



ONTARIO UNIVERSITIES
COUNCIL on QUALITY ASSURANCE

**SUMMARY OF AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE
SCOPE OF TRENT UNIVERSITY'S RESPONSE
TO THE QUALITY ASSURANCE AUDIT**

SEPTEMBER 2018

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AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE SCOPE OF TRENT UNIVERSITY'S RESPONSE TO THE QUALITY ASSURANCE AUDIT

SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance (Quality Council) undertook an Audit of Quality Assurance at Trent University in 2016-2017. As with all such audits, the purpose was to assess the extent to which Trent University complies with its own Institutional Quality Assurance Processes (outlined in the Trent University IQAP) and to affirm that institutional practices are consistent with the Quality Assurance Framework that governs quality assurance activities at publically assisted Ontario Universities.

A team of three Quality Council auditors prepared a report based on a desk audit of documents submitted by Trent University and a three-day site visit to the institution. The Report on the Quality Assurance Audit of Trent University was approved by the Quality Council on August 25, 2017 and sent to the University on August 28, 2017.

The Quality Assurance Framework requires that each institution submit a one-year follow-up response to the Quality Council in which it describes the steps it has taken to address the recommendations in the Audit Report. This response is reviewed by the auditors who, in turn, prepare a report and a summary of that report for consideration by the Audit Committee and, ultimately, by the Quality Council. Upon approval of the Institutional One-Year Response, the Auditor's Report and its Summary, the Institutional One-Year Response and the Auditor's Summary Report on the response are published on the Quality Council website.

The 2017 Audit Report for Trent University contained nine recommendations and ten suggestions. Under the Quality Assurance Framework, universities must satisfy audit recommendations, as they identify institutional practices that are not compliant with the institution's IQAP. Suggestions are proposed by the auditors in the spirit of encouraging reflection on how practice might be improved. Compliance with suggestions is not mandatory and discussion of action related to suggestions is not a required component of the University's One-Year Response.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1 Ensure that its schedule of reviews does not provide more than 8 years between cyclical program reviews

Recommendation 2 Ensure that any reasons for deviation from the Schedule of Review are documented

Recommendation 3 Ensure that the cyclical review cycle is timed from the commencement of the review process

Recommendation 4 Ensure that all approvals and commentaries required under its IQAP for the development of new programs, cyclical program reviews and major modifications are complete and part of the formal record. Reasons for

deviations from the timelines established in the Trent IQAP should also be documented.

Recommendation 5 Develop protocols and procedures for dealing with external reviewers reports that are incomplete

Recommendation 6 Either adhere to the process of ranking external reviewers as described in the IQAP, or change the IQAP to reflect current practice

Recommendation 7 ensure that faculty, staff and students are engaged in preparing the CPR self-study and that this participation is documented in the self-study

Recommendation 8 Amend the advertising of the BHSC Kinesiology pathway to clarify that it does not lead to a Trent degree.

Recommendation 9 Verify and document the arm's length status of the proposed external reviewers

CONCLUSION

The auditors are generally impressed by Trent University's One-Year Response Report. The response is consistent with the auditors' positive assessment of the state of play with regard to quality assurance at Trent University, as described in the 2017 Audit Report. However, the auditors do seek clarification with regard to the University's response to Recommendations eight (8) and nine(9).



FOLLOW-UP RESPONSE TO REPORT ON QUALITY ASSURANCE AUDIT OF TRENT UNIVERSITY

July 10, 2018

Office of Provost & Vice President Academic

Trent University would like to thank the auditors for their time and helpful recommendations. We are pleased to provide our official one-year follow-up response addressing the recommendations and suggestions outlined by the auditors in their August 2017 Report. Trent's IQAP became effective September 2011, and since that time the University has made great strides to improve the quality of our degree programs through the implementation of the program quality assurance policy. The University initiated several best practices that have enhanced our processes for cyclical review and the development of new programs. We have educated our staff and faculty on the fundamental benefits of these processes and have now developed learning outcomes across the majority of the programs, albeit there is always room for improvement, however that is ultimately the purpose of quality assurance – to evaluate and continuously improve upon current and new offerings.

Many of the programs that were reviewed in this audit round took place early on in the process, and we are pleased to say that our processes have progressed and improved, enhancing programs and student learning.

BEST PRACTICES AND CHANGES WE HAVE IMPLEMENTED

Best Practices and Changes we have implemented since September 1, 2011 to improve processes

- Implementation of Templates
- Updated IQAP (effective September 1, 2015) to include processes and practices to provide more direction and clarity
- More detailed instructions for completing Self-Studies, New Program Proposals, and Appendices – available on the website (<https://www.trentu.ca/vpacademic/quality-assurance>)
- Greater support for developing Learning Outcomes through Centre for Teaching and Learning
- Workshop – for Cyclical Review --- specifically addressing writing the self-study (best practices), developing learning outcomes, and data analysis
- Library Statement of Support for all cyclical reviews and new programs.

ELEMENTS TO BE CONSIDERED FOR INCLUSION IN THE UPCOMING REVIEW OF IQAP IN FALL 2018

- Arm's Length Declaration form for external reviewers
- Identification of Major Modifications – arm's length declaration
- Process for Handling incomplete external reviewer reports

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 1 – ENSURE THAT ITS SCHEDULE OF REVIEWS DOES NOT PROVIDE MORE THAN 8 YEARS BETWEEN CYCLICAL PROGRAM REVIEWS

Response

The Cyclical Review Schedule has been revised to address the reviewers' concerns. Length of time between external reviews will no longer exceed the allowable eight years. Specifically, the review for the Master of Education program has been moved to an earlier date. New approved programs have been added to the roster. See [Appendix A – Revised Cyclical Review Schedule](#) for reference.

