

Program review – self-study report

Introduction

The purpose of program review at BCIT is to assist in the continual improvement of educational quality, based on evidence relating to program performance. The Self-study Report for program review is to be used by the self-study team to examine and document the quality of core aspects of a program: educational design (including a summative review of the curriculum); program-specific student educational experience; program services, resources and facilities; and relationships with other programs, units, and the community within and outside BCIT. It also evokes comparisons over time, and with comparable external programs. It provides conclusions and recommendations.

The Self-study Report has descriptive, explanatory, evaluative, and formative functions. It is based on evidence relating to program performance including recognition and celebration of strengths, opportunities for improvement, desired improvements, and future directions. The Self-study Report provides an opportunity for schools and programs, in conjunction with service departments and support units, to access all dimensions of the program's academic quality and environmental impact. It is essential that *self-study* is reflective, constructive, utilizes critical thinking, is analytical, and involves internal and external stakeholders in the process.

While there is considerable information to be gathered in the Self-study report, the analytical functions of the study are more important. A high-quality review not only assembles relevant information, but it also uses it to support a reflective, probing self-assessment of the program and **leads to evidence-based recommendations**.

The self-study report template is designed to generate interpretations, insights, and recommendations based on the information (outcomes information, results of surveys, etc.) that the department will examine in the course of its review.

The Self-study Report is intended to be:

- **Guided** by BCIT's institutional vision, mandate, mission, Strategic Plan), operational reality, and by British Columbia Ministry – DQAB requirements.
- **Holistic:** the Self-study Report for program review sees indicators as a “total picture.” No one indicator should dominate, because the overall goals and structure of the program are to be considered.
- **Focused On Teaching And Learning:** program-wide quality of teaching and learning and currency of curriculum are central pillars of program review.
- **Comprehensive yet succinct:** based on experience and feedback from internal and external participants, successful Self-study Reports are comprehensive to provide a full picture of the program's current state and future direction, yet at the same time succinct.

Self-Study Report Template for Program Review

The Self-study report template is designed to create a holistic picture of a program, with a focus on teaching and learning as a central pillar of program review. The template guides program teams to

generate interpretations, insights, and recommendations based on information (outcomes information, results of surveys, etc.) that the departments will examine in the course of their review.

Additional Resources

Additional resources are available to assist with the program review, such as BCIT's current Strategic Plan, Education Plan, [Learning and Teaching Framework](#), BCIT's [Indigenous Vision](#), [Sustainability Vision](#), [E-Learning Strategy](#), Ministry guidelines and criteria, regulatory and accrediting-body documents, and [BCIT policies](#) (links to these resources are available on the APQA website: <https://www.bcit.ca/academic-planning-quality-assurance/>). These and other internal documents will help provide an accurate institutional and community context for the program and its review. Additional materials can be requested from and/or recommended by the APQA Office, the IRP, LTC, and others involved in the program review process.

Review of Curriculum

The essence of any program is its curriculum, which should be designed in a coherent and logical structure to ensure optimal learning. A high-level review of a program's curriculum (program goal alignment with course matrix, appropriateness of assessment methodologies according to program goals, overall relevancy and currency) is essential to the program review process to provide a holistic picture of how well the program is currently preparing students for industry or further study.

The starting point for reviewing the curriculum is reviewing the program goals. These are foundational statements that describe what a graduate is able to do on completion of the program. Clear program goals are the basis on which a program is built, with all courses contributing to student achievement of the goals. Stakeholder feedback on the currency and relevancy of the goals is key to understanding whether the program as it is currently designed is still meeting stakeholder needs or whether adjustments need to be made to the program to better align with those needs. Revisions or refinements to program goals (and therefore the curriculum) are a common outcome of program reviews.

In addition to feedback on program goals, it is critical to collect stakeholder feedback on many other aspects of the curriculum, including courses, employability skills, delivery methods, teaching methods, and assessment methods. The standard survey questions include key questions for stakeholders to ensure these aspects of the curriculum are reviewed (programs may wish to customize the question wording to apply to their program). The self-study report template includes a series of matrices that the self-study team will need to complete related to the curriculum:

- Program map
- Program goal integration and assessment matrix
- Employability skills matrix

These matrices are the same ones used in new program proposals, and quickly illustrate the structure of the program, and show connections between courses and the program goals and employability skills. This provides a good overall picture of the program, helping program areas analyze whether the program is well aligned with stakeholder needs or requires revisions to be better positioned for the future.

Please note it is at the program's discretion to conduct a more in-depth, detailed curriculum review (e.g. review of individual course learning outcomes, duplication of material across courses etc.) alongside the program review if deemed feasible and valuable. For further details about this *separate* curriculum review process, please consult with the Learning and Teaching Centre and/or the IDC. If major

curriculum changes are warranted and included as SSR recommendations, the details of some of these changes may be provided in the subsequent major curriculum change proposal (e.g. learning outcomes, contents, evaluation methods, learning and teaching methodologies of new courses).

