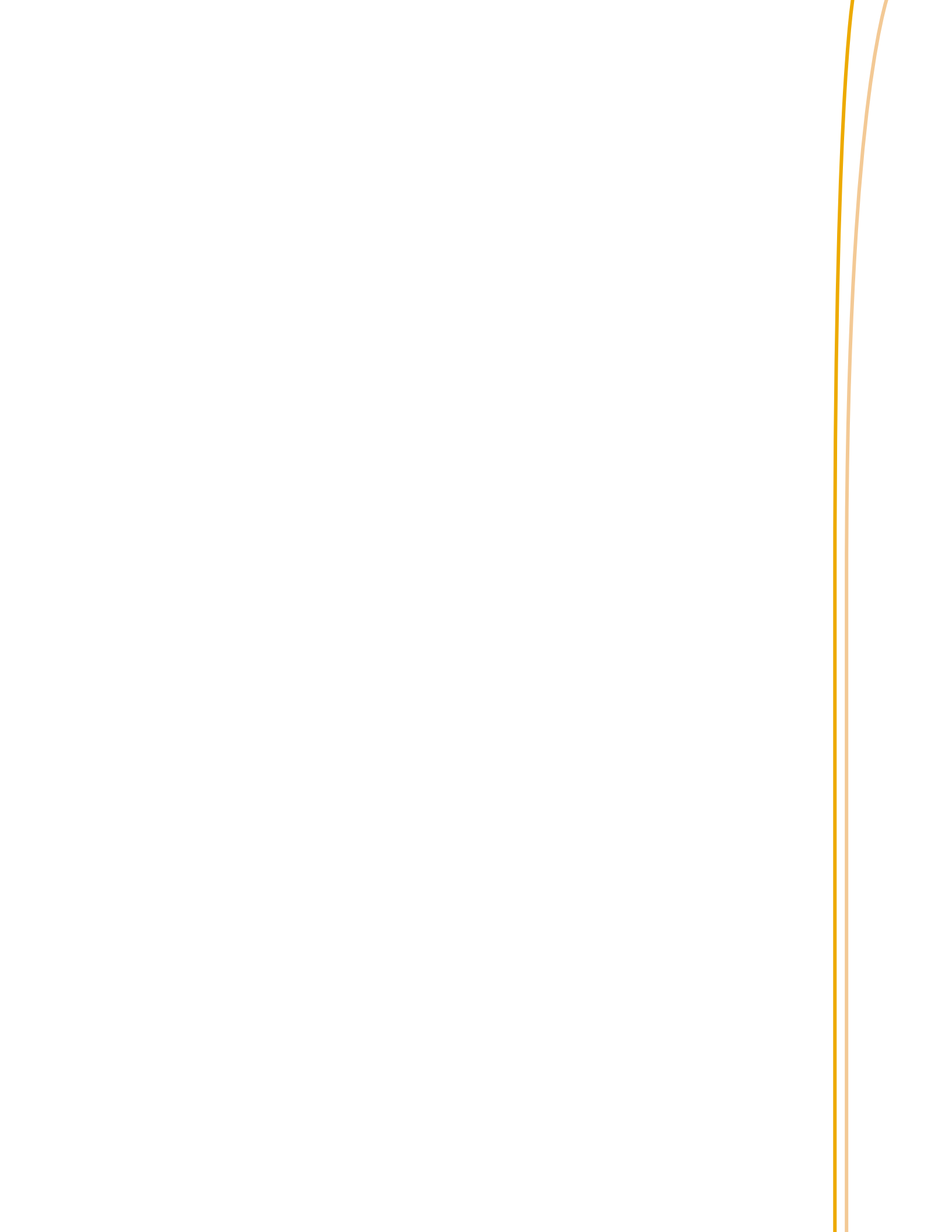




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Une publication équivalente est disponible en français sous le titre suivant : *Cadre stratégique de l'Ontario pour la différenciation du système d'éducation postsecondaire, 2013*

This publication is also available on the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities website, at [www.ontario.ca/tcu](http://www.ontario.ca/tcu).  
13-268 • ISBN 978-1-4606-3368-7 (PDF) • © Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2013





# 1. Introduction

## 1.2

The government has opted for differentiation as a primary policy driver for the system. The government's policy of differentiation sets the foundation for broader postsecondary system transformation by publicly articulating government expectations and aligning the mandates of Ontario's colleges and universities with government priorities.

