

Guidelines for Advisory Teams
Participating in UPEI Quality Assurance of Academic Programs
(Prepared by the Senate Academic Planning and Curriculum Committee as required
by UPEI Senate Policy on Quality Assurance of Academic Programs)

Last APCC Update: September 13, 2022

The following *Guidelines for Advisory Teams Participating in UPEI Quality Assurance of Academic Programs* support the *UPEI Senate Policy for Quality Assurance of Academic Programs*.

The criteria outlined in the following document are specific to the development of the Advisory Teams and the role, duties and expectations associated with reviews of credit bearing exit credential programs and their related activities at UPEI. Review criteria have a strong student focus.

Selection and Composition of Advisory Team

Selection of Advisory Team members for external review of UPEI programs is aligned with the *MPHEC Guidelines for the Selection of External Program Assessors*

[http://mphec.ca/resources/Guidelines for the Selection of External Program Assessors.pdf](http://mphec.ca/resources/Guidelines_for_the_Selection_of_External_Program_Assessors.pdf)
and UPEI's commitment to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) [link needed].

1. Each Advisory Team will be comprised of one UPEI faculty member from a cognate unit at UPEI and two or more scholars from outside the University.
2. Advisory Team candidates should have sufficient experience within the academic community to have a strong understanding of University systems and processes, programs, student issues, and the Canadian post-secondary landscape.
3. In consultation with the Program Lead, the Dean of the Faculty will provide the Vice-President Academic and Research (VPAR and Chair, APCC) with a list of potential program reviewers (i.e. Advisory Team members) for final selection. Two names will be provided for each Advisory Team position (i.e. six potential reviewers in total: two candidates for the internal Advisory Team member; four candidates for the external Advisory Team members).
4. External Advisory Team members should be nominated from faculty in appropriate disciplines at Canadian universities. An effort to identify one regional expert and one expert from outside Atlantic Canada is preferable to provide scope and balance to the review. Consideration of UPEI's commitment to EDI is required in the nomination and selection of Advisory Team members.
5. In determining candidates for the Advisory Team, Program Leads and Deans should refer to the MPHEC guideline noted above to ensure any potential conflict of interest is avoided.

6. The Dean and VPAR will consult to determine which prospective reviewers are approached first. The Faculty Dean will contact the prospective Advisory Team members to provide information on the review, roles and expectations, and invite their participation.
7. Upon confirmation of intent to participate, Advisory Team members will be contacted by the Vice-President Academic and Research Office to confirm participation and duties through a letter of acceptance detailing review timelines, deliverables, travel expense policy, and honorarium.
8. Following knowledge and experience gained during the COVID-19 pandemic, virtual site visits may replace in person site visits. However, if the review includes a new program, extensive infrastructure (such as labs, facilities, etc.), or would provide a distinct benefit from in-person consultation, an in-person site visit is recommended.

Review Components

1. Advisory Team members will be provided with all necessary documentation on UPEI's quality assurance program review process.
2. The Advisory Team will identify one its external review experts as the Advisory Team Lead. The Advisory Team Lead will be responsible for coordination, preparation, and submission of the Advisory Team Report and Recommendations.
3. The Advisory Team will undertake a review of the program/s and related activities beginning with review of the self-study prepared by the Academic Program unit.
4. Following independent review of the self-study, the Advisory Team will conduct a site visit. The site visit may be in-person or virtual. The agenda for the site visit will be developed by the Department Chair and/or Dean of the program/s being reviewed and approved by the VPAR/Chair, APCC. The draft agenda will be provided to the Advisory Team approximately one month prior to the site visit.
 - a) Site visits will normally:
 - i. take place over 2 days;
 - ii. include consultations with senior academic staff (e.g. the Vice-President Academic and Research, Dean(s), Associate Dean(s), Department Chair or Coordinator), faculty and staff associated with the program, students, graduates, the University Librarian or an assigned Library liaison, key internal and external stakeholders (e.g. graduates and/or employers of graduates); and
 - iii. provide an overview of facilities and infrastructure.
 - b) The standard elements of the assessment that the Advisory Team will consider in its review include:

Program Rationale and Structure

- a) Does the program have a strong focus on students and program quality?
- b) What are the defining characteristics of the program?
- c) Does the program have a clear and reasonable strategic direction?
- d) Is this direction aligned with the mission, vision, and strategic priorities of the University?
- e) What are the goals of the program? Are program goals clearly articulated, realistic, and evaluated on a regular basis?
- f) How well is the program achieving what it has set out to be accomplished?

