# George Brown Polytechnic Jewellery & Gemmology Rescue Proposal

### Up to 30 Days to Form a Working Group, Followed by a 90-Day Sustainability Review

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| Submitted to | Gervan Fearon, President Hassun Malik, Provost and Vice-President, Academic Ana Rita Morais, Dean George Brown Polytechnic Board of Governors |
| Copied to | Ontario ministry responsible for colleges and universities Ontario Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development (MLITSD) Skilled Trades Ontario Toronto-area Members of Provincial Parliament |
| Submitted by | Proposed industry and community coalition: students, alumni, faculty, jewellery employers, manufacturers, retailers, gemmologists, industry organizations, and supporters. Organizational participation and endorsements are subject to confirmation. |
| Date | October 6, 2026 |

## Executive Summary

George Brown Polytechnic’s Jewellery and Gemmology programs form a specialized, industry-connected training ecosystem whose lineage dates to 1952. They develop technical, creative, and professional skills for goldsmithing, gem setting, repair, fabrication, CAD/CAM, gemmology, design, and entrepreneurship. Losing this capacity would disperse specialist teaching resources, facilities, curriculum, expertise, and industry relationships that have taken decades to develop.

The suspension of Jewellery Arts, Jewellery Methods, and Gemmology, followed by the announced cessation of new Jewellery Essentials intake for 2027–28, places the department’s continued teaching capacity at risk. The campaign requests that irreversible dismantling be paused while the Polytechnic and industry examine financially sustainable alternatives.

The immediate decision is preservation and cooperation in a review—not an unconditional commitment to operate every existing program indefinitely. Options include redesigned college credentials, work-integrated learning, continuing education, industry contributions, and a potential apprenticeship pathway linked to Ontario’s existing Gemsetter/Goldsmith trade.

The proposed process allows up to 30 calendar days from acceptance to establish the working group, followed by a 90-calendar-day review. Preservation arrangements start immediately on acceptance and continue throughout both periods—up to 120 days unless extended in writing. The review begins when membership, leadership, an executive sponsor, and terms of reference are confirmed in writing.

### The immediate requests

- Pause irreversible dismantling and assess admissions or bridging-intake options before recruitment deadlines expire.
- Maintain existing teaching resources in educational use and custody, and retain sufficient specialist staff and technical capacity to support students and keep delivery options viable.
- Establish a Jewellery and Gemmology Sustainability Working Group within 30 calendar days of acceptance, unless extended in writing.

- Invite industry organizations and provincial bodies to evaluate potential partnerships and the feasibility of approved apprenticeship technical training.
- Return a costed recommendation to the Board within 90 calendar days after the group is formally constituted.

# 1. The Decision Requested

### Proposed Board resolution

> George Brown Polytechnic will pause irreversible measures to dismantle Jewellery and Gemmology teaching capacity from acceptance of this proposal through a working-group formation period of up to 30 calendar days and a subsequent 90-calendar-day sustainability review, unless extended by written agreement. During both periods, the Polytechnic will maintain existing instructional resources, specialist facilities, sufficient faculty and technical expertise, and program-development capacity. The review will invite faculty, students, alumni, jewellery employers, the Canadian Jewellers Association (CJA), Women's Jewelry Association Canada, relevant craft and gemmological organizations, Skilled Trades Ontario, and provincial ministry representatives. Participation is subject to agreement. The group will present a costed, evidence-based recommendation to the Board, including assessment of potential approved in-school delivery for the Gemsetter/Goldsmith trade.

### Preservation terms

Existing teaching collections, gemstones, tools, equipment, benches, instructional materials, and specialist facilities will remain in their current educational use and custody during formation and the review. No sale, disposal, permanent transfer, or repurposing will occur, except for ordinary instructional consumption and necessary safety or maintenance activities. Existing security and access procedures will continue.

A new commercial valuation or liquidation assessment will not be a prerequisite for considering the proposal. Existing accounting, insurance, security, and legal obligations remain. Public reporting will not disclose sensitive collection contents, storage arrangements, or security information.

Qualified industry volunteers may provide expressly authorized assistance with educational continuity, equipment readiness, or organization of existing instructional records under faculty supervision and applicable policies, but will not prepare a liquidation inventory.

### Why a pause is essential

Once specialist faculty leave, equipment is reassigned, facilities are converted, and technical curriculum knowledge disperses, a later restart becomes harder and potentially more costly. A time-limited preservation arrangement retains the ability to evaluate alternatives before irreversible decisions foreclose them.

