BCIT™

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 (SWG).

What Is the School Working Group Responsible For?

The 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 the School Operations Plan.	• Two paragraphs describing the program and rationale
2. Develop a realistic work schedule and target completion dates.	• Project plan and timeline
3. Identify program aims, goals, audience, etc.	• Notice of Intent
4. Research and assess data that support the need for the program.	• Needs assessment report or documentation, as required
5. Consult with industry, other BCIT departments, and service groups.	• Log of dates, names, and specific recommendations
6. Gather supportive documentation.	• Letters of support, faculty qualifications, committee members and consultations, etc.
7. Map the curriculum.	• Program map • Program structure map
8. Coordinate the course outline development.	• BCIT course outlines
9. Write and assemble the proposal.	• Proposal and appendices
10. Submit the proposal for the review/approval process*	• Proposal and appendices • Development report (Instructional Development Consultant - IDC)
11. Revise documents based on reviewer feedback.	• Revised proposal and appendices • Development report (IDC)
12. Implement the program.	• **Upon approval***

*Note: Review/approval steps differ according to the credential type. See the Policy/Procedures 5401 for details.

Members of the School Working Group (SWG)

The minimum suggested membership in a SWG is:

- Program champion
- Associate dean
- Instructors and/or subject matter experts (SMEs)—as required
- An 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 **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 **Associate dean** has responsibility to ensure the SWG achieves the necessary milestones in the program development/approval process, and that the proposed program aligns with the School's vision and incorporates all appropriate consultation.

The **IDC**, who has expertise in 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 for assistance from LTC editors, 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, including developing a plan with milestones and tasks.

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, and this is referred to as a "kick-off meeting". This meeting is usually called by the VP Academic Office (Academic Planning and Quality Assurance, APQA), and includes the full School Working Group and a representative from APQA. There are a few key agenda items that need to be sorted out in this meeting:

- Discussion about the vision of the proposed program
- Determining the required approval process to be followed (internal and external)
- Clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the members of the school working group

- Distributing copies of the relevant policy and proposal documents and templates
- Ensuring up-to-date contact information: phone and e-mail (especially for off-campus members)
- Starting the development of 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	Kick-off meeting	APQA	Feb 1
Plan realistic project timeline	Project timeline	Jim and Les	Feb 7
Develop and write notice of intent	Notice of intent (draft)	Jim	Mar 15
Conduct needs assessment	Needs assessment report	SWG	June 1
Etc.			
Etc.			
Proposed implementation		**School**	**Sep 20XX**

It is important to review the schedule periodically 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 to distinguish each update. For example: Notice of Intent 2017-09-01.docx. When someone sends it back, the filename can include the person's initials: Notice of Intent 2017-09-01-PF.docx. The next time that the file is sent out, the filename should have the new date: Notice of Intent 2017-09-08.docx. With this format of dating, yyyy-mm-dd, the files will always be in chronological order with the latest one at the bottom of the list.