



University of Windsor Quality Assurance Processes Cyclical Program Review Guidance for Students

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to outline the important role you play during the Cyclical Program Review (CPR) Site Visit, as a student of the program under review. CPRs provide an opportunity for you to come together with faculty, staff, and other stakeholders to identify program strengths and areas for improvement in your enrolled program.

CPRs occur on an 8-year cycle and are at the heart of the University of Windsor's Institutional Quality Assurance Process, essential to ensuring all undergraduate and graduate programs meet the university's standards for academic excellence. The goal is to foster a culture of continuous improvement in pursuit of academic quality, providing students with the best possible educational experience at the University of Windsor.

The review process is characterized by a reflective, analytical, and collaborative approach, which is captured in a Self-Study report. An external peer review will then take place over the course of a two-day Site Visit. Two external reviewers will come from outside of the University of Windsor, and they will be joined by one internal facilitator. The team will review the prepared documentation, meet with groups, and tour the campus. After the Site Visit, the external reviewers will prepare recommendations.

Student Participation in Cyclical Program Review's External Review Site Visit

During the Site Visit, the external reviewers use an established set of evaluation criteria focused on areas such as the appropriateness of the curriculum, appropriateness of resources, and continuous improvement to conduct their review (See Table 5 attached). To determine their recommendations, they will meet with:

- Institutional leadership (Dean, AVPA)
- Program leadership (Department Head, Curriculum Coordinators)
- Staff (admin, support, library)
- Faculty
- Students
- Other groups as identified

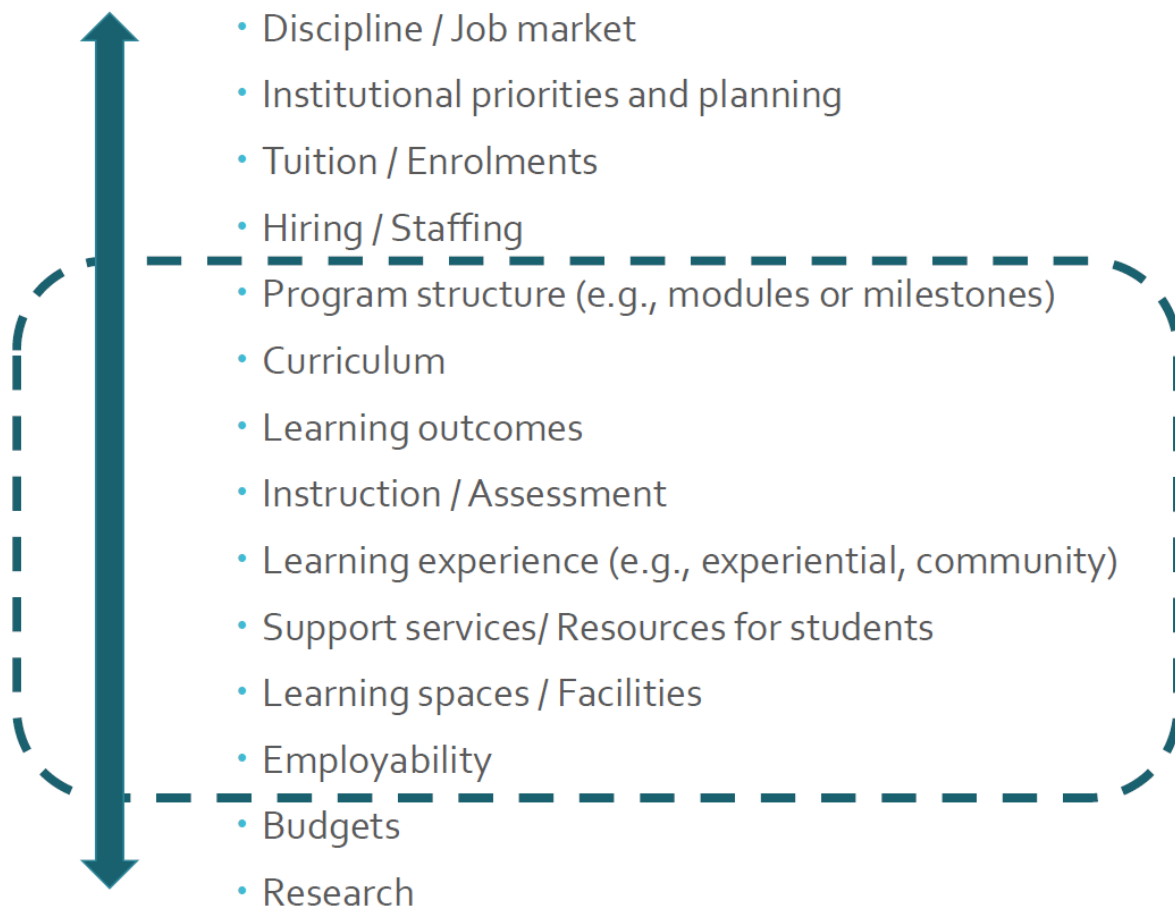
Meeting with the External Reviewers: What to Expect

Your meeting with the external reviewers is an important and valued part of the Site Visit. This is your dedicated time with the reviewers to discuss positives and negatives concerning your program and your ability to navigate towards successful graduation. The reviewers will ask for your opinions on things like access to advising, ability to understand the requirements needed to achieve success in your degree program, your learning experiences, etc. This meeting is done in confidence.