Curriculum and Teaching

- a) Is the curriculum up-to-date and appropriate in respect to discipline and credential/degree level expectations?
- b) What is the process for curriculum renewal?
- c) Does the curriculum align with the program's focus and goals?
- d) Are learning outcomes across the curriculum clearly laid out for students and linked to required courses and program goals?
- e) Is the supply of elective courses satisfactory?
- f) What types of experiential learning are embedded in the program? Is there an appropriate procedure in place to administer and evaluate the experiential education components?
- g) Are the program's structure and delivery method(s) appropriate?
- h) Is the student workload appropriate?
 - i. Are admission requirements appropriate? Are there appropriate procedures and mechanisms for assessing applicants?
 - ii. What strategies are used within the program to address academics and progression to graduate or professional programming, career development, and lifelong learning?
 - iii. Are there any gaps identified in curricular components and program goals?

Student Success Indicators

- a) Is the achievement of student learning and graduate outcomes a core focus that is measured on an ongoing basis?
- b) To what extent do enrolled students succeed (e.g., retention, time to completion, graduation rates, etc.)?
- c) What measures are used to assess the performance of students relative to program goals? How well are students achieving these goals?
- d) Are there identified barriers to student success within the program?
- e) What measures of student satisfaction and engagement are regularly reviewed? How does evidence from these measures impact program renewal?
- f) How is the success of program graduates assessed?

Learning Supports

- a) Does the program provide appropriate academic advisement to students?
- b) Are supports provided for students and the learning environment appropriate (e.g., library, student services, technology systems, physical infrastructure, etc.)?

Culture of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity (EDI)

- a) How does the program work to include inclusive content, design, and teaching practices?
- b) Does the program provide pathways to recruit and admit underrepresented students?
- c) Does the program work to recruit and retain a diverse faculty and staff complement?
- d) What initiatives are in place to support an inclusive learning environment?

Culture of Reconciliation

- a) Are University commitments to reconciliation addressed through curriculum, teaching, research and service?
- b) Is there evidence of consultation with University Indigenous leaders and faculty?
- c) How does the program work to include truth and reconciliation in the content, design, and teaching practices of the program/s?
- b) Does the program provide pathways to recruit and admit Indigenous students?
- c) Does the program work to recruit and retain Indigenous faculty and staff complement?
- d) What truth and reconciliation initiatives are in place to support the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action within the learning environment?

Faculty and Staff

- a) Do program faculty and staff have the capacity to deliver the program and the quality of education necessary for the students to achieve the needs of existing and anticipated students?
- b) Is the distribution of expertise appropriate for the program?
- c) Do program faculty participate in continuing progress and achievement in teaching, research, scholarly endeavors, and creative activities?
- d) Is the pattern of scholarly research and/or creative activity related to the program appropriate?
- e) Are the goals and objectives of the unit with respect to professional and/or community service clearly laid out?
- f) Is the level and quality of service being provided to the University, the profession and the community appropriate?
- g) Is there an appropriate balance among scholarly research, teaching and professional or community service that allows the program to fulfill its mission?
- h) Is the student/faculty ratio appropriate?

Facilities and Resources

- a) How effective and efficient are the management, organization and decision-making structures of the program in respect to human resource and budget management?
- b) Are existing resources (including human, physical, technological, and financial

- resources) used appropriately and effectively?
- c) Does the University have a sufficient supply of the following facilities and resources?
 - d) Taking into consideration student interest and labour market trends, are the resources appropriate to sustain the program?

Graduate Programs (if applicable)

- a) Is the level of scholarship within the program(s) appropriate for a graduate program (as demonstrated by scientific, scholarly, and professional publications or by appropriate creative activity)?
- b) Does the program satisfy the expectations of a graduate program?
- c) Do program Graduate Faculty members have appropriate experience and training in respect to supervising and mentoring graduate students?

Advisory Team Report

1. Based on examination of the program's self-study (including student, program, research, and financial, and institutional data provided through the Office of the VPAR), as well as the site visit, interviews, and consultations, the Advisory Team will prepare an Advisory Team Report and Recommendations. This report is to be submitted no later than one month following the Advisory Team's site visit.
2. The Advisory Team report will:
 - a) consider and address criteria outlined in this document;
 - b) provide recommendations to program leadership as appropriate;
 - c) include an executive summary;
 - d) provide recommendations that are student-focused on aim to assist the Academic Program unit with efforts of continual improvement and student success over the long-term;
 - e) be used as a critical reference for the development of a multi-year Action Plan by program Faculty and leadership to outline continual improvements to ensure the ongoing quality of the academic program, program delivery, and student experiences. This Faculty developed Action Plan will be submitted to APCC for review and approval, communicated to UPEI Senate, MPHEC, and the broader UPEI community.