

USER GUIDE



Transfer Credit Awarded (TCA)

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1. Document Usage

1.1 Document Purpose

The User Guide document has been developed for Transfer Credit Awarded (TCA) provincial data collection in Alberta. The TCA User Guide is for participating institutions for TCA to help in submission of TCA data. The document provides information on the following:

- Data Elements
- Provider Operating Names for TO Institution data submissions
- XML structure to submit data
- Access to TCA module in DCaR

Details regarding terms and definitions are located in the [TCA Data Dictionary](#) and the vision, goals, guiding principles, data questions and system measure in the [TCA Guiding Principles](#) document.

1.2 Audience

The primary audience for the User Guide is:

- The institutions/stakeholders required to provide and/or understand TCA data.
- The ACAT Secretariat/Advanced Education, who facilitate TCA data standards and the system.

2. TCA Data Elements

TCA Learner (Level 1)	Transfer Credit (Level 2)	XML Tag	Type	Size	Comments/ Validation
Alberta Student Number		ASN	Mandatory	9	<p>Learner's Alberta Student Number (ASN). Must be an active ASN.*</p> <p>Cross-reference ASN with Birthdate to confirm the ASN is assigned to the appropriate learner (same check as LERS) and issue a warning if discrepant.</p> <p>Check if an ASN combination appears more than once in the records in a submission, and if so, a validation error will occur.</p> <p>Combination being checked = ASN + To Institution + To Institution course code + PAPRS Program ID + PAPRS Program Specialization Code + From Institution + From Institution course.</p> <p>Note: This will prevent the same ASN record combination from being submitted twice.</p> <p>*ASN validation exception is in place only for specific Learner Pathways System institutions where students do not have ASNs.</p>
Birth Date		BirthDate	Mandatory	8 (YYYYMMDD)	Learner's Date of Birth. Required for ASN validation to ensure an ASN is related to the correct learner.
To Institution		Provider	Mandatory	min:2, max: 100	<p>Learner's PSI operating name that they transferred to, and who is awarding them transfer credit. Must be a valid PAPRS institution operating name.</p> <p>See Provider Operating Names in this User Guide for a list of all potential "To Institution" Alberta Learner Pathways System institution member operating names from PAPRS.</p>
Academic Year		AcademicYear	Mandatory	YYYY	<p>Academic year for which the TCA data is submitted. Must be the same for all records in the file.</p> <p>Start and end dates for the annual TCA reporting period mirror institutional LERS enrolment reporting cycle as applicable, with the TCA academic year based on institutional fiscal year start and end dates and not by calendar year.</p> <p>For Example: Academic Year for TCA and LERS Reporting/Institutional Fiscal Year End Dates:</p> <p>For March 31st institution fiscal year ends, enrolment reporting cycle is May 1 – April 30.</p> <p>For June 30th institution fiscal year ends, enrolment reporting cycle is July 1 to June 30.</p> <p>Note: Academic year is included in data submissions identified by a single year (e.g., 2021 for the 2021-2022 academic year), and annual data submissions are provided based on the institution's start and end dates for their previously completed fiscal year. For example, if your fiscal year starts May 1, 2021 and ends April</p>

