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Program Review Manual

September 2023
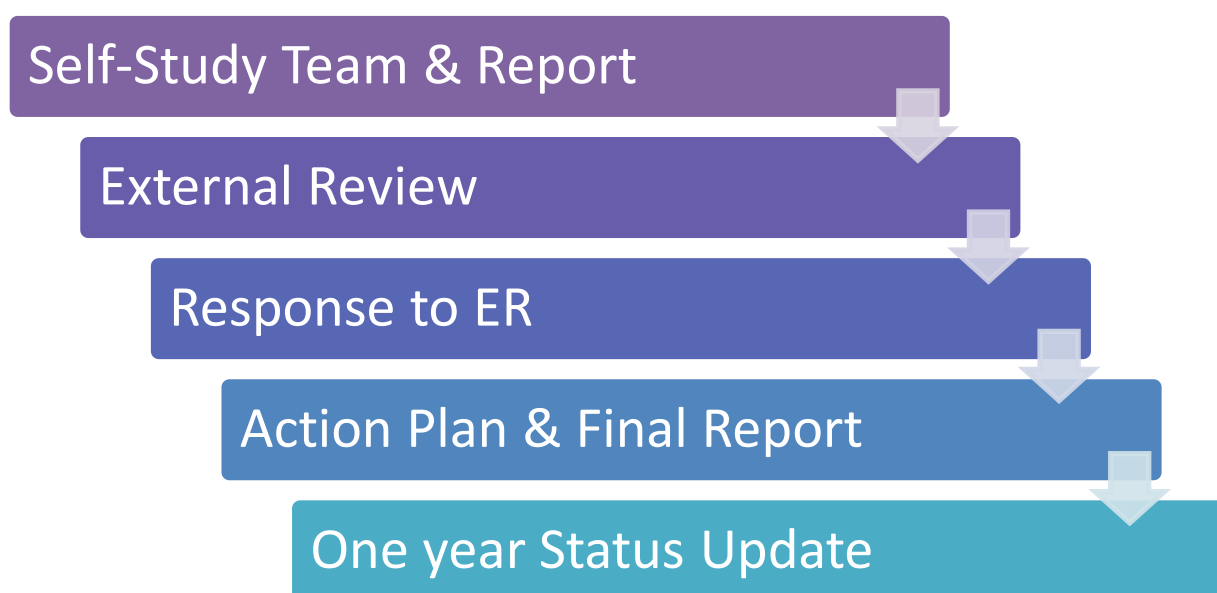
Table of Contents

Overview and Introduction

Program review is a systematic, constructive, research-based examination of a program's quality. This process contributes to a culture of self-reflection, evidence-based inquiry, and striving to improve learning for students. Program review fosters a sense of a program's uniqueness, cultivates a broad dialogue on issues of teaching and learning, and results in an action plan to ensure programs remain current with developments and advancements in their fields.

This Program Review Manual has been informed by the policies and procedures of the College and has been created to aid a coherent and comprehensive program review process.
The Dean, in consultation with Academic Head/Coordinator/Chair, will establish a three-year plan for which programs will be reviewed. This plan will be will have check-ins woven into the process for accountability and clarity of process. It is recommended that each program be reviewed with a frequency of 5-7 years.

The program review process follows five general stages. Program Review will begin with an initiation of a Self-Study Team (SST) who will collaborate, research and produce a Self-Study Report (SSR). This SSR, based on evidence relating to program performance, will create an overall perspective of the program reflecting the program learning outcomes. The program will then undergo an External Review (ER) Process. Following this, the SST will provide a written response to the ER, create an action plan, and provide a comprehensive Final Report. A year after the Final Report is submitted and posted, a One-year Status Update will be provided to Education Council to ensure progress and completion of the Action Plan. Figure 1.1 gives a visual representation of this process.

