Guide to the Cyclical Program Review York University Quality Assurance Procedures (YUQAP)

Table of Contents

1. Introduction to the Cyclical Program Review Program Brief

Programs under review are responsible for submitting a Program Brief to the Office of the Vice Provost Academic and relevant Dean(s)/Principal by August 15[th]prior to the expected site visit (Fall term or Winter term). The Program Brief consists of multiple parts. Note: There are Self-Study Report templates for undergraduate programs and for graduate programs, as well as for certificates and diplomas.

- Self-Study Report(s), which includes commentary on quality indicators and outcomes measures
- Appendices
- Curricula Vitae of Faculty

The Self-Study templates are available on the YUQAP website: http://yuqap.info.yorku.ca/. The Self-Study Report should be broad-based, reflective and forward-looking and must include critical analysis. It should explicitly address the evaluation criteria specified in the York's Institutional Quality Assurance Process. To ensure that all of the issues that external reviewers are asked to review are addressed in the self-study report, programs are required to submit the self-study report using the established template.

Section 6 of this document includes a list of important University Documents that will be useful to the program and that are provided by the Office of the Vice-Provost Academic to the external reviewers along with the Self-Study.

The Self-Study Report and all components are forwarded by the Office of the Vice-Provost Academic to the Dean/Principal who in turn must provide his/her the Agenda of Concerns to the YUQAP Office within the four weeks so that it can be given to the reviewers along with the Self-Study documents at least a month prior to the site visit.

2. Cyclical Program Review Self-Study Template (Undergraduate and Graduate)

The Cyclical Program Review Self-Study Templates (both graduate and undergraduate versions) includes questions to guide reflection on program quality, as well as quality indicator data that relates to the questions. The review culminates with the section on Quality Enhancement.

Data should be included as appendices in the order outlined in the CPR. Additional appendices may be included as appropriate.

The Self Study Report must be submitted to the Office of the Vice-Provost Academic as a bookmarked PDF. Each main section of the Self Study Report should be bookmarked, as well as the appendices.

SPECIAL NOTE: Concurrent Graduate and Undergraduate Reviews

Where multiple programs from the same department are undergoing review, and/or when graduate program review is aligned with undergraduate review, each program should respond to the Self Study questions. Programs may have their own self-study document, or may determine that "chapters" in the self-study document are sufficient, particularly where responses to some questions, such as those describing facilities, would have answers in common.

Likewise, it may be possible that one set of CVs is submitted to support all programs, provided that faculty with graduate appointments are clearly identified. A chart may be useful for this.

3. Cyclical Program Review Data Kit

Each Program will be provided with a DATA KIT that includes the information listed below. Normally this kit will normally be available by December of each year. The information is compiled by the Office for Institutional Planning and Analysis (OIPA).

1. Academic Program Report – enrolment and graduation data compiled by OIPA. Available online at any time: http://oipa.info.yorku.ca/data-hub/

2. Student Profile Report (undergraduate only)

3. Course Instructors and enrolments for last eight years

4. NSSE results – (OIPA – results by program or by program grouping) (undergraduate only)

5. Alumni data

6. CIQ results by Faculty and by Department (broken down by year level) – available through the Online Course Evaluation System (ONCE): http://courseevaluations.yorku.ca/

For Graduate Programs the following data will be provided in the Data Kit:

- Faculty Research Funding
- Cohort Data showing Retention, Withdrawal and Time to Completion
- Financial Support for Graduate Students
- Graduate Student Research Funding

4. Student Survey

For undergraduate programs with 50 or more majors: Before consultants are chosen and a self-study is conducted, a student survey will be administered normally by the Institute for Social Research (ISR). This survey is intended to provide the program with important information about students' responses to the program, their instruction and contact with instructors, and their perceptions of their intellectual growth, increased knowledge, critical skills, etc. ISR will provide units with a report summarizing the results of the surveys which includes student comments which are edited to remove any identifying information.

The student survey consists of an extensive core questionnaire, to which programs can add additional questions. The development of program-specific questions should be completed by the program by the end of November of the calendar year preceding the program review date. ISR can provide guidance with respect to the development of program-specific questions. ISR will not accept requests to add program-specific questions after November 15 in order to ensure that questionnaires are completed by November 30.

