

AD04 Ordering Course Materials

Classification:	Administration
Responsible Authority:	Director, Campus Services
Executive Sponsor:	Vice President, Finance and Administration
Approval Authority:	Algonquin College Executive Team
Date First Approved:	1996-02-22
Date Last Reviewed:	2025-06-11
Date to Complete Mandatory Review:	2030-06-11

PURPOSE

The Adoption & Ordering of Course Materials Policy provides a College-wide framework for ensuring timely, cost-effective, and high-quality textbook and course material adoption. As a College-wide framework this policy removes barriers to student learning, retention, and success while maintaining the quality of education and selection of course materials.

In alignment with the Strengthening Accountability and Student Supports Act, 2024, this policy helps to ensure students and their families can find information on educational costs with ease; and improve consistency across the sector in publishing educational costs and leverage best practices.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees requiring course materials, and all employees involved in the adoption and ordering of course materials within Algonquin College.

DEFINITIONS

Word/Term	Definition
Adoption Coordinator	The Adoption Coordinator is the Program Coordinator or other academic area designate responsible for the submission of course materials to the adoption system.
Campus Store	Connections, the Campus Store is the identified Ottawa Campus retail location for the receiving, selling, and shipping of course materials to students and other college campuses.
Course Manual	A Course Manual is a learning resource developed by a College faculty member or academic department to be used as a lab manual or in replacement of a traditional textbook. Course Manuals may be in a print or digital format and for this policy are treated as textbooks.
Course Material Advisory Committee	The Course Material Advisory Committee is the formal liaison between the College administration, the student body and the College facilities, on this policy and user experiences.
Course Material Services	Course Material Services serves as the stewards of this policy and the contained procedural process to ensure the receiving, ordering, inventory, and returning of course materials.

Course Materials	Course Materials are any items that a student may need to be successful in their courses including, e.g. print and digital textbooks, OERs, coursepacks, course manuals, computer/course software, course kits, course clothing and course supplies.
Course Required Kit	An assembled grouping of required resources usually developed at the request of a professor or academic department to ensure all of its students purchase precisely the same required materials.
Coursepack	A compilation of scanned material from a variety of sources e.g. Books, journals, lab notes, textbooks, websites, which a professor has decided to use in a course. Coursepacks may be in a print or digital format and for this policy are treated as textbooks.
Net Promoter Score	An index ranging from -100 to 100 that measures the willingness of customers to recommend a company's products or services to others.
Online Course Adoption Platform	An online submission platform where an Adoption Coordinator logs in to enter course material adoptions for each course in their portfolio.
Open Educational Resource	Learning, teaching and research materials available in a variety of formats such as textbooks, courses, journals, multimedia and more. These resources fall under flexible open licensing and are accessible for anyone to use at no cost.
Print Services	Print Services is responsible for print production, College printers, and provision of College Publications produced by Algonquin College for resale.
Required Materials	Required Materials are vital materials and tools that are needed to ensure that students can achieve the learning outcomes for a given course, without which would likely impede the student's chance of success.
Retail Services	The division of Campus Services responsible for the oversight of Connections, the Campus Store, Print Services, and Course Material Services.
Suggested Materials	Suggested materials are supplementary materials and tools, which provide additional context and understanding but are not essential to the achievement of learning outcomes for a given course.
Textbook	A Textbook is a book in print or digital format designed to be used in a course to introduce students to a subject or continue instruction at the intermediate or advanced levels of a subject.

POLICY

The Adoption and Ordering of Course Materials policy process at Algonquin College will promote the strategic direction of the College by promoting innovative and high-quality education and supporting the academic freedom and expertise of the faculty, with the goal of reducing course material costs as a barrier to students' learning journey. The College supports individual faculty, faculty teams, programs and departments to pursue a variety of options with the goal of reducing course material costs.

The following policy guidelines standardize the course material adoption process across academic departments to minimize processing waste and improve the affordability of course materials:

1. Retail Services is directed to be the responsible department for sourcing all the required and suggested course material - print and digital textbooks, OERs, coursepacks, course manuals, computer/course software, course kits, course clothing and course supplies –

needs of professors, staff, and all students regardless of student funding status. The Procurement department will automatically redirect any requisitions for course materials received to Retail Services.

