Cape Breton University
Quality Assurance Framework

June 2016

(Updated with additional draft documents April 2017;
Schedule and Graduate Attributes updated June 2022;
framework and policy updates May 2025)

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Cape Breton University Quality Assurance Review Policy

Classification:	Subject:	Implementation Date:
Senate Policy, Office of the Provost	Quality assurance of academic programs and support services.	March 2016
Supplemental Documents:		
Procedures for the Quality Assurance Review of Academic Programs and Support Services *Quality Assurance Program/Service Review Process Timeline* *Self-Study Guidelines for the Review of Academic Programs* *Self-Study Guidelines for the Review of Academic Support Services (forthcoming)*		
Next Review: March 2030	**Authorized:**	

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure Cape Breton University's commitment to quality assurance and the continuous improvement of all academic programs and support services.

II. Responsibility

The Vice-President, Academic and Provost (Provost) is responsible for quality assurance at Cape Breton University. The Quality Assurance Committee of Senate (QAC), on which the Provost sits, is responsible for overseeing the reviews of academic programs and support services.

III. Scope

This policy and its related procedures apply to and covers all academic programs and support services. An academic program is defined as a Senate approved sequence of courses prescribed for the fulfillment of the requirements of a particular degree/diploma/certificate. A support service is any academic support service or grouping of services that has a direct impact on student or faculty success. The Provost can determine whether a given support service is assessed more effectively on its own or in conjunction with academic programs.

IV. Objectives

The objectives of this policy are:

a) To promote and encourage a high level of teaching, research, and learning.
b) To examine the role, objectives, and outcomes of programs and services.
c) To examine the role of research, its contribution to teaching and learning, and the development of knowledge in general.
d) To assist CBU in assessing and improving the quality of its programs and services.
e) To contribute information for the institutional planning process.
f) To demonstrate accountability to the Board of Governors and the community at large.
g) To assure the compatibility of individual programs and service activities within the framework of the mission, vision and strategic directions of the institution.
h) To demonstrate accountability and compliance with the goals, policy and guidelines of the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission in matters of Quality Assurance.

V.   Policy

According to a schedule prepared by the Provost, in consultation with the QAC, all academic programs and support services will be externally reviewed on an assessment cycle not to exceed 7 years. The review process, not to exceed 18 months in duration, includes a self-study prepared by a Review Committee (RC) and an external review carried out by at least two external experts (with at least one coming from outside Atlantic Canada). To ensure continuous program/service improvement, an action plan and follow-up mechanisms must be built into the review.

When and where appropriate, the results of accreditation processes may be included, and/or substituted for the self-study component of the review and/or the external review. Any gaps between accreditation and the self-study requirements described in the accompanying supplemental documents must be addressed to ensure the same standards are applied across all programs.

VI.   Guiding Principles

Quality assurance at Cape Breton University is guided by:
>   the institutional mission, vision, values, and strategic plan.
>   the institutional graduate attributes.
>   the pursuit of continuous improvement.
>   a focus on the student experience and, in the case of academic programs, the quality of learning and teaching.

>   consultation with various stakeholders such as (but not limited to): faculty, staff, students, graduates, employers, accrediting bodies, program committees, and advisory committees.

>   critical and constructive self-reflection and analysis.

All information contained in the final self-study is public information and may be subject to access to information legislation. Personnel issues are beyond the purview of the review unit's self-study.

Procedures for the Quality Assurance Review of Academic Programs and Support Services

Document Type:	Subject:	Last Revised
Supporting document to "Quality Assurance Review Policy"	Quality assurance of academic programs and support services.	May 2025

1. Purpose

The purpose of these procedures is to provide a framework for academic programs and services under review to systematically collect and analyze information that will result in recommendations for improvement and assist in charting future directions.

The Quality Assurance Review Policy requires all academic programs and services undergo periodic reviews that involve the completion of a self-study and an external review.

a) The self-study is the principal focus of this procedures document.
b) The self-study is to be completed within the terms established by the policy with the purpose of providing for a free and reasonable discussion of accomplishments, issues and concerns for each review program/service.
c) The subsequent process provides for commentary and external review to be appended to the self-study towards advising the Provost in determining future actions as a result of the review.

2. Definitions

Review: An organized process of collecting, analyzing and reporting information to assist faculty, staff and administrators in making judgments about academic programs/services in reference to the University's Mission, Vision, and Strategic Plan.

Program: A Senate approved sequence of courses or other component of study prescribed for the fulfillment of the requirements of a particular degree/diploma/certificate and is considered to be the comprehensive body of studies required to graduate with a specialization in a particular discipline.

Service: For the purpose of the Quality Assurance Review Policy, a service refers to an academic support service or grouping of services that has a direct impact on student or faculty success.

Review Unit: An existing program, service, or composite grouping designated to undertake a set of activities related to the review process outlined in this document. A single program or combination of programs can be considered the review unit for a program review. A single service or combination of services can be considered the review unit for a service review.

Quality Assurance Committee (QAC): The Senate Quality Assurance Committee.

Review Committee (RC): The committee responsible for generating the self-study for a review unit.

Faculty: A member of the Cape Breton University Faculty Association (CBUFA) or the Nova Scotia Government & General Employees Union Local 18, Teachers Bargaining Unit (NSGEU).

Self-Study: An objective assessment of the quality and effectiveness of a review unit from the perspective of the RC based on criteria laid out in this document.

Self-Study Report: Document produced by the RC upon conclusion of the self-study process.

Review Report: The name used for the final review, which includes the review unit's self-study, the external reviewers' report, commentary from the RC in response to each of the recommendations contained in the external reviewers' report, action plans, and recommendations. A synopsis of the review process shall also be included in the final report document.

Final Report: Report drafted by the Office of the Provost incorporating documentation pertaining to a Quality Assurance review and including an executive report containing recommendations with responsibilities assigned and with timelines, as deemed appropriate.

