



# **Institutional Quality Assurance Process**

**University of Ottawa**

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## ACRONYMS

<b>CGS:</b> Council on Graduate Studies
<b>COU:</b> Council of Ontario Universities
<b>CUS:</b> Council on Undergraduate Studies
<b>GPEC:</b> Graduate Program Evaluation Committee
<b>IQAP:</b> Institutional Quality Assurance Process
<b>MCU:</b> Ministry of Colleges and Universities
<b>OCAV:</b> Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents
<b>OPE:</b> Office of Program Evaluation
<b>OUCQA:</b> Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance (the Quality Council)
<b>QAF:</b> Quality Assurance Framework
<b>SCEUP:</b> Senate Committee on the Evaluation of Undergraduate Programs

## GLOSSARY

### **Certificate**

The certificate is an independent undergraduate program requiring at least 30 units and entitling the student to a diploma called an “undergraduate certificate” and conferred by the Senate of the University.

Universities may grant certificates in acknowledgement of students’ participation in either for-credit or not-for-credit activities at the undergraduate level. Not-for-credit and for-credit undergraduate certificate programs are not subject to approval or audit by the Quality Council.

### **Collaborative Specialization\***

An intra-university graduate field of study that provides an additional multidisciplinary experience for students enrolled in and completing the degree requirements for one of a number of approved master’s and/or PhD programs.

### **Concentration\***

In a graduate program, an identified set and sequence of courses, and/or other units of study, research, and practice within an area of disciplinary or interdisciplinary study, which is completed in full or partial fulfillment of the requirements for the awarding of a degree and is recorded on the graduate’s academic record.

### **Course Learning Outcomes**

They describe the skills, knowledge, and abilities that students will have acquired upon the successful completion of a course. They are informed by program learning outcomes, and, indirectly, by program goals and rationale and degree-level expectations.

**Degree Level Expectations (Undergraduate or Graduate) \***

The Degree Level Expectations established by OCAV serve as Ontario universities’ academic standards and identify the knowledge and skill outcome competencies that reflect progressive levels of intellectual and creative development. They may be expressed in subject-specific or in generic terms. Graduates at specified degree levels (e.g., BA, MSc) are expected to demonstrate these competencies. Each university has undertaken to adapt and describe the degree level expectations that will apply within its own institution. Likewise, academic units will describe their institution’s expectations in terms appropriate to its academic programs.

**Degree\***

An academic credential awarded on successful completion of a prescribed set of requirements at a specified standard of performance consistent with the OCAV’s Degree Level Expectations and the institution’s own expression of these expectations.

**Degree Program\***

The complete set of courses, combinations of courses and/or other units of study, research and practice prescribed by an institution for the fulfillment of the requirements of a particular degree.

**Desk Review\***

A review of a New Program Proposal or Self-Study conducted by external reviewers independently of the university (i.e., does not typically include interviews or in-person or virtual site visits). Such a review may, with the agreement of the external reviewers and the Provost, replace the external reviewers’ in-person or virtual site visit in the New Program Approval process and Cyclical Program Review process for certain undergraduate and master’s program reviews.

**Diploma\*\***

Document obtained after having successfully completed the requirements of an undergraduate program of study (bachelor's) or a graduate program (master's or doctorate).

**Diploma Program\***

Universities may grant diplomas in acknowledgement of students’ participation in either for-credit or not-for-credit activities at the graduate level. The Quality Council recognizes only three types or categories of graduate diploma. In each case, when proposing a new graduate diploma, a university may request an expedited approval process. For more information on graduate diploma categories, please consult the [Quality Assurance Framework — Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance \(oucqa.ca\)](http://www.oucqa.ca)

**Executive Summary\*\***

Part of the final assessment report that is posted on the University website and available to the public.

**Field\***

In graduate programs, “field” refers to an area of specialization or concentration (in multi/interdisciplinary programs, a clustered area of specialization) that is related to the demonstrable and collective strengths of the program’s faculty. Institutions are not required to declare fields at either the master’s or doctoral levels. Institutions may wish, through an expedited approval process, to seek the endorsement of the Quality Council.

**Final Assessment Report (FAR)\*\***

Synthesis of external and internal evaluations and responses to them, as part of the cyclical program review process.

**Focus (research, courses, field placement) \*\***

A set of selected courses that allows undergraduate students to reach an advanced level in research, courses, or field placements within a discipline.

**Graduate Level Course\***

A course offered by a graduate program and taught by institutionally approved graduate faculty, where the learning outcomes are aligned with the graduate degree level expectations and the majority of students are registered as graduate students.

**Major\*\***

A main discipline or field of study and intensive training, usually consisting of 42 units in the discipline or field of study. Eighteen units must be in courses at the 3000 level or above and six units must be at the 4000 level.

**Microprogram**

A microprogram is independent and of short duration. May be pursued for professional and career development purposes without formal admission to a program. Credits obtained in a microprogram may also be recognized by specific undergraduate programs or for admission into specific graduate programs.

**Minor\*\***

Introductory-level training in a branch or sub-branch of a particular subject or discipline consisting of 30 units of which at least six must be at the 3000 level or above.

**New Program\***

Any degree program, including cost-recovery programs and offsite programs, that has not been approved by the Quality Council, its predecessors, or any prior applicable intra-institutional approval processes in place before the establishment of the Quality Council. The new program has substantially different program requirements and learning outcomes from those of any existing approved programs offered by the institution. A change of name only does not constitute a new program.

The creation of a new major is required to follow the approval process of a new program. However, if a new major in large part retains the same requirements and program outcomes as an existing Honours degree within the same discipline (for which a major yet exists), it need not go through the process for the approval of a new program but through the process of a major modification.

### **Option\*\***

At the undergraduate level, an option is obtained by a student who has completed a set number of units, usually less than required for a minor, in a specific discipline or area of study.

Currently, two different types of options are offered as part of undergraduate programs:

- Options that are completed following a core program as part of a bachelor's program;
- Options that focus on a sub-discipline of the student's main area of study.

At the graduate level, the term "option" is used only to identify whether a master's program is course-based or includes a thesis, a project, or a major research paper.

### **Ottawa-Carleton Joint Institutes\*\***

The Ottawa-Carleton joint institutes are joint graduate programs between the University of Ottawa and Carleton University. There are 14 joint institutes in Science, Engineering and Economics.

### **Professional Master's Program\***

Typically, a professional master's degree is a terminal degree that does not lead to entry into a doctoral program. Such programs are designed to help students prepare for a career in a specific field.

### **Profile\*\***

This term is used by some undergraduate programs instead of the term "option" (e.g., Communication program). In these specific cases, the term is similar to the options that focus on a sub-discipline of the main area of study.

### **Program\***

A coherent and articulated set of courses and other learning activities prescribed by an institution for obtaining a particular degree.

### **Program Learning Outcomes**

Clear and concise statements that describe what successful students should have achieved, and the knowledge, skills, and abilities that they should have acquired by the end of the program. Program learning outcomes emphasize the application and integration of knowledge – both in the context of the program and more broadly – rather than coverage of material; make explicit the expectations for student success; are

measurable and thus form the criteria for assessment/evaluation; and are written in greater detail than the program goals and rationale. Clear and concise program learning outcomes also help to create shared expectations between students and instructors.

**Program Goals and Rationale**

Clear and concise statements that describe the goals of the program. The program goals and rationale explain the potential applications of the knowledge and skills acquired in the program; seek to help students connect learning across various contexts; situate the particular program in the context of the discipline as a whole; and are often broader in scope than the program learning outcomes that they help to generate.

**Virtual Site Visit\***

The practice of conducting all required elements of the external reviewers' site visit using videoconferencing software and/or suitable platforms. A virtual site visit will still include elements such as virtual meetings with students, faculty, and other stakeholders. It may also include remote attendance at performances or events, and virtual facilities tours. A virtual site visit may replace an in-person site visit for certain undergraduate and master's program, with agreement from both the external reviewers and the Provost.

\*Definitions from the [Quality-Assurance-Framework-Oct-2021-1.pdf \(oucqa.ca\)](#)

\*\* Definitions from the University of Ottawa, some of which are posted on its [website](#)



## 1. INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the Quality Assurance Framework of the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance (Quality Council)<sup>1</sup>, which the University of Ottawa adopted first in 2011, and then in 2021, “quality assurance” includes the processes of program creation, modification, and closure, as well as program cyclical review. These processes provide a framework for the continuous improvement of program quality.

The University of Ottawa affirms its commitment to the quality assurance principles for Ontario Universities as defined by the Quality Assurance Framework of the Council on Quality Assurance. These principles underscore the role of quality assurance in providing students with the best possible experience, in ensuring the value of the university degree in Ontario and in ensuring that our highly qualified graduates continue to be strong and innovative contributors to Ontario’s economy and society. In addition to the Experience of the Student, these principles enshrine the importance of the following:

- Oversight by an Independent Body;
- Autonomy of Universities;
- Transparency;
- Increased Responsibility for Quality Assurance;
- Continuous Monitoring and Quality Improvement;
- Expert Independent Peer Review;
- Appropriate Standards.

The policies and procedures established for reviewing existing and for approving new undergraduate and graduate programs are one mechanism the University of Ottawa uses to ensure its programs meet the highest quality standards.

### 1.1. Authorities

For the University of Ottawa and Saint Paul University, the University of Ottawa Senate is the final authority responsible for the quality assurance of all university programs that lead to a degree or diploma. The Provost and Vice-President, Academic Affairs has general oversight over the quality assurance process, both at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

The Office of the Provost and Vice-President, Academic Affairs submits all proposals and annual reports relating to the University’s programs to the Quality Council and oversees all follow-up both with the Council and the various faculties. The Provost and Vice-President, Academic Affairs is assisted in this process by the Vice-Provost, Academic Affairs who is responsible for ensuring the proper conduct of quality assurance activities for undergraduate and graduate programs.

In order to implement all activities ensuring the quality of programs as set out by the Quality Council, in 2016, the University revised the mandate and structure of some of its decision-making bodies. Approved by the Senate in 2016, the new quality assurance structure now includes the two academic councils, namely the Council on Undergraduate Studies (CUS), chaired by the Vice- Provost,

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<sup>1</sup> The framework and the council, hereafter referred to as the Quality Council (QC), were established in 2010 by the Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents (OCAV).

Academic Affairs, and the Council on Graduate Studies (CGS), chaired by the Vice- Provost, Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. Most of the work of the two councils consists of reviewing proposals for new programs, modifications to existing programs, and programs closure. Each council’s chair is also a member of the other council.

The two program evaluation committees, namely, the Senate Committee on the Evaluation of Undergraduate Programs (SCEUP) and the Graduate Program Evaluation Committee (GPEC) are chaired by the Director, Program Evaluation, who is also a member of the two academic councils mentioned above. The chart in Appendix 1: Quality Assurance Process, describes the organizational structure for quality assurance at the University.

The Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP) that applies to programs offered by the Ottawa-Carleton Joint Institutes is the same as that for University of Ottawa programs, but specific procedures have been established for examining proposals and reports. The Procedures Regarding Ottawa-Carleton Joint Programs document is available on the [Quality Assurance website](#).

## **1.2. Contact person**

The Provost and Vice-President, Academic Affairs is the contact person for the Quality Council.

## **1.3. Program evaluation**

All programs offered at the University of Ottawa that lead to a degree or diploma are subject to a cyclical review process at least once every eight years. This includes programs offered by federated or affiliated institutions (Saint Paul University), as well as those offered in collaboration or in partnership with colleges, other universities, or other postsecondary institutions.

The information required for examining proposals for program creation, closure, or modification, as well as for the cyclical review process, both at the undergraduate and graduate levels, supports the University’s mission, strengthens its strategic planning, ensures program coherence, and helps meet the degree-level expectations for each program. The present document includes the various administrative approval steps, the evaluation criteria as well as the main components for each type of proposal.

The quality of programs is assessed using the criteria of coherence, relevance, distinction, and compliance, as per the following complementary components:

- Program structure and content are coherent and determined by the learning outcomes, goals, and rationale;
- Programs are based on the learning outcomes, goals, and rationale that underlie admission requirements and all pedagogical decisions (delivery modes, teaching and evaluation methods);
- Programs meet student needs and offer them a quality university experience;
- Programs contribute to the University’s mission and academic plans;
- Programs have adequate human, financial, and physical resources;
- Faculty expertise ensures the intellectual quality of the student experience;
- Programs are viable and relevant.

### **1.3.1. Saint Paul University**

Approval of major and minor modifications to Saint Paul University's undergraduate and graduate programs, as well as the creation of programs, are done within the Saint Paul University governance bodies. Once the proposals are approved by the Saint Paul University Senate, they need to be submitted to the following bodies at the University of Ottawa:

- for information to either the Council on Undergraduate Studies or the Council on Graduate Studies;
- for approval to the Executive Committee of the Senate and then to the Senate.

The Letter of Intent for the creation of a new program is submitted for approval to either the Council on Undergraduate Studies or the Council on Graduate Studies at the University of Ottawa.

The Vice-Provost Academic Affairs and the Vice-Provost Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies or their delegates are the University of Ottawa representatives on the Saint Paul University Senate.

### **1.4. Audit process**

Any substantive changes to the IQAP must be submitted to the Quality Council for ratification. An audit process is undertaken by the Quality Council's Audit Committee at least every eight years to ensure the University's compliance with its IQAP for all quality assurance activities.

### **1.5. Other information**

Templates for the various types of proposals can be found on the [Quality Assurance website](#).

The University of Ottawa IQAP is to be used in conjunction with the Quality Council's [Quality-Assurance-Framework-Oct-2021-1.pdf \(oucqa.ca\)](#).

## **2. PROTOCOL FOR THE APPROVAL OF NEW PROGRAMS**

The creation of a new program may be initiated by an academic unit, a faculty, the central administration, an internal committee, an external organization, or at the proposal of the community.

The regular and the accelerated processes for the approval of a new program are described below.

Each new program proposal must undergo an appraisal and approval process that involves several stages. At any of these stages, the proposal can be returned to the academic unit concerned, which must incorporate recommended modifications before moving on to the next approval stage.

Proposals for the creation of new graduate diplomas undergo an accelerated approval process that does not include an external review. They must nevertheless be submitted for approval to the Quality Council.

Proposals for the creation of program components such as concentrations and new fields for graduate programs or minors, and options for undergraduate programs, do not need to be submitted to the Quality Council but must nevertheless be evaluated and approved by the University's Senate. The process will be the same as indicated below but without an external review and without submission to the Quality Council.

### **2.1. Regular approval process for new programs**

#### **2.1.1. Stage 1: Letter of intent**

The new program approval process is initiated by the academic unit or units offering the program, in consultation with the home Faculty concerned. The academic unit prepares a letter of intent using the existing template that is submitted for approval to the Vice-Dean and Dean of the Faculty. The Dean's office submits the letter to the Council on Undergraduate Studies or Council on Graduate Studies, as appropriate, for discussion, suggestions (intra or inter Faculty partnerships, links between undergraduate and graduate studies, experiential learning opportunities), and approval. The letter of intent is also submitted by the chair of the appropriate council (CUS or CGS) to the Office of the Deputy Provost, Planning and Academic Budgets who can provide support in preparing a market assessment.

#### **2.1.2. Stage 2: Detailed proposal**

The detailed proposal prepared using the new program template is submitted for approval to all home Faculty authorities (undergraduate program committee, graduate program committee, or their equivalents) and, finally, to the faculty council or councils, who is responsible for verifying the completeness of components of the new program proposal. The proposal must include an analysis of the resources needed. This analysis is done by the Office of the Deputy Provost, Planning and Academic Budgets. A confirmation of the program's financial viability by the Dean is also required. It must also identify whether the program will be full cost-recovery and/or a professional program.

### **2.1.2.1. Council on Undergraduate Studies or Council on Graduate Studies**

The detailed proposal is submitted by the home Faculty for approval to the Council on Undergraduate Studies or to the Council on Graduate Studies, as appropriate.

#### **2.1.2.1.1. External review**

The proposal undergoes an external review, which is coordinated by the Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Affairs. A nomination subcommittee under the authority of both the undergraduate and graduate studies councils is responsible for selecting the external reviewers. The subcommittee comprises of three members, namely the Vice-Provost, Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, the Director, Program Evaluation and the Vice-Provost, Academic Affairs, who acts as chair.

Two external reviewers are selected by the nomination subcommittee from a list of at least five candidates compiled by the chair of the academic unit and approved by the Dean of the home Faculty concerned. The subcommittee may also consult representatives from industry or related organizations and professions.

#### **2.1.2.1.2. External reviewers**

The reviewers must have expertise in the discipline and must be at arm's length from the program under review (no family ties, recent collaboration, supervisory relations, or other types of relationships). They must be associate or full professors and should have experience in the administration of university programs. Reviewers must also have an appreciation of pedagogy and learning outcomes; in addition, for thesis-based graduate programs, the reviewers must be experienced thesis supervisors. A conflict of interest exists when a proposed external reviewer:

- has collaborated or published with a member or members of the academic program being reviewed within the past six years;
- has an administrative or family link with a member of the academic program being reviewed;
- is a former research supervisor, graduate student, or postdoctoral trainee of one of the members of the academic unit being reviewed;
- is a regular external examiner for doctoral theses of students in the academic unit proposing the program;
- is involved in a dispute with a member of the academic program being reviewed;
- acted as an external reviewer for a Cyclical Program Review or a New Program Proposal in the academic unit in question. Whilst this is preferable, in cases where it is not ideal, at least one of the external reviewers must not have previously reviewed a program in the academic unit.

Here are some examples that do not infringe on the external reviewers' arm's length status:

- has participated in a conference panel with a member of the program;
- has participated on a research grant selection committee with a member of the program;
- is the author of an article in a journal edited by a member of the program or the author of a chapter in a book edited by a member of the program;
- has made a presentation during a conference held at the university where the program is offered;
- has received a bachelor's degree from the university where the program is offered;
- has co-authored or collaborated on research with a member of the program more than seven years ago;
- was invited to make a presentation at the university where the program is offered;
- was editor of a manuscript written by a member of the program.

The external reviewers will receive a copy of the proposal, the faculty CVs as well as information on the objectives of the review, their role and responsibilities, and instructions for writing the report. The proposal, CVs, and accompanying documents will be submitted to external reviewers at the same time.

In most cases, the external review of a new program will be conducted onsite, but for new programs, it may be conducted by desk review, video conference, or an equivalent method if the external reviewers are satisfied that the off-site option is acceptable. The Provost or designate will clearly explain the reasons for this. The site visit will include meetings with the Provost and Vice-President, Academic Affairs, the Vice - Provost, Academic Affairs, the Vice-Provost, Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies in the case of graduate programs, the Dean, the academic unit chair, the program director, regular and part-time faculty, students, academic advisers, and administrative staff members.

Within one month of the consultation, the external reviewers submit their report(s) on the proposed program's relevance, value, and viability. Reviewers will consider the elements described in section 2.3 of this document. While joint reports are preferred for all external reviews, separate reports can be submitted after consultation with the Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Affairs. Before accepting the report as final, the Vice-Provost, Academic Affairs for undergraduate programs or the Vice-Provost, Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies for graduate programs, will bring to the attention of the reviewers any clear factual errors that can be corrected in the report, and/or omitted IQAP requirements that can be added to the report. Once formally accepted the final report is submitted to the Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Affairs.

### **2.1.2.1.3. Internal responses**

The Vice-Provost, Academic Affairs sends a copy of the external reviewers' report(s) to the Dean and to the Vice-Dean of the home Faculty, to the chair of the academic unit concerned and, in the case of graduate programs, to the Vice-Provost, Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. The chair of the academic unit and the Dean of the Faculty are invited to provide written comments, separately, regarding the report(s), within one month. An exception to this requirement for separate responses is in the case of single department Faculty (or equivalent), where the Dean (or equivalent) is essentially the divisional head. The academic unit will then make any changes necessary to the proposal and demonstrate how it has addressed the external reviewers' recommendations. All changes must be clearly identified in the proposal or in a report.

### **2.1.2.2. Senate**

The Vice-Provost, Academic Affairs or the Vice-Provost, Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies presents all the documentation for approval to the Executive Committee of the Senate. Once the documentation is approved (detailed proposal, amended, if necessary,<sup>2</sup> external reviewers' report(s), Dean, and academic unit chair responses), it is submitted to the University's Senate for final institutional approval.

### **2.1.3. Stage 3: Quality Council**

Once the proposal is approved by the Senate, the Provost and Vice-President, Academic Affairs submits the full proposal, CVs, evaluators response, internal response, and any other relevant information for approval to the Quality Council, which consists of two steps: Appraisal Committee review and recommendation followed by the Quality Council decision.

### **2.1.4. Stage 4: Ministry of Colleges and Universities**

New programs must also be approved by the Ministry of Colleges and Universities before they can admit any students. The Office of the Provost and Vice-President, Academic Affairs submits new program proposals to the Ministry. Programs that are full cost-recovery do not need the approval of the Ministry.

## **2.2. Expedited approval process for new programs**

The expedited approval process is the same as the regular approval process described in section 2.1., except that the proposal is not subject to an external review.

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<sup>2</sup> If the modifications made to the proposal are deemed major by the Vice-Provost, Academic Affairs or, in the case of graduate programs, by the Vice-Provost, Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, the proposal is resubmitted to the appropriate council before submission to the Executive Committee of the Senate.

