply educational theory to their teaching practice. Candidates explore Indigenous perspectives on lifelong learning and reflective practice. They develop strategies for responding to changing classroom conditions using Indigenous values to guide decisions.

Conclusion

Based on the information provided, the Accreditation Committee finds that Requirement 5 is fully satisfied.

Requirement 6

The program's format and structure are appropriate for the course content.

Findings

Evidence gathered from documentation indicates that the format and structure of the program reviewed are appropriate for the course content.

Lakehead University offers KITEP – Primary/Junior at their two campuses: Thunder Bay, and Orillia. The program is structured either as a two-year (7 consecutive semesters) or a four-year part-time (14 semesters) format at both campuses. There are no courses in the spring (May – June) semester of the third and fourth years of the 14-semester option.

The Faculty of Education uses a 10-credit model where one full credit is equivalent to 72 hours of coursework. The KITEP – Primary/Junior consists of eight combined credits of method and foundation courses and two credits of practical experience.

Coursework

The program is offered as a combination of in-person components (camp setting, community-based and practicum) and synchronous online coursework. *Culture Camp* and *Community-Led Student Teaching and Learning Ziigwan/Niibin* are in-person, five-day courses in a camp setting. The camps are held at locations such as Lakehead's Thunder Bay campus and a host community setting with access to Aki (land). The camps are taught or co-taught by faculty members, Elders, and Knowledge Keepers. The *Community-Led Student Teaching and Learning* course uses a blended model with community-based and synchronous online components. All other foundation and method courses are offered synchronously on Zoom.

In the two-year model, teacher candidates begin method courses on literacy and numeracy prior to the first practicum placement. The first session consists of the equivalent of nine credits of methodology and three credits of foundation courses as follows: *Culture Camp* (0.5 credit of methodology); *Indigenous Storytelling (Literacy)* (0.5 credit of methodology); *Agindaasowin (Math)*, (0.5 credit of methodology); and *Wholistic Healing and Indigenous Education* (0.5 credit of foundation). The other four core content teaching subject areas are completed before the end of the second practicum.

Courses focusing on *Student Teaching*, which precede the practicum, encompass a comprehensive range of topics including legislation, duty to report, principles of assessment, curriculum policies, professional conduct, and the ethical standards of the teaching profession.

In the four-year model, literacy and numeracy courses also start before the first placement. Science and visual arts courses are offered before the end of the second practicum and the remaining method courses completed in Year 3 and 4.

Practicum

The KITEP includes two 30 to 50-day practicum blocks for a total of at least 80 days. The first practicum block is scheduled in Fall I/Winter I for all teacher candidates. The second practicum block takes place in Fall II/Winter II for teacher candidates in the 7-semester model and in Fall III/Winter III for those in the 14-semester model. Each teaching block can be completed in the Dagwaagin (Fall) semester (September- December), Biboon (Winter) semester (January- April), or a combination of the Dagwaagin/Biboon (Fall/Winter) semesters. This design intentionally provides flexibility to candidates.

The practicum courses *Student Teaching I* and *Student Teaching II* begin with four weeks of instruction focused on education-related laws, legislation, and Ontario Ministry of Education curriculum and policy documents. Candidates gain familiarity with theories of learning and teaching, assessment and evaluation, and differentiated instruction prior to their practicum placements. After successfully completing the course, teacher candidates begin their practicum in Kindergarten to grade 6 classrooms.

Conclusion

Based on the information provided, the Accreditation Committee finds that Requirement 6 is fully satisfied.

Requirement 7

Teacher candidates are assessed and informed of their progress on an ongoing basis throughout the program.

Findings

The evidence indicates that teacher candidates are assessed and informed of their progress on an ongoing basis throughout the program reviewed.

Program policies stipulate that teacher candidates must maintain a minimum cumulative average of 65%. A candidate who fails to maintain a 65% cumulative average and/or has one or more Full Credit Equivalent (FCE) below 60% in coursework may continue “On Probation” for one year. Teacher candidates may repeat up to two courses and are allowed to repeat a course once. Failure of the same course twice results in withdrawal from the KITEP.