3. Implementation & Monitoring

a) The responsibility for quality assurance falls under the Vice-President Academic and Provost (Provost).

b) The overall timeline for the review is determined by the Quality Assurance Review Policy. A timeline of 6-9 months is suggested for completion of the first draft of the self-study by the RC. The external reviewers' site visit should take place within 3 months of submission of the draft self- study report to the QAC by the RC.

c) The reviews will be coordinated and supported by the Office of the Provost in consultation with the QA Committee where matters of QA policy are at issue. The QAC will provide an annual report to Senate on institutional compliance with the Quality Assurance Policy.

d) Each self-study will be generated by an RC according to the terms set out in this procedures document (see section 6.1: Nature and Scope of the RC activity).

e) The Dean(s)/Director(s) responsible for the review unit will work in collaboration with the Office of the Provost to ensure that encouragement and adequate resources are available for the review to move forward in a timely fashion.

f) Monitoring by the QAC involves receiving a self-study timeline from the RC, communicating with the RC on their progress during the self-study process, reviewing and providing feedback on the first completed draft of the self-study, reviewing the names suggested as external reviewers in order to make recommendation to the Provost, and reviewing the Review Report prior to the Provost's response.

4. Self-Study

The self-study is the most significant portion of the review process, providing those associated with a particular program or service the opportunity for self-reflection. The self-study document provides the external reviewers with sufficient information to prepare for a site visit and evidence that will allow for judgments on program/service quality.

4.1 DOCUMENTATION FOR THE SELF-STUDY

Consistent with CBU's Mission, Vision, and Values a number of standard documents congruent with the review objectives will be used to assess the quality of the review units (see *Self-Study Guidelines for the Review of Academic Programs* or *Self-Study Guidelines for the Review of Academic Support Services*).

4.2 PRINCIPLES OF THE SELF-STUDY

The self-study will:
a) Be as objective as possible b)
   Be critical but constructive
c) Serve as the focal instrument for the review
d) Include specific recommendations based upon a judgment about the quality of the review unit
d) Adhere to the Guiding Principles in the Quality Assurance Review Policy

Faculty and staff will be encouraged to participate in proposing and implementing changes that will contribute to improvement. It should be noted that all information contained in the self-study will become public information.

As it is available, the RC will be provided with institutional and review unit data that are sufficient, appropriate, reliable, and consistent. Self-study recommendations will be based on, or have taken into account, these data.

Surveys, where appropriate, will be formulated and processed in conjunction with the Office of the Provost to objectively collect information from stakeholders if the information is not provided with the standard review data.

5. Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)

The Quality Assurance Committee advises and makes recommendations to Senate on policies and procedures related to Quality Assurance reviews. At the completion of a review, the QAC provides to Senate comment on the process and outcome of the Quality Assurance review. In addition, the QAC comments to the Provost and Senate on the overall quality and state of the academic programs and services of the university.

5.1 NATURE AND SCOPE OF QAC ACTIVITY

Although the QAC is not mandated to manage the procedures of the reviews, it is expected that the Office of the Provost will consult with the QAC to coordinate the efforts of both entities in supporting the units under review.

The QAC shall:

5.1.1   Receive and comment upon a recommended schedule of reviews from the Provost.

5.1.2   Receive a timeline from the RC by way of the Office of the Provost once a review has been initiated by the Provost.

5.1.3   Communicate with the RC on their progress throughout the self-study process.

5.1.4   Receive the draft self-study of the review unit from the RC. The Chair of the RC will present the findings and recommendations of the self-study report to the review unit before submitting it to QAC. QAC will submit constructive comments to the RC on the self-study

5.1.5   Review suitability of suggested external reviewers and make a recommendation to the Provost on the appointment of two individuals to assume this role.

5.1.6   Receive the completed Review Report from the RC containing the self-study, the external reviewers' report, and the RC response. QAC will inform RC if any revisions are required.

5.1.7   Submit the revised Review Report to the Provost for response.

5.1.8   Submit an annual report to Senate summarizing its activities and reporting on the progress of reviews.

5.1.9   In collaboration with the Provost, periodically provide a reflective perspective of the Quality Assurance Policy, identifying issues that may have arisen during reviews, and make appropriate recommendations to Senate.

6. Review Committee (RC)

When a program or service is designated for review at CBU, a Review Committee shall be constituted as set out in the *Quality Assurance Review Policy*. This committee is responsible for generating the self-study for a review unit. A representative of the Office of the Provost will serve as a resource during the review process.

6.1   COMPOSITION

The RC should consist of an appropriate mix of faculty, students/alumni, and others associated with the review unit. Suggested RC membership includes:

a)   The Dean/Director responsible for the program/service under review.

b)   Three (3) to five (5) faculty/staff members from within the review unit, appointed by the School/Academic Support Unit. One of these members will serve as the Chair of the RC.

c)   One (1) to two (2) faculty members from outside the review unit, appointed by the School or Academic Support Unit under review.

d)   At least one (1) student or alumnus representing the school under review, or, in the case of a service review, at least one student selected by the Students' Union.

e)   Up to two (2) additional members selected by a) through d).

The Chair of the RC will submit the composition of the RC to the Provost for approval. In cases where there is difficulty forming a committee, the composition of the RC will be determined through discussions between the Dean/Director responsible for the review unit and the Provost.

6.2 NATURE AND SCOPE OF RC ACTIVITY

6.2.1 The principal task of the RC is to prepare the self-study, in accordance with a timeline prepared and submitted to the QAC (through the Office of the Provost) at the beginning of the self-study process.

6.2.2 Solicit names for external reviewers and make recommendations to the QAC (See Appendix: 1.1).

6.2.3 Review the contents of the self-study with the external reviewers, as appropriate.

6.2.4 Present the Review Report, including the RC's response to the external reviewers' report, to the QAC for compliance review.

6.3 REVIEW PROCESS

In the term prior to the scheduled review, the Provost will notify the appropriate Dean or Director of the impending review and the Office of the Provost will provide a framework to the Dean/Director. Once the RC has been determined, it will develop a timeline, in accordance with the timeline for reviews stated in 3b. The timeline will include deadlines for the activities associated with the review and be submitted to the Office of the Provost. The timeline will be forwarded to the QAC by the Office of the Provost.