The expedited approval process applies to:

- Proposals for new for-credit graduate diploma programs (Types 2 and 3);
- Review by the Quality Council of a major modification (program renewal and significant change) proposal, at the request of the University. The proposal for a graduate diploma Type 1 must be processed as a major modification (program renewal and significant change);
- New standalone degree programs arising from a long-standing field in a master's or doctoral program that has undergone at least two cyclical program reviews and has at least two graduating cohorts.

Programs created or modified through the Protocol for Expedited Approvals are not normally selected for the institution's Cyclical Audit.

### **2.3. Evaluation criteria**

The various academic authorities involved in both the regular and expedited approval processes examine the detailed proposals according to several criteria, namely coherence, conformity, relevance, and distinction. They take into account academic criteria specific to the University of Ottawa, the Quality Council's requirements and the Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents (OCAV) Guidelines on University Degree Level Expectations. (Note: The University of Ottawa has adopted OCAV's Guidelines on Degree Level Expectations, and therefore the institution's guidelines on Degree Level Expectations are the same as those of OCAV.)

The program creation proposal must include an analysis of the following elements:

#### **2.3.1. Program goals and rationale**

- a) Clarity of the program's goals and rationale;
- b) Alignment of the program in terms of its conformity with the University of Ottawa's mission and strategic plans;
- c) Appropriateness of degree nomenclature given the program's goals and rationale;
- d) Evidence of the program's relevance consistent with student demand and societal need.

#### **2.3.2. Program requirements**

- a) Appropriateness of the program's structure and the requirements to meet its goals, rationale, and learning outcomes;
- b) Appropriateness of the program's structure, requirements, and learning outcomes in meeting the institution's undergraduate and/or graduate degree level expectations;
- c) Appropriateness of the proposed mode(s) of delivery to facilitate students' successful attainment of the program learning outcomes;
- d) Ways in which the curriculum addresses the current state of the discipline or area of study, including any distinctive curriculum or program innovations, creative components, or significant high impact practices when compared with other existing internal or external programs.



### **2.3.3. Program requirements for graduate programs only**

- a) Clear rationale for program length that ensures students can achieve the program-learning outcomes and complete the requirements within the proposed time;
- b) Evidence that each graduate student in the program is required to take a minimum of two-thirds of the course requirements among graduate-level courses;
- c) For research-focused graduate programs, clear indication of the nature and suitability of the major research requirements for degree completion.

### **2.3.4. Admission requirements**

- a) A detailed description of the program's admission requirements in relation to the program's goals and rationale and of the learning outcomes established for program completion. Sufficient explanation of any alternative requirements, if applicable, for admission into a graduate, second-entry, or undergraduate program such as minimum average, additional languages, portfolios, or how the program recognizes prior work or learning experience.
- b) A description of the intellectual, psychological, mental, and physical capacities that are academically essential to succeed in the program.

### **2.3.5. Assessment of teaching and learning**

- a) The relevance and efficacy of the proposed methods for assessing to what extent students achieve the intended program learning outcomes and degree level expectations;
- b) Appropriateness of the plans to monitor and assess:
  - i. The overall quality of the program;
  - ii. Whether the program is achieving in practice its proposed goals and rationale;
  - iii. Whether its students are achieving the program learning outcomes; and
  - iv. How the resulting information will be documented and subsequently used to inform continuous program improvement.

### **2.3.6. Resources (all programs)**

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

- a) The unit's administrative plan for the use of human, physical, and financial resources that demonstrates the program's viability. If new resources are needed, include any agreements established with the Dean and with the Deputy Provost, Planning and Academic Budgets;
- b) Evidence of participation by a sufficient number and quality of core faculty who have the necessary expertise to teach and supervise in the program, achieve the goals of the program, and foster the appropriate academic environment;
- c) 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;

- d) If required, provision of relevant experiential learning opportunities;
- e) Evidence of adequate resources to ensure the best experience for undergraduate and graduate students, both in the classroom as well as for their research activities, including library support, information technology support, laboratory access, and class size, and ensuring the quality of scholarship;
- f) Evidence that the new program will not have a negative impact on current available resources for the management of existing undergraduate and graduate programs;
- g) If necessary, additional institutional resource commitments to support the program in step with its ongoing implementation.

### **2.3.7. Resources (graduate programs only)**

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

- a) Evidence of a sufficient number of institutionally approved faculty members who have the recent research or professional/clinical expertise needed to sustain the program, promote innovation, and foster an intellectually stimulating climate.
- b) Where appropriate to the program, evidence that financial assistance for students is sufficient to attract adequate quality and numbers of students.
- c) Evidence of how supervisory loads will be distributed and of the qualifications and appointment status of faculty responsible for teaching and supervision.
- d) A detailed description of the unit's plans to ensure that new thesis supervisors are properly mentored and that the highest standards of thesis supervision will be maintained in the program.

### **2.3.8. Quality and other indicators**

- a) Evidence of quality of the faculty (e.g., qualifications, funding, honours, awards, research, innovation, and scholarly record; appropriateness and benefits of collective faculty expertise for the proposed program and commitment to student mentoring).
- b) Evidence of a program structure and faculty research that will ensure the intellectual quality of the student experience.

**2.3.9.** If applicable, a separate file containing the CVs of the professors who will be teaching and supervising in the proposed program.

**2.3.10.** The proposal submitted to the Quality Council will further include a brief commentary on the two external reviewers selected to review the proposed program in regard to their qualifications, notably with respect to:

- a) Sufficient expertise in content and program delivery;
- b) Appropriate connections to industry (where appropriate); and
- c) Expertise in teaching and learning.

## **2.4. Announcement of new programs**

With the permission of the Provost and Vice-President, Academic Affairs, new programs may be advertised once they are approved by Senate, with the following caveat: “*Conditional upon approval by the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance and the Ministry of Colleges and Universities.*” In addition, the announcement of a program in advance of Quality Council approval must include the following statement: “Prospective students are advised that offers of admission to a new program may be made only after the University’s own quality assurance process has been completed and the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance and the Ministry of Colleges and Universities have approved the program.” Programs that are full cost-recovery do not need the approval of the Ministry.

The academic unit must not solicit applications without the explicit written authorization of the Provost and Vice-President, Academic Affairs.

## **2.5. Implementation window**

The program will begin within 36 months of the date of approval by the Quality Council; otherwise, the approval will lapse.

## **2.6. Institutional follow-up**

Ongoing monitoring of the program (including oversight of the timely implementation of recommendations) is the responsibility of the Provost and Vice-President, Academic Affairs, who normally delegates this to the Dean and Vice-Dean responsible for the program, who will monitor the implementation of the recommendations.

The first cyclical review of the program must be conducted no later than eight years after the date of the program’s initial enrollment and in accordance with the cyclical review schedule. If the program was approved by Council with the following decision: “Approved to Commence, with Report”, this report will also be submitted to the Council at the prescribed time.

At the end of the third academic year after first registrations in the programs, the Office of the Provost and Vice-President, Academic Affairs will ensure that the program is progressing well. To this end, the Office of Institutional Research and Planning will submit a brief report to the Office of the Provost and Vice-President, Academic Affairs, with a copy to the Dean of the home Faculty.

The report must include the following information:

- a) number of applicants;
- b) number of offers extended;
- c) number of offers accepted;
- d) number of registrations;
- e) student retention;
- f) list of courses offered in English and in French, including number of registered students;
- g) quality of the student experience as determined by the academic unit (e.g., focus groups, surveys);

- h) a careful evaluation of the program's success in achieving its objectives, requirements, and outcomes, as originally proposed and approved;
- i) any changes that have occurred in the interim, including in response to any note(s) from the Appraisal Committee.

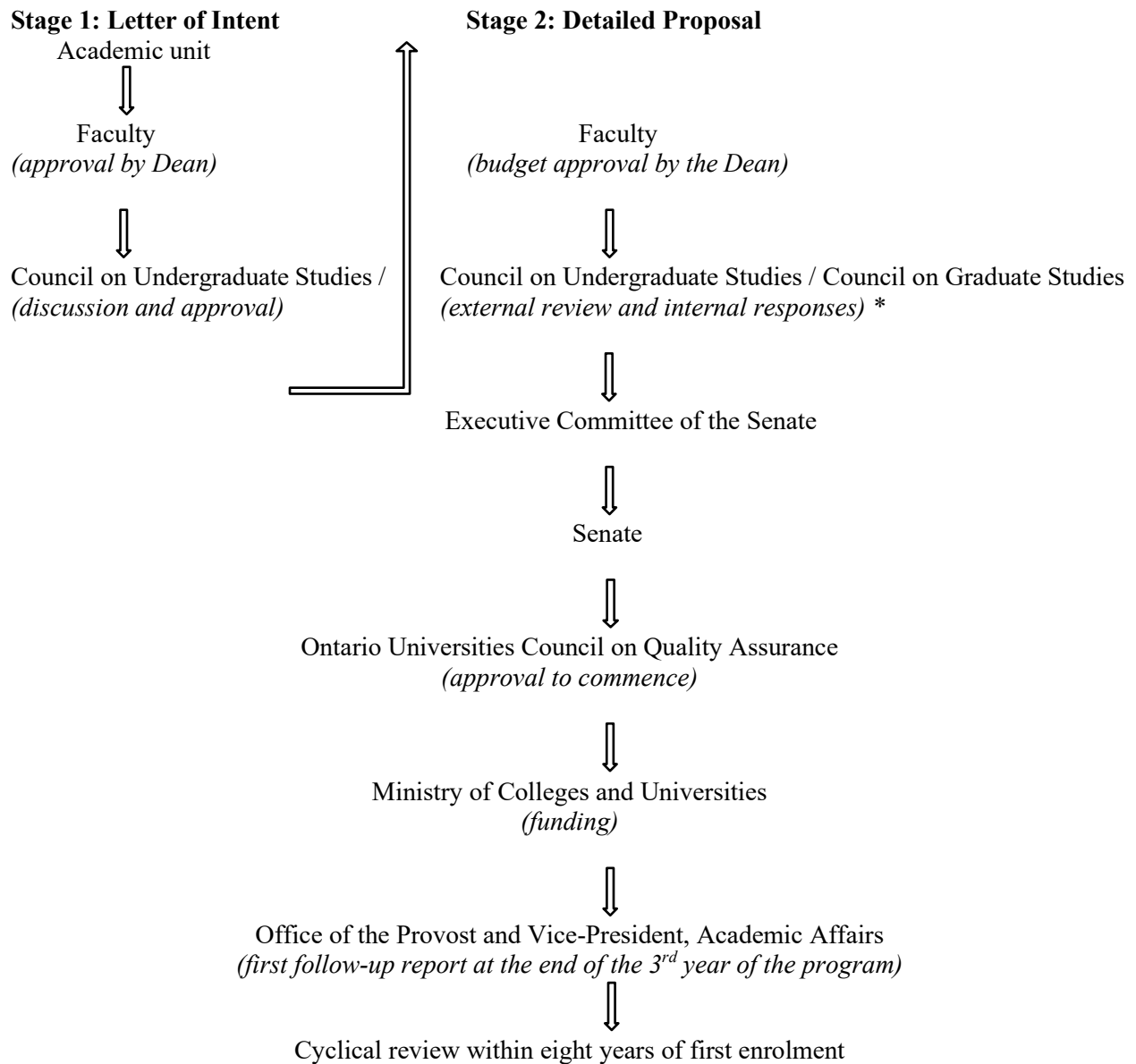
The report will be discussed with the program coordinator, the Director, Program Evaluation, the Vice-Provost, Academic Affairs, and, for graduate programs, the Vice-Provost, Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

After this consultation, the academic unit may be required to make modifications to the program.