RECOMMENDATION 2 – ENSURE THAT ANY REASONS FOR DEVIATION FROM THE SCHEDULE OF REVIEW ARE FULLY DOCUMENTED

Response

Following Trent University's Audit, it is evident that any deviations from the Cyclical Review Schedule need to be clearly documented and accessible in a central location. Trent has been using Microsoft Excel to track all major steps of the cyclical review process to better manage the process, tracking each step with related date. We have now added an additional column to the tracking sheet to address any changing in the timing of a cyclical review that will require a rationale.

Early in the process, the International Development Studies' degree was delayed based on the rationale that the Office of the Provost had not provided the required notification of review. This was due to a technicality. The review was to take place in 2011-2012 and as Trent's IQAP did not come into effect until September 2011, we could not have provided the requisite notice of a year. Documentation from this specific example included a string of emails with no clear rationale or final approval.

As we enter the second round of Quality Assurance, the Deans have come to appreciate the cyclical review process and understand the importance of ensuring reviews progress as scheduled. We have also become better at utilizing the IQAP as leverage to deny a deferral of an external review.

RECOMMENDATION 3 – ENSURE THAT THE CYCLICAL REVIEW CYCLE IS TIMED FROM THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE REVIEW PROCESS

RESPONSE

As per the Quality Assurance Framework and Trent University's IQAP, all existing undergraduate and graduate degree programs will be reviewed every eight years. The 'Schedule of Cyclical Reviews' is the official schedule and the year in which the site visit takes place is considered to be the official academic year of review.

Academic units are informed well in advance that work on the self-study and appendices is expected to begin in the year prior to the site visit, however, we consider the review year identified on the Schedule to be the official 'commencement of the review process.' For example, a program reviewed in the fall of 2017-2018 would have its next review no later than the winter of 2025-2026.

In the first round of cyclical reviews a few programs were delayed by decision of the Office of the Provost to balance workload and group similar degrees together to facilitate the external review process. In the revised Schedule of Cyclical Reviews, we have attempted to balance workload and group degrees together where possible.

RECOMMENDATION 4 – ENSURE THAT ALL APPROVALS AND COMMENTARIES REQUIRED UNDER ITS IQAP FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW PROGRAMS, CYCLICAL PROGRAM REVIEWS AND MAJOR MODIFICATIONS ARE COMPLETE AND PART OF THE FORMAL RECORD. REASONS FOR DEVIATIONS FROM THE TIMELINES ESTABLISHED IN THE TRENT IQAP SHOULD ALSO BE DOCUMENTED.

Response

We agree with this recommendation and this is a work in progress. As mentioned in Recommendation 2, Trent uses Excel to track the cyclical review process. We have revised the existing tracking sheet to address the gaps identified during the compilation of documentation for the audit and in response to the Recommendations and Suggestions as outlined in the Audit Report. As shown in [Appendix B – Snapshot of Cyclical Review Tracking Sheet](#), we have clearly identified the important information and steps in the cyclical review process. It should be noted that we have a similar tracking sheet for the approval process of new programs.

- Deferral of external review. This concern is addressed in Recommendation 2.
- Minutes approving Self-Study will now clearly indicate that the document has been approved, ie. International Development Studies, Business Administration. The Office of the Provost has now clearly relayed, to Committee Secretaries, that Minutes should clearly reflect approval of the Self-Study with suggested revisions, and next steps. It should be clear whether the document needs to come back to the Committee for final approval or if revisions are minor whether the Office of the Provost can review documentation to ensure that revisions have been implemented. In the case of major revisions, the Self-Study would come back to the Committee for further review and approval.
- Graduate Data. Trent's IQAP indicated that 'information on graduates is to be included when available'. This is a gap we identified early in the quality assurance process; this information was not readily available, specifically, in the case of International Development Studies. In 2015, the Office of the Provost collaborated with the Alumni Office to assist academic units in gathering data on graduates. As it currently works, the Alumni Office works with the Department to circulate a survey to that program's alum. We continue to improve this process and since that time have created general surveys that programs may amend to better fit their needs.

As well, we have recently noted that the results of National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and Canadian University Survey Consortium (CUSC) were not readily available to academic units. This year, the Office of the Provost will follow-up directly to ensure that the Office of Institutional Planning and Analysis provides results from NSSE and CUSC.

- Delays in Process. Early in the process, we acknowledge that there were some long delays in participants responding to reports, ie. International Development Studies. This case may be an anomaly however we have noted across the board that this was an area that needed to be addressed. We have increased response efficiency in two key ways, including:
 - Informing new and existing Deans of their responsibilities. As well, the role and responsibilities are more explicitly detailed in Trent's IQAP effective September 2015.
 - Hiring an additional person in August 2016 to support quality assurance processes
- Approval Sign-Off. In Trent's initial IQAP, effective September 1, 2011, Deans were to 'provide feedback and facilitate improvements' of self-studies. No official sign-off was required however documentation from the Dean for this step was clearly missing. In Trent's IQAP 2014, it clearly states that the Dean must 'sign-off on an academic unit's Self-Study'. To document this step, we have included a box on the Self-Study template that requires the Dean to acknowledge review and approval of the Self-Study. We will not require the Dean's individual comments. See [Appendix C – Dean's Approval \(Sign-Off\) of Self Study](#).
- Major Modifications – fit with Integrated Plan. The process for major modifications has been updated from the Sept 2011 to the Sept 2015 IQAP. Major modifications no longer need to provide 'an explanation as to how the revised program would fit with Trent's Institutional Integrated Plan'; this was found to be not applicable for most major modifications. It should also be noted that the major modification in Gender and Women's Studies, in this case, did not require consultation beyond the unit as it had no affect on other programs.
- Major Modifications – Certification by Dean. In the case of Dean certification, this was a requirement under the September 2011 IQAP however, this specific requirement has been removed from IQAP 2015. There is an underlying expectation that Chairs discuss with their Deans any major modifications to programs. Currently there are two templates that could be used to submit major modifications.