TCA Learner (Level 1)	Transfer Credit (Level 2)	XML Tag	Type	Size	Comments/ Validation
					30, 2022, and you are assessing and awarding transfer credit for a student for a course(s) in January 2022, this credit would be reported in your 2021 (2021/2022) submission, not in your 2022 (2022/2023) submission.
PAPRS Program ID		ProgramID	Mandatory	30	<p>Program ID for which learners got transfer credit awarded.</p> <p>Must be defined in PAPRS and be an existing PAPRS Program ID for an active program for Alberta publicly funded "To" institutions.</p> <p>For Institutions that are not required to use PAPRS or that have data requirement limitations for some programming, use "0" and provide details in Notes.</p>
PAPRS Program Specialization Code		SpecializationID	Mandatory	10	<p>Specialization Code for which learners got transfer credit awarded.</p> <p>Must be defined in PAPRS and be an existing PAPRS Program Specialization Code for Alberta publicly funded "To" institutions.</p> <p>For Institutions that are not required to use PAPRS or that have data requirement limitations for some programming, use "0" and provide details in Notes.</p> <p>Note: TCA aggregate data analysis will include assessment of any instances of multiple Program Specialization Code records for the same From Institution + From Course(s) offerings.</p>
	From Institution	FromInstitution	Mandatory	Min:2, max:100	<p>From Institution operating name where Learner completed work to get credit.</p> <p>From Institutions where From Institution location = 1 (in Alberta), the From Institution name for all Alberta Learner Pathways System institution members is recommended to be an existing PAPRS Institution operating name.</p> <p>For From Institutions where the From Institution Location = 1 (in Alberta), 2 (outside of Alberta in Canada), 3 (outside of Canada), or 4 (unknown), the From Institution names will not be validated against PAPRS and are recommended to reflect those institutions' operating names.</p> <p>Once TCA data is submitted by an institution, the ACAT Secretariat/Ministry will run a validation on From Institution operating names and will confirm validation with institutions.</p> <p>For data with IB or AP course codes, the From Institution name must be "High School".</p> <p>For data with PLAR course codes, the From Institution name must be "Prior Learning".</p> <p>Please see sample XML file.</p> <p>See Provider Operating Names in this User Guide for a list of all Alberta Learner Pathways System institution member operating names from PAPRS.</p>

TCALearner (Level 1)	TransferCredit (Level 2)	XML Tag	Type	Size	Comments/ Validation
	From Institution Location	FILocation	Mandatory	1	<p>The geographical location of the institution where the learner completed the course(s) being awarded transfer credit.</p> <p>Value must be: 1-Alberta 2-Outside of Alberta in Canada 3-Outside of Canada 4-Unknown</p> <p>When entering IB or AP courses, use the geographical location where they took their high school courses/where the AP/IB course was taken.</p> <p>Value must be 1, 2, 3, or 4.</p>
	Course Code at From Institution	FICourseCode	Mandatory	100	<p>From Institution Course Code (Course Code = Code and Number) for which the Learner got credit.</p> <p>When entering multiple From Institution Course Codes within one record, separate the course codes with commas, and no white spaces before or after the comma and the next course code.</p> <p>If white/blank spaces are remaining, DCaR will automatically strip out white spaces before/after commas.</p> <p>For PLAR data use "Prior Learning" for the Course Code at From Institution.</p> <p>Please see sample XML file.</p>
	Date course taken at From institution	FIAcademicYearCourseTaken	Mandatory	YYYY	<p>Academic Year in which Learner took the course at the From Institution.</p> <p>Where multiple courses are included for transfer credit awarded, use the later academic year, e.g. Learner took CourseA in 2015 and CourseB in 2017, use 2017.</p> <p>For PLAR credit awarded, use the latest year of experience for which the credit is being awarded, e.g., Learner relevant experience is between March 2015 – Dec 2017 put 2017. If experience period is not known enter 9999.</p>
	Course Code at To institution	TCACourseCode	Mandatory	100	<p>To Institution Course Code (Course Code = Code and Number) for which the Learner gets credit.</p> <p>When entering multiple To Institution Course Codes within one record, separate the course codes with commas, and no white spaces before or after the comma and the next course code.</p> <p>If white/blank spaces are remaining, DCaR will automatically strip out white spaces before/after commas.</p>