The monitoring process will also consider the outcomes of this interim monitoring report and any additional areas to be considered in the first cyclical review of the new program.

New undergraduate and/or graduate programs that have been approved within the period since the conduct of the previous Audit are eligible for selection for the University's next Cyclical Audit.

## 2.7. OVERVIEW OF THE APPROVAL PROCESS FOR A NEW PROGRAM



\* An external review is undertaken only as part of the regular approval process and not the expedited approval process.

### **3. PROTOCOL FOR PROGRAM CLOSURE**

There are five possible situations that can lead to the closure<sup>3</sup> of a program:

1. A proposal from the academic unit, Faculty or program;
2. A recommendation in the cyclical program review report or made by one of the program evaluation committees;
3. As part of a program renewal initiative;
4. Low enrollment in the program;
5. No new admissions for three consecutive years.

Each proposal for the closure of a program or of a component within an existing program (e.g., major, minor, concentration) must undergo a five-stage approval process.

The program closure proposal, which is examined by the various academic authorities, must include:

- a) The rationale for the closure, including alignment with the unit's academic plan;
- b) The impact of the closure on other undergraduate or graduate programs within the academic unit, Faculty or in other Faculties;
- c) The impact of the closure on, and accommodation of, any students currently enrolled in the program.

#### **3.1. Program closure process**

##### **3.1.1. Stage 1: Academic unit**

The program closure process is normally initiated by the academic unit or units offering the program. However, before any discussions with academic authorities take place, the Vice-Dean responsible for the program, the Dean of the Faculty concerned, the Provost and Vice-President, Academic Affairs, and the Vice-Provost, Academic Affairs (for undergraduate programs) or the Vice-Provost, Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (for graduate programs) must be advised in writing of the proposed program closure, at least six months before the set closure date.

The unit then prepares a program closure proposal and submits it to all its academic authorities for approval (program committee and departmental assembly, or their equivalent).

##### **3.1.2. Stage 2: Home Faculty**

The program closure proposal is submitted for approval to all academic authorities of the home Faculty (undergraduate or graduate program committee, or its equivalent) and, finally, to the faculty council.

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<sup>3</sup> The closure of French-language programs must comply with the regulations approved by the University's Senate.

### 3.1.3. Stage 3: Council on Undergraduate Studies or Council on Graduate Studies

The proposal is submitted by the home Faculty for approval to the Council on Undergraduate Studies or to the Council on Graduate Studies.

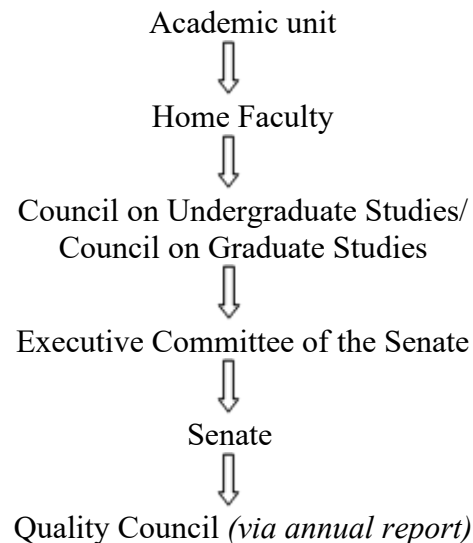
### 3.1.4. Stage 4: Senate

The proposal is then submitted for approval to the Executive Committee of the Senate by the Vice-Provost, Academic Affairs (for undergraduate programs) or the Vice-Provost, Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (for graduate programs). Once approved by the Executive Committee of the Senate, the proposal is then submitted to Senate for final institutional approval.

### 3.1.5. Stage 5: Quality Council

Program closures are reported annually to the Quality Council by the Provost and Vice-President, Academic Affairs as part of the Annual Report on Major Modifications.

## 3.2. OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM CLOSURE PROCESS



#### **4. PROTOCOL FOR THE APPROVAL OF MAJOR MODIFICATIONS (PROGRAM RENEWAL AND SIGNIFICANT CHANGE) AND MINOR MODIFICATIONS TO EXISTING PROGRAMS**

Program modifications aim to maintain or improve a program's quality. They are defined as major or minor according to the specific criteria detailed below. Each modification should ensure that program coherence is maintained or improved and should be in line with the University's goals and strategic objectives. For joint programs, each partner institution must be involved.

Continuous improvement is the ultimate goal of the quality assurance process and major modifications of existing programs. Major modifications encourage active and ongoing program renewal to ensure that the educational experiences of students are engaging and rigorous, and that programs remain current with the discipline.

As such, major modifications are undertaken to:

- Implement the outcomes of a cyclical program review;
- Reflect the ongoing evolution of the discipline;
- Accommodate new developments in a particular field;
- Facilitate improvements in teaching and learning strategies;
- Respond to the changing needs of students, society, and industry; and/or
- Respond to improvements in technology.

Proposals for the creation of a graduate diploma Type 1 must be processed as a major modification.

##### **4.1. Definition of major modifications (program renewal and significant change)**

A modification to a program is considered major when it *significantly* affects:

- The program requirements compared to those existing at the time of the most recent cyclical program review;
- The program learning outcomes not meeting the threshold of a new program;
- The program name and/or degree nomenclature (when the program learning objectives are also changed);
- An existing graduate program by the addition of a new field. It is not required to declare fields for either master's or doctoral programs. The creation of more than one field at one point in time or over subsequent years may need to go through the Expedited Protocol;
- The program coherence in terms of its structure, content and/or its learning outcomes; and/or
- The human and physical resources necessary to implement the program, for example, where there have been changes to the existing mode(s) of delivery (e.g., different campus and/or online/hybrid delivery) (in which case, a preliminary approval from the Dean as well as from the Deputy Provost, Planning and Academic Budgets is required).



As such, program modifications are major when:

- a) The program requirements differ *significantly* from those existing at the time of the most recent cyclical program review.

Examples:

- Merger of two or more programs, in the absence of any other significant changes (e.g., to the degree designation, learning outcomes, etc.);
- Creation of new graduate collaborative specialization programs, comprising existing programs;
- Introduction or deletion of a unit or program participating in a collaborative specialization graduate program;
- New bridging options for college diploma graduates;
- Introduction or deletion of laboratory time in an undergraduate program;
- Introduction or deletion of an undergraduate thesis or capstone project;
- Introduction or deletion of a practical experience component, CO-OP option, \* internship, practicum or portfolio;
- Changes in the number and content of compulsory courses that has a significant impact on the program's learning outcomes\*\*;
- Changes in the language of program delivery;
- Changes made to more than one-third of courses for undergraduate programs;
- Changes to more than one-third of courses\*\* for course-based master's programs or to more than one-third of the program requirements for other graduate programs;
- Any change to the duration of studies\*\*;
- At the master's level, the introduction or deletion of a research project, research essay or thesis, course-only, co-op, internship, or practicum components;
- Creation, deletion or re-naming of a field in a graduate program;
- Any change to the requirements for graduate program candidacy examinations and/or field studies;
- Introduction of a new concentration in a graduate program;
- Introduction or deletion of a course-based option as part of a master's program.

\* The introduction of a Co-op option or Immersion stream are major modifications that must be approved both by the Executive Committee of the Senate and the Senate.

\*\*The addition of a course to an undergraduate or graduate program that does not affect the time to completion is considered a *minor* modification.

- b) Significant changes have been made to the program's learning outcomes.

Examples:

- Any change made to the program's content, other than those listed in a) above, that affect the learning outcomes, but do not meet the threshold for a new program;

- Any modification that affects the first three categories of OCAV Guidelines on University Degree Level Expectations, namely for undergraduate programs, depth and breadth of knowledge, knowledge of methodologies, application of knowledge, and for graduate programs, depth and breadth of knowledge, research and scholarship, and level of application of knowledge;
  - Any change made to the program's admission or specific requirements that affects the learning outcomes.
- c) Significant changes have been made to the human and physical resources necessary to implement the program.

Examples:

- Changes to the make-up of the faculty delivering the program (e.g., a large proportion of the faculty retires; new hires alter the areas of research and teaching interests);
- An existing program is established at another institution or location or has integrated a new interinstitutional collaboration;
- Change to full-time or part-time program options;
- Change to the mode of delivery of a program to online for all or a significant portion of a program that was previously delivered in-person.

This is not an exhaustive list of examples of major modifications to a program. The Vice-Provost, Academic Affairs, or the Vice-Provost, Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, will act as arbitrators to determine whether a change constitutes a major modification to undergraduate or graduate programs, respectively. The Office of the Provost and Vice-President, Academic Affairs has the authority to decide for the University of Ottawa, but the Council on Quality Assurance has the final authority to decide if a major modification constitutes a new program and, therefore, must follow the Protocol for New Program Approvals. Note that major modifications are not normally selected for the University's Cyclical Audit.

## **4.2. Approval process for major modifications**

Each proposal for major modifications to existing programs must undergo a five-stage approval process. At any stage, the proposal can be returned to the academic unit concerned, which must incorporate the recommended modifications before moving on to the next stage.

### **4.2.1. Stage 1: Academic unit**

The approval process for major modifications is normally initiated by the academic unit(s) offering the program. The process may vary slightly for interdisciplinary or collaborative specialization programs. However, before any discussions with the unit's academic authorities take place, the Vice-Dean responsible for programs must be advised of the modifications being proposed. For joint programs, each partner institution must be involved.

The unit prepares a detailed proposal using the major modifications template and submits it to all of its academic authorities for approval (program committee and departmental assembly, or their equivalent).

#### **4.2.2. Stage 2: Home Faculty**

The detailed proposal is submitted for approval to all academic authorities of the home Faculty (undergraduate or graduate program committee, or its equivalent, and Faculty council or councils). The proposal must include an analysis of the resources needed and a confirmation of the program's financial viability by the Dean.