These templates have been updated to include a statement indicating that there is an expectation that the Chair consult with their Dean when proposing any major curriculum or programming changes, prior to submission to USC.

All undergraduate Deans sit on the Undergraduate Studies Committee as Consultants and receive complete meeting packages.

- Major Modifications – Identification. The example of Kinesiology was given in citing that no official record of consultation between USC and PQAC took place to identify this as a Major. Agreed. This is a gap that continues to not be clearly documented, in part due to the limited number handled. Trent's IQAP will be reviewed in Fall 2018 and this issue has been earmarked for attention.

RECOMMENDATION 5 – DEVELOP PROTOCOLS AND PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH EXTERNAL REVIEWER REPORTS THAT ARE INCOMPLETE

Response

Currently Trent's IQAP is silent on a process for dealing with incomplete external reviewer reports. We have developed templates for external reviewer reports for both new degree program proposals and cyclical review and have found that reports are, for the most part, complete. This should address gaps that the reviewers found, specifically with respect to the review of the International Development Studies program.

We have noted gaps or brief responses particularly relating to learning outcomes. In order to address this, the initial meeting with the Provost & VP Academic now includes information that relates to degree level expectations and learning outcomes. This is particularly important to address with out of province reviewers who may not be as familiar with Ontario's degree level expectations and expectations for curriculum mapping and learning outcomes.

Trent's current IQAP is scheduled for review in Fall 2018. At this time, we will consider formalizing a process for handling incomplete external reviewer reports.

As per the review of the Master of Education programs, we acknowledge that the External Reviewers' Report did not provide a concise numbered list of recommendations however they did include a number of recommendations throughout. We considered the report to be complete as they did include a number of recommendations through out the document. The External Reviewer's template and instructions have been updated to indicate a concise, numbered list of recommendation is required as part of the final report.

RECOMMENDATION 6 – EITHER ADHERE TO THE PROCESS OF RANKING OF EXTERNAL REVIEWERS AS DESCRIBED IN THE IQAP, OR CHANGE THE IQAP TO REFLECT CURRENT PRACTICE

Response

In Trent's IQAP 2011, the Program Quality Assurance Committee (PQAC) was tasked with the responsibility of ranking external reviewers nominated by the academic unit. It became clear, early on that this process was not efficient nor responsive in the spring/summer months as the Committee only met biweekly and only during the academic year (September to April).

Trent's revised its practice prior to formal approval of this change to our IQAP 2015. The Office of the Provost became responsible for consulting with the appropriate Deans in the formal ranking of external reviewers. Trent's IQAP 2015 reflects this practice.

As per the Biomedical program, reviewers were ranked using the accepted practice (not yet approved in IQAP 2015). It should be noted that the Provost, two Deans, and the support person involved with the ranking of the Biomedical program were also members of PQAC at the time.

We have acknowledged the need to formalize the process of ranking external reviewers; an email from the Dean ranking reviewers is now required and will be included as official documentation.

RECOMMENDATION 7 – ENSURE THAT FACULTY, STAFF AND STUDENTS ARE ENGAGED IN PREPARING THE CPR SELF-STUDY AND THAT THIS PARTICIPATION IS DOCUMENTED IN THE SELF-STUDY

Response

- a) Faculty, staff and students are engaged in the cyclical review process however it may be that our template is not clearly asking academic units to comment on the level of participation. Text has been revised on the template to clarify the level of detail required by the academic unit. In Section 1.3 Self-Study Process (of the template), academic units will identify the role of faculty, staff and students, describing both the participation and engagement of each group.

Section 1.3 extracted from Trent University's Self-Study template

1.3 SELF-STUDY PROCESS

Provide a description of the process by which the self-study was prepared including the role and responsibility of faculty, staff and students. Details should include: the input and involvement of each group, clearly providing a description of the level of participation and engagement for each.

- b) Trent University holds a Workshop each fall for those individuals (staff, faculty, Deans, committee members from Cyclical Program Review) involved in the preparation and writing of the self-study. Writing the Self-Study and related appendices is a focus of this Workshop and in future workshops, the need to engage faculty, staff and students in the preparation of the self-study and the requirement to document the participation of each group will be emphasized.
- c) Increasing the participation and involvement of students into the entire cyclical review process has been a focus at Trent over the last few years. The Workshop emphasizes the role of the student, and explores different approaches to expanding the role of the student and two key elements that have been identified include:
- For those students participating in the review – providing a clear explanation as to the purpose of the review and potential outcomes
 - Providing students with appropriate follow-up – the results of the review. The challenge with this is that the students that are participating are typically upper year students who may have graduated by the time the Final Assessment Report is published.

We have found that students are much more engaged if they are provided with an overall understanding of quality assurance processes at the university, and understand their role and how their input may impact a program. Finally, sharing a list of recommendations from the external review with students that participated is helpful as they are able to see some of the results of the review, as many would have graduated prior to the Final Assessment Report being published.

