



PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT & REVIEW:

School Quality Committee

Program quality is the responsibility of all involved in the development and maintenance of BCIT programs. The School Quality Committee (SQC) forms part of the total quality chain at BCIT. Each School will establish an SQC, which is a standing committee advisory to the Dean. The mandate of the committee is to assess the quality of new programs and ensure that any changes maintain or enhance the quality of existing programs within the School. In addition, SQCs provide peer feedback on Self-Study Reports which are part of the Institute's program review process. This document provides guidelines for the work of the SQCs.

Membership

The SQC shall have a minimum core membership of five. Members of the SQC can include faculty and management personnel, but the majority should be faculty. Members must have a commitment to quality and represent a range of program areas within the School. Persons from outside the School may also be part of the core membership. The Chair shall be appointed by the Dean or elected from among the members of the committee. Additional members, from inside or outside the School or from industry, with appropriate expertise for the program under review, may be added to the committee on an ad hoc basis at the discretion of the Chair. SQC members should serve a minimum term of two years to ensure consistency, familiarity, and expertise with common issues.

Accountability

The SQC provides a report of its review with recommendations to the Dean of the School. This report accompanies the proposal to the next stage of the quality review. Templates for SQC reports are available on the Academic Planning & Quality Assurance website (<http://www.bcit.ca/apqa/>).

Responsibilities

The SQC provides an objective review of new program proposals and major curriculum change proposals as part of the overall BCIT program development process. The SQC also provides peer feedback on Self-Study Reports as part of the Institute's program review process.

The SQC has the following specific responsibilities (see a more detailed description of each below):

1. To review all new notices of intent and program proposals, including course outlines and supporting documentation.
2. To review major curriculum change proposals to programs (all credentials) within the School.
3. To review Self-Study Reports compiled as part of the Institute's program review process, with the aim of providing peer feedback to the program area on how effectively the reports address the required components.
4. To review new course outlines at the degree/graduate (Master's and Graduate Certificate) level (usually any course numbered 5000 or higher).



The Dean may request that the SQC undertake reviews of other educational quality initiatives/proposals, as appropriate.

1. New Programs: Notices of Intent and Proposals

a. Notice of Intent

The SQC reviews notices of intent for new programs to ensure all aspects of the notice of intent template are effectively addressed and that the program being proposed aligns with the School's strategic direction. The SQC may also provide recommendations to the program champions on issues they should consider when developing the full proposal.

The SQC should be satisfied that the notice of intent aligns with the following criteria:

- Clear purpose/rationale, including description of the profession/industry, primary reasons why the program is needed, alignment with provincial direction and BCIT's mandate/Strategic Plan, and opportunities for certification/accreditation.
- Brief competitive scan, including competition for the program, relationship to other programs (internal or external), and risks to offering/not offering the program.
- Program description, including program aim and goals, clear rationale for the credential type, initial description of the program structure and length, plans for delivery methods and location, and a description of potential students and entry requirements.
- An appropriate school working group is identified
- Reasonable milestone dates are planned for program development/approval/launch

Outcome of Notice of Intent Review

The Chair will provide a report of the committee's findings/recommendations to the Dean and the program champion. This report will be included with the Development Report (created and maintained by the Instructional Development Consultant (IDC) on the School Working Group). The Dean will approve the program prior to forwarding the notice of intent to the Office of the VP Academic (VPA) along with any additional comments as appropriate.

b. Proposals

In providing a critical and objective review of the proposal for the credential being sought, the committee should be satisfied that a new program proposal meets the criteria outlined below.

Educational Integrity

- The program is at the level appropriate to the credential being sought (benchmarked with other programs and BCIT credential standards).
- The program aims and goals are clearly articulated, realistic, and achievable.
- The program content (course outlines) flows from the program aims and goals.
- Teaching, learning, and assessment methods facilitate the achievement of the program aims and goals.
- The program has educational integrity (an integrated, coherent learning experience that builds on prerequisite knowledge).
- There is an appropriate balance of theory and practice.
- The program documentation and program map are clearly presented.

Industry Relevance

- There is evidence that the program reflects the current and emerging needs of industry.
- There is evidence that the program has the support of the relevant professional and accreditation bodies (as appropriate).
- The program prepares students with transferable knowledge and skills.
- Teaching and learning strategies used to achieve “employability skills” are identified, realistic, and achievable.
- There is evidence of adequate justification for the program.