1. Course Material Services is directed to maintain the online course adoption platform, steward the adoption process, and order all course materials as requested by the adoption coordinator to reduce costs and curtail duplication of services.
2. The Campus Store is directed to assemble and distribute course kits as directed by the course material adoption and where needed support Course Material Services in the delivery of all other course materials.
3. Print Services is directed to be the printer of choice for course materials including but not limited to coursepacks, course manuals, and print-on-demand textbooks as requested by Course Material Services.
2. Retail Services and the comprised unit teams will negotiate purchases with suppliers to the best financial advantage of the College when purchasing with college funds. If a college department has a particular circumstance requiring department level negotiations, requisitions and specific details for such orders must go to the appropriate Retail Services unit. Retail Services will ensure that learners are provided with an attractive balance between convenience and value for money. When the conditions for a formal Request for Proposal (RFP) are met*, (* following those guidelines found in the Broader Public Sector (BPS) directive), the Procurement Department, in consultation with Retail Services will lead the issuance of an RFP and perform all necessary steps through to award of a final contract.

3. **Schedule**

1. To ensure course material adoptions are made with enough lead time to confirm availability and, where possible, ensure maximum availability of used textbooks and deployment of digital formats of materials, adoption coordinators will submit adoptions to Course Material Services through the online course adoption platform on or before the dates listed on the following schedule:
 1. **Fall Term** : June 15
 2. **Winter Term** : October 15
 3. **Spring Term** : March 15
2. The schedule of textbook adoptions reduces processing waste, supporting faculty or faculty teams who wish to adopt course materials for the academic year while establishing change periods should selected course materials become unavailable within the academic year.
 1. Course kits and required materials included in college program fees follow the course material adoption schedule. Additions or updates to course materials included in program fees will follow the preparation of Annual Schedule of Fees as directed in Policy SA 06 Fees.

4. **Adoption of Course Material**

1. Course Material Services facilitates the course materials adoption process. All course materials are adopted using an online course adoption platform.
2. Course Material Services assigns each academic department to a Course Material Representative who provides technical support, training, and advisement to adoption coordinators and faculty.
3. Adoption Coordinators collate course material adoption requests from faculty, faculty teams, and other academic designates in advance of the adoption schedule. See Appendix 3 for a sample adoption form.
4. Selection of textbooks, OERs and other course materials is the purview of the faculty member or faculty team, who then communicates their resource selection to the designate adoption coordinator for their program or area of study. All course materials, as listed in approved Course Outline, are to be adopted to each course (textbooks, OERs, course kits, course clothing, course supplies).
 1. All sections of a course will use the same course materials except in exceptional circumstances as expressed in AA26 Course Outlines and Course Section Information policy. Continuity of resources provides consistent instruction across all sections and locations, and students avoid being placed at a financial disadvantage if they change sections.
5. Adoption Coordinators report in the online course adoption platform if a faculty member requires or does not require course materials for each course scheduled for registration.
6. Course Material Services will ensure that at least 99% of all course material adopted by the deadline is available to purchase for the first day of the academic term.
7. Course Material Services will provide final adoption reports to Adoption Coordinators and academic department administrators once all adoptions have been completed and will identify cases where a failure to meet the adoption deadline occurred

5. Ordering of Course Material

1. Course Material Services will process course material adoptions as received in the online course adoption platform.
2. Using previous sell-through rates, feedback from faculty and students, and return policies from Publishers, Course Material Services will set a buy-percentage for each title that includes, where possible, options for digital and print formats, including used copies.
3. Publishers at various times will modify their product lists identifying some titles out of print. When this occurs Course Material Services will notify the Adoption Coordinator and the faculty member, where indicated, of the need to consider a new edition or different resource.

1. At the request of the faculty member or faculty team, their designated Course Material Representative may assist with finding an available solution.
2. If 1. results in a new textbook adoption, the Adoption Coordinator will submit a new adoption request using the online course adoption.
4. Course Material Services will order the printing of all textbooks, coursepacks and course manuals through Print Services.
5. All required and suggested course material and their applicable delivery formats (print and/or digital) will be available for purchase at Connections - The Campus Store and on The Campus Store website.

6. Course Material Feedback

1. User feedback is critical to the continuous improvement of the course material experience for all stakeholders. Course Material Services, with the support of Campus Services, will regularly collect user feedback, including the Net Promoter Score (NPS) and Satisfaction rating for course materials.
2. During week nine of each academic term, a survey will be provided to all Algonquin College students as a means to collect feedback to support continuous improvement of the course materials experience.
3. Results of the surveys will be shared with the Course Materials Advisory Committee for feedback each academic term.

7. Departmental Purchasing of Course Materials

1. Some academic programs have course materials included in ancillary program fees and as such purchase material on a budget code for those students. The course materials will be made available to learners on Day 1 of the term, in coordination with faculty and Connections - The Campus Store.
 1. If this material is being used on a course of study as indicated on point 4.5 and meets any of the definitions in this policy, all of section 4.0 Adoption of Course Material is applicable.
 2. Print Services should receive all other material printing requests not deemed to be course materials.