Typical Roles of Students, Staff and Faculty

Members of University Community	Description of Role
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> participate in the site visit and sit on committees at both the departmental and university level; they are also asked to complete surveys – whether it be as a current student or an alum level of participation varies within academic unit
Chair and Faculty Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> typically, one or two key faculty members prepare a draft self study. the self-study is shared and discussed with all members of the academic unit at the department level recommended revisions are made as appropriate
Librarians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide library report/statement of support outlining available resources for new degree program being proposed or existing degree program under review
Staff: Departmental Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> typically assist with the collection of CVs, Course Syllabuses, responsible for working with Development Office on finalizing student surveys – alumni and current students
Staff: Office of Institutional Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> work with individual departments or Working Group to provide relevant data, i.e., enrolment, retention, graduation rates
Staff: Centre for Teaching and Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> available to assist with learning outcomes and curriculum mapping
Staff: External Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Office of the Provost has worked closely with the Development Office in setting up a process whereby the departments work closely with external relations/alumni office to develop and send out a survey to alum

RECOMMENDATION 8 – AMEND THE ADVERTISING OF THE BHSC KINESIOLOGY PATHWAY TO CLARIFY THAT IT DOES NOT LEAD TO A TRENT DEGREE

Response

Students are aware and well informed that the degree they will be receiving is a BHSc – Bachelor of Health Sciences (Honours) from UOIT. In reviewing the documentation provided to students, Trent University has made it very clear to students that the Kinesiology degree is a collaborative program with UOIT and that students will complete Years 1 and 2 at Trent’s Peterborough campus, and Years 3 and 4 and UOIT in Oshawa.

This information is available to students:

- on Trent’s website - www.trentu.ca/kinesiology/welcome
- on the OUAC site - www.ouac.on.ca/apply/secondary/en_CA/program/detail/program/rk
- in Trent University’s Viewbook

The Office of the Provost has confirmed with the Recruiting team that this information is clearly relayed to students interested in the Kinesiology program at university Open Houses and at the Ontario Universities Fair. Furthermore, students attend a summer orientation prior to the September start and at least one information session during their time, here at Trent, with UOIT representatives in attendance. Students understand that they must meet certain requirements in order to be accepted into their third year at UOIT.

RECOMMENDATION 9 – VERIFY AND DOCUMENT THE ARM’S LENGTH STATUS OF THE PROPOSED EXTERNAL REVIEWERS

Response

- Trent’s IQAP 2011 clearly indicated that arm’s length would be declared in writing. This was a gap that was identified in the compilation of audit documentation.
- Prior to Fall 2016, arm’s length designation had been confirmed verbally. Departments, Deans and the Provost indicated that they were at arm’s length from the external reviewers prior to sending out

invitations to the externals. Secondly, the Provost confirmed that the external reviewers were at arm's length during the initial meeting during the site visit.

- As of November 2016, Trent developed a 'Declaration of Arm's Length' form which all external reviewers are required to sign once they have accepted an invitation to review either an existing or new program.
- See [Appendix D – Arm's Length Declaration Form](#) for external review of existing degree programs. A similar form was developed for the review of new degree programs.
- In the 2018 fall review of Trent's IQAP, we will consider adding that a Declaration of Arm's Length form must be signed by all external reviewers.

SUGGESTIONS

SUGGESTION 1 – CONSIDER HOW CYCLICAL PROGRAM REVIEWS FOR PROGRAMS WITH PARTNER INSTITUTIONS BE DEALT WITH AT THE OUTSET

Response

Trent University has only a few formal partnerships with other institutions and based on previous cyclical reviews, it is evident that a formal process needs to be established prior to the onset of a program's cyclical review. Many of the delays experienced can be attributed to changes in key staff and personnel involved, and having said that we feel it is imperative that the process be clearly documented and agreed to by each university prior to initiating the actual review. In this regard, Trent University has chosen to establish a set of guidelines to be followed, as set out below.

Based on the compilation of documentation for the Canadian Studies PhD it became quite apparent that some guidelines were needed. Trent University looks upon this a great learning opportunity as to how we could improve processes and practices when reviewing joint programs.

GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCTING A CYCLICAL REVIEW OR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW DEGREE PROGRAM WITH A PARTNER UNIVERSITY

Trent University, due to its small number of formal partnerships with other universities, has chosen to develop a set of guidelines to facilitate the cyclical review process of joint programs with partner universities. In order to facilitate the process, it is important for all parties to understand the review process and associated timelines.

- a) The process to be followed will be established prior to the onset of the degree program's cyclical review and will include timeliness where appropriate. This will be negotiated by Trent University's Office of the Provost and the identified office/person of the partner university. It is also helpful for each institution to have a clear understanding of the formal approval stages and corresponding governance structure.
- b) The agreed upon process shall be governed by the IQAPs of each participating university and will meet all requirements as set out by the Quality Assurance Framework. In some cases, a merging of the two IQAPs may be necessary and, provided the conditions of the Framework are met, this will be acceptable. Some flexibility from Trent's IQAP and the partnering institution may be required and will be permitted provided processes meet the QAF.
- c) Typically, one university will take the lead working closely with participating universities.
- d) Consultation with participating universities will occur throughout the process, and will include formal

sign offs at major steps in the process, to be identified in a) or as per the IQAP.

- e) All official documentation produced will be clearly identified with the logo and/or name of each participating university.
- f) Invitations sent to potential reviewers will be sent under signature of all participating institutions
- g) Any delays in the processes will be fully documented and agreed upon by all participating universities.
- h) Any concerns or issues that arise will be discussed by the parties identified in and documented if appropriate.

SUGGESTION 2 – CONSIDER CREATING A JOINT MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT WITH PARTNER INSTITUTIONS FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICIES AND PRACTICES RELATED TO DEVELOPMENT OF JOINT PROGRAMS AND MAJOR MODIFICATIONS OF EXISTING JOINT PROGRAMS.