Our overriding goals for a differentiated system are to build on and help focus the well-established strengths of institutions, enable them to operate together as complementary parts of a whole, and give students affordable access to the full continuum of vocational and academic educational opportunities that are required to prosper in our contemporary world.

Over time, the government will align its policies, processes, and funding levers with Ontario's Differentiation Policy Framework to steer the system in ways that align with provincial priorities while respecting the autonomy and supporting the strengths of our institutions.

The government's goals, combined with a collaborative approach to differentiation, will help facilitate the achievement of targeted quality outcomes and enable institutions to respond to a broader range of learners whose diverse qualifications and skills are needed to support economic prosperity and build strong communities across Ontario.







# 3. Differentiation Policy Framework

## 3.1



The Differentiation Policy Framework is the foundation for the ministry's decision making and ongoing dialogue with institutions, students, and all stakeholders going forward.

## 3.2



The Differentiation Policy Framework provides a balanced and collaborative approach to better support the government's vision and priorities for postsecondary education, while supporting institutions in demonstrating leadership through their distinct contributions. The overarching goals for differentiation of Ontario's postsecondary education are to:

1. Support student success and access to a high-quality Ontario postsecondary education
2. Improve the global competitiveness of Ontario's postsecondary education system
3. Build on and help focus the well-established strengths of

development, serving the needs of the economy and labour market, and promoting a culture of entrepreneurship. This may include, but is not limited to, the impacts of institutions' commercialization, innovation, and applied research activity on social and economic development.

Differentiation strengthens alignment between regional development needs and defined institutional mandates. This will advance innovative partnerships and programs that serve the distinct Ontario communities to which institutions are connected, as well as broader provincial needs. This alignment will ensure that students graduate with skills that respond to local and provincial labour market needs and contribute to social development. In areas that align with institutional capacity, these partnerships may be global in scope.

### 3.3.2 Teaching and Learning

This component captures institutional strengths in program delivery methods that expand learning options for students and improve their learning experience and career preparedness. This may include, but is not limited to, experiential, entrepreneurial, work-integrated, and online learning.

Institutions will focus on areas of educational strength and specialty so that *collectively*



Greater collaboration between and within sectors will work to maximize recognition for prior learning and strengthen pathways so that students can better navigate learning options within a differentiated postsecondary education system.

### 3.4 **Supporting the Differentiation Process**

In addition to the six components of differentiation, Ontario's Differentiation Policy Framework identifies two key directions that help support the differentiation process.

#### 3.4.1 **Strategic Enrolment**

Discussions about future enrolment levels will be part of the differentiation process and will be informed by system-level ministry enrolment projections, demographics, and recent provincial growth planning decisions that affect capacity, including capital. Working with institutions on managing enrolment growth will help to align institutions' enrolment planning with provincial priorities. Ultimately, coordinated growth and capacity planning will enhance responsiveness to shifting trends in demand and demographics, further helping to protect the quality of postsecondary education from periods of slower growth while meeting local access needs and system-level forecasts.

#### 3.4.2 **Financial Sustainability**

The ministry recognizes that underlying the differentiation process is a commitment and action towards ensuring financial sustainability at the institution and system level. Institutions will be expected to provide measures of financial health, including pension plan status and compliance with the BPS Accountability Act.

Transparent reporting standards using comparable measures of financial health and administrative efficiency will enhance institutions' ability to focus investments in areas of institutional strength. Collectively, this will drive the system towards greater productivity and will ensure postsecondary education in Ontario has a secure future.

