

How to Develop Your New Program

Form a School Working Group

All programs at BCIT are developed using a collaborative method. This includes consultation with those delivering and supporting the program. The School is responsible for the program and conducts program and proposal development through a School Working Group.

What Is the School Working Group Responsible For?

The School Working Group (SWG) is the central team that will be getting the proposal through all the steps to approval.

General Overview of Tasks	Documentation Required
1. Write brief description for School Ops Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two paragraphs describing the program and rationale
2. Develop a realistic work schedule and target completion dates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project plan and timeline
3. Identify program aims, goals, audience, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concept paper
4. Research and assess data that support the need for the program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needs assessment report or documentation, as required
5. Consult with industry, other BCIT departments, and service groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Log of dates, names, and specific recommendations
6. Gather supportive documentation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letters of support, faculty qualifications, committee members and consultations, etc.
7. Map the curriculum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program map Program structure map
8. Coordinate course outline development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BCIT course outlines
9. Write and assemble proposal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal and appendices
10. Submit proposal for review/approval process*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal and appendices Development report (IDC)
11. Revise documents based on reviewer feedback.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised proposal and appendices Development report (IDC)
12. Proceed to program implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upon approval*

*Note: Review/approval steps differ according to the credential type (see [Policy/Procedure 5401](#))

Members of the School Working Group (SWG)

The minimum suggested membership in a SWG is:

- School program champion
- Instructors and/or subject matter experts (SMEs)—as required
- Instructional development consultant (IDC) from the Learning and Teaching Centre

Roles of members

While everyone has contributions to make, it is most effective to have one person take charge of pulling materials together and writing them. Usually this person is the School program champion who has been given some release time to lead the project. Instructors and SMEs—including other ad hoc members—may search for, or solicit, specific information; write sections of required documents; and participate actively in the development of the program curriculum.

The IDC, whose expertise is educational design and project facilitation, has five key functions:

1. Advise on matters related to best practice in adult learning theory, instructional design, curriculum development, and student assessment.
2. Facilitate group progress through the development, consultation, and review processes.
3. Arrange assistance from LTC editors, word-processing staff, and others.
4. Prepare a companion document called a Developmental Report that accompanies your program proposal through the review and approval steps.
5. Advise the SWG on the BCIT review/approval process requirements.

First School Working Group Meeting

The SWG may be able to do much of its work by e-mail and telephone. A first meeting, however, is essential. There are four major agenda items that need to be sorted out in this meeting:

- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of the members of the group.
- Distribute copies of the relevant policy and proposal documents and templates.
- Ensure up-to-date contact information: phone & e-mail (especially for off-campus members).
- Develop a simple and clear project plan and timeline.

Preparing a Project Timeline

A basic project timeline can be as simple as listing the major milestone points or as detailed as you wish to make it (e.g. using Gantt or PERT charts, or project management software). Here's one example of a simple timeline:

Task	Milestone/Deliverable	Who?	Due By
Convene School Working Group	First meeting	Terry	Feb 1
Plan realistic project timeline	Project timeline	Jim & Les	Feb 7
Develop and write concept paper	Concept paper (draft)	Jim	Mar 15
Conduct needs assessment	Needs assessment report	SWG	June 1
Etc.			
Etc.			
Proposed implementation		School	Sep 200X

It is important to review the schedule frequently and revise it as needed.

Tips for Coordinating Group Communication

To avoid confusion, the program champion typically takes charge of the following tasks:

- Receiving and distributing materials to the SWG and to others as needed
- Communicating meeting times
- Sending deadline reminders
- Communicating any critical information to the team
- Timely submission of documentation to appropriate reviewers

Remember that with so many documents flowing back and forth, it is useful to establish a protocol for naming shared files. Use dates or version numbers to distinguish each update. For example: *Concept Paper_ draft 1.doc* or *Concept Paper_Sept 16_04.doc*.