TCALearner (Level 1)	TransferCredit (Level 2)	XML Tag	Type	Size	Comments/ Validation
	Transfer Credit Awarded	TCA	Mandatory	###.##	<p>Value of transfer credits awarded by course(s). Values include the number of credits awarded. Data may include one or more of the following: 1 course to 1 course 1 course to many courses Many courses to many courses Many courses to 1 course 1 credential ladder to 1 credential</p>
	Date transfer credit was awarded at receiving institution	TCAAcademicYear	Mandatory	YYYY	<p>Academic Year in which the Learner was assessed to receive transfer credit at the To Institution. Must be the same year for which the TCA data is submitted, i.e. same as Academic Year.</p>
	PLAR Credit Awarded	PLARCA	Optional	###.##	<p>Value of credits transcribed for PLAR credit awarded by course. Must enter either TCA or PLAR credit data within one record. When TCA data fields are populated, the PLAR credit awarded data field should be null.* *(In XML, a null PLARCA value is specified by not including the PLARCA attribute (data field) for the TransferCredit element (record). This is the XML standard for specifying null attribute values (see XML Sample).) If a PLAR assessment was done and zero credit was awarded, "0" (versus null) must be entered in the PLAR credit awarded data field. "0"s do not need to be provided for PLAR when providing transfer credit data in a record. If PLAR credit awarded data is provided, the following fields must be populated with the identified codes: From Institution – must be the following default PLAR code = "Prior Learning" From Course Code – must be the following default PLAR code = "Prior Learning" TCA – must be the following default PLAR code = "0" (0 = Prior Learning).</p>
	Notes	Notes	Optional	200	<p>For PSI to provide comments on transfer credit awarded where relevant. For Institutions that are not required to use PAPRS or that have data requirement limitations for some programming, they will use "0" in the PAPRS Program ID and PAPRS Program Specialization Code data fields and provide program name and program specialization name details in the Notes data field.</p>

Provider Operating Names

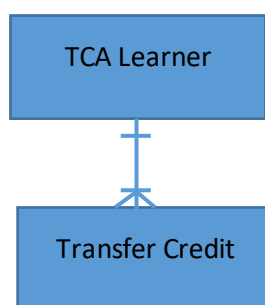
List of current institution **Operating Names (From PAPRS) for Learner Pathways System member institutions, which are to be used by institutions in “To Institution” and “From Institution” data fields for TCA data submissions.** Institutions in **green font** are out-of-province member institutions.

Provider Operating Name
Alberta University of the Arts
Ambrose University
Athabasca University
Aurora College
University nuhelot'ine thaiyots'i nistameyimakanak Blue Quills <small>(Note: If your institution's Student Information System allows a maximum of 50 characters for this data field, you may truncate the spelling of this institution name in your TCA data records to read: "University nuhelot'ine thaiyots'i nistameyimakanak".)</small>
Bow Valley College
Burman University
College of the Rockies
Columbia College
Concordia University of Edmonton
Northwestern Polytechnic
Grant MacEwan University
Keyano College
Lakeland College
Lethbridge College
Maskwacis Cultural College
Medicine Hat College
Mount Royal University
Nechi Institute Centre of Indigenous Learning
NorQuest College
Northern Alberta Institute of Technology
Northern Lakes College
Nunavut Arctic College
Olds College
Portage College

Provider Operating Name
Prairie Bible Institute
Red Crow Community College
Red Deer Polytechnic
Rocky Mountain College
Saskatchewan Polytechnic
Southern Alberta Institute of Technology
St. Mary's University
Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity
King's University, The
Thompson Rivers University – Open Learning
University of Alberta
University of Calgary
University of Lethbridge
University of Regina
Yellowhead Tribal College
Yukon University

3. XML structure

TCA data has two levels, the first level contains details about the Learner and the Institution, referred to as TCALearner (XML tag) and the second level has details of the learner's transferred courses and credits, referred to as TransferCredit. Each TCALearner must have one or more TransferCredit records.



Refer to Data Elements section for elements under TCALearner and TransferCredit.

Download a copy of the TCA XML Schema file and TCA XML Sample file* at <https://acat.alberta.ca/research/current-research/transfer-credit-awarded/>.

