York University
Guide to the Cyclical Program Review
York University Quality Assurance Procedures (YUQAP)

Contents

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1. Introduction to the Cyclical Program Review Program Brief

Programs undergoing the Cyclical Review Process are responsible for submitting a Self-Study Package to the Office of the Vice Provost Academic. The package consists of multiple parts, described below. Note Self-Study Report templates for undergraduate programs and for graduate programs, as well as for certificates and diplomas are available on the YUQAP website:

https://www.yorku.ca/unit/yuqap/cyclical-program-review/#templatesandguidelines

The final submitted package will contain:

- Self-Study document
- Appendices
- Curricula Vitae of Faculty

The self-study should be broad-based, reflective and forward-looking and must include critical analysis. It should explicitly address the evaluation criteria specified in York's Institutional Quality Assurance Process (YUQAP). To ensure that all of the items that external reviewers are asked to review are addressed in the self-study, programs are required to use the established template.

Section 6 of this document includes a list of important York University documents that will be useful to the program and that are provided by the Office of the Vice-Provost Academic to the external reviewers along with the self-study.

The self-study and all components are forwarded by the Office of the Vice-Provost Academic to the Dean/Principal who in turn must provide a Statement for Reviewers to the YUQAP Office within the four weeks so that it can be given to the reviewers along with the Self-Study documents at least a month prior to the site visit.

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2. Cyclical Program Review Self-Study Template (Undergraduate and Graduate)

The Cyclical Program Review Self-Study Templates (both graduate and undergraduate versions) include questions to guide reflection on program quality, as well as quality indicator data that relates to the questions. The review culminates with the section on Quality Enhancement.

Data should be included as appendices in the order outlined in the CPR. Additional appendices may be included as appropriate.

The self-study must be submitted to the Office of the Vice-Provost Academic as a bookmarked PDF. Each main section of the self-study should be bookmarked, as well as the appendices.

SPECIAL NOTE: Concurrent Graduate and Undergraduate Reviews

Where multiple programs from the same department are undergoing review, and/or when graduate program review is aligned with undergraduate review, each program should respond to the Self Study questions. Programs may have their own self-study document, or may determine that "chapters" in the self-study document are sufficient, particularly where responses to some questions, such as those describing facilities, would have answers in common.

Likewise, it may be possible that one set of CVs is submitted to support all programs, provided that faculty with graduate appointments are clearly identified.

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3.   Cyclical Program Review Data Kit

Each Program will be provided with a data kit that includes the information listed below. Normally this kit will normally be available by February of each year. The information is compiled by the Office for Institutional Planning and Analysis (OIPA).

1.   Academic Program Report – enrolment and graduation data compiled by OIPA. Available online at any time: http://oipa.info.yorku.ca/data-hub/
2.   Student Profile Report (undergraduate only)
3.   Course Instructors and enrolments for last eight years
4.   NSSE results – (OIPA – results by program or by program grouping) (undergraduate only)
5.   Alumni data

For Graduate Programs the following data will be provided in the Data Kit:

1.   Faculty Research Funding
2.   Cohort Data showing Retention, Withdrawal and Time to Completion
3.   Financial Support for Graduate Students

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4. Student Survey

For undergraduate programs with 75 or more majors and graduate programs with 50 or more students: Before consultants are chosen and a self-study is conducted, a student survey will be administered normally by the Institute for Social Research (ISR). This survey is intended to provide the program with important information about students' responses to the program, their instruction and contact with instructors, and their perceptions of their intellectual growth, increased knowledge, critical skills, etc. ISR will provide units with a report summarizing the results of the surveys which includes student comments with identifying information removed.

The student survey consists of an extensive core questionnaire, to which programs can add additional questions. The development of program-specific questions should be completed by the program by the end of November of the calendar year preceding the program review date. ISR can provide guidance with respect to the development of program-specific questions. ISR will not accept requests to add program-specific questions after November 15 in order to ensure that questionnaires are completed by November 30.

The survey is normally distributed in mid-Februaryb of the calendar year in which the program is up for review. Students registered in the program as a major who have completed at least 18 credits by the end of the academic year preceding the program review date are invited by e-mail to participate in the survey, which is web-based. The survey is voluntary and confidential, and the data are held securely by ISR.

Results of the survey are provided to the program as PDF files in April of the calendar year in which the program is up for review and programs may request the (anonymized) data for further analysis or additional tabulations.