Campaign figures indicate approximately 150 jewellery benches and 30 gemmological testing stations. These figures will be checked against existing institutional records. The assessment will focus on educational continuity, not commercial valuation.

# 2. Why the Programs Should Be Preserved

### A training lineage dating to 1952

Campaign historical materials trace jewellery training to the Provincial Institute of Trades in 1952, its continuation through George Brown College (now George Brown Polytechnic), and its move to the Casa Loma campus in 1973. The case for preservation concerns accumulated educational capability—not a claim that the present institution existed under its current name in 1952.

- Specialist teaching methods and curriculum developed over generations.
- Dedicated jewellery benches, tools, machinery, material-handling practices, and safety systems.
- Gemmological instruments, collections, and professional expertise.
- Faculty with practical goldsmithing, setting, design, and gemmological experience.
- Relationships with employers, suppliers, professional organizations, alumni, and international partners.
- An alumni network supporting workshops, independent businesses, production, repair, retail, design, and education.

## Distinctive technical instruction

The programs teach practical skills that require equipment, supervision, repeated practice, and assessment of fine manual work. General design education, software instruction, or short online courses should not be presumed to replace this technical depth.

- Bench fabrication, assembly, soldering, forming, filing, finishing, and polishing.
- Stone setting, sizing, repair, restoration, and quality control.
- Wax work, model making, enamelling, metalworking, and production techniques.
- Technical drawing, rendering, jewellery design, CAD/CAM, and digital production.
- Gem identification, testing, documentation, and appraisal-related knowledge.
- Manufacturing theory, professional practice, and entrepreneurship.

Campaign materials describe substantial differences between introductory and advanced pathways and identify approximately 700 hours of jewellery-specific study in the three-year Jewellery Arts program. Instructional-hour comparisons will be confirmed against course records and defined consistently before being used as definitive evidence.

## Graduate occupations and industry contribution

- Bench jewellers, goldsmiths, and gemsetters.
- Repair, restoration, finishing, and production specialists.
- Jewellery designers, studio jewellers, and CAD/CAM technicians.
- Gemmologists and appraisal-support professionals.
- Quality-control, retail, management, and customer-service professionals.
- Entrepreneurs, independent makers, business owners, educators, and arts administrators.

Industry supporters report succession, retirement, and recruitment concerns. The review will quantify these concerns through employer consultation rather than asserting an established sector-wide shortage. It will also assess hiring through referrals, alumni networks, small workshops, and self-employment that may not be represented adequately by public job advertisements.

## Student demand and Toronto industry connections

Campaign evidence reports enrolment rising from about 100 students in 2000 to approximately 225 in 2024, and full domestic enrolment in the remaining Jewellery Essentials intake. These figures and their definitions will be confirmed against institutional records. Demand for introductory training and demand for advanced credentials will be assessed separately.

Toronto's jewellery businesses, suppliers, repair operations, manufacturers, designers, and gemmological services offer opportunities for mentoring, placements, and employer partnerships. This proposal does not rely on an unverified percentage of Canada's entire jewellery industry being located in Toronto.

# 3. Education and Skilled-Trades Pathways

### An existing trade and a potential delivery role

Ontario recognizes Gemsetter/Goldsmith as a prescribed, non-compulsory trade. Its scope includes jewellery fabrication and repair, metal testing and forming, soldering, gem setting, assembly, and finishing. The existing pathway offers a Certificate of Apprenticeship; it does not presently have a certifying examination or Certificate of Qualification.

A Training Delivery Agent (TDA) is an approved provider of the in-school component of apprenticeship training. Employer-sponsored workplace learning remains a separate essential component. George Brown's current jewellery credentials should not be described as already approved apprenticeship programs.

> George Brown Polytechnic should work with industry, Skilled Trades Ontario, and MLITSD to assess its potential role as a TDA for Gemsetter/Goldsmith, including current standards, curriculum, employer sponsorship, approval requirements, funding, and cohort viability.

Apprenticeship is one option, not a guaranteed rescue mechanism. It should complement, not automatically replace, advanced design, entrepreneurship, professional practice, or Gemmology education.

