

Guidelines for Consultation with Academic Areas

Program Development / Review / Change

The following guidelines are intended to provide a framework for appropriate consultation with academic areas throughout programming processes (program development/ review/change). Depending on the programming initiative, there may be a range of consultations required to ensure appropriate areas have had opportunity for input and discussion.

Consultation:

1. is an essential element of all programming processes and helps shape the foundation of decisions.
2. provides an opportunity to learn and incorporate multiple perspectives from relevant partners/community members at an early stage of decision-making.
3. is expected with areas that may be impacted by proposed new programs or program changes.
4. helps program teams make informed decisions.
5. builds awareness of proposed changes, allowing impacted areas time to consider impacts and formulate plans.
6. provides transparency in decision-making processes.
7. ideally builds towards consensus, recognizing that not all perspectives can be adopted in final decisions.

Consultation should be:

- Comprehensive and inclusive (integrating insights from all relevant areas)
- Meaningful (taking into account differing views and ideas prior to making decisions)
- Collaborative (proactively engaging relevant areas)
- Constructive (providing opportunity for voicing views, frank conversation, sharing of alternative ideas)
- Respectful (aligning with BCIT's value to engage with respect, including respecting academic expertise across departments/schools)

The onus is on the program team/working group to ensure appropriate consultation. This includes inviting consultation on academic issues from any potentially impacted areas such as:

- Foundational studies faculty and program/department heads (e.g. math, physics, chemistry, communication, basic health sciences, etc.)
- Faculty, including program/department heads, from other departments who teach courses into the program
- Work-integrated learning department

Consultation should begin as early as possible to allow a range of contributions to be integrated into final decisions. Early consultation should be before a plan/decision/strategy has been drafted, to ensure broad perspectives are integrated at this stage. Consultation should continue as plans/decisions/strategies are progressing to ensure solid rationale and opportunity for relevant feedback to be integrated into the overall direction.

The following outlines how/when to engage in consultation through various programming initiatives:

- **Program review:** involve all faculty* in data gathering (e.g. surveys, faculty focus groups), and key meetings to discuss issues such as data review/analysis, drafting of recommendations
 - o **Curriculum review:** where this is done separately from a program review, this process should similarly involve all faculty in data gathering and analysis, to inform decisions on curricular changes
- **Program change:** involve any faculty groups impacted by a proposed change, which may be a result of a formal or informal review process. This applies to both minor and major program changes.
- **Program development:** based on program goals, consider areas of expertise when identifying proposed courses and engage faculty from the respective areas in curricular design/development/delivery. There are times when expertise from more than one department is advantageous; in these cases, co-authoring of course outlines and/or team teaching is also an appropriate approach.

** Faculty includes those from within the teaching department and faculty teaching into the program from other departments.*

Once a decision has been made based on the consultations, it is important to ensure all faculty and relevant department(s) are informed.

The rationale for the proposed changes and a summary of the consultations will be included in the relevant documents (e.g., self-study report, proposal or program update form).

Additionally, consultation is required with other internal partners to ensure all aspects of program review/development/renewal are appropriately addressed:

- The [IDEAS Guiding document](#) outlines a series of guiding questions to consider components of the IDEAS framework and how these can be integrated into program design. Included within the document is a listing of key internal partners (see final page) who can advise on effective approaches to align programs with the IDEAS framework.
- Operational/service issues are another important element of program design/revision to ensure alignment with institutional processes and systems for program implementation. Please see the [Consultation Checklist](#) for aspects to consider and process for consultation with Operational and Service Groups.