The survey is normally distributed in mid-February (just after reading week) of the calendar year in which the program is up for review. Students registered in the program as a major who have completed at least 18 credits by the end of the academic year preceding the program review date are invited by e-mail to participate in the survey, which is web-based. The survey is voluntary and confidential, and the data are held securely by ISR.

Results of the survey are provided to the program as PDF files in April of the calendar year in which the program is up for review and programs may request the (anonymized) data for further analysis or additional tabulations.

The Self-Study Report should include a copy of the questionnaire sent out to students (Appendix x), with an indication of the number and level of the students surveyed and the number of respondents, together with an overview of the results of the survey. The student survey results, including comparative data and, where appropriate, students' written responses should be included with the Self Study Report with the appropriate Appendix Letter.

The student survey data, including major positive and negative indicators that can be drawn from the data, should be analyzed, with the outcome of this analysis included in the Self-Study Report, where and as appropriate. Some overview of the written comments of the students should also be provided in section 3 of the Graduate Self-Study template and Section 5.4 of the Undergraduate Self-Study Template. The outcomes of student responses and various aspects of student opinions should be included for discussion in the self-study as appendices (specified in the templates), and addressed in the Self-Study Report.

Alternatives to the Student Survey

Student feedback is important. For undergraduate programs with fewer than 50 majors it is recommended that student feedback be solicited and a record of the proceedings of the meeting prepared to inform the self-study of the student opinions of the program.

Below are some suggestions for alternate options for collecting student feedback. One of the first things to acknowledge is that the way data are collected will need to be transparent (which is easier in a smaller program).

Regular Student Meetings: A program may already have any regular meetings with students, discussion forums, 'town hall' meetings, etc. at special times, where all students are invited to attend (or can be invited to attend) you could use these forums to address some questions of interest for the review. An advance agenda could be posted to encourage attendance. A brief outline of the main aspects of the review for which feedback is sought could form part of an announcement of the meeting. It is important to have one, or better still, two note takers.

Special meetings: Some programs in the past have held pizza and pop lunches where they invited students and talked about the review using a set of questions. These meetings are a bit like having a focus group. It is useful to put the students at ease at the start. Questions are general and not leading. Avoid questions that beg for yes or no answers. Programs may wish to review the Institute for Social Research Moderators Guides, which are posted on the YUQAP website.

Support for Student Meetings: Students may react differently and be more willing to participate if the research is in-house and run by the program. They may respond more willingly to a request from the program and if the discussion is more of a social exchange. When you pay students for a formal focus group it becomes more like a monetary exchange and this is not advised.

5. Faculty CVs

The Program Brief must include up-to-date CVs for all faculty members appointed to the program under review. CVs must be submitted in a standardized format relevant to the program(s) under review, such as that used by one of the Tri-Councils (CIHR, NSERC, SSHRC).   The program(s) under review should agree upon the format prior to sending out a call to its faculty members. Normally, the most recent copy submitted to the Dean's Office will be acceptable.

Related undergraduate and graduate programs in a coordinated review will include in their self-study reports lists of faculty appointed to the respective program. However, only one CV is required from faculty members who are appointed to the undergraduate and graduate programs. (See the graduate self-study template for details on graduate appointments.)

Although they are part of the Self-Study Report, CVs must be submitted electronically *as an independent document*. Within this document, the CVs should be complied as an indexed PDF, in alphabetical order, with a table of contents. Where appropriate, a program may have separate sections for faculty members who hold full-time (including CLAs) positions at York, retirees, and adjunct appointments.

Note: If the review involves a graduate program, the document must also include as an appendix a copy of the program-specific appointment criteria.

Graduate Appointments and Reappointments

In conjunction with a program's cyclical review, the Faculty of Graduate Studies will provide the Graduate Program Director with a list of faculty members appointed to their program, including membership categories and the roles for which they are eligible. This information will be provided to the Graduate Program Director in the Fall of the calendar year preceding the program review dates.