6.3.1 The RC review schedule shall provide opportunity for input from faculty, staff and students (current and former), employers, CBU officials and other external groups as appropriate.

6.3.2 In addition to the self-study, the RC will submit a list of names (and CVs) of potential external reviewers to the Office of the Provost for submission to the QAC (See Appendix: 1.1) .

6.3.3 The RC self-study shall provide a candid assessment of the review unit's current and desired role and suggest strategies for achieving its goals in relation to CBU's mission, vision, values and strategic direction.

6.3.4 The initial completed self-study will be forwarded by the RC to QAC for feedback.

6.3.5 The RC will submit the completed self-study to the Office of the Provost to be shared with the external reviewers.

6.3.6 The RC will receive a copy of the final external reviewers' report from the Office of the Provost and will have an opportunity to clarify any points arising from it.

6.3.7 The final RC document, the Review Report, will consist of: the self-study, the external reviewers' report, and commentary from the RC in response to the external reviewers' report.

6.3.8 The RC will submit the completed Review Report to the QAC. The QAC will review the report prior to submitting it to the Provost for response.

6.3.9 The Final Report, including the Review Report and the Provost's response, will be submitted to Senate for approval, after which time it will be public information.

6.4 IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

An implementation committee will be formed to expedite and lead the implementation of the final report after it is approved by Senate. Recommendations will normally be implemented or postponed (for further deliberation), in consultation with the implementation committee, within 2 years.

6.4.1 The members of the implementation committee for academic schools shall normally include the chair of the RC, department chairs or their designate, Dean, and Associate Deans. The implementation committee can consult other members of the school as needed.

6.4.2 The members of the implementation committee for academic service units shall normally include the chair of the RC, Director, Registrar, Dean/unit manager or their designate. Additional

members can be included or consulted as needed.

7. Office of the Provost

It is expected that the Office of the Provost and QAC will continuously work in a collaborative environment to coordinate the efforts of both entities in supporting the review units.

The QAC will benefit from the services of the Office of the Provost (as time allows) for exchanges with RC, the drafting of documents, and general Committee business.

7.1   Administrative matters such as initiating a procedure, providing support to RC, preparing documentation for the QAC, and communicating with external reviewers are examples of responsibilities assumed by the Office of the Provost.

7.2   The Office of the Provost will provide a framework to the Dean/Director of the program/service scheduled for review in the term prior to the scheduled review.

7.3   The Office of the Provost will provide an orientation for the RC at the beginning of the self- study process.

7.4   The Office of the Provost will supply program or service data, as available, and support the RC in the administration of stakeholder surveys.

7.5   The Office of the Provost will respond to requests from RC for support in carrying out the self-study and ensure that proper resources exist for the review to proceed in a timely fashion.

7.6   The Office of the Provost concludes an agreement with the external reviewers and arranges activities that will integrate with the internal review process (See Appendix: 2.2). Site visits by the external reviewers will normally be two days.

7.7   Following approval by the QAC, the self-study will be forwarded to the external reviewers by the Office of the Provost.

8. Vice President, Academic & Provost

8.1   The Provost will prepare a schedule of reviews that will be submitted to the QAC for comments.

8.2   In the term prior to the scheduled review, the Provost will notify the Dean or Director of the review unit of the impending review.

8.3   The Provost will prepare a response to the Review Report. This report will be incorporated in the Final Report

Appendix: Generic Terms of Reference for External Reviewers

Each program or service review will include an evaluation by two external reviewers. Their task will include:
   a)   An analysis of the principles and findings of the self-study.
   b)   Interaction with the faculty, students, graduates and staff (and others as deemed appropriate to the external review) in the School or Academic Unit under review, as well as the CBU administration.
   c)   Writing of a joint report with recommendations they deem appropriate.

1.   APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL REVIEWERS

   1.1   The RC will solicit suggestions for external reviewers from the faculty, students and staff of the review unit and forward its suggestions (minimum of four), together with background information (CVs), to the Office of the Provost.

   Persons chosen as external reviewers must:

   a)   Have a regional, national, or international reputation for excellence in the School or Academic Unit area under review;

   b)   Not currently be collaborating closely, nor in the past three (3) years have collaborated closely, with administration, faculty, or staff directly involved with the program/unit under review.
   At least one of the reviewers must come from outside Atlantic Canada.

   1.2   The QAC will recommend two external reviewers to the Provost, one appointed from the list recommended by RC, the second from the same list or appointed independently by the QAC.

   1.3   The Office of the Provost will engage the external reviewers and be responsible for all logistical and administrative arrangements with the external reviewers.

   1.4   The external reviewers will be assisted by a senior CBU faculty member. This person will be available to provide clarifications on the institution's context.

2.   RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EXTERNAL REVIEWERS

   2.1   Analysis of the RC Self-Study

   a)   The external reviewers will analyze the self-study and background documentation, with a view to determining whether the goals of the review unit meet generally accepted standards, and the extent to which these goals are appropriate. The reviewers are expected to determine the strengths and areas for improvement in unit and to make appropriate recommendations. Reviewers may also comment on the adequacy and appropriateness of the self-study process.

   b)   The external reviewers may request further information as they deem appropriate.

2.2   Site Visit to CBU

a)   Having reviewed the self-study, the external reviewers will visit CBU for on-site meetings. Alternatively, virtual meetings will be arranged if on-site visits are not possible. This visit will normally be two days duration. Reviewers are expected to visit simultaneously. Only under exceptional circumstances will individual visits be accommodated.

b)   The schedule for the visit will be arranged through the Office of the Provost.

2.3   The Report of the External Reviewers

a)   The external reviewers are expected to prepare and submit a joint report normally within forty-five calendar days after completing their site visits. In exceptional circumstances and, with the agreement of the QAC, separate reports may be submitted.

b)   The report of the external reviewers, complete with recommendations, will be submitted to the Office of the Provost who will determine if the external reviewers' report complies with the policy. Where the external reviewers' report is inconsistent or non-compliant with policy, the Office of the Provost will correspond with the external reviewers to resolve inconsistencies. Once resolved and the report modified accordingly, the report is deemed final.

c)   A copy of the external reviewers' report will be sent by the Office of the Provost to the Chair of the RC, giving the RC the opportunity to clarify any points arising from the external reviewers' report.

