# 5 Cyclical Program Review Protocol

## 5.1 Purpose and Application

The Cyclical Program Review Protocol is used to ensure University of Toronto programs meet the highest standards of academic excellence. As stated in the Policy on Approval and Review of Academic Programs, regular reviews allow for ongoing appraisal and quality improvement of programs and the academic units in which they reside.

The Cyclical Program Review Protocol applies to all undergraduate and graduate degree programs offered by the University, and to degree programs that are offered by the University with other institutions including all joint, multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, multisite and inter-institutional programs, and all modes of delivery.

## 5.2 Institutional Authority

The Vice-Provost, Academic Programs is responsible for the oversight of the University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process and ensuring that the UTQAP is applied in a manner that conforms to the University's quality assurance principles and Quality Council requirements. The Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs is responsible for ensuring that cyclical reviews of academic programs and/or units are undertaken. Where quality concerns are raised in the cyclical review, the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs monitors the timely implementation of improvements.

Within the Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs, the Director, Academic Programs and Policy is the authoritative contact between the institution and the Quality Council.

## 5.3 Degree Programs and Review Schedule

The University's full complement of undergraduate and graduate degree and diploma programs are reviewed on a planned cycle.[5] Reviews are conducted on a regular basis, frequent enough to ensure that Chairs, Deans and the Provost are kept informed of developments in all academic units, but at sufficiently long intervals that the effects of given actions can be assessed and that the system is not overburdened by the logistical demands of the process. The interval between program reviews must not exceed eight years.

[5] See the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs website for a schedule of reviews.

elect to review both its undergraduate and graduate degree programs concurrently or separately.

### 5.6.2

Additional Graduate Program Criteria

Evidence that students' time to completion is both monitored and managed in relation to the program's defined length and program requirements.

Quality and availability of graduate supervision.

Definition and application of indicators that provide evidence of faculty, student and program quality, for example:

- Faculty: funding, honours and awards, and commitment to student mentoring;
- Students: grade level for admission, scholarly output, success rates in provincial and national scholarships, competitions, awards and commitment to professional and transferable skills;
- Program: evidence of a program structure and faculty research that will ensure the intellectual quality of the student experience; sufficient graduate level courses that students will be able to meet the requirement that two-thirds of their course requirements be met through courses at this level.

Semi Tvwl.1e0x(t)-4]TJ -[(4(er)3(e Tc -0)14)ovrs arr/T3D0 tvr -2(g)2(ra2t )10ie Tc34

## 5.7 External Evaluation: Reviewer Selection and Review Process

The commissioning officer is responsible for the selection of the external review committee in consultation with the unit and/or program(s) to be reviewed. All reviewers are approved by the Office of the Provost. When the commissioning officer ihah4(e)13(n-t )10(t sf)-4(i4t) nm41.001 Tc 02.77

3. Three external reviewers or two external and one internal reviewer for the concurrent review of an undergraduate and graduate program.

In cases where more than one program is being considered by the Review Committee, reviewers should be selected to ensure the appropriate review of all the programs being considered. In selecting reviewers, an appropriate balance needs to be struck between familiarity with the unit and/or program(s) under review and distance to allow for objective assessment. All members of the Review Committee must be at arm's length from the program under review; that is, they should not have a particular interest in the outcome of the review due to personal or professional relationships with members of the unit. For more details, see the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs website.

The external and institutional reviewers should be active and respected in their field. They will normally be associate or full professors with program management experience and representatives of peer institutions offering high-quality programs in the field under review.

The Vice-Provost, Academic Programs website provides further guidance on the selection of reviewers and nomination forms that set out the information that must be provided to support an informed approval process.

### 5.7.2 Commissioning Officer Responsibilities

The commissioning officer is responsible for ensuring that all members of the Review Committee:

- Understand their role and obligations;
- Identify and commend the program's notably strong and creative attributes;
- Describe the program's respective strengths, areas for improvement and opportunities for enhancement;
- Recommend specific steps to be taken to improve the program, distinguishing between those the program can itself take and those that require external action;
- Recognize the institution's autonomy to determine priorities for funding, space and faculty allocation; and
- Respect the confidentiality required for all aspects of the review process.

Reviewers will be provided with clear terms of reference. The commissioning officer will also emphasize these elements when meeting with the reviewers during the course of their visit.

### 5.7.3 Documentation to be Provided to the Review Committee

The commissioning officer will identify what reports and information are to be provided to the Review Committee in advance of the site visit. Core documents that must be included are the:

As part of this consultation, the Dean will request a brief administrative response to the Review Committee report from the program and/or unit (in departmentalized Faculties/Divisions) under review. The Dean's response will reflect

The Office of the Vice

The compendium brought forward to each meeting is also considered by the Agenda Planning Committee of the Academic Board to determine whether there are any overall academic issues warranting discussion by the Board. The record of the discussion at AP&P is forwarded to the Executive Committee of Governing Council.

At the conclusion of this governance process, the Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs is responsible for finalizing the Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan, which is intended as an institutional synthesis of the external evaluation and internal responses and assessments.

### 5.8.4 Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan

The Vice-Provost, Academic Programs compiles the Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan providing the institutional synthesis of the external evaluation and internal responses and assessments. This report:

Includes the full and accurate summary described in 5.8.3, which identifies the following:

- significant strengths of the program;
- opportunities for program improvement and enhancement;

Includes the Dean's response and implementation plan described in 5.8.1, which

- Sets out and prioritizes recommendations that are selected for implementation and identifies

  who will be responsible for providing any resources made necessary by those recommendations;
  who will be responsible for acting on those recommendations;
  timelines for acting on and monitoring the implementation of those recommendations; and

Includes relevant excerpts from the report of the AP&P meeting, including whether

- the Dean's response and implementation plan adequately addressed all the issues identified;
- there were questions, comments or substantive issues that the committee considered;
- a follow-up one-year report is required from the Dean

May include a confidential section (where personnel issues are required to be addressed);
Includes an institutional Executive Summary, exclusive of any such confidential information and suitable for publication on the web.