#### **4.2.3. Stage 3: Council on Undergraduate Studies or Council on Graduate Studies**

The Vice-Dean responsible for the program submits the proposal for approval to the Council on Undergraduate Studies or to the Council on Graduate Studies, as applicable.

#### **4.2.4. Stage 4: Senate**

The proposal is submitted for approval to the Executive Committee of the Senate by the Vice-Provost, Academic Affairs for undergraduate programs, or by the Vice-Provost, Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies for graduate programs. If necessary, the proposal is submitted to Senate for final institutional approval. Senate approval is necessary if a modification has an impact on the degree conferred (e.g., adding a major to an existing Honours degree within the same discipline, a Co-op option, or an Immersion stream is added to the program or a concentration is created as part of a graduate program).

#### **4.2.5. Stage 5: Quality Council**

The Provost and Vice-President, Academic Affairs reports all major modifications and program closures approved by Senate to the Quality Council as part of the University's annual report on major modifications approved during each academic year. The University can request that the Quality Council review a major modification proposal, in which case the Expedited Approval process applies, including the application of the relevant criteria set out in section 2.3 of the IQAP and a description of, and rationale for, the proposed changes.

### **4.3. Evaluation criteria**

The major modification proposal must include:

- a) a justification for the major modifications proposed and their relation to the different types of major modifications identified in section 4.1;
- b) a detailed description of the modifications proposed and the context in which they are being proposed (changes to admission or graduation requirements, program structure, courses, delivery methods, allocated resources, etc.);
- c) the effect of these modifications on the University's mission with respect to bilingualism, strategic objectives of the University, of the faculty and of the academic unit, learning goals and expected learning outcomes, degree level expectations, admission requirements, student preparedness, enrollment, and the student university experience input from current students and recent graduates of the program must be considered;

- d) where necessary, the effect of these modifications on teaching, learning, and evaluation methods and any adjustments that will need to be made;
- e) where necessary, the effect of these modifications on physical space requirements as well as on faculty, material, and financial resources required and expected class sizes;
- f) the effect of these modifications on the program's administrative structure;
- g) an assessment of the impact the proposed modification will have on the program's students, including a statement of the way in which the proposed major modification will improve the student experience. Input from current students and recent graduates should be considered.

When changing the mode of delivery of a program to online for all or a significant portion of a program that was previously delivered in-person, consideration of the following criteria is strongly encouraged as part of the approval process for the proposed major modification:

- a) Maintenance of and/or changes to the program goals and rationale and program learning outcomes;
- b) Adequacy of the technologies used;
- c) Sufficiency of support services and training for teaching staff;
- d) Sufficiency and type of support for students in the new learning environment; and
- e) Access.

If new resources are required to implement the major modifications, the Dean must decide on the resources needed to offer the program for a reasonable period of time. The financial impact of the major modifications and any potential internal or external sources of funding must be explored by the faculty before the proposal is submitted to the Council on Undergraduate Studies or to the Council on Graduate Studies.

#### **4.4. Minor modifications**

Program modifications are considered minor when they clarify information related to courses or student progression through the program or integrate innovative elements that do not affect the program's coherence with respect to its structure, content, and learning outcomes, the University's mandate with respect to Francophonie or institutional strategic priorities (unless they contribute to them).

In general, minor modifications include changes to course titles, descriptions, prerequisites, and the list of compulsory and optional courses.

Examples:

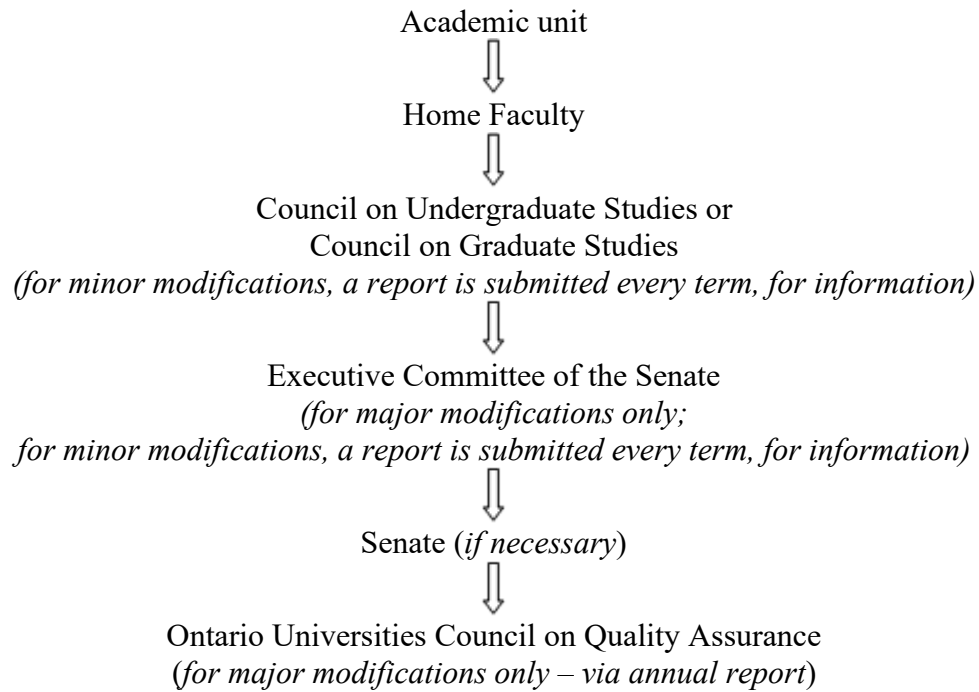
- Creation, modification or abolition of a list of optional courses;
- Creation of an experiential learning component that does not affect the duration of studies (work placements, field research, etc.);
- Creation of a profile that proposes a specific pathway within an honours bachelor's program (without any impact on the diploma);
- Modification to an honours thesis in an undergraduate program;
- Change in the number of contact hours of a course;
- Creation or abolition of elective courses;
- Changes made to a course title;
- Changes made to the description of one or more elective courses;
- Addition or elimination of one or more course prerequisites;
- Creation of a new microprogram;
- Creation of an undergraduate certificate;
- Creation of an integrated pathway between bachelor's and master's degrees.

Proposals for minor modifications are submitted to all Faculty academic authorities and receive final approval from the faculty council.

Before approval by Faculty committees, the faculty must confirm with the Vice-Provost, Academic Affairs or the Vice-Provost, Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies that the changes proposed are indeed considered minor modifications. A copy of the proposal must also be sent at this time to the Curriculum Management team at the Office of the Registrar for a verification of the technical aspects of the proposed modifications. Each term, a report including all the minor modifications approved by each Faculty is submitted for information to the appropriate council (Council on Undergraduate Studies or Council on Graduate Studies). This report is then submitted, for information only, to the Executive Committee of the Senate and, via the minutes, to the Senate.

Note: A change in the name or degree designation of a program is considered a minor modification according to the definition in section 4.4 (if there is no concomitant change in learning objectives) but requires nevertheless approval from the Executive Committee of the Senate and the Senate.

#### 4.5. OVERVIEW THE APPROVAL PROCESS FOR MAJOR AND MINOR PROGRAM MODIFICATIONS



## **5. CYCLICAL PROGRAM REVIEW PROTOCOL**

The Cyclical Program Review of existing programs is the key quality assurance process aimed at assessing the quality of existing academic programs, identifying ongoing improvements to programs, and ensuring continuing relevance of the program to stakeholders. The cyclical program review process has five main stages, namely:

1. Self-study;
2. External review (peer review);
3. Internal responses to the external review report from the academic unit and appropriate dean(s);
4. Institutional analysis of the review reports and adoption of the plan to implement the recommendations and their monitoring; and
5. Follow-up reporting on the implementation of the recommendations.

### **5.1. Principles of the cyclical review process**

#### **5.1.1. Objectives**

Programs are expected to continually improve. Cyclical reviews allow to:

- Assess the quality of existing academic programs
- Identify ongoing improvements to programs
- Ensure continuing relevance of the program to stakeholders.

#### **5.1.2. Scope**

All degree or diploma programs at the University of Ottawa are subject to the cyclical review process, regardless of whether they require previous university studies. This process considers all independent program offerings, joint and interinstitutional programs (Section 5.1.2.2), collaborative specialization programs (Section 5.1.2.3), programs offered through collaborative agreements or partnerships with other universities or colleges, and programs offered at multiple locations. The review also encompasses degree programs offered by Saint Paul University. Moreover, all modes of program delivery are part of the review process.

Cyclical Program Reviews do not include programs that have been closed or for which admission has been suspended. Additionally, programs offered by Saint-Paul University under the pontifical charter are also excluded from the scope of a Cyclical Program Review.

Programs are reviewed at least every eight years according to a schedule determined in advance by the Office of Program Evaluation. A new program undergoes its first cyclical review no later than eight years after the program's initial enrolment. Where possible, cyclical reviews for undergraduate and graduate programs will take place simultaneously and use the same self-evaluation report. The schedule also takes into account reviews conducted by professional accreditation bodies.

### **5.1.2.1. Use of accreditation and other external reviews in the Institutional Quality Assurance Process**

For programs that are subject to professional accreditation and for which the cyclical review and accreditation processes are to be coordinated, it must be determined, within a timeframe set by the Office of Program Evaluation, to what extent the two processes assess similar criteria. In order to make this determination, the program director must submit a copy of the accrediting body's evaluation template to the Office of Program Evaluation. In close collaboration with the faculty and the program, the Office of Program Evaluation will conduct a comparative analysis of the two templates and determine whether any elements of the accreditation process can be integrated into the cyclical review process, while ensuring compliance with the requirements of the cyclical review process and related policies. The accreditation body can also be invited to participate in the program's cyclical review.

The Senate Committee on the Evaluation of Undergraduate Programs (SCEUP) or the Graduate Program Evaluation Committee (GPEC), as applicable, will recommend to the Provost and Vice-President, Academic Affairs, whether to approve the template following the comparative analysis. The academic unit and the Director, Program Evaluation jointly define the report formats and organize the site visits by external reviewers.

### **5.1.2.2. Joint and interinstitutional programs**

For joint and other interinstitutional programs, the cyclical review process includes a self-evaluation report that clearly explains how input was received from faculty, staff and students at each partner institution. Each partner institution must be involved in selecting the reviewers, and site visits must take place at all partner institutions, and preferably at all sites (with exceptions as noted in the Guide to the Quality Assurance Framework, see [Approval of New and Review of Existing Joint Programs Offered by Two or More Ontario Institutions — Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance \(oucqa.ca\)](#)).

