



AMCTO Diploma in Municipal Administration Terms of Reference

Updated November 2024

Section 1: Program Overview

- a) The AMCTO Diploma in Municipal Administration Program (Diploma Program) provides essential and integrated knowledge of the processes and administration of local government in the areas of systemic organization and management, legal framework and interpretation, finance, and human resources management.
- b) The Diploma Program is an academic curriculum offered by AMCTO that results in an academic certification for students who, having explicitly registered into the Diploma Program, have successfully completed all required program elements.

Section 2: Elements of the AMCTO Diploma Program

- a) The elements of the Diploma Program are as follows:
 - i. The 4 Units of the AMCTO Municipal Administration Program
 - ii. The 2 Units of the AMCTO Municipal Accounting and Finance Program
 - iii. The 4 Units of the AMCTO Municipal Law Program
 - iv. The AMCTO Employment Law and Human Resources Program
 - v. An Employment Law/Human Resources Research Report (only applies to students who enroll(ed) in the Employment Law and Human Resources Program prior to May 2025)

An official AMCTO Diploma will be issued upon successful completion of the Diploma Program.

Section 3: Requirements to Graduate from the AMCTO Diploma Program

- a) To graduate from the AMCTO Diploma Program, a student must acquire a minimum of 46 credits with a fixed number of credits being assigned to each program element within the Diploma Program (see Table 1).

- b) Credits will be assigned to equivalent courses offered through post-secondary institutions or other educational organizations, if approved by AMCTO. See Section 5 for more information on exemptions from Diploma Program elements.

Table 1: Credits Assigned to Each Diploma Program Element

Program Element	Credits Assigned
Municipal Administration Program – Unit 1	4
Municipal Administration Program – Unit 2	4
Municipal Administration Program – Unit 3	4
Municipal Administration Program – Unit 4	4
Municipal Accounting and Finance Program – Unit 1	4
Municipal Accounting and Finance Program – Unit 2	4
Municipal Law Program – Unit 1	4
Municipal Law Program – Unit 2	4
Municipal Law Program – Unit 3	4
Municipal Law Program – Unit 4	4
Employment Law and Human Resources Program (includes the Employment Law/Human Resources Research Report for students who enroll(ed) in the program prior to May 2025)	6

- c) Each program element is considered complete when the student has met the minimum grade, completion, and/or attendance requirements established by AMCTO.
- d) While it is expected that students should complete all the required elements of the Diploma Program within five (5) years of enrollment, the maximum time allowed for the completion of all Diploma Program elements is eight (8) years.
- e) Program Units must be completed within the following time frames:
- i. The 4 Units of the Municipal Administration Program: Three (3) years
 - ii. The 2 Units of the Municipal Accounting and Finance Program: Two (2) years
 - iii. The 4 Units of the Municipal Law Program: Three (3) years

- f) Students who enroll(ed) in the Employment Law and Human Resources Program prior to May 2025 must complete the Employment Law/Human Resources Research Report before the end of 2025, or within three (3) years of their enrollment in the Employment Law and Human Resources Program, whichever comes first. Students who do not complete the Research Report by the end of 2025 will be required to re-take the program to qualify for the Diploma.
- g) Requests to extend completion timelines are assessed on a case-by-case basis and will only be considered under extenuating circumstances that are out of the student's control. Extension approvals are granted at the discretion of AMCTO.
- h) A maximum of 16 credits required for the Diploma Program may be achieved through a combination of exemptions and challenge courses (see Section 5 and Section 6).

Section 4: Grade Requirements

- a) The minimum required grade for any Diploma Program element is 60%.
- b) Specific program elements completed prior to the date of enrollment in the Diploma Program will be recognized provided that the grade attained was at least 60%.
- c) Equivalent courses from post-secondary institutions or other educational organizations will only be recognized if a minimum grade of 60% was achieved for the course. An official transcript from the post-secondary institution or other educational organization will be required as a corroborating document. See Section 5 for more information on exemptions from Diploma Program elements.
- d) Students who achieve a cumulative average grade across all Diploma Program elements that is greater than 85% will be recognized on the AMCTO Honour Roll.

Section 5: Exemptions from Diploma Program Elements

- a) Individuals seeking exemption for Diploma Program elements must submit an Exemption Application Form. Exemptions are granted at the discretion of AMCTO.
- b) AMCTO may grant exemptions for up to two (2) Units of the Municipal Administration Program, Municipal Accounting and Finance Program, and Municipal Law Program, under certain conditions, to individuals who have completed equivalent courses offered through post-secondary institutions or other educational organizations. No more than two (2) Unit exemptions can be applied to the Diploma Program. A Unit exemption will only be considered if:
 - i. The equivalent course was completed within ten (10) years of the Exemption Application Form submission date.
 - ii. The grade achieved in the equivalent course is 60% or higher, and the grade is proven with an official transcript.