Figure 1.1

Self-Study Team & Report

External Review

Response to ER

Action Plan & Final Report

One year Status Update

Recommended Schedule

Sept. (weeks 1-4)	Oct. - mid-Jan. (weeks 5-20)	Mid-Jan – mid-March (weeks 21-30)	mid-March – end of April (weeks 30-36)	May-mid - May (weeks 36-38)	Mid-May – end of May (weeks 38-40)	By mid-June (weeks 40-42)
Program Review Planning	Collect & Review Self Study Data	Write & Submit Self Study Report	Arrange and have External Review, Report done	Review and respond to External Review Report	Action Plan creation	Submit Final Report

Time Frame and Process[1]		
1	**Program Review Planning Initiated** - Self Study Team (SST) created by Dean/Associate Dean or Director (AD&D) - Initial Meetings and planning with Self Study Team, SST Lead identified	Weeks 1-4
2	**Collect And Review Data for Self-Study Report** - To inform the Self-Study Report, the SST collects readily available information, reports, and other data from Cluster meeting minutes, course outlines, learner data, faculty research or reports, the IR Office, and data and information gathered through survey instruments (using standard survey templates as a basis) and/or focus groups. Stakeholders involved in program review include students, alumni, industry, community, instructors and staff.	Weeks 5-20
3	**Prepare Self-Study Report** - The SST review the data collected, and use it to create the Self-Study Report.	Weeks 21-28
4	**Submit Self-Study Report to Centre of Learning Transformation**	Week 28-30
5	**Arrange External Review Panel and Create Plan for Site Visit** - An External Review Panel (ERP) is nominated by the SST, and appointed by VP, ASI. This is a panel of three experts who will conduct an external review of the program. - One panelist is a College instructor from a different Cluster than the program under review. - One panelist must be an academic peer from another post-secondary institution with relevant expertise and experience. - The third panelist should either be an academic peer external to the College, or be an expert in the field from outside the post-secondary system. - One of the 3 panelists - not employed by the College - will chair the ERP.	Weeks 30-32
6	**External Review Panel Site Visit and Report** - The point of the external review is to validate the self-study report and provide additional input regarding program strengths and opportunities to improve. - The external review will include a site visit, typically one (1) to one and a half (1½) days in duration, during which panel members will gather relevant information about the program by meeting with faculty, current and/or past students, and administrators. - The chair of the ERP will write the final External Review report with recommendations agreed to, and signed off by, all ERP members.	Weeks 32-36
7	**SST and Cluster meet to Review, Discuss, and Respond to ERP – SST prepares a Written Response to the ERP**	Weeks 36-38
10	**SST, in consultation with Program Cluster, Create Action Plan** - VP ASI to approve action plan	Weeks 38-40
11	**SST Prepare and Submit Final Report** - A final comprehensive report, including appendices with copies of all data collected and all components of program review must be submitted to the VP, ASI to be presented to Education Council by the appropriate Dean and/or VP, ASI and a summary will be posted publicly.	Weeks 40-42
12	**One Year Status Update** - One year after completion of a review, and in subsequent years if necessary, the SST, Dean and program cluster will provide a progress report on the action plan to Education Council and the VP, ASI.	1 year after submission

Self-Study Team (SST)

The Dean or Associate Dean or Director (AD&D) will identify the SST, which will consist of the Dean (or AD&D), the Academic Head/Coordinator/Chair and one or more program instructors. The SST work will be led by the program champion (typically the Academic Head/Coordinator/Chair, but may be a different program instructor as decided by the SST) who, preferably, has some historical knowledge of the program.

The Centre of Learning Transformation will coordinate and lead the first meeting of the SST. COLT will outline the purpose and process for program review, resources available, and expectations for reports and timing. This first meeting will establish a schedule for the program review, and identify key questions to explore through the process of review. Additional meetings are scheduled by the SST.