In accordance with Section 4.1 of the Policy on Appointments to the Faculty of Graduate Studies:

> *All appointments to a graduate program shall be reviewed in conjunction with a program's cyclical appraisal. In accordance with cyclical appraisal guidelines and procedures, each member of the program has the onus of establishing that they meet/continue to meet the program-specific criteria for the relevant appointment category. Where an individual does not provide sufficient evidence of meeting the relevant criteria, the program shall approve or recommend for approval changes to the appointment, as appropriate. Submission to the Faculty of Graduate Studies Academic Planning and Policy Committee of a recommendation for reappointment is not required for Full Members and Associate Members who, upon review by the program, continue to satisfy the conditions of a previously approved continuing appointment.*

By June 1st of the calendar year in which the program is up for review, the Faculty of Graduate Studies will require from the program:

- Confirmation that those members with continuing appointments continue to meet the program-specific criteria for the relevant appointment category;
- Updates with respect to changes in continuing appointments where an individual does not provide sufficient evidence of meeting the relevant criteria;
- Recommendation for Appointment Forms and up-to-date CVs for new (i.e. effective July 1 of the calendar year in which the program is up for review) Full Member appointments.

6. University Documents

Some sections of the Self Study Template refer to university planning documents. A list of relevant documents is below. In addition, these documents will be provided to external reviewers when appropriate.

1. Strategic Planning Documents: http://oipa.info.yorku.ca/stategic-planning-documents
    - University Academic Plan
    - Strategic Mandate Agreement
    - Strategic Research Plan (graduate programs)
2. Pan University Bachelor of Arts Structure:
    http://secretariat.info.yorku.ca/files/BAMatrixFinal.pdf
3. Pan University Bachelor of Science Structure:
    http://secretariat.info.yorku.ca/files/BScPanUniversityDLE.pdf
4. Master's Degree-Level Expectations:
    http://gradstudies.yorku.ca/current-students/regulations/degree-types/#mastersexpectations
5. Doctoral Degree-Level Expectations:
    http://gradstudies.yorku.ca/current-students/regulations/degree-types/#doctoralexpectations

In addition programs may wish to include in their Cyclical Program Brief any Faculty or Departmental Plans.

7. Dean's/Principal's Agenda of Concerns

The Self-Study Report and all components are forwarded to the Dean/Principal who in turn provides the Agenda of Concerns in approximately four weeks so that it can be distributed with the Self-Study Brief to the Reviewers at least one month prior to the site visit.

8. Cyclical Program Review and Accreditation

Section 7.3 of the York University Quality Assurance Procedures notes the following:

> *Reviews may also be aligned with professional accreditation. Note that the university reviews are not waived because an externally-commissioned review, such as an accreditation, has recently been conducted. In some cases, the University process may be streamlined by aligning the requirements of the internally and externally commissioned reviews and supplementing documentation as necessary.*

A mapping of accreditation (or other external review) documentation should be provided to guide external reviewers for the YUQAP process to the relevant information for the cyclical program review. Where YUQAP questions are not addressed in accreditation materials (for example, concerns and recommendations raised in previous reviews), the self-study template should be used to prepare the relevant information in the appropriate order.

Aligning site visits for the Cyclical Program Review with accreditation site visits may not work or may not be desirable. Discussion about potential dates should be undertaken with the Vice-Provost Academic early in the review cycle.

9. Site Visit Guidelines for Cyclical Reviewers

When submitting the Program Brief to the Office of the Vice Provost Academic, the program may indicate their preference with respect to the timing of the site visit; i.e. fall or winter term, including recommended date(s). The Office of the Vice Provost Academic will try and accommodate the recommended dates.

After the date of the site visit is confirmed by the Office of the Vice Provost Academic, the senior academic lead of the program(s) under review is responsible for arranging the site visit schedule. The site visit itinerary will be reviewed by the Vice-Provost Academic and who will subsequently send it on to the reviewers.
The reviewers should visit together and attend all relevant campuses. During their visit, provisions must be made for the reviewers to meet with:

- faculty,
- students,
- the relevant Dean(s)/Principal,
- the appropriate subject librarian and the University Librarian
- the Vice Provost Academic, and
- the Associate VP Graduate/FGS Dean for reviews involving a graduate program.

The reviewers must not be split up during the site visit, and will need to have some time during the day when they can meet together privately. The reviewers may meet with students in a classroom setting and as a separate group. With that in mind, they should arrange for a classroom visit (the professor in the class and the unit members should leave the reviewers alone with the students for about 20 minutes), and a well-advertised general meeting of the reviewers alone with a broad cross-section of students (perhaps over pizza lunch).

The Office of the Vice Provost Academic is responsible for contacting the external and internal reviewers with respect to travel, accommodation, honoraria, travel expenses, etc.

Sample site visit itineraries are available from the Office of the Vice-Provost Academic (yuqap@yorku.ca).