What this meeting is not, however, is one where individual personal issues can be solved. Please do not identify specific individuals. Instead, please frame issues into a broader context will help the reviewers suggest overall recommendations to the program. Cyclical Program Review is about continuous improvement, and your voice is very important in this process.

Focus of IQAP Program Reviews

The criteria used by the external reviewers is included in Table 5, **Cyclical Program Review Evaluation Criteria**, (on the next page) and is adapted from the Quality Assurance Framework. The diagram below provides the overall approach and demonstrates the evaluation criteria used in a cyclical program review. The content within the dotted outline is where greater emphasis is given to help inform continuous improvement for the programs.



Quality Assurance of Ontario's Universities

The Quality Council is the provincial body responsible for assuring the quality of all programs leading to degrees and graduate diplomas granted by Ontario's publicly assisted universities. It operates at arm's-length from both the provincial government and the universities. The Quality Council does not make decisions regarding the funding of university programs; however, the provincial government's Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCU) will not fund a program which has not been quality assured and approved by the Quality Council. Ontario's universities have committed to a process to ensure the quality and continuous improvement of their academic undergraduate and graduate programs.

The degree of rigour established throughout the Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) and in particular, the Protocol for Cyclical Program Reviews plays an essential role in ensuring the ongoing improvement of existing academic programs using internationally accepted quality assurance practices.

Table 5
Cyclical Program Review Evaluation Criteria
From the *Quality Assurance Framework*

The IQAP for review of existing undergraduate and graduate programs requires the evaluation criteria below.
<p>5.1.3.1.1 Objectives</p> <p>a) Program is consistent with the institution’s mission and academic plans.</p>
<p>5.1.3.1.2 Program requirements</p> <p>a) Appropriateness of the program’s structure and the requirements to meet its objectives and the program-level learning outcomes;</p> <p>b) Appropriateness of the program’s structure, requirements and program-level learning outcomes in meeting the institution’s own undergraduate or graduate Degree Level Expectations;</p> <p>c) Appropriateness and effectiveness of the mode(s) of delivery to facilitate students’ successful completion of the program-level learning outcomes; and</p> <p>d) Ways in which the curriculum addresses the current state of the discipline or area of study.</p>
<p>5.1.3.1.3 Program requirements for graduate programs only</p> <p>a) Clear rationale for program length that ensures that students can complete the program-level learning outcomes and requirements within the time required;</p> <p>b) Evidence that each graduate student in the program is required to take a minimum of two-thirds of the course requirements from among graduate level courses; and</p> <p>c) For research-focused graduate programs, clear indication of the nature and suitability of the major research requirements for degree completion.</p>
<p>5.1.3.1.4 Assessment of teaching and Learning</p> <p>a) Appropriateness and effectiveness of the methods for assessing student achievement of the program-level learning outcomes and degree level expectations; and</p> <p>b) Appropriateness and effectiveness of the plans to monitor and assess:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The overall quality of the program; • Whether the program continues to achieve in practice its objectives; • Whether its students are achieving the program-level learning outcomes; and • How the resulting information will be documented and subsequently used to inform continuous program improvement.
<p>5.1.3.1.5 Admission requirements</p> <p>e) Appropriateness of the program’s admission requirements given the program’s objectives and program-level learning outcomes; and</p> <p>f) Sufficient explanation of alternative requirements, if applicable, for admission into a graduate, second-entry or undergraduate program, e.g., minimum grade point average, additional languages or portfolios, and how the program recognizes prior work or learning experience.</p>

5.1.3.1.6 Resources**

Given the program's class sizes and cohorts as well as its program-level learning outcomes:

- d) Participation of a sufficient number of qualified core faculty who are competent to teach and/or supervise in and achieve the goals of the program and foster the appropriate academic environment;
- e) If applicable, discussion/explanation of the role and approximate percentage of adjunct and part-time faculty/limited term appointments used in the delivery of the program and the associated plans to ensure the sustainability of the program and quality of the student experience;
- f) If required, provision of supervision of experiential learning opportunities;
- g) Adequacy of the administrative unit's utilization of existing human, physical and financial resources; and
- h) Evidence that there are adequate resources to sustain the quality of scholarship and research activities produced by students, including library support, information technology support, and laboratory access.

5.1.3.1.7 Resources for graduate program only**

Given the program's class sizes and cohorts, as well as its program-level learning outcomes:

- c) Evidence that faculty have the recent research or professional/clinical expertise needed to foster an appropriate intellectual climate, sustain the program, and promote innovation;
- d) Where appropriate to the program, evidence that financial assistance for students is sufficient to ensure adequate quality and numbers of students; and
- e) Evidence of how supervisory loads are distributed, in light of qualifications and appointment status of the faculty.

5.1.3.1.8 Quality indicators

- a) Evidence of the quality of the faculty (e.g., qualifications, funding, honours, awards, research, innovation and scholarly record; appropriateness of collective faculty expertise to contribute substantively to the program and commitment to student mentoring);
- b) Any other evidence that the program and faculty ensure the intellectual quality of the student experience; and
- c) For students: grade-level for admission, scholarly output, success rates in provincial and national scholarships, competitions, awards and commitment to professional and transferable skills, and times-to-completion and retention rates.

**In keeping with past practice and the requirement for a review of academic services that directly contribute to the quality of each program under review in the Self-Study, consideration must also be given to the appropriateness, effectiveness, and sufficiency of resources and services that directly contribute to the academic quality of programs, in particular, library resources and services, for both graduate and undergraduate programs.