Self-Study Guidelines for the Review of Academic Programs

1. Introduction*

1.1 Program Overview

(a) Briefly describe the degree program, including in which School it resides, any options within the program, and approval date. A history of the program may be included, if deemed relevant for the external reviewers.

(b) State the mission and goals of the program and their relationship to the institutional mission and values.

(c) Provide a summary of the last review, including its recommendations and resulting changes.

1.2 Self-Study Context

(a) Provide the composition of the RC

(b) Provide an overview of the self-study process, including a timeline of activities, from whom information was sought, and a description of methods used to gather information.

*An institutional overview will be provided by the Office of the VPA.

2. Program Description

This section should fully describe the program, how it compares to similar programs, and its role in helping the university achieve its overall mission.

2.1 General Description[1]

(a) State the overall goals of the program[2] (*The purpose of this program is to…*).

(b) Describe the program's structure, including credits to degree and the breakdown in required and elective courses.

(c) Describe the academic policies, including admission, promotion, and graduation requirements; requests for transfer credit and advanced standing; and appeals. Links to the appropriate policies should be provided in the self-study document.

(d) Provide enrolments over the last six years, broken down by discipline and program type, if applicable.

(e) Provide the number of full-time and part-time faculty associated with the program and the percentage of courses taught by full-time faculty.

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[1] Completing this section involves the review of various sources of information describing the program. As a part of the self-study review, these information sources should be checked to ensure consistency of messaging.

[2] In a resource document published by the MPHEC entitled, *Writing Learning Outcomes: Principles, Considerations, and Examples* (Richard, J., 2016), a program goal is defined as a "general statement of intent and direction that explains one or more objectives of the program".

(f) Describe the delivery methods of the program.

(g) Describe the governing and decision-making structures associated with the program.

2.2 Curriculum

(a) Discuss any major curricular changes since the last review or program approval (whichever is most recent).

(b) Explain the pattern of course offerings over the previous six years, including an explanation for courses listed in the Academic Calendar but not taught over that time period. In an appendix, using a table like the one below, provide a listing of all courses offered over the previous six years, and indicate the number of sections offered each term. Explain the reason for any course not being offered at least every second year. Include other comments such as the number of annual online, evening, and/or non-traditional offerings.

Course Number	Course Title	Fall (Average # of Sections)	Winter (Average # of Sections)	Spring/Summer (Average # of Sections)

2.3 B e n c h m a r k i n g

The first step in benchmarking is identifying comparable programs. This includes similar programs at other institutions, as well as possibly similar programs internally. When selecting comparators, consider such things as program goals, institutional size, number of faculty associated with the program, and student enrolment. The following program components should be considered for benchmarking:

(a) Program structure (number of credits to degree, number and type of required versus elective courses)

(b) Admission requirements, including practices around transfer credits/advanced standing

(c) Progression and graduation requirements (e.g., honours, major, co-op)

(d) Other relevant benchmarking measures that speak to program quality (e.g., experiential learning, external credentialing, accreditation)

3. Learning Outcome Assessment

(a) List the program's student learning outcomes and illustrate their fulfilment of the institution's graduate attributes.

(b) Provide a mapping of the program's courses to the program's student learning outcomes. Include a table like the following:

Program/Learning Outcome	Courses Achieved in and Level Achieved *	Method of Assessment	Connection to CBU Graduate Attributes

*I	Introductory Level	*outcome is achieved at the introductory level, assuming limited or no prior knowledge*
R	Reinforced	*outcome is reinforced, assuming introduction in a previous course*
M	Mastered	*outcomes is mastered or met, usually assuming introduction/reinforcement in prior courses*

(c) Describe and evaluate the assessment procedures and methods used for each learning outcome.

(d) Present any other evidence of the achievement of program learning outcomes, for example, student/alumni survey results.

(e) Summarize the findings for each learning outcome in light of the program's stated goals and degree level expectations, identifying strengths and possible gaps.

4. Program Quality

4.1 F a c u l t y
Name, Degree, current status, Specialty, Courses taught in last 5 years, research output summary last 5 years

Provide a list of full-time faculty members* associated with the program under review over the last six years. The scope of the information in this section should be centered on providing details that directly relate to the program's quality. In the case of term faculty, include the year(s) employed, the length of contract, number of courses/labs instructed, and notes on the reason for the contract.

If applicable, include emeriti, senior scholars, adjunct faculty, and others who are integral to the program. This information is best provided in tabular form.

*Faculty information can be obtained through the Deans' Office.

Name	Highest Degree/ Professional Designation	Hire Date and End Date, if applicable	Current Rank (if applicable)	Current Status (Tenure/Tenure Track/ Continuing/Limited Term/ Emeritus/Senior Scholar/Adjunct)	Specialty

(a) Quality of Teaching
   i) For each faculty member over the last six years, provide a review of teaching activity, including courses taught, number of sections delivered, course/program development (new courses), and innovative practices.
   ii) As available and appropriate, provide aggregate course evaluation data by discipline, compared to all of CBU/the School/other programs.
   iii) Include any other indicators of teaching quality, including distinguished teaching awards.

(b) Faculty Research/ Scholarly Activity

   For each full-time faculty member, summarize faculty research and scholarly activity over the last six years in tabular form, including such things as funding, publications, conference presentations, technical reports, policy documents, students supervised, and/or any other inputs or outputs a review committee decides are relevant.

(c) Faculty Service
Summarize faculty participation in the department, university, profession, and community. Include evidence of collegiality, interdisciplinary activities, and committee involvement over the last six years.

(d) Professional Development
Summarize faculty participation in development activities over the last six years.

4.2 Students

(a) Supports to Students
i) Describe and assess the advising (academic, career, etc.) for students enrolled in the program. Include student input through surveys or other means.
ii) Summarize the efforts to support incoming students in their transition to studies at CBU. Retention and enrolment rates will be provided to you by the VPA Office.
iii) Summarize other supports available to students, including those offered through Student Services and the Library. Describe any supports specific to international students.