Institutional Issues

- The program fits with the strategic direction of both the School and Institute.
- Communication and consultation across the Institute about the new program is evident.
- The program makes appropriate use of other expertise and resource departments at the Institute and avoids academic duplication within BCIT.

Resources

- The human and capital resources needed to run the program have been clearly identified.
- Faculty qualifications are appropriate for the level of credential.

Format

- The program proposal uses the relevant proposal template (as approved by EdCo), adheres to the guidelines and meets all requirements of the BCIT Program Development & Credentials Policy & Procedures (5401) for this specific credential. Templates are on the Academic Planning & Quality Assurance website.

Accuracy

- The information contained in the program proposal is consistent and accurate (for example, credit calculations are accurate and there is consistency between the body of the proposal, the program map and course outlines).

Outcome of Proposal Review

The Chair will provide a report of the committee’s findings/recommendations to the Dean and the program champion. This report will be included with the Development Report (created and maintained by the IDC on the School Working Group). The Dean will approve the program prior to forwarding the proposal to the Office of the VP Academic (VPA) along with any additional comments as appropriate.

Note: The SQC can be a valuable resource for developers of proposals at all stages of program development. It is recommended that on-going communication/consultation occur between the program developers and the SQC, via the Chair of the SQC, throughout the development process.



2. Curriculum Changes

Curriculum changes are broadly classified as major or minor (Policy/Procedures 5401). The process for review will depend on the type of change and will be determined by the Chair in consultation with the committee.

Major changes require review by SQC and approval by EDCO and include but are not limited to the following:

- Any change that impacts current students
- Change of credential type
- Graduation requirements
- Program aims and goals
- Program hours and/or credits within a credential by more than 10%
- Program name (in most cases)

Other changes may be referred to the SQC by the Dean.

Process

For curriculum changes requiring review by SQC, the Office of the VPA requires documentation from the Chair of the SQC outlining the review process undergone and indicating any outstanding issues.

In fulfillment of their responsibilities, the SQC should ensure the following:

- The approved template for curriculum changes has been used to describe the proposed changes.
- Any changes to the program aims and goals are clearly identified and articulated.
- Changes in total credits and/or hours required for program completion are identified.
- The rationale for change is well articulated.
- Additional content is appropriate to the credential level and supports the achievement of the program aims and goals.
- There is evidence that the changes reflect the current and emerging needs of industry and have the support of industry and/or professional bodies as appropriate.
- The program retains educational integrity (integrated, coherent, learning experience that builds on prerequisite knowledge).
- The program retains an appropriate balance of theory and practice.
- Any associated academic departments have been consulted on the proposed changes.

Operational Issues

There is evidence that the following have been considered:

- The program retains financial aid eligibility.
- Formal consultation has taken place with all service departments affected by the change.
- The effect on current students and applicants has been documented.
- The implementation date for the proposed change is realistic from an operational perspective; e.g., Registrar's Office.



Outcome of Curriculum Change Reviews

The Chair will provide a report of the committee's findings/recommendations to the Dean and the program champion. The SQC report will be integrated into the Development Report (created and maintained by the IDC on the School Working Group). The Dean will approve the program change prior to forwarding the proposal to the Office of the VP Academic (VPA) along with any additional comments as appropriate.

3. Program Reviews

The SQC reviews Self-Study Reports which are written as part of the Institute's program review process. The purpose of the SQC's review is to provide feedback to the program area on how effectively the report addresses each of the required components, and how well any resulting program recommendations are supported by evidence within the report. The Program Review Manual outlines a series of questions that can be considered within the report, but not all questions will apply nor need to be considered by all programs, and the areas of focus in Self-Study Reports may vary among programs. The outcome of the SQC's review is a brief report written by the Chair to the program area providing suggestions for clarity or revision, as appropriate.

4. Degree/Graduate (Master's and Graduate Certificate) Level Course Outlines

The SQC reviews course outlines for new degree or graduate (Master's and Graduate Certificate) level courses (usually all courses numbered 5000 or higher). The review and feedback focus on clarity of the course description, rigour of learning outcomes as related to the intended course level, appropriateness of prerequisites, evaluation criteria and learning resources, accuracy of course credits and hours, and general completeness of information as indicated in the course outline template. The Chair provides feedback to the program area in a brief report, which accompanies the course outline when submitted through the Electronic Course/Program Update Form.