*The **TCA Schema file** and the **Sample TCA XML file** have been updated to match the updated TCA data standard that is referenced in the **TCA Data Elements** section earlier in this document.

There are **two approaches** that can be used to construct a valid TCA XML file. Examples of these two approaches can be found under the [TCA Sample Files](#) tabs on the TCA webpage on the ACAT website and are illustrated below.

- **TCA XML Sample – Student Records Grouped Under their ASN** (e.g. below from sample file)

```
<TCA xmlns="http://psdata.iae.alberta.ca/tca/v2">
  <TCLearner ASN="100006642" BirthDate="19790428" Provider="Athabasca University"
    AcademicYear="2021" ProgramID="0058XX" SpecializationID="GLM">
    <TransferCredit FromInstitution="Grant MacEwan University" FILocation="1"
      FICourseCode="CM1." FIAcademicYearCourseTaken="2015"
      TCACourseCode="TEST XXX" TCA="3.00" TCAAcademicYear="2021" Notes="test" />
    <TransferCredit FromInstitution="Grant MacEwan University" FILocation="1"
      FICourseCode="MATH-1127" FIAcademicYearCourseTaken="2021"
      TCACourseCode="TEST 100" TCA="3.000" TCAAcademicYear="2021" />
    <TransferCredit FromInstitution="Grant MacEwan University" FILocation="1"
      FICourseCode="ENGL-1223" FIAcademicYearCourseTaken="2021"
      TCACourseCode="TEST 101" TCA="3.000" TCAAcademicYear="2021" />
  </TCLearner>
</TCA>
```

- **TCA XML Sample – Student Records Listed by Repeating their ASN** (e.g. below from sample file).

```
<TCA xmlns="http://psdata.iae.alberta.ca/tca/v2">
  <TCLearner ASN="100006642" BirthDate="19790428" Provider="Athabasca University"
    AcademicYear="2021" ProgramID="0058XX" SpecializationID="GLM">
    <TransferCredit FromInstitution="Grant MacEwan University" FILocation="1"
      FICourseCode="CM1" FIAcademicYearCourseTaken="2015" TCACourseCode="TEST
      XXX" TCA="6.00" TCAAcademicYear="2021" Notes="test" />
  </TCLearner>
  <TCLearner ASN="100006642" BirthDate="19790428" Provider="Athabasca University"
    AcademicYear="2021" ProgramID="0058XX" SpecializationID="GLM">
    <TransferCredit FromInstitution="Grant MacEwan University" FILocation="1"
      FICourseCode="Math 1127" FIAcademicYearCourseTaken="2015"
      TCACourseCode="TEST 100" TCA="6.00" TCAAcademicYear="2021" Notes="test" />
  </TCLearner>
</TCA>
```

It is recommended to validate the TCA XML file against the TCA schema (XSD) before using DCaR to submit to the ministry. As part of the submission, the data file is validated against the schema and the business rules. A file with errors cannot be imported and the errors are logged in the Error log file.

In case the file is created manually or to validate a system generated file, one of the tools to use is NotePad++ with a XML plugin. The details on how to use NotePad++ to validate XML against an XSD are available [here](#).

If an institution requires assistance creating their XML file or converting their file to XML, they may contact ae.lps@gov.ab.ca and use the *Share Files* tab in the DCaR TCA module to receive assistance.

4. Access to TCA module in Data Collection and Reporting (DCaR)

User must have MyAlberta Digital ID to login to DCaR. To get access to the TCA data set, the gatekeeper of the institution needs to send a request to the ACAT Secretariat/Advanced Education at ae.lps@gov.ab.ca for the PSI user.

When access to TCA is granted, the User will login using the following DCaR URL:

<https://psdata.ae.alberta.ca/dcar.web.external/>

Users will mass upload their previous academic year's TCA data annually (TCA academic year is based on each institution's fiscal year start and end dates) using the DCaR TCA module according to the TCA data elements/data standard outlined in this document.