(b) Student Engagement & Satisfaction
i) Provide information on student involvement in scholarship, research and other forms of experiential learning or professional activities, including numbers of students involved and types of activities.
ii) Discuss student satisfaction. Include student survey results that illustrate students' opinions on program outcomes and quality.

4.3 Graduates

(a) Provide graduation information for the program, such as credentials granted, graduation rates, and time-to-completion. Data can be provided to you by the VPA Office.
(b) Provide information on graduates, including such things as the number of graduates employed in a field or job requiring the degree, number who attended graduate school, number who attended professional schools, number taking/passing licensing exams, and other accomplishments that reflect on program quality. Data can be provided to you by the VPA Office in conjunction with Alumni.
(c) From alumni survey results, discuss alumni opinions regarding the program and its quality.

4.4 Resources

(c) Faculty – Discuss the use of faculty resources, retirement projections, and plans for hiring new faculty. Plans for hiring new faculty should consider enrolment trends/projections, and trends in faculty composition in terms of disciplinary and other considerations.

(d) Teaching and Research Resources – Describe the teaching and research supports available to faculty.

(e) Library Resources – Describe and assess library holdings and access for both faculty and students in the program.

(f) Physical Resources – Describe and assess the spaces used by students and faculty, such as classrooms, student labs, faculty offices, faculty research spaces, common spaces, etc.

(g) Technological Resources – Describe and assess the availability of technologies to support the program, including online and distance resources.

(h) Recruitment – Describe and assess the recruitment efforts for the program, including faculty/staff involvement, brochures, the website, scholarships and bursaries, etc.

(i) Budget – Provide high-level information on operating budget.

5. Critical Analysis

5.1 Threats, Opportunities, Weaknesses & Strengths

Based on the information gathered and assessed during the self-study process, identify the external threats and opportunities for the program, as well as the internal strengths and weaknesses.

5.2 Recommendations

This section should include recommendations based on the critical self-study. Recommendations may include:

- Revising mandates
- Revising courses, programs, or services
- Recommending new courses, programs, or services
- Reorganizing human resources
- Acquiring or reallocating of resources
- Restructuring physical space

Accompanying Documentation

Accompanying documentation should include CVs for all full-time faculty and course syllabi (in senate approved format) for courses taught within the program over the previous six years. Lengthy tables and supporting information should be placed in appendices.

Guidelines for Self-Study Modifications

During the self-study process, if the Review Committee (RC) discovers that their program does not align with a specific section of the framework or if the RC wishes to modify a section of the framework they can consult with the Quality Assurance Advisor to make the required changes.

Self-Study Guidelines for the Review of Accredited Academic Programs

1. Program Overview

1.1 Briefly describe the degree program, including in which School it resides, any options within the program, and approval date. A history of the program may be included, if deemed relevant for the external reviewers.

1.2 State the mission and goals of the program and their relationship to the institutional mission and values.

1.3 Provide the full accreditation review, including its recommendations and resulting changes.

2. Critical Analysis

2.1 Threats, Opportunities, Weaknesses & Strengths

Based on the information gathered and assessed during the accreditation process, identify the external threats and opportunities for the program, as well as the internal strengths and weaknesses.

2.2 Recommendations

This section should include recommendations based on the accreditation review and SWOT analysis. These recommendations and those of the accreditation review will inform the Vice-President Academic and Provost's report to Senate.

Recommendations may include:
- Revising mandates
- Revising courses, programs, or services
- Recommending new courses, programs, or services
- Reorganizing human resources
- Acquiring or reallocating of resources
- Changes/additions to physical space and/or equipment

2.3 Additional Information

The Review Committee may consult with the Quality Assurance Advisor if they wish to provide additional information from the sections of the Quality Assurance Framework.

Self-Study Guidelines for the Review of Academic Support Units

1. Introduction*****

1.1 Unit Description

(a) Briefly describe the unit. If deemed relevant for the external reviewers, include a history of the unit.

(b) State the mandate of the unit.

(c) State the overall goals of the unit.

(d) Describe where the unit fits within the organization, as well as the organization of the unit itself (organizational structure).

(e) In a table (or as an Appendix), list the positions within the unit, the number of each position, and the role of each.

(f) Provide details on who is served by the unit, including usage statistics.

(g) Describe any policies or governing/decision-making structures connected to the operation of the unit.

(h) Provide a summary of the last review, including recommendations and resulting changes.

*An institutional overview will be provided by the Office of the VPA.

1.2 Self-Study Context

(a) Provide the composition of the RC.

(b) Provide an overview of the self-study process, including a timeline of activities, from whom information was sought, and a description of methods used to gather information.

2. Unit Assessment

Academic Support Units undergo assessments annually, as part of the Academic Planning Process. The Quality Assurance Review, conducted every 5-7 years, provides the opportunity to aggregate the information gained annually for a deeper look at the unit's continuing appropriateness and effectiveness.

2.1 Goal Alignment

Examine the goals of the unit in relation to the overall institutional goals to ensure alignment. Identify any areas of inconsistencies, as well as opportunities to better support the institutional goals.

2.2   Service Objectives and Actual Outcomes

Complete the following table for each service/support delivered by the unit:

Service Objectives (Expected Outcomes) *What should a student or other user – faculty, staff, vendor, etc. – gain, learn, and/or be able to do as a result of using the service/support?*	Criteria (Measurement) *What are the measures/indicators used to assess the service objectives?*	Summary Results of Assessment (Actual Service Outcomes) *Include a summary of the data presented in the annual reports produced since the last review.*	Use of Results/ Improvements to Date *Describe any changes made to services as a result of the annual assessments since the last review.*

2.3.   Benchmarking

The first step in benchmarking is to identify comparable units. This may include similar units at other institutions and/or other internal units. The following components of the unit may be considered for benchmarking, as appropriate:

(a) Scope of responsibilities
(b) Size of staff
(c) Number of students/faculty/staff served
(d) Budget
(e) Physical space
(f) Equipment

2.4.   Input from Stakeholders

Collecting input from various stakeholders (e.g., students, alumni, faculty, staff, employers) should be a regular part of departmental assessments to gain feedback on whether service objectives are met and whether the unit is effective. While valuable information may be collected informally from stakeholders, the self-study is a time when the unit should ensure feedback is formally collected and documented, e.g., through surveys, interviews, and focus groups.