### 3.5 Metrics

Metrics provide the evidence-base on which to have informed discussions, and it is important to strike a balance between system-wide and institution-level metrics:

- **System-wide metrics** are the primary metrics used to measure progress. These metrics are rooted in historical data to enable measurement of progress over time, and are linked to the institutional internal planning processes.
- **Institution-specific metrics** are optional, but help identify unique strengths. These are rooted in historical data to enable measurement of progress over time, and are linked to the institutional internal planning processes.
- **Current metrics** are based on current data collected or already available to the ministry, are applicable to all institutions and form the basis for measuring progress.

The following table outlines, in detail, the approach to metrics in each component (additional information on definitions and technical details for each metric can be found in the Technical Addendum).

## Differentiation Framework – Metrics

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>Graduate Employment Rates</p>           | <p>Metrics</p>   |
| <p>Graduate Employment Rates</p>           | <p>As part of forming an institution's profile and measuring progress in this component, the ministry will use the following system-wide metrics for all institutions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduate employment rates</li> <li>• Employer satisfaction rates</li> <li>• Number of graduates employed full-time in a related job</li> </ul> <p>In addition, before March 31, additional system-wide metrics will be developed, in consultation with the sector focused on applied research, commercialization, entrepreneurial activity, and community impact (e.g., number of patents, number of licences, revenue from licensing, number of start-up companies and jobs created).</p> <p>Institutions are invited to provide up to 3 additional metrics that demonstrate economic and community impact.</p> |
| <p>Student Engagement and Satisfaction</p> | <p>As part of forming an institution's profile and measuring progress in this component, the ministry will use the following system-wide metrics for all institutions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Survey of Student Engagement Results (university-specific)</li> <li>• Student Satisfaction Survey Results (college-specific)</li> <li>• Graduation rates</li> <li>• Retention rates</li> <li>•</li> </ul>   |
|  |  |



| <p>Strategic Mandate Agreement<br/>Component</p> | <p>Details</p>   |
|--|--|
| <p>Strategic Mandate Agreement<br/>Component</p> | <p>As part of forming an institution's profile in this component, the ministry will use the following system-wide metrics for all institutions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of college and university pathways and/or articulation agreements (college-college, college-university, university-college, university-university)</li> <li>• Number of transfer applicants and registrants</li> <li>• Number of college graduates enrolled in university programs</li> </ul> <p>Institutions are invited to provide up to 3 additional metrics that demonstrate support for greater co-ordination and pathways.</p> |

| <p>Strategic Mandate Agreement<br/>Component</p> | <p>Details</p>   |
|--|--|
| <p>Strategic Mandate Agreement<br/>Component</p> | <p>Given the forecasted enrolment growth over the next 5–10 years, the ministry has asked institutions to provide medium-term forecasts of planned enrolment through 2018–19 to illustrate the future enrolment trajectory of an institution. These will form the basis for discussing medium-term enrolment growth per institution.</p>                     |
| <p>Strategic Mandate Agreement<br/>Component</p> | <p>The ministry will use the financial sustainability metrics outlined in the Deputy Minister's November 2013 Memorandum as a backdrop to the Strategic Mandate Agreement discussions. Following the conclusion of SMAs, the ministry intends to engage the sector in discussions around financial sustainability with a view to finalizing the metrics.</p> |



## 4. Implementation

### 4.1 Strategic Mandate Agreements

The Strategic Mandate Agreements (SMAs) are the mechanism through which colleges and universities articulate their unique mandates, strengths, and aspirations. They outline the relationship between the ministry and the institutions, and how each institution's mission and activities align with Ontario's vision for postsecondary education as articulated in this framework.

### 4.2 Alignment of Government Levers

Ontario's differentiation and Strategic Mandate Agreement process will set the foundation for future alignment of government levers to support sustainability, a high-quality postsecondary education, and other government priorities. Over time, the ministry will align its policy, processes, and funding levers with both the framework and the SMAs to ensure coherent decision making.

### 4.3 Accountability

Reporting by colleges and universities to the ministry continues to be an integral part of the government's relationship with institutions. The ministry will work with the sector to phase in