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[1] p. 20-23 BCIT Program Review Manual and College Education Policy

Self-Study Report (SSR)

In many ways the SSR is the backbone of program review. The SSR utilizes data related to the many multi-faceted aspects of a program to give important evidence-based feedback and recommendations. Data will be gathered from faculty, staff, administrators, current and past students, graduates, advisory committees, First Nations Council, industry representatives, and employers for analysis. This data and analysis, in combination with a comprehensive program overview will discuss program strengths, opportunities for growth, and potential for change in program direction in the future. It is important that connected perspectives and relationships within and outside of the institution and program are consulted to inform a reflective review that has a practical traction for the program's refinement.

Privacy and Confidentiality

It is important that data collection, discussion, and analysis be conducted in a professional and confidential manner. Reports will not contain any information which could be used to identify students, faculty or other participants or individuals. Also, in keeping with the spirit of an in-depth formative assessment of a program, program review will not address the performance evaluation of individual personnel. This will be appropriately carried out in accordance with collective agreements.

Structure and Layout of the Review

This report will include the following sections: (BCIT and CMTN's Education Policy)

1. **Program Overview**

This section will give the big picture of the program including how the program has functioned in the past and its current context. Although this section is meant to provide a general overview it is important to include some specifics:

   a. Program Name/Credential type
   b. Administrative Structure
   c. Program Goals
   d. Program Description
   e. History of the Program's Development

2. **Educational Design Quality**

This section will examine how the program is constructed educationally. It will look at curriculum alongside teaching and delivery and evaluate the cohesiveness and integrity of the program. The College's goals of being the college of choice for experiential and place-based education will form a foundational criteria for examining program design quality. This section must include:

   a. comprehensive curriculum review
   b. review of teaching, learning, and assessment methods
   c. program delivery – class size/time structure/learning environment
   d. faculty qualifications

3. Educational Experience Quality

This section examines the quality of the learning experience. Learner's perspectives, overall satisfaction, and integration of their learning after their time in the program are looked at through:

a. Program Attrition and Graduation Rates
b. Relevance of Education to Further Studies
c. Relevance of Education to Employment
d. Satisfaction with Skills Development
e. Satisfaction with Learning Experience including Quality of Instruction

4. Services, Resources, and Facilities Quality

This section examines the resources and materials needed and utilized the program. Learning facilities and spaces will be considered alongside technologies, including library materials, computers, and other tools. These will be considered from both the learner's and staff and faculty's perspectives

5. Program Pathways and Connections

This section examines how the program relates within its widening context. This examination considers the following connections:

a. Articulation
b. Accreditation
c. Alignment with Strategic Plan
d. Communications
e. Community Engagement
f. Industry/Professional Associations
g. Credential Recognition and Nomenclature – Compliance with the Ministry, Regulatory, and College Policies and Procedures

6. Comparison to Previous Reviews

This section considers previous formative and summative reviews related to the program. Comparing and contrasting the current review with previous ones will help lead to understanding the larger trajectory of the program and provide a frame for recommendations. Information from self evaluations, previous program reviews, accreditation as relevant, and curriculum reviews will help inform this process.

7. Benchmarking with Comparable Programs

This section considers comparable programs in relevant regions (i.e. province, nation, and North America). Benchmarking will be done with appropriate course clusters and components in an effort to compare the programs length, specialization, rigour, uniqueness, certifications, admissions standards of the program.

8. Conclusions, Recommendations, and Future directions

This section is briefly summative of the studies findings, provides clear and practical recommendations

and action items, and will discuss future challenges, possibilities, and trajectories of the program.

These sections are further explained and defined in the SSR Template which is meant to guide the report process. The program review procedure is intended to assist and support the quality assessment of programs by providing information on a comprehensive range of factors. Because standards and expectations vary among programs, departments, and disciplines, it is important that the SST work and consult with the appropriate Dean to identify additional questions for consideration and areas that are not applicable.

Please use the SSR Template as a guide.