The types of questions to address with each group include:

Are the service objectives relevant/current to today's needs?
Should the unit add service objectives?
Should the unit eliminate certain service objectives that are irrelevant?
Are stakeholders aware of all the services/supports available and do they understand how to best utilize them?

For each stakeholder group, the feedback reported in this section should include the method of assessment/instrument(s) used to the information/data and a summary of the information/data gathered. More detailed reports can be included as Appendices, if deemed to be of value.

3.   Critical Analysis

3.1 Department Discussion & Review of Services/Supports

After the information is gathered for the previous sections of the self-study, the unit should find sufficient time to review and discuss the questions below in light of the aggregated assessment data.

(a) Contribution of the Unit to the Student Experience

How is the unit contributing to the student experience?

Is there more the unit could be doing to enhance the student experience at the university?

(b) Continuing Appropriateness & Effectiveness of the Services/Supports

Are services/supports being delivered as intended?

Are new and/or different services/supports required?

Are the most appropriate procedures and processes consistently deployed?

Do any of the service objectives and/or measures need to be changed?

(c) Capacity to Deliver the Services/Supports

Does the unit have the capacity to deliver the current services/supports?

Are human, physical, technological, and financial resources being used appropriately and efficiently?

If new services/supports have been identified, how will they be resourced and who will be responsible for ongoing assessment?

Is additional staff training required?

(d) Communicating with Users

Are students or other users aware of the services/supports available to them and how to access them?

How are users made aware of changes to services/supports?

Are materials used to inform users of the services/supports clear and effective?

Are the current means of communication effective?

3.2   Recommendations

This section should include recommendations and related actions that have emerged from the critical self-study. They may include changes to:
- Services offered
- Service objectives and/or criteria that will be assessed annually
- Procedures and process employed to serve stakeholder
- Information and materials provided
- Roles and responsibilities of staff
- Allocation of resources
- Physical space

Guidelines for Self-Study Modifications

During the self-study process, if the Review Committee (RC) discovers that their unit does not align with a specific section of the framework or if the RC wishes to modify a section of the framework they can consult with the Quality Assurance Officer to make the required changes.

Guidelines for Self-Study Modifications

Quality Assurance Program/Service Review Process Timeline

# of months

-2 -1 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16

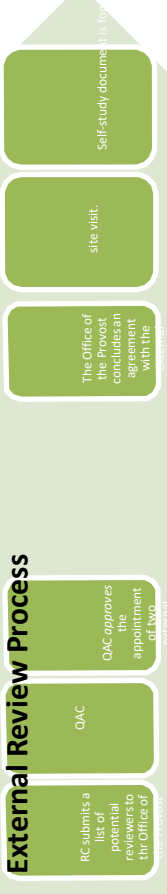|						
Provost notifies Dean/Director of impending review and provides a framework	Self-study process begins	External Review preparations begin	Self-study complete	Two-day site visit takes place	The Office of the Provost receives external reviewers' report and determines compliance with policy	external reviewers' report from the Office of the Provost and has the opportunity to clarify any points	Review Report for QAC to review (self-study + reviewers' report + commentary from RC)	Provost prepares a response to the Review Report	Final Report is submitted to Senate for approval

Self-Study Process

Dean/Director oversees the formation of a Review Committee (RC)	RC has first meeting, marking official beginning of the review	timeline to the Office of the Provost for submission to QAC	the initial completed self-study to QAC for compliance review	QAC submits constructive comments to RC on self-study	RC submits the finalized self-study to the Office of the Provost

External Review Process

RC submits a list of potential reviewers to the Office of	QAC	QAC approves the appointment of two	The Office of the Provost concludes an agreement with the	site visit.	Self-study documents for

Quality AssuranceTemplate: Academic Program Review Team Report

The purpose of this template is to provide a framework to guide the review team as they conduct the site visit and prepare their report of the program.

The following evaluation criteria are a guideline only. A number of questions are provided for consideration.   The reviewers are not expected to respond to each of the questions, but rather use them as a guide to aid in preparing and structuring the report.

Visit Preparation

The Review Team can expect to:
>   Be in possession of and review the *Self-Study* and any supporting documents
>   Be provided with a site visit schedule prior to the visit
>   Have the opportunity to identify other groups or specific individuals to meet

A.   Description of the Visit

Briefly describe:
>   People and groups interviewed
>   Facilities toured
>   Documents reviewed
>   Any other activities relevant to the appraisal

B.   Evaluation Criteria

1.   Goals and Objectives
>   Is the program consistent with the institution's mission?
>   Are the program requirements and learning outcomes clear, appropriate, and in line with degree level expectations?
>   Does the program have adequate procedures in place to determine whether it is meeting its instructional goals and objectives and to determine and refine curricular content?

2.   Recruitment & Admissions
>   Are the admission requirements for the programs appropriate?
>   Are there any concerns with the admissions processes?
>   Are there suitable materials and resources in place for advertising and promoting student recruitment?

3.   Program Structure & Curriculum
>   Is the program's structure optimal in terms of credits to degree, number and type of required vs elective credits, and credits required for major/honours?

Does the program's curriculum educate students in the appropriate values, knowledge and skills?

Does the curriculum reflect the current state of the area of study?

Does the curriculum support the institution's graduate attributes?

What evidence is there of innovation/creativity in the content and/or delivery of the program?

Are the modes of delivery appropriate and effective to meet the program's identified learning outcomes?

Are the methods used to assess student achievement of the defined learning outcomes and degree level expectations appropriate and effective?

4. **Student Experience**

4.1 Learning Environment

Does the program provide a stimulating, challenging learning environment for all students?

Do the courses offered in the various modes of instruction (lecture, seminar, laboratory, clinical practice, fieldwork, other forms of experiential learning, etc.) provide an appropriate balance for the program?