8. Training Support

1. To support all stakeholders in the adoption and ordering of course materials, Course Material Services shall:
 1. Provide training and support on the course material adoption process;

2. Offer technical training and support for the online course adoption platform;
3. Make every effort to be available to Academic Service areas and the College community as subject matter experts on the adoption and ordering of course materials; and
4. Provide access to relevant course material data and reports.

PROCEDURE

Action		Responsibility
1.	Annual Course Material Adoption Cycle – Preparing for Fall Term	
1.1	Call for the annual list of adoption coordinators by academic program or academic department on April 1.	Course Material Services
1.2	Identify adoption coordinators for submission to Course Material Services by academic program or academic department on April 25.	Academic Administrators
1.3	Provide onboarding and training to all identified adoption coordinators.	Course Material Services
1.4	All adoption coordinators must complete the self-paced online training in the Online Course Adoption platform before submitting course material adoptions for the first time.	Adoption Coordinators
1.5	Open the Online Course Adoption (OCA) platform for course material adoptions on May 1.	Course Material Services
1.6	Review course material resource requirements and consider if material will be required or suggested for each assigned course.	Faculty / Academic Teams
1.7	Submit course material to the adoption coordinator for submission to the online course adoption platform.	Faculty / Academic Teams
1.8	Submission of all course material adoptions entered into the online course adoption platform by June 15.	Adoption Coordinators
1.9	For all adoptions submitted by deadline noted in 1.7, adoptions will be processed within 10 business days of the submission deadline.	Course Material Services
1.9.1	If an adopted course material is not available an email with details and rationale will be sent to the adoption coordinator and lead faculty (if on record) for follow-up.	Course Material Services
1.9.2	Should the faculty member wish to modify the adoption to a course material that is available, an adoption correction must be entered in the online course adoption platform and the previous adoption removed.	Adoption Coordinators
1.10	Where available a print or digital alternative(s) will be added to all course adoptions to ensure students have a choice in resource format.	Course Material Services
1.11	Provide final adoption reports to Adoption Coordinators and academic department administrators once all	Course Material Services

	adoptions have been completed and identify cases where a failure to meet the adoption deadline occurred.	
1.12	Order print resources using historic sell-through rates, faculty feedback, and publisher return policies.	Course Material Services
1.13	Post to the College community the Day One readiness score for all course material adopted by deadline as noted in 1.7.	Course Material Services
1.14	Provide a course material feedback survey to all enrolled learners as well as faculty and adoption coordinators.	Campus Services Marketing & Course Material Services
1.15	Provide notice to faculty and students of the intent to return portions of unsold material as of week 6 of the academic term, excluding off-cycle programming.	Course Material Services
1.16	Provide an opportunity for students to sell back select print textbooks for resale in the next academic term where an adoption for that material is known.	Retail Services
1.17	Bring materials for buyback into Connections - The Campus Store at the Ottawa Campus or use the online buyback tool on the Connections website to confirm if the course material is included in the buyback program for that term.	Students
1.18	Results of the student course material survey will be reviewed by the Course Materials Advisory Committee for feedback.	Campus Services Marketing & Course Material Services
2.	Annual Course Material Adoption Cycle – Winter Adoptions	
2.1	Open the online course adoption platform for winter term course material adoptions on September 25.	Course Material Services
2.2	Review course material adoptions for the coming winter term.	Faculty / Academic Teams
2.3	Notify the adoption coordinator of any changes to existing adoptions or any new material to be adopted for the winter term	Faculty / Academic Teams
2.4	Submission of all course material adoptions entered into online course adoption platform by October 15.	Adoption Coordinators
2.5	For all adoptions submitted by deadline noted in 2.4, adoptions will be processed within 10 business days of the submission deadline.	Course Material Services
2.6	Procedural items 1.8 through to and including 1.18 are completed in the stated weeks as applied to the winter term of study.	
3.	Annual Course Material Adoption Cycle – Spring Adoptions	
3.1	Open the online adoption system for changes to spring term course material adoptions and submission of any new course material requests on February 25.	Course Material Services
3.2	Review course material adoptions for the coming spring term.	Faculty / Academic Teams
3.3	Notify the adoption coordinator of any changes to existing adoptions or any new material to be adopted for the spring	Faculty / Academic Teams

	term.	
3.4	Submission of all course material adoptions entered into online course adoption platform by March 15.	Adoption Coordinators
3.5	For all adoptions submitted by deadline noted in 3.4, adoptions will be processed within 10 business days of the submission deadline.	Course Material Services
3.6	Procedural items 1.8 through to and including 1.18 are completed in the stated weeks as applied to the spring term of study.	