#### **5.1.2.2.1. Joint programs with Carleton University**

At the beginning of a review cycle, joint institutes may choose to complete the process as a joint entity or as two separate entities. In consultation with both program directors of the Institute, the decision to complete an individual or joint review is at the discretion of the Director, Program Evaluation at the University of Ottawa, and the Vice-Provost & Associate Vice-President (Academic) at Carleton University. It is the responsibility of the Director and the Vice-Provost to conduct the necessary consultations at their home institutions prior to a final decision being made. For more information regarding individual reviews or joint reviews, please consult the *Procedures Regarding Ottawa-Carleton Joint Programs* document available on the [Quality assurance | About us \(uottawa.ca\)](#).



### **5.1.2.3. Collaborative specialization programs**

At the graduate level, collaborative specialization programs do not require a site visit or external review. A collaborative specialization program can be evaluated as a separate entity or together with one of the host programs. However, collaborative specialization programs must be reviewed at least every eight years. In consultation with the program director, the decision to complete an individual or integrated review is at the discretion of the Director, Program Evaluation.

### **5.1.3. Initiation of the cyclical review**

The Office of Program Evaluation identifies the programs to undergo cyclical reviews and submits a list of the programs to the Vice-Provost, Academic Affairs, who will contact the deans of the respective academic units to advise them of the primary steps involved in the process.

### **5.1.4. Role of the Director, Program Evaluation**

The Director, Program Evaluation oversees all activities related to the cyclical review of undergraduate and graduate programs. They chair the Senate Committee on the Evaluation of Undergraduate Programs (SCEUP) and the Graduate Program Evaluation Committee (GPEC).

## **5.2. Components of the cyclical review**

### **5.2.1. Self-evaluation**

The self-evaluation critically analyzes all aspects of a program, specifically related to the expected learning outcomes. It includes admission criteria, curriculum, modes of delivery, teaching and evaluation methods, the student experience as well as the human, financial and physical resources.

The self-evaluation report must identify the program's strengths and weaknesses. It is an in-depth, forward-looking probe based on hard data, some of which is supplied by Institutional Research and Planning (IRP), as well as specific quality indicators.

The description of the educational goals of the program under review must refer to the program's purpose (specific professions, graduate studies, in-depth training in a specific discipline, prerequisite training for a related program, etc.), while the expected learning outcomes must translate students' expected learning in terms of knowledge, skills, and abilities that the program aims to develop. The self-evaluation report must make reference to the Guidelines for Degree Level Expectations, approved by the Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents (OCAV).

In order to meet the criteria of the Quality Council, the self-evaluation process must involve all the program's teaching staff (professors and thesis supervisors), a representative number of students—including those sitting on the academic unit's assembly or standing committees—and administrative staff.

Relevant and useful comments received from other stakeholders (e.g., graduates of the program, employers, and representatives from industry, business, professions, or practical training programs) can also be included in the self-evaluation report.

#### **5.2.1.1. Information to be included in the self-evaluation report**

The self-evaluation report must address the evaluation criteria detailed in section 5.3 of this document and must include:

- a) Description of how the self-study was written, including how the views of faculty, staff, and students were obtained and considered;
- b) Where appropriate, any unique curriculum or program innovations, creative components, or significant high impact practices;
- c) Areas that the program's faculty, staff, and/or students have identified as requiring improvement, or as holding promise for enhancement and/or opportunities for curricular change;
- d) Description of how concerns and recommendations raised in previous reviews have since been addressed, especially those detailed in the Final Assessment Report, Implementation Plan and subsequent monitoring reports from the previous Cyclical Review of the program;
- e) For the first Cyclical Review of a new program, the steps taken to address any issues or items flagged in the monitoring report for follow-up, and/or items identified for follow-up by the Quality Council in its approval letter;
- f) An analysis of program goals and rationale, expected learning outcomes, degree level expectations, admission criteria, number of students and professor;
- g) An analysis of the program's structure and content (total number of units, course sequence by year as well as compulsory, optional and elective courses), admission requirements and career opportunities, including access to graduate studies;
- h) Program-related data and performance indicators, including length of the program, graduate rate, and provincial, national and professional standards (as applicable);
- i) An analysis of the program's modes of delivery (vis-à-vis expected learning outcomes) as well as of teaching and learning assessment tools;
- j) A statement on the ways in which the curriculum addresses the current state of the discipline or area of study;
- k) A comparison with similar programs offered elsewhere that highlights innovative aspects or particular features of the program, including distinctive strengths of the academic unit, teaching staff, students, partnerships, etc.;
- l) An analysis of data from student and alumni surveys as well as from student course evaluations;
- m) An analysis of the physical space and material resources needed to deliver the program and achieve expected learning outcomes;
- n) An analysis of services (library, CO-OP education, academic advisement, etc.);
- o) Identification of awards, honors and/or publications of students enrolled in the program;

Additional requirements for graduate program reports;

- p) An analysis of thesis supervision and mentoring programs or other initiatives to ensure a high quality of supervision; and
- q) An analysis of internal and external funding available to students.

The report comprises three parts:

1. The self-evaluation report, including the appendices recommended in the template;
2. The curriculum vitae of each of the program's faculty members, including a section with their teaching experience at the undergraduate and graduate levels and supervision of theses. CVs are shared only with external reviewers; and
3. The curriculum vitae of each of the proposed external reviewers. Whenever possible, this document should be submitted first to facilitate the coordination of the external reviewer's site visit.

When the review combines different program levels (for example, undergraduate and graduate), program modes, or programs offered at different locations, the quality of each academic program, and the learning environment of the students in each program must be explicitly addressed in the self-study.

Prior to being submitted, the final version of the self-evaluation report must be approved by the program committee (or its equivalent) and presented and discussed at the academic unit assembly.”

### **5.3. Evaluation criteria of the cyclical program review**

#### **5.3.1. Program goals and rationale**

- a) Conformity of the program goals and rationale with the University's mission and academic plans, including the availability of courses in French and in English, the national and international calibre of programs, and the availability of programs and services that meet the needs of Ontario's francophone population; and
- b) Conformity of the program and the strengths of the academic unit or units with the teaching and research goals.

#### **5.3.2. Program requirements**

- a) Appropriateness of the program's structure and the requirements to meet its goals and rationale, and program learning outcomes;
- b) Appropriateness of the program's structure, requirements and learning outcomes in meeting the institution's own undergraduate and/or graduate degree level expectations;
- c) Appropriateness and effectiveness of the mode(s) of delivery in facilitating students' successful completion of the program learning outcomes; and
- d) Ways in which the curriculum addresses the current state of the discipline or area of study.

### **5.3.3. Program requirements for graduate programs only**

- a) Clear rationale for program length that ensures that students can achieve the program learning outcomes and complete the requirements within the time required;
- b) Evidence that each graduate student in the program is required to take two-thirds of the course requirements from among graduate level courses; and
- c) For research-focused graduate programs, clear indication of the nature and suitability of the major research requirements for degree completion.

### **5.3.4. Assessment of teaching and learning**

- a) Appropriateness and effectiveness of the methods for assessing student achievement of the program learning outcomes and degree level expectations; and
- b) Appropriateness and effectiveness of the plans to monitor and assess:
  - i) The overall quality of the program;
  - ii) Whether the program continues to achieve in practice its objectives;
  - iii) Whether its students are achieving the program learning outcomes; and
  - iv) How the resulting information will be documented and subsequently used to inform continuous program improvement.

### **5.3.5. Admission requirements**

- a) Appropriateness of the admission requirements with respect to the program goals, rationale, and the program learning outcomes; and
- b) 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.

### **5.3.6. Resources**

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

- a) 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, as well as foster the appropriate academic environment (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;
- c) If applicable, discussion/explanation of the role and approximate percentage of adjunct and part-time 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;
- d) Integration of part-time professors;
- e) If required, provision of supervision of experiential learning opportunities;
- f) Adequacy of the administrative unit's utilization of existing human, physical and financial resources; and
- g) Appropriateness of the level of academic advising services available to all students.

### **5.3.7. Resources for graduate programs only**

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

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

### **5.3.8. Student Experience**

- a) 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; and
- b) For students: scholarly output, success rates in provincial and national scholarships, competitions, awards and commitment to professional and transferable skills, and times-to-completion, retention rates and other quality indicators.

### **5.3.9. Continuous program improvement**

Evidence of measures taken to improve the program since the last cyclical review and a clearly articulated program implementation plan, which demonstrates a culture of continuous program improvement.

## **5.4. Review of the self-evaluation report**

The Office of Program Evaluation reviews the self-evaluation reports submitted by the academic units to ensure they meet the Quality Council's requirements described above and that all necessary elements are present. Any suggested changes are submitted to those responsible for the self-evaluation by the Office of Program Evaluation. The updated version of the self-evaluation report is then submitted to the external reviewers.

## **5.5. External review**

### **5.5.1. Selection of external reviewers**

External reviewers are selected by the appropriate evaluation committee, namely SCEUP and/or GPEC from a list of at least six candidates compiled by the chair of the academic unit.

At least two external reviewers are responsible for conducting the external review of each program.

The external reviewers must have expertise in the discipline of the program being reviewed and meet the criteria indicated in section 2.1.2.1.1.

### **5.5.2. Role of external reviewers**

External reviewers receive and analyze the self-evaluation report and the curriculum vitae of faculty members.

In addition to commenting on the elements presented in section 5.3, reviewers are also asked to:

- a) Describe the program's strengths, including any innovative aspects as well as areas to be developed and opportunities for improvement;
- b) Make at least three recommendations for specific steps to be taken that will lead to the continuous improvement of the program, distinguishing between those the program can itself take and those that require external action;
- c) Identify those changes considered necessary versus those desired; and
- d) Maintain confidentiality in all aspects of the review process.

It is important to note that, while the external reviewers' report may include commentary on issues such as faculty complement and/or space requirements when related to the quality of the program under review, recommendations on these or any other elements that are within the purview of the university's internal budgetary decision-making processes must be tied directly to issues of program quality or sustainability.

### **5.5.3. External reviewers' site visit**

The Office of Program Evaluation, together with the Office of the Provost and Vice- President, Academic Affairs, organizes a site visit for the reviewers and provides the external reviewers with all required information (self-evaluation report, information on the objectives of the review, their role and responsibilities and instructions for writing the report). The University is committed to ensuring that reviewers understand the quality assurance process and program evaluation.

The external review of a doctoral program must incorporate an on-site visit. Certain master's programs (e.g., professional master's programs or fully online) may be conducted by desk review, virtual site visit, or an equivalent method if both the Provost (or equivalent) and external reviewers are satisfied that the off-site option is acceptable. An on-site visit is required for all other master's programs. External review of undergraduate programs will normally be conducted on-site, but the Provost (or delegate) may propose that the review be conducted by desk review, virtual site visit or an equivalent method if the external reviewers are satisfied that the off-site option is acceptable. The Provost (or delegate) will also provide a clear justification for the decision to use these alternatives.