Do courses effectively include use of instructional media, computers, and other modern technologies and employ innovative teaching strategies?

4.2 Student Supports & Engagement

Do students receive timely and accurate academic advising?

Are there sufficient academic supports available to students in the program?

Is there evidence of students participating in the academic life of the program through undergraduate research and other opportunities for student/faculty collaborative work?

What efforts are made to create an intellectual and social climate that fosters student development and learning (e.g. clubs, student chapters of professional organizations, etc.)?

4.3 Student Satisfaction

Are there concerns around the satisfaction of students in the program, both in regards to the academic experience and the overall student experience?

5. **Quality Indicators**

Comment on faculty qualifications, research & scholarly activity, teaching activity, and the use of contract instructors.

Comment on retention rates, credentials granted, graduation rates, and time-to-completion.

Comment on graduate outcomes and/or other feedback received from the alumni survey.

6. **Resources**

Identify any concerns with human, physical, technological, budgetary, and/or academic support resources.

7. **Quality Enhancement**

Comment on initiatives taken or underway to enhance the quality of the program and the associated learning and teaching environment.

C. Other Issues

D. Summary and Recommendations

Questions to consider when preparing this section:

What are the weaknesses and areas of improvement for the program? What further challenges do you foresee the program facing in the coming years?

Are there differences between the program's view of its role and the university expectations for the program?

What should be the core objectives and priorities for the program over the next five years?

What opportunities exist to extend and build upon present strengths and what do you see as the major obstacles that impede the program's progress?

What improvements are possible through reallocating existing resources?

What improvements can only be addressed through additional resources? What are innovative ways to address these needs?

Quality AssuranceTemplate: Academic Support Unity Review Team Report

The purpose of this template is to provide a framework to guide the review team as they conduct the site visit and prepare their report of the unit.

Visit Preparation

The Review Team can expect to:
- Be in possession of and review the *Self-Study* and any supporting documents
- Be provided with a site visit schedule prior to the visit
- Have the opportunity to identify other groups or specific individuals to meet

The following evaluation criteria are a guideline only. For the "Recommendations for improvements" section, a number of questions are provided for consideration. The reviewers are not expected to respond to each of the questions, but rather use them as a guide to aid in preparing the recommendations.

A. **A brief summary of the visit, including:**
- When the visit took place
- People & groups interviewed
- Facilities toured
- Documents reviewed
- Any other activities relevant to the appraisal

B. **Major findings related to the following items (as appropriate):**
- Alignment of the goals of the unit with those of the university
- Role of the unit within the university and relationship to other units
- Contribution to the student experience
- Relationship with other users
- Ongoing planning & assessment processes
- Appropriateness & effectiveness of the services/supports delivered
- Appropriateness & effectiveness of communication with stakeholders
- Resource allocation/capacity to deliver services/supports
- Other issues to be addressed

C. **Recommendations for improvement**
   Questions to consider when preparing this section:
- What are the weaknesses and areas of improvement for the unit?
- What further challenges do you foresee the unit facing in the coming years?
- Are there differences between the unit's view of its role and the expectations of: 1) the university, and 2) its different stakeholders?
- What should be the core objectives and priorities for the unit over the next five years?
- What improvements are possible through reallocating existing resources?
- What improvements can only be addressed through additional resources? What are innovative ways to address these needs?
- Are the recommendations provided in the self-study reflective of the self-study's findings?
- Are there additional recommendations that come from the self-study and/or the site visit?

CBU Graduate Attributes

The first goal of the university experience is the pursuit of specialized knowledge. In addition to discipline-specific learning, students grow and develop as individuals through the total university experience, including their co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. This growth and development will be reflective of the university a student attends, so the CBU graduate attributes communicate the kinds of experiences and opportunities a student can expect at Cape Breton University, both inside and outside the classroom.

Graduate attributes are the higher-level skills and qualities that students should obtain through their learning and overall university experiences. Each student will bring a unique lens to their learning and, in turn, will experience the CBU graduate attributes in their own way. These attributes are not meant to represent specific or remedial skills that are to be taught; they are to be developed over time across a wide range of courses and experiences that students will have.

Foundational to all Cape Breton University curriculum, experiences, and activities is a commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility, allyship, reconciliation and decolonization.

CBU graduates are prepared to demonstrate

- Active and responsible citizenship;
- Creativity and curiosity;
- Information literacies and professional integrity; and
- Effective communication and collaboration.

as they engage in their workplaces, communities and the wider world.

Active and Responsible Citizenship
As active and responsible citizens, CBU graduates engage in local and global communities in ways that are inclusive and mutually supportive.

During their studies at CBU, students will have the opportunity to:
- Respectfully engage L'nu and other cultural perspectives
- Embrace and value diversity, accessibility, and allyship
- Understand the historical contexts that impact local and global community dynamics
- Practice active stewardship of the environment

Creativity and Curiosity
CBU graduates demonstrate creativity and curiosity; they are adaptable, resourceful and resilient in acquiring, creating and applying knowledge.

During their studies at CBU, students will have the opportunity to:
- Nurture a learning spirit
- Demonstrate courage to challenge themselves
- Actively embrace a culture of research and knowledge creation
- Apply creative, innovative, and/or entrepreneurial responses to personal and societal problems

Information Literacies and Professional Integrity

CBU graduates find, synthesize, apply and acknowledge information in all of its various formats, with honesty and integrity.

During their studies at CBU, students will have the opportunity to:
- Learn to demonstrate a high level of academic integrity
- Gather and critically examine sources of knowledge, discerning information from misinformation
- Apply ethical reasoning to social/societal problems and challenges
- Develop digital and data literacies while adapting to emergent technologies

Effective Communication and Collaboration

CBU graduates effectively listen and share ideas to work toward a common goal.

During their studies at CBU, students will have the opportunity to:
- Value diverse perspectives while being able to advocate for one's own position
- Skillfully communicate in a variety of modes and formats
- Adapt communication to different audiences
- Work independently and in teams, serving in both leadership and support roles

Graduates will be able to articulate their learning and growth through a number of statements.