Response

The Guidelines provided in Suggestion 1 will apply to Trent initiating the development of a new joint degree with another university. In addition, we would emphasize, the importance of developing clear timelines and understanding which governing bodies require approval. Each university tends to have a slightly different structure so is beneficial to clearly outline the governance structure with a proposed timeline for completion and expected date of submission to Quality Council for approval.

SUGGESTION 3 – CONSIDER EXPANDING STUDENT INVOLVMENT IN ITS QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES

Response

Trent agrees with this suggestion and is constantly seeking ways to further engage our students. We touched upon this in Recommendation 7.

Trent University, like any other university, is very student oriented; we value our student's input and involvement in the academy. The cyclical review process takes place over a three to four-year period so it is impossible to engage the same students in the processes from beginning to end. What we have discovered is that we need to provide more information to the students that are involved. We need to explain the importance of the quality assurance processes, the purpose of a cyclical review, and subsequently, the benefits and possible outcomes from a review. This will allow our students to see the 'big' picture, even if they are unable to participate in all phases of the review.

Currently, our students do participate in committees at both the departmental and university level. Depending on the level of participation some students may be involved in decision-making with respect to curriculum (within individual academic departments), while others may be a member of a university committee (Senate, Academic Planning & Budget Committee, Undergraduate Studies Committee) where a curriculum decision is going forward for final decision and approval. At the Undergraduate Studies Committee and Graduate Studies Committee, students have the opportunity to review and provide input on new course content and curriculum. Students on our Cyclical Program Review Committee have the opportunity to review programs in depth as we review self-studies, external reviews, program and decanal responses in order to determine relevant recommendations and finalize the Implementation Plan. Students sit on the Academic Planning Committee, where we discuss new program proposals, courses to be offered, and resources available to offer the program. The student perspective is invaluable and our students are able to help us improve upon our proposed programs and curriculum content. Students sitting on these committees represent their peers and have a voice on the committee to speak to the quality, resources, faculty, and curriculum of the programs

under discussion. We value student opinion and are always looking for ways to incorporate more of the 'student' into our quality assurance processes. However, like any other institution – the level of engagement does vary from department to department and from discipline to discipline depending on the year and input is directly dependent on student interest and engagement.

We also feel strongly that departments need to be issuing an exit survey upon graduate to gather invaluable documentation to help improve upon the program. We have also encouraged programs to track graduating students however we recognize that limited resources may be available to do this. As well, alum survey from program graduate is extremely important to providing critical feedback to the department, do our graduate have the necessary skills – we want to make sure we have equipped them with the skills and knowledge to be successful in their chosen field. Most commonly our students, both current and alum are asked to complete surveys associated with the external review of a specific degree program. We partnered with the Development Office three years ago in order to facilitate the process of surveying or alum students.

Academic units distribute surveys to current students to gather data relevant for the review. We are encouraging our departments to consider holding focus groups to enhance student engagement and to provide a face to face connection with students to get their immediate feedback on the program they are currently enrolled in.

As with many smaller universities, staff are already maxed out, wearing numerous hats so this is very much a work in progress, however we continue to encourage departments to engage students as much as possible in the external review process.

SUGGESTION 4 – CONSIDER DEVELOPING A TRACKING SYSTEM FOR WRITTEN DOCUMENTATION RELATED TO ITS QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES, INCLUDING SIGNOFFS ON EACH STEP OF THE PROCESS

Response

As mentioned in Recommendation 4, we have revised our existing tracking system in Excel to better identify the priority steps in both the cyclical review and new program development processes. The original tracking sheet included too much information --- too many steps and too many dates. Having been through one audit, we have prioritized and streamlined the tracking document to remove unnecessary information and steps. We now have a better idea as to what documents are required on a go forward basis for audit purposes. For example, Step 8 of the Cyclical Review process now clearly indicates the Dean sign-off is required.

It should also be noted, as per the Biomedical documentation, we encourage working groups to provide a summary of changes in response to the External Reviewers' Report rather than revising the original program proposal. The exception would be if there are major changes. The Office of the Provost retains a complete copy of documentation submitted to the Academic Planning & Budget Committee, Faculty Board and Senate. With respect to submitting documentation for an official Quality Assurance Audit, we would typically submit the final proposal only. The exception to this would be if the working group revised the program proposal in response to the External Reviewers' Report.

See [Appendix B – Snapshot of Tracking Sheet for Cyclical Review](#) as mentioned above in Recommendation 4.

SUGGESTION 5 – CONSIDER CREATING A CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEES

Response

We prefer not to put a formal policy in place. The Committee Chairs are informed of general practices with respect to what constitutes conflict of interest. At the first meetings, Committee members are instructed as to

what constitutes conflict of interest and it is at the Chair's discretion how to handle individual cases that may arise during the year. Prior to discussing a member's program, the members may choose to recuse himself. The Chair may consult with the Provost & VP Academic as required.

In the past, we have found it useful to have a member provide further information when discussing that members' program however on the same note, we have also recused other members who did not feel comfortable participating in the discussion. Each case is unique and is handled as such. The end goal is to ensure a fair and due process when discussing the quality of the degree program.

SUGGESTION 6 – CONSIDER INVITING THE PROGRAM CHAIR OR PROPONENT FOR A NEW PROGRAM PROPOSAL OR SELF-STUDY TO BE PRESENT AT RELEVANT COMMITTEE MEETINGS WHERE THE NEW PROGRAM PROPOSAL OR CYCLICAL REVIEW IS TO BE DISCUSSED

Response

From the onset of IQAP 2011, the relevant Dean and or Chair of the Working Group has been invited to attend meetings where new programs are under discussion. It was only in Fall 2016 that we instituted the same practice for cyclical reviews. Deans are now invited to attend the Cyclical Program Review Committee when one of their programs is under the discussion.