The reviewers meet with faculty, students, staff, and members of the university's senior administration. If the time allotted for the site visit does not provide all parties an opportunity to share their feedback with the reviewers, a teleconference can be held after the site visit with prior approval of the reviewers.

In the case of programs offered jointly with other institutions, the external reviewers must also visit those institutions to meet with the program managers, professors, and students.

For University of Ottawa programs offered at other sites, the review will include a site visit, or a videoconference will be arranged so that external reviewers can communicate with professors, administrative and support staff, and students.

The material made available to external reviewers during their visit includes:

- A sample of syllabi for courses in the program (particularly mandatory courses);
- If possible, a sample of undergraduate assignments and exams or graduate-level student publications and theses; and
- Any other documents requested by the reviewers.

#### **5.5.4. External reviewers' report**

External reviewers must comment on each section of the self-evaluation report. When the review combines different program levels (for example, undergraduate, and graduate), program modes, or programs offered at different locations, the quality of each academic program, and the learning environment of the students in each program must be explicitly addressed in the self-study.

No later than one month following the site visit, the reviewers must submit a joint report to the Vice-Provost, Academic Affairs. The Director, Program Evaluation ensures that the report is in compliance with the IQAP and, if not in compliance, contacts the external reviewers to request clarifications, especially regarding recommendations. External reviewers' reports are confidential and shared only with the Dean (or equivalent), the program leadership and the program evaluation committee of the unit, and the Senate program evaluation committees.

#### **5.6. Internal responses**

Both the Chair of the academic unit (or delegate) as well as the Dean of the Faculty concerned will be asked to respond separately to the external reviewers' report in writing to the Director, Program Evaluation. The exception to this requirement of separate responses is in the case of single-department Faculty (or equivalent), where the Dean (or equivalent) is essentially the Divisional Head. (5.3.1)

The response should address whether a recommendation can be implemented or not and what resources are needed, and identify individuals responsible for implementing the recommendations and, where appropriate, preparing a submission for program modification.

The responses, decanal and academic unit, for each recommendation are included in the action plan (excluding all confidential information).

## **5.7. Final assessment report**

SCEUP and/or GPEC review the documentation, identify key components, and create a prioritized list of recommendations for inclusion in the Final Assessment Report. The Office of Program Evaluation then drafts the report, which is reviewed and approved by the relevant Senate program evaluation committee (SCEUP and/or GPEC).

The Final Assessment Report provides the institutional synthesis of the external evaluation of the program and strategies for continuous improvement, and must:

- a) Identify all significant strengths of the program;
- b) Identify opportunities for program development and improvement;
- c) List all recommendations of the external reviewers and the associated separate internal responses and assessments from the unit and from the Dean(s);
- d) Explain why any external reviewers' recommendations not selected for further action in the implementation plan have not been prioritized;
- e) Include any additional recommendations that the unit, the Dean(s) and/or the University may have identified as requiring action as a result of the program's review;
- f) If applicable, include a confidential section for any issues related to personnel; and
- g) Include an executive summary, which will be posted on the University of Ottawa website with the implementation plan.

## **5.8. Implementation plan**

The Final Assessment Report will also include an Implementation Plan that:

- a) Sets out and prioritizes those recommendations that are selected for implementation;
- b) Identifies the group or individual responsible for providing resources needed to address recommendations from the external reviewers or action items identified by the University;
- c) Identifies who will be responsible for acting on those recommendations; and
- d) Provides specific timelines for acting on and monitoring the implementation of those recommendations

The primary responsibility for developing the implementation plan is with the leadership of the academic unit and the leadership of the faculty of the relevant program(s).

## **5.9. Reporting requirements**

### **5.9.1. Internal reporting requirements**

- a) The Executive Summary and the associated Implementation Plan be posted on the University's website;
- b) The approved Final Assessment Report (excluding all confidential information, as appropriate), Executive Summary, and Implementation Plan will be provided to the unit to "own" and act on, as appropriate;



- c) The Final Assessment Report, Executive Summary, and associated Implementation Plan will be distributed to Senate and Board of Governors for information; and

It is expected that the report from the Review Team will be afforded an appropriate level of confidentiality.

### **5.9.2. External reporting requirements**

The University of Ottawa will submit the approved Final Assessment Report (excluding all confidential information), Executive Summary and associated Implementation Plan for each completed Cyclical Program Review to the Quality Council. Should the Council then determine that a substantive issue(s) appears to exist, it may decide to initiate a Focused Audit.

### **5.10. Follow-up mechanism for the implementation of progress report recommendations**

A progress report is prepared by the academic unit according to the timeline established in the implementation plan. This report should include specifics on the implementation of the recommendations that were proposed and to be signed by the Dean. The report is then submitted to SCEUP and/or GPEC for approval.

Depending on the nature of the recommendations (some can take several years to implement) or on the progress made in implementing recommendations, the SCEUP or GPEC can request additional follow-up reports until all changes have been made to the full satisfaction of the committee members. The Provost and Vice-President, Academic Affairs, forwards a copy of the follow-up reports to the Dean of the Faculty and to the chair of the academic unit concerned.

### **5.11. Role of the Dean**

The Dean of the Faculty whose program is being reviewed takes part in the review process at several stages.

- a) The Dean is notified of which programs are scheduled for review in the following year;
- b) The Dean ensures that someone is appointed to produce the self-evaluation report and that each step of the review process is completed within the set deadlines;
- c) The Dean meets with the external reviewers during the site visit and provides comments on the external reviewers' reports to the appropriate committee;
- d) The Dean receives a copy of the final assessment report from the Provost and Vice-President, Academic Affairs at the end of the process, approves the progress report on implementation of the recommendations, and ensures the progress report and follow-up reports are submitted within the set deadlines.

### **5.12. Selection for Cyclical Audit**

The Cyclical Review of undergraduate and/or graduate programs that were undertaken within the period since the conduct of the previous Audit are eligible for selection for the University's next Cyclical Audit.

## OVERVIEW OF THE CYCLICAL REVIEW OF EXISTING PROGRAMS

Initiation of the review process by the Vice-Provost, Academic Affairs



Introductory meeting (Academic unit, OPE, TLSS, IRP)



Academic unit prepares self-evaluation report



Senate Committee on the Evaluation of Undergraduate Programs or  
Graduate Program Evaluation Committee



External review



Internal responses



Evaluation summary – Senate Committee on the Evaluation of Undergraduate Programs or  
Graduate Program Evaluation Committee



Provost and Vice-President, Academic Affairs



Executive Committee of the Senate  
(Annual Report /Final Assessment Report)



Implementation and ongoing monitoring



Senate  
(Annual Report /Final Assessment Report)

Cyclical review within eight years  
(or sooner, if deemed necessary)



Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance

## **6. CYCLICAL AUDIT PROTOCOL**

The Cyclical Audit presents the University with a chance to assess its quality assurance policies and practices, which helps to ensure accountability to key stakeholders such as students, government, employers, and the public. This evaluation examines the extent to which the University's internally established quality assurance processes, procedures, and practices comply with internationally recognized standards outlined in the Quality Assurance Framework.

The University is subject to a Cyclical Audit of its quality assurance practices at least once every eight years, as per a schedule set by the Quality Council and made available on its website.

As outlined in the QAF, Section 6.1, the Cyclical Audit will:

- a) Review institutional changes made in policy, process, and practice in response to the recommendations from the previous audit;
- b) Confirm the University's practice is in compliance with its IQAP as ratified by the Quality Council and note any misalignment of its IQAP with the QAF; and
- c) Review institutional quality assurance practices that contribute to continuous improvement of programs, especially the processes for New Program Approvals and Cyclical Program Reviews.

### **6.1. Cyclical Audit process**

As outlined in the QAF, the Audit Team is responsible for reviewing the University's self-study, conducting a desk audit of documentation related to a sample of the University's completed new program and cyclical review processes, and performing a site visit. The resulting report, which does not include confidential information, will have two parts: a general report and an addendum with specific findings related to the audited programs. The report may include Suggestions, Recommendations, or Causes for Concerns.

#### **6.1.1. Pre-orientation and briefing details**

One year before the scheduled Cyclical Audit, the Vice-Provost Academic Affairs, the Vice-Provost Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, and the Director, Program Evaluation will attend a half-day briefing session with members of the Audit Team and the Secretariat. The Office of the Vice-Provost Academic Affairs will manage the coordination of any other pertinent stakeholders' participation.

#### **6.1.2. Institutional self-study**

This self-study is prepared by the Office of the Vice-Provost Academic Affairs in collaboration with quality assurance stakeholders, including the Deans' Offices, faculty, students, and staff, as well as the members of the relevant Senate committees. Once approved by the Provost and Vice-President, Academic Affairs, the self-study is submitted to the Quality Assurance Secretariat before the desk audit.

#### **6.1.3. Publication of main audit findings**

The Quality Assurance Secretariat publishes the approved report of the overall findings, absent

the addendum that details the findings related to the audited programs, together with a record of the recommendations on the Quality Council's website. The university will also publish the report (absent the previously specified addendum) on its website.

#### **6.1.4. Web publication of Follow-up Response Report**

The Quality Assurance Secretariat publishes the Follow-up Response Report and the auditors' report on the scope and adequacy of the University's response on the Quality Council website and sends a copy to the University for publication on its website.

