Action Plan in Response to Reviewers' Recommendations from the Assessment of UPEI's Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures

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September 15, 2023

Background

- MPHEC's primary role is to confirm that reviews occur periodically to ensure the ongoing quality of programs and student services.

- Validation that institutional quality assurance (QA) frameworks meet required regional standards.

- QAM process review aims to answer the following questions:

  1. What progress have institutions made since the "first cycle"?
  2. To what extent are institutions following their own QA framework?
  3. To what extent are institutions' QA frameworks aligned with the MPHEC's 2016 Guidelines for Maritime Universities' Quality Assurance Frameworks?

- Institutional review conducted on March 13 – 14, 2023.

Overall Assessment by Review Team

- Overall positive review that UPEI's policy and guidelines provide a firm foundation for quality assurance through cyclical program reviews.

- Since the last QAM review in 2008-09, UPEI has been diligent in addressing the recommendations made in the 1st cycle report and has made significant changes to its QA policies and procedures.

- Based on interview sessions, reviewers found three focal points are increasingly important to UPEI as an institution: experiential learning; EDI; and expansion of research and scholarship.

- QA processes are more proactive, shared, and collaborative than the past.

- UPEI's QA framework and MPHEC's QA framework are well aligned.

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Areas of Improvement

- Follow-up on QA reviews and monitoring of action plans

- Communication / awareness of QA across campus

- Composition of APCC

- QA reviews of programs at UPEI Cairo campus

- Review of academic support units within the QA policy

- Clarity around accredited programs within the QA policy

- Articulation of student learning outcomes

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Responses to Recommendations

Recommendation	UPEI Response
1. More prominence to QA on website	Development of communication strategy in progress
2. Web page(s) with updated summary of QA reviews	Communication strategy includes web presence
3. VPAR and relevant Dean meet with faculty / students prior to review	VPAR and relevant Dean to increase outreach to faculty, staff and students
4. Program leads attend APCC during presentation of relevant QA report	Already built into process but VPAR to seek input from APCC on additional ways to improve process
5. Post minutes of APCC meetings online	APCC motions approved at Senate are posted, APCC Chair to discuss with APCC
6. More awareness of QA as formative reviews of student outcomes	QA communications strategy and renewal of institutional strategic plan

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Responses to Recommendations

Recommendation	UPEI Response
7. Template for follow-up to QA reviews	Post-review template to be developed and shared with APCC for review / approval
8. APCC monitoring of unit progress for two years following QA report	Post-review template to be integrated with monitoring process
9. Clarify relationship between QA and accreditation processes	Updated Senate policy clarifies relationship between processes
10. Reconsider composition of APCC	Recommendation to be communicated to UPEI Senate Steering Committee
11. Undertake reviews of academic support units	UPEI will examine review practices of academic support units
12. Fortify QA policy / procedures to include academic support units	UPEI will examine review practices of academic support units

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Responses to Recommendations

Recommendation	UPEI Response
13. Ensure quality of degrees in Cairo is comparable to PEI	The Cairo curriculum is overseen by the UPEI Cairo Provost and Deans at UPEI. VPAR working with UPEI Cairo and Deans to review QA activities there.
14. Make habitual the communication of the QA process	Aligns with earlier recommendations on follow-up and communications strategy
15. More meaningful discussion of academic issues at Senate	Composition of APCC to encourage more focused discussion on QA improvement
16. Post-review communication between Deans and executive team	As per Senate policy, QA reviews focus on program quality and student experience rather than advocacy for more resources
17. Datasets relevant to QA reviews provided to each unit to be reviewed	Provision of datasets is already firmly in place.
18. Potential isolation experienced by international and non-PEI students	AVP (Students) will have a leadership role to identify improvements in this area

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Responses to Recommendations

Recommendation	UPEI Response
19. Better communication between undergraduate and graduate students	Peer mentoring, cross-level listings, conference / poster sessions, others
20. Articulate QA as a priority in future planning documents of UPEI	Communications strategy, renewal of institutional strategic plan, policy revisions, APCC annual reports to Senate

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Concluding Remarks

- Majority of recommendations made to UPEI are related to process / procedural items rather than larger fundamental / structural aspects.

- Number of recommendations similar to other universities (recently 20 at UNB, 22 at STU).

- Overall, almost half of the recommendations relate to APCC and/or Senate (including Office of the VPAR to operationalize) and others align with institutional level initiatives, communications and processes.

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Acknowledgements

- Faculty, staff and students who participated and contributed to the QAM review process (March 2023).

- Chairs and Deans of highlighted programs that were reviewed in detail (History, Business, Nursing, Science Graduate Programs).

- Contributions by Charlotte McCardle, Director of Strategic Planning, to the oversight, development and support of QA processes and QAM action plan.

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Questions ?