### An integrated model to assess

| Program element | Potential role |
|---|---|
| Jewellery Essentials | Foundation and possible pre-apprenticeship route for basic bench, fabrication, finishing, and safety skills. |
| Jewellery Methods | Intermediate technical pathway supporting repair, setting, manufacturing, and employment. |
| Jewellery Arts | Advanced fabrication, design, portfolio, professional-practice, and entrepreneurship education. |
| Gemmology | Specialist education supporting identification, documentation, valuation-related work, retail knowledge, insurance, and consumer confidence. |
| Gemsetter/Goldsmith apprenticeship | Employer-sponsored registered training with approved in-school components, subject to feasibility and provincial approval. |
| Continuing education | Professional upgrading in repair, setting, CAD/CAM, laser welding, fabrication, gemmology, and business operations. |

# 4. Working-Group Formation and Review

### Formation and accountability

Within 30 calendar days of proposal acceptance, unless extended in writing, the Polytechnic and industry will establish membership, leadership, an executive sponsor, terms of reference, confidentiality arrangements, and access to existing records. The executive sponsor should have authority to coordinate academic, financial, staffing, and facilities decisions.

The 90-day review begins on written confirmation that the working group is formally constituted. Admissions, staffing, facilities, or resource-disposition deadlines falling earlier will be identified immediately and addressed through interim decisions. Preservation starts at acceptance and continues through formation and the review.

## Proposed membership

- Senior Polytechnic executive sponsor and representatives of academic leadership, finance, enrolment, and apprenticeship delivery.
- The responsible Dean, specialist faculty, technical staff, students, and alumni.
- Employers from manufacture, custom jewellery, repair, setting, CAD/CAM, retail services, and gemmology.
- Canadian Jewellers Association and Women’s Jewelry Association Canada.
- Relevant craft and gemmological organizations.
- Skilled Trades Ontario and the provincial ministries responsible for post-secondary education and skilled trades, subject to agreement.
- Independent financial or labour-market expertise where useful.

## Required deliverables

- Financial review: budgets, actuals, revenue, enrolment, direct and allocated costs, forecasts, and assumptions behind suspension.
- Employer-demand report: staffing, vacancies, actual hires, anticipated retirements, hiring intentions, wage information where available, and sponsor capacity.
- Educational continuity assessment: facilities, instructional capabilities, expertise, and teaching-resource access needed to retain delivery options, using existing information without requiring commercial appraisal.
- Program options: current credentials, redesign, flexible sequencing, bridging intake, professional upgrading, work-integrated learning, and partnerships.
- TDA feasibility assessment: current trade requirements, curriculum alignment, approvals, funding, sponsors, and delivery capacity.
- Employer commitments: distinguish confirmed placements, sponsorships, contributions, and hiring commitments from expressions of interest.
- Indicative three-year transition: costed delivery assumptions, funding gaps, institutional contribution, confirmed industry support, and measurable outcomes.
- Board decision paper: options, risks, costs, approval requirements, responsible parties, and implementation milestones.

## Reporting milestones

- Review day 30: publish initial employer and educational-continuity findings and identify interim decisions.
- Review day 60: present preliminary financial scenarios, commitments, and delivery and funding feasibility.
- Review day 90: submit the costed recommendation and proposed implementation plan to the Board.

Terms of reference, membership, progress summaries, and the final Board response should be public, with necessary protection for personal information, security details, and confidential business data. Any

extension requires written agreement and updated preservation arrangements.

## 5. Indicative Three-Year Transition

This framework is for evaluation, not advance approval or a claim that funding is secured. Program mix, staffing, timing, admissions, and delivery will be determined by the review and subsequent institutional and provincial approvals.

### Year 1: Preserve, stabilize, and design

- Assess continued admissions or a bridging intake against recruitment deadlines and staffing capacity.
- Retain sufficient specialist staff, workshops, and resources for existing students and development of alternatives.
- Map relevant curriculum to trade requirements and assess TDA feasibility.
- Establish industry advisory participation and measurable employer commitments.
- Design continuing education and modular upgrading that complement, rather than hollow out, advanced pathways.
- Seek transitional public support, documented employer contributions, scholarships, materials, mentoring, placements, and graduate hiring.

### Year 2: Launch approved pathways

- Launch a feasible employer-sponsored apprenticeship cohort only if required approvals, funding, and sponsors are secured.
- Deliver approved technical training if TDA status is obtained.
- Link foundation education to employment, advanced study, or apprenticeship through clearly defined routes.
- Retain sufficient advanced technical and gemmological depth to serve the occupations identified by employer evidence.
- Review employer feedback, placement quality, retention, completion, related-field employment, and delivery costs.