- iii. Sufficient documentation, including but not limited to a detailed course outline of the equivalent course, is provided to demonstrate its comparability to a Unit in terms of content, learning objectives, workload requirements, level of difficulty, and Ontario municipal focus.
- c) AMCTO may grant exemptions for the Municipal Administration Program, Municipal Accounting and Finance Program, Municipal Law Program, and Employment Law and Human Resources Program, under certain conditions, to individuals who already hold a relevant professional designation or Canadian university degree in a related field. Such exemptions will be accompanied by the recognition of the Program as being successfully completed.
 - d) Exemptions for all four (4) Units of the Municipal Administration Program will be granted to individuals who hold an AMCTO CMO or AMP designation.
 - e) Exemptions for up to four (4) Units of the Municipal Administration Program will be considered under the following conditions:
 - i. The individual graduated from a degree focused on municipal public administration at an accredited Canadian university.
 - ii. The degree was completed within ten (10) years of the Exemption Application Form submission date.
 - iii. The degree includes courses that are equivalent to the Municipal Administration Program Units. Sufficient documentation, including but not limited to detailed course outlines of the equivalent courses, is provided to demonstrate comparability to the Units in terms of content, learning objectives, workload requirements, level of difficulty, and Ontario municipal focus.
 - iv. The grades achieved in the equivalent courses are 60% or higher, and the grades are proven with an official transcript.
 - f) Exemptions for the Municipal Administration Program for the purposes of obtaining AMCTO's CMO or AMP designation will be considered in accordance with Sections 5(c), 5(d) and 5(e).
 - g) Exemption for the two (2) Units of the Municipal Accounting and Finance Program will be considered under the following conditions:
 - i. The individual holds a Canadian CPA (Chartered Professional Accountant) designation in good standing.
 - ii. The individual has been employed by a municipality or related public sector/not-for-profit organization, in Ontario, in an accounting or finance function for at least three (3) years within ten (10) years of the Exemption Application Form submission date. An official job description must be provided.

- iii. The individual has provided proof of the CPA designation.
- h) Exemption for the four (4) Units of the Municipal Law Program will be considered under the following conditions:
- i. The individual graduated with a J.D. or LL.B from an accredited Canadian university.
 - ii. The degree was completed within ten (10) years of the Exemption Application Form submission date.
 - iii. The individual has been employed by a municipality or related public sector/not-for-profit organization, in Ontario, in a legal function for at least three (3) years within ten (10) years of the Exemption Application Form submission date. An official job description must be provided.
 - iv. The individual has provided an official transcript that confirms their achievement of the law degree.
- i) Exemption for the Employment Law and Human Resources Program and the Employment Law/Human Resources Research Report (if applicable) will be considered under the following conditions:
- i. The individual holds an Ontario Human Resources Professionals Association (HRPA) designation (CHRP, CHRL, or CHRE) in good standing.
 - ii. The individual has been employed by a municipality or related public sector/not-for-profit organization, in Ontario, in a human resources function for at least three (3) years within ten (10) years of the Exemption Application Form submission date. An official job description must be provided.
 - iii. The individual has provided proof of the HRPA designation.
- j) Decisions to approve or decline applications for exemption are made by AMCTO's Manager – Education Services. The responsibility to interpret and enforce the provisions of this Section rests with the Manager.
- k) If an applicant disagrees with the Manager's decision, the applicant may ask AMCTO's Executive Director to review the decision. Such requests must be made within 30 calendar days of the date of the Manager's decision.
- l) Decisions made by the Executive Director are final. Appeals of individual cases will not be accepted. Should an individual wish for the AMCTO Board of Directors to consider changes to exemption policy, written submissions can be made to the Executive Director outlining the proposed changes. This written submission will be reviewed by AMCTO staff and submitted to the Board for consideration at a meeting to be determined by the Executive Director.

Section 6: Challenging a Unit

- a) Individuals seeking to challenge a Unit within the Diploma Program must have a minimum of five (5) years of Ontario municipal work experience in a senior supervisory role that aligns with the content of the Unit being challenged. Additional qualifications or conditions may also be specified on the challenge application.
- b) Approval to challenge a Unit is granted at the discretion of AMCTO.
- c) The challenge process is conducted through a challenge course that includes assessments such as exams and reports. The minimum grade to pass a challenge course is 70%. An individual who does not pass a challenge course will not be permitted to challenge it again.
- d) The challenge option is not available for the Employment Law and Human Resources Program.

Section 7: Recognition of Elements Completed Prior to Diploma Enrollment

- a) The recognition of program elements completed prior to enrollment in the Diploma Program is subject to time restrictions. See Table 2 for the time restrictions:

Table 2: Time Restrictions for the Recognition of Program Elements

Program	Time Restriction
Municipal Administration Program	Individual Units must have been completed within five (5) years of the date of enrollment.
Municipal Accounting and Finance Program	Individual Units must have been completed within three (3) years of the date of enrollment.
Municipal Law Program	Individual Units must have been completed within five (5) years of the date of enrollment.
Employment Law and Human Resources Program	Program must have been completed within three (3) years of the date of enrollment. The Employment Law/Human Resources Research Report must be completed according to the timeline restrictions under Section 3.

- b) The recognition of program elements that have been exempted for an individual are subject to the time restrictions specified under Section 5.

- c) Individuals who completed a Unit in the Municipal Administration Program, Municipal Accounting and Finance Program, or Municipal Law Program outside of the time frame for recognition in Table 2 may re-enroll in or apply to challenge the Unit.

Section 7: Program Fees

- a) The fees to be charged for the various program elements will be determined on an annual basis by the AMCTO Board of Directors. Fees will be charged on an individual program element basis.

Section 8: Application of AMCTO Policies

- a) All individuals enrolled in the Diploma Program are subject to the Association's Education Programs Policy and any other current or future education-related policies developed by the Association.