Culture Camp and *Community-Led Teaching and Learning* courses are assessed through a pass/fail framework. The rationale for this framework is that these courses are based on and prioritize experiential and cultural learning. The Faculty explains that pass/fail systems are advantageous in these courses as they shift focus away from grades and competition, allowing teacher candidates to concentrate on their learning experiences.

Courses include formative and summative assessments and may include the use of self and peer assessments alongside more traditional instructor evaluation, including assessment as, of, and for learning.

Coursework

There are opportunities for instructors to offer candidates feedback and formative assessment built into all courses. Assignments often build on each other and culminate in candidate presentations of their work at the end of the courses. For example, in the *Agindasowiin* math course, teacher candidates complete a *Cultural Math Lesson Plan* divided into two parts, with opportunities for feedback on the first part before they complete the second part. This allows instructors to scaffold teacher candidate knowledge and conceptual understandings throughout the duration of a course.

Instructors in the KITEP offer a variety of course assignments including focused lesson and unit planning, literature reviews, presentations, critical observations, community learning reports, action research projects, artistic works, creative writing, and educational technologies. KITEP instructors are encouraged to work collaboratively to develop Aki grounded and course-specific assessment tools that reflect the specific knowledge in their areas of teaching and use these to assess candidates' work.

For example, in the *Indigenous Storytelling* course, candidates are evaluated using an assessment criteria that focuses on the following indicators for a lesson planning assignment:

- **Alignment with Ontario Curriculum:** The lesson plan should accurately reflect curriculum expectations for the chosen grade and language strand
- **Integration of Indigenous Perspectives:** Thoughtful and respectful integration of Indigenous texts or oral traditions, highlighting cultural significance and context
- **Lesson Clarity and Structure:** Clear, step-by-step instructions and well-defined lesson components (objective, materials, activities, assessment)
- **Cultural Responsiveness:** Responsive to Indigenous cultural values and protocols in lesson design and instructional approach
- **Cross-Curricular Connections:** Meaningful links to other curriculum areas that enhance the lesson's depth
- **Reflection and Self-Assessment:** Insightful reflection on the benefits and challenges of incorporating Indigenous perspectives into the language curriculum.

Practicum

Teacher candidates receive regular feedback throughout the practicum, notably from both faculty advisors and associate teachers.

Associate teachers complete formative and summative assessments at the midpoint and endpoint of each practicum. There is ongoing dialogue and meetings between teacher candidates and associate teachers to support the candidates' growth throughout the practicum. Formalized meetings, in conjunction with the assessment processes, also promote professional dialogue.

Faculty advisors observe each teacher candidate teach once, and more if needed, for each placement. The observation of teacher candidates can be virtual or face to face, and feedback is provided to the candidate by using a lesson observation form. Faculty advisors provide written feedback to the candidate following the observation of a lesson, identifying areas of strength, areas for growth, and next steps for improvement.

The formative assessment provides feedback to teacher candidates and documents the outcome of the mid-practicum evaluation. Candidates also complete a self-assessment at the midpoint of the practicum. At the end of the placement, the associate teacher completes the summative assessment and Practicum Experience Form. These forms indicate the placement location, division, associate teacher and Principal, and dates of placement (the information submitted on this form is tracked). Teacher candidates are assessed (formative and summative) according to the following categories: professionalism; positive learning environment; and teaching practice assessment and evaluation.

The KITEP Teaching Practicum Guide includes evaluation forms based on the observable indicators, which associate teachers use to assess teacher candidates' performance and provide feedback. Teacher candidates are assigned a Pass, Fail, or Incomplete grade in each practicum course.

Conclusion

Based on the information provided, the Accreditation Committee finds that Requirement 7 is fully satisfied.

Requirement 8

The program includes a practicum that satisfies the requirements set out in subparagraph 2v of subsection 1(2) and subsection (2).

Subparagraph 2v of subsection 1(2) sets out that the program includes a minimum of 80 days of practical experience, appropriate to the format and structure of the program, in schools or in other situations approved by the College for observation and practice teaching.

Subsection 9. (2) sets out that the requirements for the practicum portion of the program are as follows:

- 1. The practicum must include observation and practice teaching in an instructional setting in schools or other situations that use the Ontario curriculum or in situations approved by the College.*
- 2. The practicum enables every teacher candidate to participate in settings related to each division and at least one of the subject areas of the program that are relevant to the teacher candidate.*
- 3. An experienced teacher supervises the teacher candidate and assesses their practicum.*
- 4. A faculty member is appointed as an advisor for each teacher candidate.*

Findings

The evidence indicates that all required components for the practicum are addressed in the program reviewed.