### Year 3: Evaluate and improve

- Compare actual financial and employment outcomes with forecasts before expansion.
- Broaden confirmed placements, mentoring, and apprentice sponsorship where viable.
- Formalize credit recognition between credentials and apprenticeship where permitted.
- Develop targeted advanced upgrading in setting, repair, laser welding, CAD/CAM, gemmology, and business practice.
- Consider industry proposals for modernized trade standards and future certification assessment without making them prerequisites for immediate preservation.

# 6. Funding and Financial Sustainability

## Specialized delivery costs

Jewellery and gemmology education requires specialist facilities, safety and ventilation systems, hands-on supervision, consumables, tools, equipment maintenance, security procedures, and instructors with advanced practical expertise. These requirements merit a delivery-specific financial analysis rather than an assumption that classroom-based program economics apply unchanged.

- Identify required student-to-instructor ratios for safe, effective bench work.
- Separate equipment renewal and maintenance from recurring teaching expenditure.
- Assess consumables, materials management, gemmological instruments, and technical support.
- Evaluate scheduling and workshop use while preserving educational quality.

## Potential funding sources

| Source | Role and conditions |
|---|---|
| Public operating support | Attributable support for eligible post-secondary delivery and any approved transitional funding. |
| Apprenticeship funding | Approved in-school delivery only if approval and funding are confirmed; not automatic upon TDA approval. |
| Tuition | Realistic domestic enrolment and applicable continuing-education revenue, with sensitivity testing. |
| Employer support | Confirmed scholarships, sponsored training, materials, equipment, mentorship, and projects. |
| Employer wages | Paid employment for apprentices or placement students; not automatically operating revenue for the Polytechnic. |
| Alumni and philanthropy | Bursaries, scholarships, program support, and equipment renewal, subject to confirmed commitments. |
| Professional upgrading | Feasible short courses with demonstrated demand and a net contribution after delivery costs. |
| Research and partnerships | Eligible skills, digital production, material reuse, and business-development projects with approved funding. |

Industry support should complement—not be presumed to replace—public funding. The review will identify a sustainable funding mix rather than rely on an unconfirmed contribution or on selling existing teaching resources.

## Financial review method

Compare continued delivery, transitional or redesigned delivery, and closure. Distinguish direct costs from allocated overhead, avoidable costs from costs that remain, and one-time from recurring effects. Report the timing and certainty of projected savings and any revenue lost under closure.

For each scenario, show cohort assumptions, attributable tuition and public funding, incremental delivery costs, confirmed contributions, implementation costs, required cash support, and sensitivity to enrolment. Reconcile the analysis with institutional financial reporting.

The annual funding gap is incremental delivery costs less attributable revenues and confirmed contributions. In-kind support reduces the gap only where it replaces a necessary expenditure. An allocated accounting deficit is not, by itself, proof of an equivalent avoidable cash loss.

### Performance measures

The adopted model should report outcomes through a consistent dashboard:

- Domestic enrolment, retention, and completion.
- Related-field employment and self-employment, using transparent definitions and response coverage.
- Confirmed paid placements, employer participation, and satisfaction.
- Apprenticeship registrations and completions where applicable.
- Graduate earnings and business formation where reliable information is available.
- Actual delivery cost, attributable revenue, annual funding gap, and confirmed contributions.
- Continued productive educational use of facilities and resources.

## 7. Government Participation

### Post-secondary ministry

Within 30 calendar days of proposal acceptance, request a meeting with the ministry responsible for colleges and universities to discuss transitional support and a transparent alternatives assessment. The request is for a feasible preservation and review arrangement, not an unconditional permanent funding commitment.

- Assess transitional support to maintain specialist teaching capacity during the review.
- Consider the costs and risks of dismantling accumulated public educational resources before alternatives are examined.
- Evaluate financially credible continuation, redesign, and partnership models.
- Recognize specialized workshop delivery requirements in the analysis.

### MLITSD and Skilled Trades Ontario

Within 30 calendar days of proposal acceptance, request an initial feasibility discussion with MLITSD and Skilled Trades Ontario. Their participation and any funding or program approval remain subject to agreement.

- Confirm the current Gemsetter/Goldsmith pathway, standards, curriculum expectations, and sponsor requirements.
- Assess George Brown Polytechnic’s potential TDA role and applicable application and approval process.
- Identify viable employer-sponsored cohorts and technical-training arrangements.
- Consider a technical working session on modernization of standards.
- Treat any future examination or certification proposal as a separate longer-term question.