As a CBU Graduate...

"I recognize the relationships between personal wellbeing and wellbeing for all. I take action on social, economic, environmental, and cultural issues."

"I am genuinely curious, open to new experiences, perspectives, and knowledge. When challenged, I approach personal and societal problems with creativity and innovation."

"I critically evaluate information, distinguishing fact from misinformation. I readily acquire new literacies, recognizing the potential of evolving technologies for life-long learning."

"I am adaptable, versatile and respectful in ways of communicating and working with others."

CBU Order of Program & Support Unit Reviews

Updated June 2022*

Program	Last Review Completed	Scheduled Reviews Initiated
Bachelor of Arts (BA)	2017	2023, every 6 years thereafter
Bachelor of Arts Community Studies (BACS)	2018	2023**, every 6 years thereafter
Bachelor of Arts and Science in Environment (BASE)	--	2023, every 6 years thereafter
Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA)	In progress***	2027, every 6 years thereafter
Bachelor of Education (BEd) accreditation	Program modifications completed in 2020	Accreditation scheduled to be completed in 2023
Bachelor of Engineering Technology (BET)	2022	2027, every 6 years thereafter
Bachelor of Emergency Management (BEM)****	In progress	2028, every 6 years thereafter
Bachelor of Health Sciences (Public Health) [BHSc(PH)] accreditation	2014	Accreditation scheduled to be completed in 2023
Bachelor of Hospitality and Tourism Management (BHTM)	2021	2027, every 6 years thereafter
Bachelor of Science (BSc)	In progress	2029, every 6 years thereafter
Bachelor of Science, Nursing (BScN) accreditation	2017	2023, every 6 years thereafter (or following accreditation cycle)
Diploma in Government Management	Approved July 2022	2025, every 6 years thereafter
Post-baccalaureate Education Diploma in Educational Technology	--	2023, every 6 years thereafter
Post-baccalaureate Education Diploma in Curriculum	--	Currently undergoing modifications at the request of NS Teacher Certification
Post-baccalaureate Education Diploma in Counselling	--	Program discontinued in 2021
Post-baccalaureate Education Certificate in High School Mathematics Education	Approved 2022	2026, every 6 years thereafter
Bachelor of Social Work	Approved 2022	Pre-accreditation underway; full accreditation expected in 2025
Master of Business Administration in Community Economic Development (MBA)	2018	2023 every 6 years thereafter
Master of Education in Sustainability, Creativity, and Innovation	Approved February 2021	2024, every 6 years thereafter
Post-baccalaureate Diploma in Supply Chain Management	Approved October 2017	2022, every 6 years thereafter
Post-baccalaureate Diploma in Business Management	Approved October 2017	2022, every 6 years thereafter
Post-baccalaureate in Diploma Business Analytics	Approved Fall 2019	2023, every 6 years thereafter
Post-baccalaureate in Diploma Health Care Management	Approved Fall 2021	2024, every 6 years thereafter
Post-baccalaureate in Diploma in Occupational Health and Safety Management	Approved 2021	2025, every 6 years thereafter

Academic Support Unit		
Athletics & Campus Life (ACL)	2021	TBD
Centre for Teaching & Learning (CTL)	2022	2028, every 6 years thereafter
Cultural Assets (CA)	In progress	2028, every 6 years thereafter
Library (Lib)	2021	2027, every 6 years thereafter
Office of Research & Graduate Studies (ORGS)	2019	2024, every 6 years thereafter
Office of the Registrar and Admissions (ORA)	In progress	2028, every 6 years thereafter
Student Affairs (SA)	In progress	2028, every 6 years thereafter

Reviews include all Majors, Minors, Certificates, and Diplomas within the degree; Each review will take 12 - 18 months to complete

*Timelines have been reconfigured to reflect changes required in relation to CBU's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions. This is a one-time adjustment made by the Quality Assurance Committee of Senate. Units will be required to adhere to the new schedule with a new review scheduled to begin every six years.

** Includes the first full review of the **Honours/Major in Sport and Physical Activity Leadership** (approved Feb 26, 2016) and the Major in Applied Theatre (approved July 12, 2016). Status updates must be submitted to MPHEC prior to this first full review:

- Honours/Major in Sport and Physical Activity Leadership – Reports to be submitted in **May 2018** and **May 2021** on the faculty deployment plan, including the status of anticipated faculty hires and details on steps taken/to be taken in the event the anticipated full-time faculty hires are not realized.
- Major in Applied Theatre – Report to be submitted in **2019-20** on steps taken to address the impact of increasing enrolments in Community Studies courses as a result of the introduction of the new major.

*** Includes the first full review of the **Supply Chain Management Major** (approved Oct 5, 2016)

**** The first full review of the **Emergency Management programs** is required to be submitted to MPHEC by **Fall 2023**. The following status updates are required prior to this date:

- CBU to provide confirmation of the faculty resources to support the program prior to implementation of the first full year (**July 2018**) including part-time faculty hires (with appended CVs) and an update to the faculty deployment plan that identifies each faculty member, their areas of expertise, and courses they will teach.
- Prior to the fourth full year of implementation (**July 2021**), CBU to provide a progress report demonstrating successful implementation of the programs, including information on the second full-time faculty hire, an update on faculty resources and their involvement in the program, a report on the practicum component and details regarding online delivery.

Program review by year

Start Year	Program/ Academic Support Unit
2022	BSc, PB Bus. MGMT, PB SCM, BEM,
2023	BA, BACS, MBA, PB Bus. Analytics, BASE, Ed. Tech, BScN, BHSc
2024	ORGS, PB Health Care MGMT, M.Ed SCI, B.Ed
2025	Dip. Govt MGMT, PB OHS, BSW
2026	PB Certificate in Math
2027	BHTM, LIB
2028	SA, ORA, PB Bus. MGMT, PB SCM, BEM, BET, BBA, CTL, CA
2029	BA, BACS, MBA, PB Bus. Analytics, BASE, BSC, Ed. Tech, BScN, BHSc

Repeats every 6 years