A Minimum of Eighty Days Appropriate to the Format and Structure of the Program

Teacher candidates complete a minimum of 80 days of practicum, divided into two 30-to-50 day placements. This variation in the timing and number of placement days in each block offers flexibility to candidates while adhering to the 80-day total. Both placements can be completed in the Dagwaagin semester (September to December), Biboon semester (January to April), or a combination of the Dagwaagin/Biboon (Fall/Winter) semesters.

Observation and Practice Teaching in Settings that Use the Ontario Curriculum

All practical experience occurs in an instructional setting using the Ontario Curriculum including provincially and federally funded school boards such as: Attawapiskat Education Authority; District School Board Ontario North East; Lakehead District School Board; Lambton Kent District School Board; M'Chigeeng Board of Education; and Mundo Peetabeck Education Authority.

Schools that are operated by an Education Authority, Council, or Band ensure that the Ontario Curriculum is used in candidate placement experiences.

Most KITEP teacher candidates already work in the community as educational assistants or on a teaching Letter of Permission. The schools in which candidates are placed are committed to supporting them, as there is a need for qualified teachers who can teach the language and culture, and who are familiar with and come from the community.

The expectations and requirements regarding the gradual increase in teaching responsibilities are clearly established and communicated to teacher candidates and associate teachers. During the practicum placement, candidates are expected to complete up to five days of active observation. Responsibility for planning and teaching increases from approximately 25% to 50% during the first three weeks up to 100% in the final week, depending on the teacher candidate's readiness.

Each Division and One Subject Area

Teacher candidates are placed in practicum settings related to each division: primary (Kindergarten-grade 3) and junior (grades 4-6). Teacher candidates are expected to gain experience in both primary and junior classrooms within the first 10 days of the practicum, corresponding to the first session leading to the Multi-Session Transitional Certificate of Qualification and Registration.

Experienced Teacher Supervises and Assesses

In the KITEP – Teaching Practicum Guide, Lakehead describes the role of associate teachers as professional mentors who encourage, guide, model, co-plan, co-teach and provide regular feedback. In addition to supervising candidates, associate teachers provide formative and summative assessments related to performance expectations and observable indicators. For teacher candidates completing their practicum on a Multi-Session Transitional Certificate of Qualification and Registration, the school principal may serve as the associate teacher.

Associate teachers who supervise and assess teacher candidates are Ontario Certified Teachers who have at least two years of experience.

Faculty Advisor

The role of the faculty advisor involves mentoring teacher candidates and facilitating communications between associate teachers, teacher candidates, Indigenous community partners, school principals, and the Practicum Coordinator.

The KITEP – Teaching Practicum Guide explains the responsibilities of the faculty advisor throughout the practicum such as maintaining regular contact with teacher candidates and

associate teachers, to monitor and review teacher candidate's lesson plan/unit plan submissions to their daybook and provide feedback to teacher candidates during each placement. The faculty advisor monitors the number of practicum days completed by teacher candidates as well as the submissions of the formative and summative assessments.

Conclusion

Based on the information provided, the Accreditation Committee finds that Requirement 8 is fully satisfied.

Requirement 10

The teaching method courses in the program are appropriate in relation to the divisions to which they relate.

Findings

The evidence indicates that the teaching method courses in the program are appropriate in relation to the divisions to which they relate.

Teacher candidates in the KITEP – Primary/Junior undertake division-specific method courses reflecting the six core content areas of the Ontario Curriculum: Language, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Health and Physical Education, Social Studies, and the four strands of The Arts.

Candidates take the following method-related courses: three seasonal *Community Led Student Teaching and Learning* *Dagwaagin* (Fall), *Biboon* (Winter) and *Ziigwan/Niibin* (Spring/Summer) ; *Indigenous Storytelling, Part I&II* (Literacy); *Agindaasowin, Part I&II* (Math); *Indigenous Ways of Seeing* (Visual Arts); *Culture Camp*; *Indigenous Ways of Knowing* (Science); *Indigenous Ways of Doing* (Music, Dance, Drama); *Indigenous Ways of Being* (Social Studies).