Data Collection

Data collected for Program Review and used in the SSR will be gathered from two main types of data from within the program and institution, and outside it.

1. Already existing reports, Cluster meeting minutes, course outlines, learner data, faculty research and reports, information collected through the IR office.
2. Primary research (both qualitative and quantitative) will come from surveys and focus groups.

Data Usefulness

With the broad spectrum of possibilities available in data collection it is important to gather specific and useful information. Care taken to ensure the method choice and coherent analysis aligns with the study's clearly outlined goals will have direct implications on the quality of the SST. Questions will be framed and crafted to get good and relevant data. All primary research will be done with appropriate ethical and confidentiality considerations as well as being done in alignment with the collective agreements.

Programs with Outside Accreditation (from CMTN policy)

Programs undergoing review by an external accrediting body are encouraged to coordinate, in terms of timing and reporting, with College program review requirements. This should help minimize any duplication of effort, while ensuring the main areas of the program review are addressed. Completed forms and templates required by the external accrediting body will be used whenever possible. Areas requiring review by the College's program review procedures, but not included in the accrediting body requirements must still be completed to supplement the accreditation review. If the accreditation review requires a site visit, this will usually be considered adequate for the College's program review, and no further site visit will be required.

External Review

The point of the external review is to validate the SSR and provide additional input regarding program strengths and opportunities to improve. The external review will include a site visit or virtual site visit, typically one (1) to one and a half (1½) days in duration, during which panel members will gather relevant information about the program by meeting with faculty, current and/or past students, and administrators.

How the External Review Panel is Chosen

An External Review Panel (ERP) is nominated by the SST, and appointed by VP, ASI. This is a panel of three experts who will conduct an external review of the program. One panelist is a College instructor from a different Cluster than the program under review. One panelist must be an academic peer from another post-secondary institution with relevant expertise and experience. The third panelist should either be an academic peer external to the College, or be an expert in the field from outside the post-secondary system. One of the three panelists - not directly employed by the College - will chair the ERP.

Responsibilities of the External Review Panel

As the ERP considers the SSR it is important that the ERP speaks specifically to:
- Completeness of the SSR. Are all the sections completed adequately?
- Coherence with the SSR. Do the data, findings and recommendations align?
- Coherence with the SSR and what is experienced during the on-sight visit?
- Any additional observations or recommendations for the program to consider.

Site Visit

It is important that the ERP review the SSR before arrangements are made for an on-site or virtual visit. COLT will contact the panellists to confirm availability and willingness for the visit, provide appropriate documents at least two weeks before the visit, and supply a schedule and appropriate travel information for the visit.

The ERP should be reimbursed for expenses related to the visit including travel, lodging, meals, transportation, and materials for ERP related tasks. Financial compensation for ERP is not allowed by the College's policy. COLT will ensure the ERP has appropriate space and resource to complete their work.

The chair of the ERP will write the final External Review report with recommendations agreed to, and signed off by, all ERP members. This report should be completed within approximately two weeks of the site visit.

It is important that the ERP maintain confidentiality with their findings through the process. Until the findings are published and submitted questions should be directed to the Dean or COLT. COLT is responsible for overseeing all aspects of the External Review.

Written Response

Once the ERP submits their report, it is important that the SST respond to the ERP and confirm that they have received their report.

Action Plan and Final Reporting

The Action Plan is an iterative process which will be created by the SST following the review and response in consultation with the program cluster and COLT. The Action Plan will be reviewed and approved by the VP, ASI using a feedback/resubmission process.

Once an Action Plan Report has been completed, the SSR, the ERP report, written response, and action plan will be compiled and will then be approved by COLT and the VP ASI. Once approved, the SST will present it

as an informational item to EdCo and a Final Report that summarizes the compilation will be posted publically.

One Year Status Update

One year after the Program Review, and in following years if necessary, the SST, Dean, and program cluster will provide a progress report on the Action Plan to EdCo and the VP ASI.