The self-study should include a copy of the questionnaire sent out to students as an appendix, with an indication of the number and level of the students surveyed and the number of respondents, together with an overview of the results of the survey. The student survey results, including comparative data and, where appropriate, students' written responses should also be included with the self-study as an appendix.

The student survey data, including major positive and negative indicators that can be drawn from the data, should be analyzed, with the outcome of this analysis included in the self-study, where appropriate. Some overview of the written comments of the students should also be provided in section 5 of the self-study template. The outcomes of student responses and various aspects of student feedback should be included for discussion in the self-study as appendices (specified in the templates), and addressed in the self-study.

Alternatives to the Student Survey

Student feedback is important. For undergraduate programs with fewer than 75 majors or graduate programs with fewer than 50 students, it is recommended that student feedback be solicited and a record of the proceedings of the meeting prepared to inform the self-study of the student experience of the program.

Below are some suggestions for alternate options for collecting student feedback. One of the first things to acknowledge is that the way data are collected will need to be transparent (which is easier in a smaller program).

- **Regular Student Meetings**
  A program may already have any regular meetings with students, discussion forums, 'town hall' meetings, etc., at special times where all students are invited to attend (or can be invited to attend). You could use these forums to address some questions of interest for the review. An advance agenda could be posted to encourage attendance. A brief outline of the main aspects of the review for which feedback is sought could form part of an announcement of the meeting. It is important to have a note taker at the meeting to capture the discussion.
- **Special meetings**
  Some programs have held lunches where they invited students and talked about the review using a set of questions. These meetings are similar to a focus group format. It is useful to put the students at ease at the start. Questions should be general and not leading. Avoid questions that require yes or no answers. Programs may wish to review the Institute for Social Research Moderators Guides and other resources in the Support section of the YUQAP website: https://www.yorku.ca/unit/yuqap/cpr-support/
- **Support for Student Meetings**
  Students may react differently and be more willing to participate if the request for feedback and relevant data collection activities is run by the program. They may respond more willingly to a request from the program and if the discussion is more of a social exchange. Paying students for a formal focus group is not advised.

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5.   Faculty CVs & Graduate Appointments

The self-study report must include up-to-date CVs for all faculty members appointed to the program under review. Normally, the most recent copy submitted to the Dean's Office will be acceptable.

Related undergraduate and graduate programs in a coordinated review will include in their self-study reports lists of faculty appointed to the respective program. However, only one CV is required from faculty members who are appointed to the undergraduate and graduate programs. (See the graduate self-study template for details on graduate appointments)

Although they are part of the self-study report, CVs must be submitted electronically as an independent document. Within this document, the CVs should be complied as a bookmarked PDF, in alphabetical order, with a table of contents. Where appropriate, a program should have separate sections for faculty members who hold full-time (including CLAs) positions at York, retirees, and adjunct appointments.

Note: If the review involves a graduate program, the document must also include as an appendix a copy of the program-specific appointment criteria.

Graduate Appointments and Reappointments

An important component of a graduate program's cyclical review is the review of their faculty appointments to the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS). Tied to this is the periodic review of the program's own criteria for appointment, and their collegial processes within which colleagues are considered for appointment and re-appointment, both of which impact a program's capacity to provide adequate graduate supervision, teaching and program governance. To that end, and in conjunction with a program's cyclical review, the Faculty of Graduate Studies routinely makes available via ARMS a list of faculty members appointed to their program, including membership categories and the roles for which they are eligible. Requests from the Faculty of Graduate Studies for the Graduate Program Director to update their appointments are routinely made early in every calendar year including the year preceding the program review dates.

In accordance with Section 4.1 of the Policy on Appointments to the Faculty of Graduate Studies:

> *All appointments to a graduate program shall be reviewed in conjunction with a program's cyclical appraisal. In accordance with cyclical appraisal guidelines and procedures, each member of the program has the onus of establishing that they meet/continue to meet the program-specific criteria for the relevant appointment category. Where an individual does not provide sufficient evidence of meeting the relevant criteria, the program shall approve or recommend for approval, changes to the appointment, as appropriate. Submission to the Faculty*

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of Graduate Studies Academic Planning and Policy Committee of a recommendation for reappointment is not required for Full Members and Associate Members who, upon review by the program, continue to satisfy the conditions of a previously approved continuing appointment.