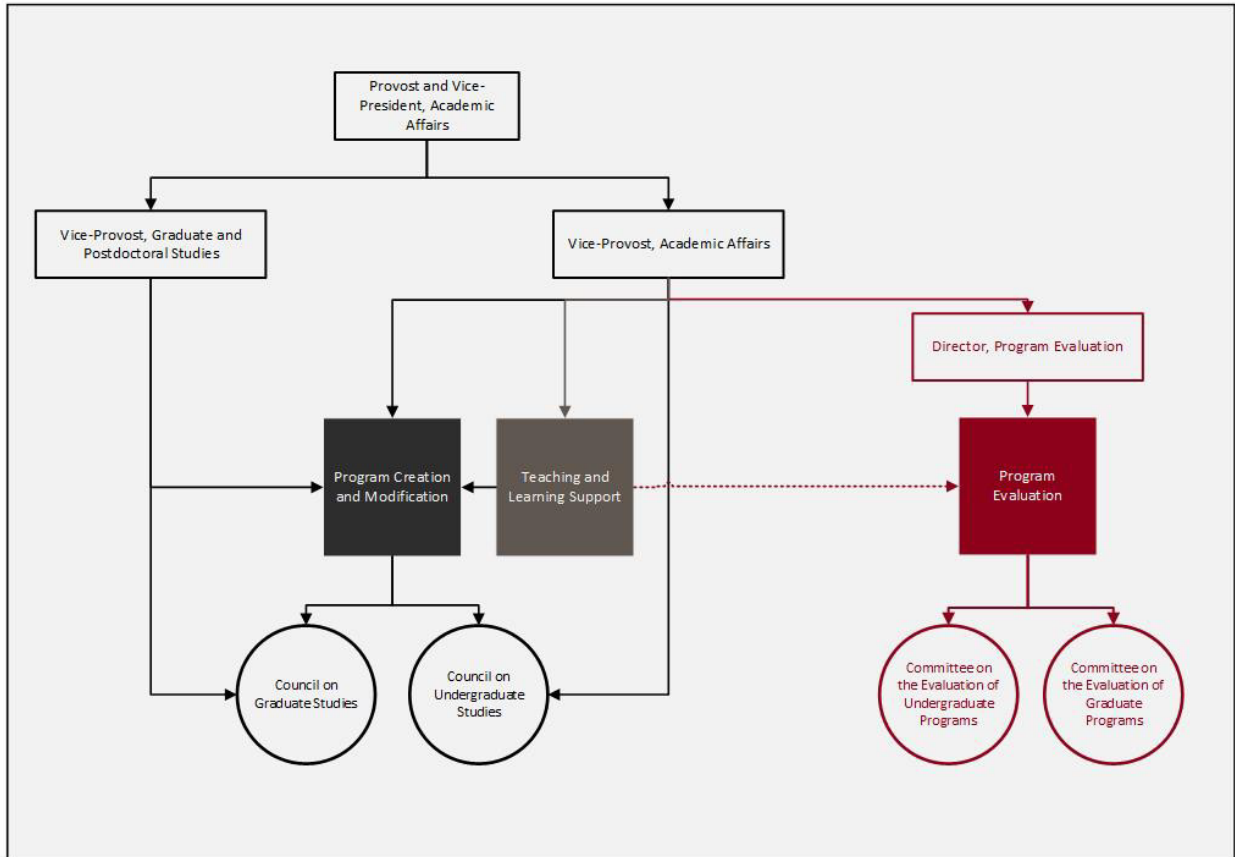
#### **6.1.5. Focused Audit and Focused Audit Report**

In case the Audit Report has identified one or more Causes for Concern or if the Quality Council expresses concerns about the quality assurance processes, a Focused Audit may be required. A Focused Audit may consist of an additional site visit and/or a desk audit. Upon completion of the Focused Audit, the auditors will prepare a report which may include Suggestions, Recommendations, and/or Causes for Concern. The University will participate in a focused audit, as required. The report will be published on both the Quality Council and university websites. A Focused Audit does not replace the Cyclical Audit.

# APPENDIX 1: QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESS

## Quality Assurance Process

Governance Structure



**APPENDIX 2: INTERDEPENDENCY OF PROGRAM GOALS AND RATIONALE AND PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES**

<b>Degree-level Expectations</b>	<b>Program Goals and Rationale</b>	<b>Program Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Course Learning Outcomes</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Established by the Ontario Council of Academic Vice Presidents</li> <li>- General, overarching expectations</li> <li>- Adapted by individual universities and units; OCAV DLES can also be supplemented with additional DLEs</li> <li>- Set out academic standards that identify the knowledge and skill outcome competencies and reflect progressive levels of intellectual and creative development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Describe the goals of the program</li> <li>- Inform Program Outcomes, and ultimately, course outcomes</li> <li>- Provide justification for program and course curricular decisions</li> <li>- Broader in scope than program outcomes</li> <li>- May reference the structure of the program, the kinds of learning opportunities offered, as well as goals beyond the program</li> <li>- May not be directly assessed or measurable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Articulate what successful students will have achieved as well as knowledge, skills, and abilities they should have acquired by the end of the program.</li> <li>- More specific than program goals and rationale</li> <li>- Achievement demonstrated by completion of a cluster of courses, or, infrequently, a single course</li> <li>- Must be measurable and therefore should include specific verbs, e.g., students will “identify,” “evaluate,” “distinguish” rather than “understand.”</li> <li>- Collectively address all DLEs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Specific to individual courses</li> <li>- Informed by program learning outcomes</li> <li>- Not within the purview of the external review</li> </ul>
Collectively, the program outcomes must satisfy all of the more general and overarching DLEs.			
	All program learning outcomes should be informed by the broader program goals and rationale.		
		Course learning outcomes should be informed by program outcomes (and, indirectly, by Program Goals and Rationale).	

### APPENDIX 3: UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS

	<b>Baccalaureate/Bachelor’s Degree</b>	<b>Baccalaureate/Bachelor’s Degree: Honours</b>
	<i>This degree is awarded to students who have demonstrated:</i>	<i>This degree is awarded to students who have demonstrated:</i>
<b>1. Depth and Breadth of Knowledge</b>	<p>a) a general knowledge and understanding of many key concepts, methodologies, theoretical approaches and assumptions in a discipline</p> <p>b) a broad understanding of some of the major fields in a discipline, including, where appropriate, from an interdisciplinary perspective, and how the fields may intersect with fields in related disciplines</p> <p>c) an ability to gather, review, evaluate and interpret information relevant to one or more of the major fields in a discipline</p> <p>d) some detailed knowledge in an area of the discipline</p> <p>e) critical thinking and analytical skills inside and outside the discipline</p> <p>f) the ability to apply learning from one or more areas outside the discipline</p>	<p>a) a developed knowledge and critical understanding of the key concepts, methodologies, current advances, theoretical approaches, and assumptions in a discipline overall, as well as in a specialized area of a discipline</p> <p>b) a developed understanding of many of the major fields in a discipline, including, where appropriate, from an interdisciplinary perspective, and how the fields may intersect with fields in related disciplines</p> <p>c) a developed ability to: i) gather, review, evaluate and interpret information; and ii) compare the merits of alternate hypotheses or creative options, relevant to one or more of the major fields in a discipline</p> <p>d) a developed, detailed knowledge of and experience in research in an area of the discipline</p> <p>e) developed critical thinking and analytical skills inside and outside the discipline</p> <p>f) the ability to apply learning from one or more areas outside the discipline</p>
<b>2. Knowledge of Methodologies</b>	... an understanding of methods of enquiry or creative activity, or both, in their primary area of study that enables the student to:	... an understanding of methods of enquiry or creative activity, or both, in their primary area of study that enables the student to:



	<b>Baccalaureate/Bachelor's Degree</b>  <i>This degree is awarded to students who have demonstrated:</i>	<b>Baccalaureate/Bachelor's Degree: Honours</b>  <i>This degree is awarded to students who have demonstrated:</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems using well established ideas and techniques; and</li> <li>• devise and sustain arguments or solve problems using these methods.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems using well established ideas and techniques;</li> <li>• devise and sustain arguments or solve problems using these methods; and</li> <li>• describe and comment upon particular aspects of current research or equivalent advanced scholarship.</li> </ul>
<b>3. Application of Knowledge</b>	<p>a) the ability to review, present, and interpret quantitative and qualitative information to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) develop lines of argument;</li> <li>ii) make sound judgments in accordance with the major theories, concepts and methods of the subject(s) of study; and</li> </ul> <p>b) the ability to use a basic range of established techniques to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) analyse information;</li> <li>ii) evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems related to their area(s) of study;</li> <li>iii) propose solutions; and</li> </ul>	<p>a) the ability to review, present, and critically evaluate qualitative and quantitative information to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) develop lines of argument;</li> <li>ii) make sound judgments in accordance with the major theories, concepts, and methods of the subject(s) of study;</li> <li>iii) apply underlying concepts, principles, and techniques of analysis, both within and outside the discipline;</li> <li>iv) where appropriate use this knowledge in the creative process; and</li> </ul> <p>b) the ability to use a range of established techniques to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) initiate and undertake critical evaluation of arguments, assumptions, abstract concepts, and information;</li> <li>ii) propose solutions;</li> <li>iii) frame appropriate questions for the purpose of solving a problem;</li> <li>iv) solve a problem or create a new work; and</li> </ul>

	c) the ability to make use of scholarly reviews and primary sources.	c) the ability to make critical use of scholarly reviews and primary sources.
<b>4. Awareness of Limits of Knowledge</b>	... an understanding of the limits to their own knowledge and how this might influence their analyses and interpretations.	... an understanding of the limits to their own knowledge and ability, and an appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity, and limits to knowledge and how this might influence analyses and interpretations.
<b>5. Autonomy and Professional Capacity</b>	<p>a) qualities and transferable skills necessary for further study, employment, community involvement, and other activities requiring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making;</li> <li>• working effectively with others;</li> </ul> <p>b) the ability to identify and address their own learning needs in changing circumstances and to select an appropriate program of further study; and</p> <p>behaviour consistent with academic integrity and social responsibility.</p>	<p>a) qualities and transferable skills necessary for further study, employment, community involvement, and other activities requiring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the exercise of initiative, personal responsibility and accountability in both personal and group contexts;</li> <li>• working effectively with others;</li> <li>• decision-making in complex contexts;</li> </ul> <p>b) the ability to manage their own learning in changing circumstances, both within and outside the discipline and to select an appropriate program of further study; and</p> <p>behaviour consistent with academic integrity and social responsibility.</p>

**APPENDIX 4: UNIVERSITY GRADUATE DEGREE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS**

	<b>Master’s degree</b> <i>This degree is awarded to students who have demonstrated the following:</i>	<b>Doctoral degree</b> <i>This degree extends the skills associated with the master’s degree and is awarded to students who have demonstrated the following:</i>
<b>1. Depth and breadth of knowledge</b>	A systematic understanding of knowledge, including, where appropriate, relevant, knowledge outside the field and/or discipline, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which are at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study, or area of professional practice.	A thorough understanding of a substantial body of knowledge that is at the forefront of their academic discipline or area of professional practice including, where appropriate, relevant knowledge outside the field and/or discipline.
<b>2. Level of application of knowledge</b>	Competence in the research process by applying an existing body of knowledge in the critical analysis of a new question or of a specific problem or issue in a new setting.	The capacity to:  a) undertake pure and/or applied research at an advanced level; and  b) contribute to the development of academic or professional skills, techniques, tools, practices, ideas, theories, approaches, and/or materials.
<b>3. Level of communications skills</b>	The ability to communicate ideas, issues, and conclusions clearly.	The ability to communicate complex and/or ambiguous ideas, issues, and conclusions clearly and effectively.
<b>4. Awareness of limits of knowledge</b>	Cognizance of the complexity of knowledge and of the potential contributions of other interpretations, methods, and disciplines.	An appreciation of the limitations of one’s own work and discipline, of the complexity of knowledge, and of the potential contributions of other interpretations, methods, and disciplines.