## 8. Industry Participation and Online Resources

Jewellery businesses, manufacturers, retailers, repair specialists, gemsetters, gemmological professionals, suppliers, and other industry participants are invited to complete an online Industry Commitment Form.

The form will collect expressions of support, hiring needs, and potential commitments to paid placements, apprenticeship sponsorship, mentorship, curriculum input, scholarships, materials, equipment, and other assistance. Responses will help the working group assess employer demand and develop practical industry-supported solutions.

The online form, this rescue proposal, and links to the petition to save the program—organized independently by another group—will be available at georgebrownjewellery.ca.

An expression of interest is not a binding undertaking to hire, sponsor, fund, or provide services. Public identification of supporters and disclosure of individual business information require appropriate consent.

## 9. Conclusion and Proposed Signatories

George Brown Polytechnic can preserve the ability to assess alternatives before specialist teaching capacity is dispersed. The proposal combines a time-limited preservation request with employer consultation, a transparent financial review, and evaluation of practical educational pathways.

> The requested formation period is up to 30 calendar days, followed by a 90-calendar-day review. Preservation begins upon acceptance and continues throughout both periods—up to 120 days unless extended in writing. The outcome is a costed recommendation, not a pre-determined commitment to a particular model.

Pause irreversible dismantling. Maintain existing instructional resources and program readiness. Establish the working group. Test employer commitments, finances, and approval requirements. Return to the Board with a defensible decision.

### Proposed signatories

- Current students, alumni, faculty, and staff.
- Manufacturers, goldsmiths, bench jewellers, and gemsetters.
- Repair and restoration businesses, designers, and studio jewellers.
- Retailers, CAD/CAM firms, gemmological professionals, suppliers, and service providers.
- Industry and craft organizations, participating employers, and community supporters.

Organizations named as prospective participants are not represented as endorsers unless their approval has been obtained.

# Appendix A. Strategic Alignment and Supporting Evidence

## Published strategic framework

This proposal aligns with George Brown Polytechnic's Strategy 2026: A Roadmap to the Future, covering 2023–2026 within Vision 2030. The official strategy page remains publicly accessible. Published Board minutes from April 15, 2026 describe Strategy 2030 development; this proposal does not imply that a successor plan has been adopted.

Alignment provides a practical way to advance institutional priorities while meeting financial requirements. It is not an obligation to retain every existing program regardless of cost.

| Commitment in Strategy 2026 | Proposed contribution |
|---|---|
| Priority 2, printed p. 35 | Credential renewal, flexible pathways, lifelong learning, and sector-relevant instruction. |
| Priority 3, printed p. 37 | Employer relationships, alumni participation, community economic activity, and confirmed donors or funders. |
| Priority 4, printed p. 39 | Specific repair, restoration, and material-reuse learning outcomes without unmeasured environmental-impact claims. |
| Priority 6, printed p. 43 | Financial planning, risk assessment, accurate data, and transparent comparison of alternatives. |
| Indicators, printed pp. 49–50 | Related-field employment, experiential learning, placement quality, and apprenticeship completion where approved. |

## Evidence commitments

Supporting schedules will be submitted during the review in consultation with industry. They will identify sources, dates, geography, definitions, reliability, and limitations, and distinguish confirmed commitments from intentions.

- Sector statistics will distinguish jewellery-only measures from combined jewellery, luggage, leather goods, or other retail categories; monthly figures from annual totals; establishments from enterprises; and employer from non-employer businesses.
- Financial benchmarks for a selected revenue band will not be presented as total manufacturing revenue. Manufacturing, wholesale, and retail sales will not be added together as unduplicated economic contribution.
- Employer survey reports will disclose respondent numbers, geographic and business coverage, dates, and limitations. Findings will be attributed to respondents unless a defensible method supports wider estimates.
- Institutional schedules will confirm enrolment, teaching hours, facility counts, direct expenditure, overhead allocation, and actual avoidable savings against existing records.
- CJA will be invited to provide available research or permitted extracts, relevant methodologies and licensing terms, and assistance with employer consultation. Access and participation remain subject to confirmation.

- Personal information, sensitive security details, and confidential business data will be protected. Aggregate reporting and named commitments will follow agreed disclosure permissions.

## Decision package

The final package will include verified sector context, employer findings, educational-continuity requirements, comparative program financial scenarios, confirmed industry and public commitments, apprenticeship feasibility, implementation risks, and the Board decision requested. Evidence will support the recommendation rather than presume its outcome.