By June 1st of the calendar year in which the program is up for review (i.e., the June following your fall CPR launch meeting) the Faculty of Graduate Studies will require a one-page report sent to fgsgovrn@yorku.ca from the program indicating:

- Reviewed appointment criteria (submitted as an appendix) including articulation of the process by which the review took place. In circumstances where appointment criteria are revised, these are to be submitted to FGS for approval;
- Articulation of the collegial governance process used within the program to review all continuing and new appointments to be included in the cyclical review;
- Confirmation that each of those members with continuing appointments (which are processed via ARMS) continue to meet the program-specific criteria for the relevant appointment category;
- Updates (including the review process and individualized rationale) with respect to changes in continuing appointments where an individual *does not* provide sufficient evidence of meeting the relevant criteria;
- Recommendation for Appointment Entries (which are processed via ARMS) and up-to-date CVs for new (i.e., effective July 1 before the year of the review) Full Member appointments.

6.   University Documents

Some sections of the self-study template refer to university planning documents. A list of relevant documents is included in the self-study template. These documents will be provided to external reviewers when appropriate.

Programs may also wish to include in their self-study any Faculty or Departmental Plans.

7.   Dean's/Principal's Statement for Reviewers

The self-study and all components are forwarded to the Dean/Principal by the Office of the Vice-Provost Academic who in turn provides the Statement for Reviewers in approximately four weeks so that it can be distributed with the to the reviewers at least one month prior to the site visit.

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8.   Cyclical Program Review and Accreditation

Section 7.3 of the York University Quality Assurance Procedures notes the following:

> *Reviews may also be aligned with professional accreditation. Note that the university reviews are not waived because an externally-commissioned review, such as an accreditation, has recently been conducted. In some cases, the University process may be streamlined by aligning the requirements of the internally and externally commissioned reviews and supplementing documentation as necessary.*

A mapping of accreditation (or other external review) documentation should be provided to guide external reviewers for the YUQAP process to the relevant information for the cyclical program review. Where YUQAP questions are not addressed in accreditation materials (for example, concerns and recommendations raised in previous reviews), the self-study template should be used to prepare the relevant information in the appropriate order.

Aligning site visits for the Cyclical Program Review with accreditation site visits may not work or may not be desirable. Discussion about potential dates should be undertaken with the Vice-Provost Academic early in the review cycle.

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9.   Site Visit Guidelines

Each program (or program cluster) will be reviewed by at least two external reviewers that are considered to be at arm's length from the program. One internal reviewer (also at arm's length) will also participate in the review process; this individual's role is to help guide the reviewers during the review process. Programs must submit recommendations for eight external reviewers and three internal reviewers to their Dean for ranking and then to the Vice-Provost Academic Office by June 1. The External Reviewer Nomination Guidelines and Form can be found on the Cyclical Review Templates and Guidelines section of the YUQAP website:

https://www.yorku.ca/unit/yuqap/cyclical-program-review/#templatesandguidelines

The program should also indicate their preference with respect to the timing of the site visit; i.e. fall or winter term, including recommended date(s). The Office of the Vice Provost Academic will try and accommodate the recommended dates, but site visits are booked based on reviewers' availability.

After the date of the site visit is confirmed by the Office of the Vice Provost Academic, the senior academic lead of the program(s) under review is responsible for arranging the site visit Itinerary. The site visit itinerary will be reviewed by the Vice-Provost Academic and who will subsequently send it on to the reviewers.

The reviewers should visit together and attend all relevant campuses. During their visit, provisions must be made for the reviewers to meet with:

- faculty,
- students,
- relevant administrative support staff
- the relevant Dean(s)/Principal,
- the appropriate subject librarian and the University Librarian
- the Vice Provost Academic, and
- the Associate VP Graduate/FGS Dean for reviews involving a graduate program.

The reviewers must not be split up during the site visit, and will need to have some time during the day when they can meet together privately. The reviewers may meet with students as a separate group. Programs should arrange a well-advertised general meeting of the reviewers alone with a broad cross-section of students. Programs can also arrange for a classroom visit, if the review is in-person (the professor in the class and the unit members should leave the reviewers alone with the students for about 20 minutes).

The Office of the Vice Provost Academic is responsible for contacting the external and internal reviewers with respect to all aspects of the site visit.

Sample site visit itineraries are available from the Office of the Vice-Provost Academic (yuqap@yorku.ca).

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