Overview of the Review Categories

There are eight (8) review categories, as follows.

1. Program Background

This category describes the basic program parameters, and provides the overall context of the program as it currently exists. It summarizes information that will be discussed in greater detail in later sections. This section is not intended to solicit analysis and/or recommendations but should be referenced as appropriate throughout the report.

- 1.1. Program Name/Credential Type/Administrative Structure
- 1.2. Program Aim
- 1.3. Program Description
- 1.4. History of Program's Development
- 1.5. Program Review Data Sources and Stakeholder Profiles

2. Quality of Educational Design

This category examines the critical factors in educational design (e.g. teaching methods, evaluation methods, and curriculum) that contribute to quality educational experiences. These factors directly impact what happens in the learning environment among learners, faculty (including Flexible Learning), and staff. This section also considers the currency and relevancy of the curriculum based on stakeholder feedback collected through the program review process and other ongoing department processes. In addition, it looks at the collective expertise in the department to deliver the curriculum and future needs.

- 2.1. Review of Curriculum
- 2.2. Program Delivery Methods & Teaching, Learning, and Assessment Methodologies
- 2.3. Faculty Qualifications and Currency

3. Quality of Educational Experience

This category examines the degree of learner success in the program and learner satisfaction with various aspects of the program. In addition, this section considers how well the program prepared students for their future endeavours (employment or further study).

- 3.1. Program Enrolment, Attrition and Graduation Trends
- 3.2. Relevance of Education to Further Studies
- 3.3. Relevance of Education to Employment
- 3.4. Satisfaction with Skills Development
- 3.5. Satisfaction with Learning Experience including Quality of Instruction

4. Quality of Services, Resources, and Facilities

This category examines learning materials, library materials, equipment, computer hardware, facilities, and other tools, specifically as they are used within the program and learner and faculty/staff satisfaction with these aspects.

4.1. Learner Satisfaction with Services, Resources, and Facilities

4.2. Faculty (including Flexible Learning) and Staff Satisfaction with Services, Resources, and Facilities

5. Quality of Program Relationships and Connections

This category examines the program's relations with other BCIT programs and units, with industry and professional partners, accrediting agencies, other post-secondary institutions, and with the community.

5.1. Articulation – Internal and External

5.2. Accreditation and/or Audit by Regulatory Body

5.3. Alignment with Provincial and BCIT Strategic Direction

5.4. Program Advisory Committee (PAC)

5.5. Marketing and Public/Community Engagement

5.6. Industry /Professional Associations – Connections/Engagement

5.7. Credential Recognition and Nomenclature

5.8. Compliance with BCIT Policies and Procedures

6. Comparison with Previous Reviews

This category considers the processes in place for ongoing reviews within the program, and compares the results of previous reviews to the current reviews, in particular any resulting recommendations and subsequent actions.

6.1. Annual Program Self-evaluations

6.2. Program Reviews

6.3. Accreditation and/or Audit Reports

6.4. Curriculum Reviews

7. Benchmarking with Comparable Programs

This category compares similar and related programs elsewhere in North America, as relevant to the credential type. For example, benchmarking for Associate Certificates (if reviewed independently) would usually not need to compare against other regions of Canada, although it is expected for degrees to include provincial, national, and potentially international areas. Benchmarking considers key components/course clusters/themes (as appropriate) and compares components such as program length, breadth, focus, rigour, areas of specialization, uniqueness, certifications, admission standards, etc. of this program. Insights from this benchmarking are often helpful both to establish the post-secondary landscape within a disciplinary area and to identify future opportunities for the program.

8. Conclusions, Recommendations, and Future Directions

These are the key findings, conclusions and recommendations established by the self-study team. It is critical that recommendations are based on evidence collected and presented in the self-study report. Also important is to clearly outline the timelines needed to implement the recommendations and what types of resources are needed. (A separate costing document accompanies the self-study report with details on resource needs). In addition, programs are asked to comment on trends that are likely to affect the program over the next five years, and what changes to the program may be anticipated.

Appendices: the following list of appendices demonstrate typical supporting documentation needed during a program review:

Appendix A: Program Map

Appendix B: Program Goals Integration

Appendix C: BCIT Key Performance Indicator (KPI) program report (Program Mix Analysis)

Appendix D: BC Student Outcomes Survey Results

Appendix E: Student Survey Results

Appendix F: Graduate Survey Results

Appendix G: Faculty/Staff Survey Results

Appendix H: Industry Survey Results

Appendix I: Faculty Qualifications & Currency

Appendix J: Employability Skills Matrix

Appendix L: PAC Minutes

Appendix M: Benchmark Program Comparison

The following documents associated with this guide can be found on the [APQA site](#):

- Self-study report template
- Recommendations with Projected Costs Template
- Standard survey questions
- Survey tips