

Guidelines for Development, Review & Approval

External Review Panel

Validation by the External Review Panel is one of the final stages in the continuum of BCIT's internal quality assurance process. This is a review of BCIT degrees on behalf of the external communities, both education and industry, by institutions who teach at a similar level and by industry who employ at that level.

Validation by the External Review Panel involves a critical review of the degree proposal by individual members and a subsequent on-site panel discussion.

Terms of Reference

The purpose of the External Review Panel is to exercise, under the aegis of BCIT's Education Council and Board of Governors, responsibilities for the critical examination and evaluation of proposals as part of the validation and assurance of the quality of programs leading to BCIT degrees.

In exercising these responsibilities the validation panel shall be satisfied of the following:

1. The program is educationally sound and at the level appropriate to the credential being sought.
2. The program meets the current and emerging needs of industry.
3. The program goals are realistic and achievable.

Composition of the Panel

The External Review Panel should be comprised of a minimum of eight members, as listed below:

- Two (minimum) external educators from accredited degree-granting institutions
- Four (minimum) industry representatives
- Two internal educators

Membership of the Panel shall be determined by the Director of Program Development and Review in consultation with the program, the Dean, and the Internal Review Panel. Panel members are exclusive of the Advisory Committee, the School Working Group, and the School Quality Committee.

The External Review Panel will be chaired by one of the external committee members. The Chair will be identified by the Director of Program Development and Review prior to the visit.

Organization of the Panel

The Director of Program Development and Review will assume the responsibility to manage and administer the operation of the External Review Panel. The Director of Program Development and Review will forward all written documentation to the External Review Panel and will organize the on-site visit.

Responsibilities

1. The External Review Panel shall review the degree proposal with reference to the requirements and format specified by the Ministry.
2. The External Review Panel shall meet with the following:
 - Dean, Associate Dean, program champion
 - Full- and part-time staff involved in program
 - Members of the Internal Review Panel and the School Quality Committee
 - Potential students (if applicable)

Guidelines

The following information is intended as a guideline to the External Review Panel and is not intended to be prescriptive. In fulfillment of their responsibilities, the External Review Panel should be satisfied that the proposal meets the following criteria:

- The program aims and goals reflect the current and emerging needs of an industry needs assessment.
- The knowledge and skills to be acquired for industry are relevant.
- The program is a coherent, integrated learning experience that builds on pre-requisite knowledge.
- Individual courses support the achievement of the program aims and goals.
- The teaching and learning methods support the program aims and goals.
- The range of assessment methods used correlate with program aims, goals, and course learning outcomes.
- The teaching and learning strategies foster “employability skills.”
- There is a balance of theory and practice.
- The proposed methods of delivery of the program are appropriate.
- The admission criteria to the program are appropriate.
- Student and industrial demand for the program is sufficient.
- Support structures are in place to facilitate student learning.
- Resources needed by the program will be available (e.g., library, computer, and lab equipment).
- Faculty expertise and currency are appropriate.

Meetings with Program Staff, Dean, and Associate Dean

These meetings should allow the Panel to:

- Ensure
 - Program leadership
 - Ownership of and commitment to the program by staff
 - Vision for program
- Ensure program has been critically examined by program staff and the School.

- Clarify program aims and goals.
- Explore rationale behind the aims and goals.
- Determine program strengths.
- Explore what makes the program special, unique.
- Evaluate monitoring and feedback methods.
- Examine the thoroughness and completeness of the process of program design and organization.
- Ensure the clarity and consistency of language used in program documentation.

Role of the Chair

The following is a list of suggested duties:

- Facilitate the validation process.
- Direct a positive and constructive approach.
- Manage the committee time.
- Provide the summation of Panel findings and the final recommendations and suggestions to the program at the conclusion of the visit.
- Direct the completion of the External Review Panel report and submit the report to the President of BCIT.

The Director of Program Development and Review will arrange administrative support to the Chair.

Report to the President

The External Review Panel will report to the President of BCIT on the outcome of the validation exercise and make written recommendations which normally fall into one of the following categories:

- Approval
- Approval with minor changes
- Conditional approval with major changes
- Non approval

Implementation of changes required by the External Review Panel prior to approval will be monitored by Education Council.