Having a Dean or a knowledgeable member of the Working Group present has facilitated discussions and has, more often than not, alleviated the need for additional meetings to be held. This practice has been most beneficial for both new program and cyclical review processes.

SUGGESTION 7 – CONSIDER INCORPORATING ALUMNI DATA INTO CYCLICAL PROGRAM REVIEWS

Response

See Response in Recommendation 4 – Graduate Data.

SUGGESTION 8 – CONSIDER ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS FOR PROGRAMS UNDERGOING CPRS AND PREPARING FOR NEW PROGRAMS

Response

The Cyclical program reviews that were part of this Audit were reviewed prior to some of the supports we now have in place – see table below.

Program Audited

International Development Studies BA	– reviewed in 2012-2013
Canadian Studies PhD	– reviewed in 2013-2014
Mathematics BSc	– reviewed in 2013-2014
Business Administration	– reviewed in 2014-2015

Supports Initiated to Assist Academic Units

Templates. In Summer 2015, the Office of the Provost created fillable templates for both the Self-Study and New Program proposals to facilitate the process. We have continued to revise and improve the templates to assist academic units understanding as to what is being requested.

Centre for Teaching Learning (CTL). In July 2014, Trent officially opened its doors of a new Centre for Teaching and Learning. Staff were available to meet with academic units to assist with learning outcomes and curriculum mapping. Each year the Office of the Provost notifies CTL of degree programs coming up

for review. Academic units are invited to work directly with CTL on Learning Outcomes. CTL will reach out to departments if they are not contacted, and will offer to come to a departmental meeting and conduct a session on learning outcomes. At these sessions faculty will brainstorm program goals, and will get assistance with curriculum mapping, and writing learning outcomes that are both measureable and meaningful. CTL also offers workshop during the year to assist faculty with learning outcomes and curriculum mapping

Workshop for Cyclical Review. In Fall 2015, we held our first Workshop to assist departments undergoing a cyclical review. All those involved in the development of the self-study and the appendices were invited to attend, including: undergraduate chairs, graduate directors, faculty involved in the writing of the self-study, and administrative staff. We also invited staff from the Centre of Teaching & Learning (CTL) and the Office of Institutional Analysis (OIPA) to be a part of this meeting. CTL and OIPA staff are invited so they will have a greater understanding of the cyclical review process, understand how the learning outcomes and data will be incorporated into the overall review. Meeting participants are introduced to the basics of learning outcomes, curriculum mapping and data analysis.

Data Analysis. The Office of Institutional Analysis and Planning (OIPA) provides student data and academic units can work with OIPA to customize data received. Data literacy is an important element of the review and increasingly important with the changeover of departmental chair from year to year. Chairs are encouraged to meet with staff in the Office of Institutional Analysis and Planning or their respective Deans. In Fall 2016, data analysis was added as an agenda item to the Cyclical Review Workshop.

Student Surveys. In Fall 2015, the Office of the Provost partnered with the Office of External Relations (alumni) to assist academic units in distributing surveys to graduates from their programs. Since that time our office, has developed two templates, one for current students which academic units can customize and distribute and one for alum which they can customize and work with the Development Office to distribute.

SUGGESTION 9 – CONSIDER A WORKSHOP ON THE ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR THE CYCLICAL PROGRAM REVIEW COMMITTEE (CPRC) AND THE DEANS

Response

This is an excellent idea, and one we may explore further. The Office of the Provost hosts an annual Fall Workshop for all academic units with an upcoming program cyclical review. Members of the Cyclical Program Review Committee and Deans are invited to attend the session which includes a session on learning outcomes normally lead by a staff member from Trent's Centre for Teaching and Learning.

As well, we encourage our Deans to attend the annual Learning Outcomes and Experiential Learning Symposium.

SUGGESTION 10 – CONSIDER A POLICY FOR DEALING WITH OPTIONAL PROGRAM ELEMENTS INVOLVING EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION

Response

We are always looking for ways in which to improve the cyclical review processes, and this is a gap that was identified early on in the process of reviewing degree programs, specifically the external reviewers noted the Year Abroad Programs as part of the International Development Studies degree.

The Self-Study template has been revised to provide two separate sections whereby academic units can describe and comment on distinguishing features of the program which would include year abroad programs

and/or related experiential learning opportunities. In Section 9.1, the academic unit can also provide further information on relevant external partnerships or relationships.

4.3 PROGRAM QUALITY INDICATORS

This section reflects the academic quality of the program, and should comment on the following:

- Influences and developments since the last review (8 years)
- Initiatives or revisions which have improved program quality
- How curriculum in the program reflects the current state of the discipline.

Talk about: distinguishing features of the program, program innovation and unique curriculum offerings

(ie experiential learning, year abroad, streams, specializations, resources, student interest/demand, enrolment numbers)

9.1 EXTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

Provide information on external relationships the program has with external organizations or institutions.

