

# PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT, CHANGE & REVIEW:

## School Quality Committee

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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 overall quality responsibilities at BCIT. Each School will establish an SQC, which is a standing committee advisory to the School Dean. The mandate of the committee is to assess the quality of new programs and ensure that any changes to existing programs maintain or enhance the quality of those 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. Members from outside the School may also be part of the core membership as appropriate (e.g. to round out disciplinary perspectives and/or to include an Instructional Development Consultant from the LTC). The Chair shall be appointed by the School Dean or elected from among the members of the committee. Additional members 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.

The Academic Planning & Quality Assurance (APQA) Office provides orientation to new SQC Chairs and members and can provide customized workshops for SQCs at their request. APQA facilitates bi-monthly meetings for all SQC Chairs to provide updates, share practices, and maintain a community of practice across all SQCs.

### Accountability and Reporting

The SQC provides a report of its review with recommendations to the School Dean. Key issues from this report accompany the proposal to the next stage of the quality review. Templates for SQC reports are available on the APQA website (<http://www.bcit.ca/apqa/>).

### Processes and Communication

The SQC establishes an annual schedule of its meeting dates and makes this available to all stakeholders in the School and to the APQA Office (SQC meeting dates will align with the annual Edco approval timelines). In addition, the SQC communicates to all internal School stakeholders the following information:

- Submission process, including requirements for documents and submission timelines
- SQC review process and involvement of program areas during reviews
- Possible outcomes of SQC review, typical timing of reports, and expectations of program teams following receipt of SQC report

## Responsibilities

The SQC provides an objective review of new program proposals and major program change proposals as part of the processes outlined in BCIT Policy 5401-PR2. 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 program change proposals (all credentials) within the School.
3. To review Self-Study Reports as part of the Institute's program review process, with the aim of providing peer feedback to the program area.
4. To review new course outlines for courses numbered 5000 or higher (e.g., at the degree level, Bachelor, Master's and Graduate Certificate).

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

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### 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, that the proposed program aligns with the School's strategic direction, and that it complements the School's existing programming. The SQC may also provide recommendations to the program champions on issues they should consider when developing the full proposal (e.g., collaboration possibilities, consultation needs).

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 School Dean and the program champion. Key issues from the SQC report and program responses will be incorporated into the Development Report (created and maintained by the Instructional Development Consultant (IDC) on the School Working Group). The School Dean will approve the program prior to forwarding the notice of intent to APQA within the Office of the VP Academic (VPA) along with any additional comments and edits 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 aligns with the School direction, is complementary to existing programming within the School, and contributes to laddering/pathways as appropriate.
- The program is at the level appropriate to the credential being sought (benchmarked with programs at peer institutions and BCIT credential standards).
- The program aim and goals are clearly articulated, realistic, and achievable within the time limit to complete the credential.
- Admission requirements are appropriate for the credential and align with other programs in the School.
- The program content (course outlines) flows from the program aim and goals.
- Teaching, learning, and assessment methods facilitate the achievement of the program aim 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.

### *Industry Relevance*

- There is evidence that the program reflects the current and emerging needs of industry.
- There is evidence of appropriate external consultation.
- 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 integrates key Institute plans as appropriate (e.g. Strategic Plan, Sustainability vision, Indigenous vision, International vision, etc.).
- Communication and consultation across the Institute about the new program is evident.
- Faculty qualifications are appropriate for the level of credential.
- The program makes appropriate use of other expertise and resource departments at the Institute and avoids academic duplication within BCIT.

### *Format & Accuracy*

- 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 APQA website.
- 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 School Dean and the program champion. Key issues from the SQC report and program responses will be incorporated into the Development Report (created and maintained by the IDC on the School Working Group). The School Dean will approve the updated program proposal prior to forwarding it to APQA within the Office of the VP Academic (VPA) along with any additional comments and program response documented in the Development Report as appropriate.

## **2. Program Changes**

Program changes are broadly classified as major or minor (Policy/Procedures 5401). 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% (more than 25% for Associate Certificate)
- Program and/or option name
- Program structure including adding or removing an option

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

The SQC reviews proposals for major changes to ensure all aspects of the proposal template are effectively addressed.

In reviewing the proposal, the SQC should be satisfied of the following issues:

#### *Educational Integrity*

- The rationale for proposed changes is well articulated.
- The program retains educational integrity (integrated, coherent, learning experience that builds on prerequisite knowledge).
- Any changes to the program aim and goals are clearly identified and articulated.
- Changes in total credits and/or hours required for program completion are identified.
- Additional content is appropriate to the credential level and supports the achievement of the program aim 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 an appropriate balance of theory and practice.
- Program changes take into consideration student wellness and workload.
- Any associated academic departments have been consulted on the proposed changes.

#### *Operational Issues*

- The program retains financial aid eligibility.
- Formal consultation has taken place with all operational/service departments affected by the change.
- The effect on current students and applicants has been documented, and any impacts on them have been considered and addressed (e.g., communication and teach-out plans).
- The implementation date for the proposed change is realistic from an operational perspective; e.g., Registrar's Office.

#### *Format & Accuracy*

- The program proposal uses the current major change proposal template (as approved by EdCo), adheres to the guidelines and meets all requirements of the Policy & Procedures 5401 for this specific credential. (Templates are on the APQA website.)
- 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, as well as the program comparison chart).

### **Outcome of Program Change Reviews**

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

### **3. Program Review Self-study Reports**

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 peer feedback to the program area primarily on how well program review recommendations are supported by evidence presented within the report. Program reviews are guided by a self-study template, but do allow programs flexibility to focus on specific areas of importance. SQC feedback is

particularly valuable from the perspective of School-level insights and related considerations for proposed recommendations.

### **Outcome of Self-study Report Reviews**

The Chair will provide a brief report summarizing feedback from the SQC to the program area and the School Dean, providing suggestions for clarity or revision, as appropriate.

## **4. New Course Outlines Numbered 5000 and Higher**

The SQC reviews individual course outlines for new courses numbered 5000 and higher. These are typically considered degree level courses (e.g., Bachelor, Master's, Graduate Certificate). In some cases, these courses are offered in other credentials as well, for example Advanced Certificates or Advanced Diplomas. The review and feedback focus on the rationale for the new course, 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 and the [accompanying overview document](#).

### **Outcome of Course Outline Reviews**

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.