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendix 1: GUIDING CORE PRINCIPLES

Appendix 2: COURSE MATERIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

RELATED POLICIES

AA26: Course Outlines and Course Section Information

SA06: Fees

RELATED MATERIALS

[Course Material Requisition Form](#)

[Tuition and Ancillary Fees Minister's Binding Policy Directive, August 2024](#)

<https://www.algonquincollege.com/comms/>

[Strengthening Accountability and Student Supports Act](#)

Appendix 1: GUIDING CORE PRINCIPLES

Value for Money

When considering a required resource, faculty should be able to know the costs associated with those materials and reflect on whether those resources pose an undue financial barrier on learners.

Such information is in line with the Ministry's Binding Directives, which outline that substantial assessments should not come at an additional cost to the students, and that Algonquin's resource policy "... could include a rebate to students of a portion of their textbook fees where bundled assessments represent a substantial portion of a student's mark for a course."

Sustainability — Ecologically, Financially, Institutionally

Algonquin College has mandated a commitment to sustainability, and as such, should feature in decisions around learning materials. Where possible, considerations around ecological (digital vs print), financial (one-off costs vs recurring subscriptions) and institutional (ability of those resources to be used elsewhere in the College) sustainability should be considered. Where possible, it is worthwhile to consider whether the practices and policies of publishers/suppliers/etc. align with the core values of Algonquin College: Learning, Integrity, Respect, and Caring.

Accessibility

Accessibility for students with Disabilities: The Access for Ontarians with Disabilities Act obligations must be met in order to ensure students are able to access course materials. When not inherently accessible the material must quickly and easily be adaptable to the format required to be accessible.

Availability

Purchasing of course materials by the College should be at a level high enough to meet purchasing demand and in a timely manner so that, to the optimal degree possible, students are able to acquire all of their necessary course materials at the beginning of the semester. Ideally, publishers provide a complimentary desktop copy.

Academic Freedom

In accordance with section 13 of the Collective Agreement, the principle of Academic Freedom is fundamental to the realization and preservation of the Colleges' commitment to academic excellence. This freedom carries with it both rights and responsibilities in pursuit of an honest search for knowledge.

Academic Rigour

Principles of Academic Rigour are of paramount importance in order to ensure that the learning environment is robust. As it relates to ordering course materials, it is paramount that faculty have the latitude, time and support necessary to identify and select the resources most

appropriate for their learning environments. in accordance with the Ministry's Binding Directives, students must retain the right to procure or not procure course material identified as either required or suggested in their course outlines.

Learner Choice

Recognizing that a choice made by a student to not purchase a required resource may jeopardize their ability to successfully meet the learning outcomes of the course, the choice must ultimately remain with the student.

There may be cases where resources can be offered at the optimized price point by 'bundling' products. In these cases, and in accordance with the Ministry's Binding Directive no. 20, subsection iv, students should retain the ability to purchase individual Items separately from the bundle.

As approved by College Academic Council - December 09, 2019

Appendix 2: COURSE MATERIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

1. Name and Status

1. The Committee shall be known as the Course Material Advisory Committee (CMAC).
2. The Committee shall be a college advisory standing committee, responsible to the General Manager, Retail Services.

2. Terms of Reference

1. The Committee shall act as the formal liaison between the College administration, the student body, and the College faculties, on AD04 Adoption and Ordering of Course Materials Policy and user experiences.
2. The Committee shall provide advice, upon request of the Director of Campus Services, on any matter relating to 2.1.

3. Membership

1. The composition of the Committee shall be as follows:
 1. General Manager of Retail Services (ex officio)
 2. Course Material Services Manager (ex officio)
 3. Manager, Campus Store Operations (ex officio)
 4. Course Kit / Program Apparel representative (ex officio)
 5. Representation of the Board of Directors of the Algonquin College Students' Association (SA) or designates
 6. Chair of the Learning and Teaching Services or designate
 7. Representation from College Academic Council
 8. Representative from Algonquin College Library
 9. Representative from the Centre for Accessible Learning

4. Terms of Office

1. The ex officio members shall be members of the Committee for the period for as long as they hold that college position.
2. All non-Retail Services representatives shall serve a one-year term and may be reappointed for a second or subsequent terms.

3. The Committee will be chaired by the Course Material Services Manager (or representative).
5. Meetings
1. The Committee shall meet a minimum of three times during the academic year as determined by the General Manager of Retail Services or the Course Material Services Manager.
 2. Additional meetings may be held at the call of the Chair or by request of a member majority.