- Include details on: accreditation; joint programs with colleges/universities (ie Nursing with George Brown); Year Abroad Programs; partnerships (ie background information, recent accreditation process, length and terms of agreement)

APPENDIX A - REVISED CYCLICAL REVIEW SCHEDULE

TRENT UNIVERSITY SCHEDULE OF CYCLICAL REVIEWS - BY ACADEMIC YEAR UNDERGRADUATE & GRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAMS

updated July 10, 2018; Second Cycle of Reviews since IQAP initiated

NOTE - Review Year is the year site visit takes place; academic units will begin preparing documentation in yr prior to site visit

Review Year/Year of Site Visit (yr of site visit)	Academic Unit Responsible for Review	Degrees Under Review	First intake of Students	Yr of Last Review	Yrs Between Reviews or since Initial Intake
2019-20 Year 1	BAS	Arts & Science BAS	2012-13	na	7
	CHEM	Chemistry BSc		2012-13	7
		Biochemistry & Molecular Biology BSc		2012-13	7
		Environmental Chemistry BSc		2012-13	7
	MLL	French Studies BA		2011-12	8
	HIST	History BA		2011-12	8
		History MA	2007-08	2011-12	8
	PHIL	Philosophy BA		2011-12	8
2020-21 Year 2	CAST	Canadian Studies & Indigenous Studies MA		2012-13	8
	CCTH	Communications & Critical Thinking BA	2015-16	na	5
	IDST	International Development Studies BA		2012-13	8
	MATH	Mathematics BSc		2013-14	7
		Mathematical Physics BSc	2008-09	2013-14	7
	PHYS	Physics BSc		2012-13	8
		Chemical Physics BSc		2012-13	8
2021-22 Year 3	CAST	Canadian Studies PhD (with Carleton)		2013-14	8
	CHYS	Child & Youth Studies BA	2016-17	na	5
	COIS	Computing Systems BA/BSc		2013-14	8
		Information Systems Jt Major BA/BSc		2013-14	8
		Computing Systems & Physics BSc		2013-14	8
	ENVIRON	Geography BA and Sc		2014-15	7
	SWRK	Social Work BSW	2014-15	na	7
2022-23 Year 4	ANTH	Anthropology BA		2014-15	8
		Archaeology BA/BSc	2011-12	2015-16	7
		Ancient Greek & Roman Studies BA		2016-17	6
		Anthropology MA		2015-16	7
	BIOL	Biology BSc		2015-16	7
		Biomedical Science BSc	2016-17	na	6
		Conservation Biology BSc	2018-19	na	4
	BUS	Business Administration BBA		2014-15	8
		Business Administration Jt Major BA/BSc		2014-15	8
	ENLS	Environmental Life Sciences MSc/PhD		2015-16	7
	SUST	Sustainability Studies	2010-11	2014-15	8
	TCP	Cultural Studies MA (prev TCP)		2014-15	8
		Cultural Studies PhD	2007-08	2016-17	6
2023-24 Year 5	EDUC	Education BEd		2017-18	6
		Education Indigenous BEd	2016-17	na	7
		Educational Studies MEd	2015-16	na	8
	ENVIRON	Ecological Restoration BSc (w Fleming)		2015-16	8
		Environmental Geoscience BSc	2017-18	na	6
		Environmental Studies/Science BA/BSc		2015-16	8
		Environmental Science/Studies BESS	2009-10	2015-16	8
		Sustainable Agriculture & Food Systems BA/BSc	2011-12	2015-16	8
		Water Sciences BSc	2015-16	na	8
	INDG	Indigenous Studies BA		2015-16	8
		Indigenous Environmental Studies/Science BA/BSc	2010-11	2015-16	8
		Indigenous Studies PhD		2015-16	8
	MTSC	Materials Science MSc/PhD (with UOIT)	2007-08	2015-16	8

Review Year/Year of Site Visit (yr of site visit)	Academic Unit Responsible for Review	Degrees Under Review	First intake of Students	Yr of Last Review	Yrs Between Reviews or since Initial Intake
2024-25 Year 6	CUST	Cultural Studies BA	2012-13	2016-17	8
		Media Studies BA		2017-18	7
	FRSC	Forensic Science BSc	2004-05	2016-17	8
		Forensic Science Jt Maj BA and BSc		2016-17	8
		Forensic Biology BSc	2018-19	na	6
		Forensic Chemistry BSc	2018-19	na	6
		Forensic Science MSc	2018-19	na	6
	GWST	Gender & Women's Studies BA		2016-17	8
2025-26 Year 7	ECON	Economics BA/BSc	2008-09	2017-18	8
		Mathematical Economics BSc		2017-18	8
	ENGL	English Literature BA	2007-08	2017-18	8
		English (Public Texts) MA		2017-18	8
	MICA	Instrumental Chemical Analysis Master	2018-19	na	7
		Instrumental Chemical Analysis GDip	2018-19	na	7
	MMgt	Master of Management	2018-19	na	7
2026-27 Year 8	AMOD	Applied Modelling & Quantitative Methods MA/MSc		2018-19	8
	BAS	Arts & Science BAS		2019-20	7
	BMA	Bioenvironmental Monitoring & Assessment Master/GDip	2018-19	na	8
	CAST	Canadian Studies BA		2018-19	8
	NURS	Nursing BScN (w Fleming)	2018-19	2018-19	8
		Mental Health & Addictions Nursing GDip		na	8