For each of the *Community Led Student Teaching and Learning* courses, candidates focus on two of the six core content areas, such that all six subjects are addressed. Specific attention is brought to the Kindergarten Program in *The Development of the Child* and *Student Teaching II* courses taken by all KITEP candidates.

Schedule 1 - Pedagogy, Assessment and Evaluation for Specific Curriculum Areas

The program enables teacher candidates to acquire knowledge and skills in pedagogy, assessment and evaluation for specific curriculum areas within the curriculum-specific method courses.

All KITEP method courses examine curriculum knowledge, policies, and practices specific to teaching and learning in the primary and junior divisions, Kindergarten to grade 6, in content and assignments. In several courses, teacher candidates design lessons and unit plans. They develop instructional activities, define the learning outcomes and plan formative and summative assessments.

In the *Indigenous Ways of Knowing* science course, teacher candidates plan and implement lesson plans incorporating Aki-based¹ knowledge for both divisions using the Science and Technology curriculum. They identify specific curriculum expectations, assessment strategies and best practices for engaging students in land-based activities. In the *Indigenous Ways of Doing* course, candidates analyze the Ontario Ministry of Education curriculum and policy documents and identify how Indigenous pedagogies can be meaningfully integrated into the Music, Drama, and Dance strands. They create and implement lesson plans and activities incorporating Indigenous pedagogical methods, ensuring they are culturally responsive and aligned with Indigenous ways of knowing and Ministry guidelines.

The *Culture Camp* course addresses Indigenous ways of Knowing, Seeing, Doing, and Being; Indigenous education and pedagogy; the Seven Grandfather Teachings and Eight Grandmother teachings; and Anishinaabe protocols through experiential learning and participation.

Conclusion

Based on the information provided, the Accreditation Committee finds that Requirement 10 is fully satisfied.

¹ Land-based learning

Requirement 12

The faculty members teaching the program are an appropriate combination of persons with appropriate academic qualifications, practitioners with appropriate experience in the field of education, and persons with appropriate expertise in the divisions and components of the program.

Findings

The evidence indicates that the faculty members teaching in the program are an appropriate combination of persons with appropriate academic qualifications, practitioners with appropriate experience in the field of education, and persons with appropriate expertise in the divisions and components of the program.

Expertise in the Divisions and Components of the Program

Faculty members of Keewatinase, including contract faculty, have diverse professional backgrounds, academic qualifications, and teaching expertise. All faculty have experience working with Indigenous communities and in the education sector. The KITEP instructors are qualified to teach across all divisions and components of the program, with backgrounds in elementary, secondary, post-secondary, adult education, as well as administration, leadership, and teaching Indigenous students.

Faculty members bring a combination of academic credentials, experience, divisional expertise and Additional Qualifications (AQ) in subjects and specialties in First Nation, Métis and Inuit studies, Kindergarten, primary and junior divisions, mathematics, writing, special education, teaching students with communication needs (autism spectrum); and integration of information and computer technology in instruction.

Faculty member research and field-based expertise includes curriculum design, development, evaluation, and delivery; Indigenous youth identities and schooling; Indigenous education, Indigenous philosophy and Anishinaabe Story work Circle Pedagogy; and culturally responsive, place-based mathematics education.

Conclusion

Based on the information provided, the Accreditation Committee finds that Requirement 12 is fully satisfied.

Decision of the Accreditation Committee

For the reasons set out above, the Accreditation Committee finds that the following program of professional offered by the Faculty of Education, Lakehead University fully satisfies the requirements of Regulation 347/02, Accreditation of Teacher Education Programs:

- Multi-session consecutive program of professional education for persons of First Nation, Métis or Inuit ancestry and multi-session consecutive program, with areas of study in the Primary/Junior divisions, leading to a degree or diploma [referred to as Keewatinase Indigenous Teacher Education Program (KITEP – P/J)].

The Accreditation Committee grants general accreditation to this program until December 3, 2026 to correspond with the existing expiry date of the other accredited programs of professional education at the Faculty of Education, Lakehead University.

Accreditation Committee
Ontario College of Teachers
July 21, 2025