APPENDIX B – SNAPSHOT OF CYCLICAL REVIEW TRACKING SHEET

CYCLICAL REVIEW TRACKING SHEET - MASTER LIST													
ACADEMIC YEAR		2019-2020					2018-2019			2017-2018			
ACADEMIC UNIT (dpt, school, program)	BAS	CHEM	FREN	HIST	PHIL	AMOD	CAST	NURS	MEDIA STUDIES	ECON	ENGL		
DEGREE PROGRAMS UNDER REVIEW	BAS	• CHEM BSc • BioChem & Molecular Bio BSc • Envir Chem BSc	BA	BA & MA	BA	MA & MSc	BA	BScN	BA	BA/BSc BSc Mathematical Economics	BA MA Public Texts		
ADDITIONAL NOTE (ie why prog rev deferred)	orig scheduled 2018-19; deferred by Dean to determine future of program								orig scheduled 2016-17 with CUST; deferred by Dean - Chr did not realize Media Studies to be reviewed with CUST				
SITE VISIT DATE									March 5, 2018	Jan 29-30, 2018	March 1-2, 2018	Nov 7-8, 2017	
EXTERNAL REVIEWER 1									Dr. Nick Witheford	Dr. Livio Di Matteo	Dr. Paul Keen	Dr. Christine S	
University									Windsor	Lakehead	Carleton	University of O	
EXTERNAL REVIEWER 2									Dr. Kevin Dowler	Dr. Herb Emery	Dr. Ted Bishop	Dr. Donald Ke	
University									York	University of New Brunswick	University of Alberta	Lakehead	
EXTERNAL REVIEWER 3													
University													
INTERNAL REVIEWER (& Academic Unit)									Hugh Elton (AGRS)	Stephen Bocking (TSE)	Fiona Harris-Stoertz (HIST)	Ralph Shiell (P	
Expenses Processed - Academic Unit (date)													
Expenses Processed - External Reviewer (insert reviewer name once processed with date)													
Honorarium Processed - insert reviewer name once completed; do not pay until rept rec'd & approved													
STEPS													
1	NOTIFICATION OF REVIEW - DATE (no later than Sept in yr prior to site visit) Req'd Doc: email or memo	July 3, 2018	July 3, 2018	July 3, 2018	July 3, 2018	July 3, 2018	July 12, 2017	July 12, 2017	July 12, 2017				
2	WORKSHOP DATE Req'd Doc: workshop agenda (incl list of resources shared)						Oct 16, 2017	Oct 16, 2017	Oct 16, 2017	Nov 28, 2016	Nov 28, 2016	Nov 28, 2016	Nov 28, 2016
3	NOMINATION OF EXTERNAL REVIEWERS Req'd Doc: completed template form from dpt						May 1, 2018	May 2, 2018	April 30, 2018	March 7, 2017	May 29, 2017	June 15, 2017	Jan 10, 2017
4	SELECTION OF REVIEWERS - EVIDENCE OF RANKING Req'd Doc: email or memo						June 14, 2018	May 2, 2018	April 30, 2018				
5	INVITATIONS TO REVIEWERS Req'd Doc: invite letters to reviewers (only include dpt name)									Aug 17, 2017 - Witheford Aug 17, 2017 - Dowler	July 25, 2017 - Di Matteo Sept 11, 2017 - Emery	Sept 29, 2017 - Bishop Sept 5, 2017 - Keen	June 12, 2017 June 12, 2017

APPENDIX C – DEAN'S APPROVAL (SIGN-OFF) OF SELF STUDY

SELF-STUDY TEMPLATE
CYCLICAL REVIEW OF EXISTING DEGREE PROGRAMS
FOR UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE
(updated July 9, 2018)



- Self-study form should be signed by the Chair/Director, approved and signed by applicable Dean, and submitted electronically to the Office of Provost.
- Appendices should be submitted electronically as separate files.
- Boxes are expandable.

NAMES OF DEGREE PROGRAMS List all degree programs under review	
ACADEMIC UNITS INVOLVED	
DATE OF LAST CYCLICAL REVIEW	
CHAIR APPROVAL SIGNATURES If a degree program is managed by more than one academic unit all Chairs/Directors must sign-off, ie Environmental Chemistry. Add additional rows as required. Next Step: Chair submits documentation to Dean.	
CHAIR/DIRECTOR NAME	
SIGNATURE	
CHAIR/DIRECTOR NAME	
SIGNATURE	
DEAN REVIEW AND APPROVAL SIGNATURE By signature, the Dean acknowledges that they have reviewed the Self-Study and appendices and documentation is complete. They have provided feedback, facilitated improvement and documentation is ready for review by the Cyclical Program Review Committee prior to sharing with an external reviewer. Next Step: Dean submits documentation to Office of Provost.	
DEAN NAME	
DEAN SIGNATURE	

APPENDIX D – ARM’S LENGTH DECLARATION FORM

CYCLICAL PROGRAM REVIEWS
DECLARATION OF ARM’S LENGTH
(Nov 29, 2016)



The purpose of the form is to declare whether an external reviewer is at arm’s length with the academic unit that is under review. When conducting a cyclical external review of a degree program at Trent University, it is required that the reviewer be at arm’s length from members of the academic unit whose program(s) is being reviewed. This is done to avoid conflict of interest and the appearance of conflict of interest.

To be at arm’s length, reviewers must be able to answer no to all of the following questions:

1. Are you a close friend or relative of a member of the academic unit whose degree program(s) is under review?
 2. Have you been a supervisor within the past ten years of a member of the academic unit whose degree program(s) is under review?
 3. Have you been a regular or repeated external examiner of students in the academic unit whose degree program(s) is under review?
 4. Have you collaborated (i.e. significantly contributed to intellectual work with another) within the past ten years with a member of the academic unit whose degree program(s) is under review, or have plans to collaborate with a member in the immediate future?
 5. Have you been an instructor or a visiting scholar within the past ten years in the academic unit whose degree program(s) is under review?
 6. Have you been a student within the past ten years in the academic unit whose degree program(s) is under review?
 7. Have you received an undergraduate or a graduate degree from Trent?
-

By signing the following document, you are declaring that you are at arm’s length with the academic unit that is under review at Trent University.

Academic Unit: _____

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____